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Countdown is on for 2017 Hoedown



By Brock Weir

It's time to start polishing your boots and practicing your line dancing ? tickets are now on sale for Magna's 2017 Wild, Wild West Hoedown.

Set to take place at the Magna Corral outside Magna International's Wellington Street East Headquarters on Friday, September 15 and Saturday, September 16, organizers set the countdown clock last Thursday at the event's formal launch at the Stronach family farm, Adena Meadows.

?I hoped to be able to make some announcements relative to talent, but the ink isn't quite dry,? said Magna's Steve Hinder at Thursday's launch. ?It is probably two-thirds dry and my history with this event is that until it is dry we're not going to make that announcement ? but you know it is our job to put together the best possible program that we can so that we can all collectively be successful.

?I think in the last 28 years we haven't let you down. We're excited about the 1/3 of dry ink and the full three thirds will make us really happy.?

But, as the initiated know, the entertainment is only one part of the Hoedown tradition. At the end of the day, it is all about community ? and that will once again be the case as York Region's biggest party heads towards its 30th anniversary.

One year shy of the milestone, Hoedown will partner with the second-largest roster of community charities and non-profits in its history, each of whom will share a slice of 100 per cent of Hoedown's proceeds.

?Collectively, our Hoedown recipients serve almost 82,000 York Region residents,? said Mr. Hinder.

This year's recipients include:

The ALS Society of Canada
Aurora Minor Hockey Association
Autism Ontario of York Region and Epilepsy York Region
Better Living Health and Community Services
(a collaboration between York Region hospices)
Big Brothers Big Sisters of York
Deaf Blind Ontario Services
Georgina Skating Club
Lake Simcoe Soccer Club
Life Corps Food Share
Marquee Theatrical Productions
Newmarket Food Pantry
Newmarket Stingrays Swim Club

The Optimist Clubs of York Region
Pulsars Gymnastics Group
Sport Aurora and the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame
Peer Project, Youth Assisting Youth, and the Learning Disabilities Association of York Region
Victim Services of York Region
Walk It Off Spinal Cord Wellness Centre
Welcoming Arms
Women's Centre of York Region

?It has always been our goal at Magna Hoedown and Neighbourhood Network to support organizations that help our communities thrive, which is why we're absolutely thrilled to announce this year that we have 20 Hoedown charities including five collaborative partnerships,? said Mr. Hinder, addressing the organizers in attendance ? each of whom were dressed in their best rendition of western gear, including a cowgirl and the requisite cow from Marquee.

?Magna is involved in the Hoedown for only one reason: it is for you. The only reason why Magna does Hoedown and will do it this year for the 29th time is to support the community. That's what Magna believes in. It is about making the community stronger for you, for us, for our Magna employees, for everywhere. It is about bringing us all together.?

Representing York Region's elected officials, Mayor Geoff Dawe was on hand in his cowboy hat to once again welcome Hoedown to Aurora.

?It really is such a privilege and pleasure to be here, to thank the Magna organization for the incredible work they do to give back to our community and for the support they bring,? said Mayor Dawe. ?It really has helped make York Region ? and particularly Aurora ? one of the best places to live in Canada. I think I was at the first one in 1988 with the hot air balloon rides and the backyard barbecue and the evolution of this event is stunning. My congratulations to the organizers. Thank you for everything that you have done.?

For information and tickets, visit www.hoedown.ca.