

# Cattle Baron's Ball turns 20

By Jessica Chia

Cattle Baron's Ball hits the two-decade mark in Waco this year, and country music superstar Clint Black will help make the milestone memorable.

This year's theme is "Through the Looking Glass," which pays homage to the dedication of those who helped shape the event and the consistent willingness shown by the community to give.

The ball's co-chairs, Rusty and Carolyn Haferkamp, have been involved with the event for the past eight years in various capacities, and set a high goal for the June 9 event. The gala benefits the American Cancer Society and funds raised go toward research, treatment and support programs.

"Our goal is to reach the half-million-dollar mark. The amounts have varied each year, but that was the high point in 2007. We're working to get back there, just like the rest of the economy," Rusty Haferkamp said.

Black, a triple-platinum country artist, has almost two dozen No. 1 hit singles, including like "A Better Man" and "Killin' Time."

"When Clint Black takes the stage, everyone is going to realize how many hits he actually had. They'll remember those songs," Haferkamp said.

Cattle Baron's Ball has always had top-



Carolyn and Rusty Haferkamp are co-chairing "Through the Looking Glass," the 20th Cattle Baron's Ball. The Haferkamps have been involved in the event for the past eight years. The photo was taken at MCC Highlander Ranch, where the event is held, and Carolyn's ensemble was provided by Roots. Photo by Steven Ruud.

flight performers such as Dwight Yoakam last year and Blake Shelton in 2010.

The evening's musical entertainment also will feature three local groups: the Brett Hendrix Band, Jonquil Street Band and the Sloppy Joe Band.

In addition to the traditional casino games and dancing, a goat-roping contest will be added for the first time.

The gala also will feature a wine pull and mystery boxes, both of which operate on a system of a "blind" purchase of a bottle of wine or a box of goods. Three different auctions are scheduled for the evening.

Caterer Eddie Deen will serve up Southwest favorites for attendees to enjoy.

# Who's who

Hispanic Heritage Festival  
at MCC's Bosque River Stage  
Photos by Michael Bancala



Karla Gomez, Lacy Mickles



Brisa Coronado, Margarita Tello



Robert Gain, Lisa Gain

These photos and many more are available  
to buy at [www.wacotrib.com](http://www.wacotrib.com)

Although the mood of the event will be celebratory, the heart of it is deep and far-reaching, Haferkamp said.

"It's a party with a purpose," he said. "I lost my grandfather when I was a teen. It was the first dramatic loss I'd experienced and it carved out my heart, gave me a resolve to help eradicate the disease. After we made the decision (to chair the Cattle Baron's Ball) my stepfather was diagnosed with cancer and they gave him six months to live. We lost him in July of last year.

"It's propped me up to make sure that I do everything that I can. I'm going to make sure that I live up to those promises."

One thousand people are diagnosed with cancer each year in Texas, he said.

"There are hundreds of people that have been through it and you don't realize that they've been through it," he said. "So many people you know have been diagnosed: a friend, a neighbor."

Honorary chairman Bill Goss, of Waco, was diagnosed with Stage III metastatic melanoma in 2008. He had surgery at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in November of that year, followed by radiation treatments and a year of thrice-weekly injections. He has been in remission since the surgery, he said.

He said many people have come forward to talk to him about the disease. And he was eager to point the spotlight at those who make the event possible.

"I think it goes back to the fact that the Cattle Baron's Ball had a good foundation by the people that originally started the event and the tremendous participation by the community in it," Goss said.

Organizing committees work year-round to ensure that the ball will be a success.

"Bill being the face of the ball this year lets other people know that you can get through it and still get out there and face the world," said Cherise Myatt, community manager of distinguished events for the American Cancer Society.

Haferkamp said a good starting point for getting involved is to attend the ball and reach out to one of the volunteers.

"The Cattle Baron's Ball committees

and volunteer list are kind of like a family," he said. "Once you're in, it's hard to get out — they come back year after year. Volunteers can help out at several different levels, and it usually turns into something where they want to try and take on more the following year."

The importance of those loyal volunteers cannot be overestimated, Myatt said.

"The event is so large, there is no way a handful of people could put it together. It takes an army," she said.

Haferkamp agrees.

"Without the volunteers, donors and sponsors there is no Cattle Baron's Ball," he said. "Waco is looked at by the rest of the Cattle Baron's Balls, even in larger cities, as a huge success. It's amazing to see the effects of a huge community involvement, year after year."

The American Cancer Society relies on donations to fund its research to find treatments and cures for cancer. They also help fund support programs, The Road to Recovery, for example, provides drivers for cancer patients who have difficulty in getting to their appointments.

"We have had more people coming in to get assistance lately," Myatt said. "We have a gas card program, which is new. Patients can receive the gas card to drive to their appointment in Houston or Dallas. The road driver program has been around for ages. Volunteer program road drivers can drive the patients to their appointments if they're not feeling well."

Myatt said the organization has seen an increase in the number of people asking for assistance.

Several fundraisers and activities lead up to the Cattle Baron's Ball each year.

In April, the Couture for Cancer Style Show and the Shoot for a Cure Skeet Shoot raised funds, while the Little Wranglers Party invited pediatric cancer patients and their families to relax and enjoy a day of fun at the Jump-n-Place in Hewitt.

The "Running with the Bulls" 1-mile or 5-kilometer walk/run is May 26.

Those interested in attending the ball should reserve their table or tickets as soon as possible, because seating is limited and the event is popular, Haferkamp said.

"The Cattle Baron's Ball is meant for everyone in the community to come out and enjoy themselves for one night of the year, and when they wake up the next morning they'll realize that their money went to one of the greatest causes," he said.

### Cattle Baron's Ball

**When:** June 9

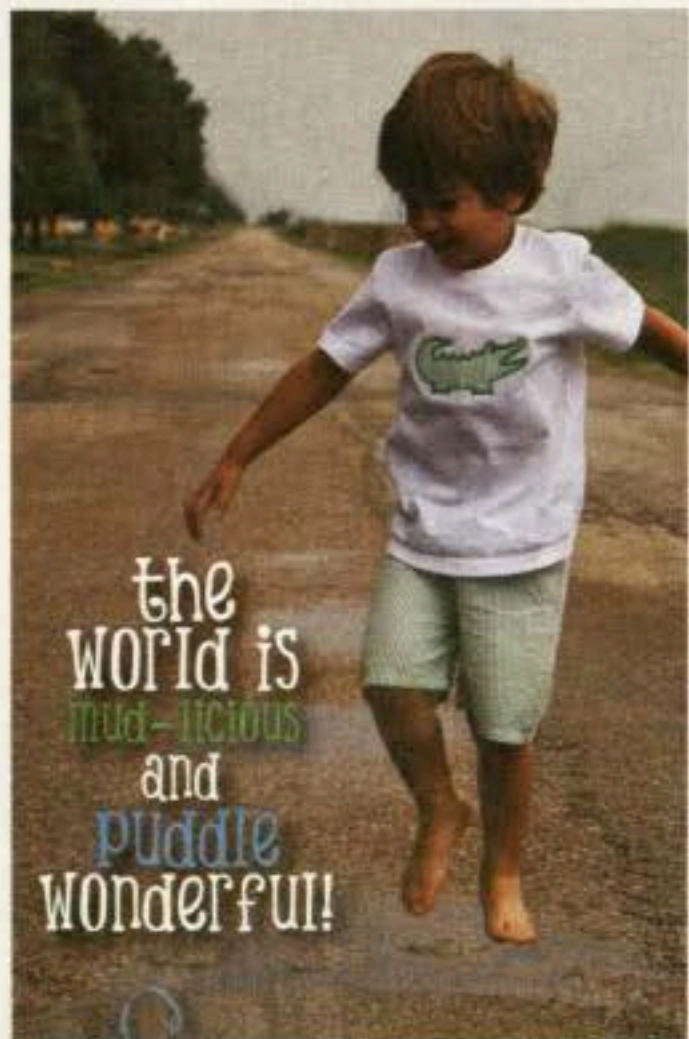
**Where:** MCC's Highlander Ranch

**Time/tickets:** Doors open at 6 p.m. for gold baron-level patrons, 6:30 p.m. for silver-baron patrons and 7 p.m. for general admission. Tickets cost \$200 for silver-baron level or \$300 for gold-baron level, with premium seating in an air-conditioned, private area with a bar and food line. General admission tickets cost \$150, but seating is first-come, first served. Tables of 10 can be purchased for \$2,000 for silver-baron level and \$3,000 for gold-baron level.

**Information:** Call 254-753-0807 or visit [WacoCattleBaronsBall.org](http://WacoCattleBaronsBall.org).



Country star Clint Black will perform at the 2012 Cattle Baron's Ball.



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