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NO BULL: RING OF FIRE IS A HUGE HIT

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By Heather Rule

Firefighter Kyle Grinager is active in the rodeo industry and ended up turning that passion into a fundraiser for the Parkers Prairie Fire Department to purchase equipment. [Parkers Prairie](#) assistant fire chief and city council member Tony Woodworth called Grinager the “brains of the operation” for the Ring of Fire bull ride, an annual event since 2017. Unfortunately, the 2019 bull ride, and the fall festival it coincides with, were called off because of COVID-19. But they plan to be back in 2022.

In addition to the professional bull riders, Ring of Fire leaves spots open for anyone in attendance to try it out for themselves, "for anybody that has always wanted to prove to his girlfriend that he can do it," Grinager said. Four or five people try it out each year and usually realize they should stick to their 9-5 job, Grinager added. "It's fun. They can say they've done it," Grinager said. "And it gives the crowd some excitement."

The family-friendly event is



The Ring of Fire draws wanna-be and actual bull riders for a night of excitement and entertainment.

complete with food, kids' games and the chance to buy cowboy hats and boots at the western store on site. Attendees can view all the action in front of them, or also catch it on a 20-by-30-foot high-definition screen to show the bull rides and instant replays.

The Ring of Fire also has a unique feature called the "shark tank" in the middle of the arena. Organizers draw from the top sponsors to allow six people to sit in the protected metal cage that's lowered into the dirt. "So, you're literally eye-level with the bulls," Grinager said. "That has been a very, very popular event."

Anyone can participate in an auction to sit in the shark tank for the last eight bulls that are bucked.

The bull ride, held on the Friday night before the fall festival just east of Parkers Prairie on County Rd. 42, has grown in popularity. It packed the arena for the inaugural event in 2017, drawing 3,500 people in a standing-room only crowd. Going forward with 3,000 tickets as the seating capacity, Ring of Fire sold out a week prior to the event in 2018 and sold out a month before the ride in 2019. Tickets are general admission, \$15, with children 5 and under free.

Even if people aren't able to get a ticket, they're still invited to roam around the commons area - no charge - where they can still view the bull-riding action on the big screen and purchase food and beverages.

The latest ride was such a hit that Ring of Fire won the National Federation of Professional Bull Riders New Event of the Year.

After the Ring of Fire, folks can stick around to see a band play on the stage, too.

Grinager sees the Ring of Fire's popularity stemming from how different and uncommon bull riding is when it comes to community events. "It seems like every town has a demo derby and a parade," Grinager said. "It's just kind of something you see on TV but don't get to see in person very often."

To learn more: 218-338-4115, or visit ParkersPrairie.net.

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