



Dear Members

July marks the Smoky Mountain Rodeo Association's anniversary of being seated with the International Gay Rodeo Association. We, the Board of Directors, would like to thank all of you for your many contributions to SMRA since then and so far in 2009 in particular. SMRA has truly accomplished some amazing feats in the last six months and we would like to thank all of you for your help in those efforts!

February 2009's Winter Round-Up was the most successful Round-up in years. Thanks for everyone who came to Nashville and donated –or purchased – items for the silent auction!

- January through June 2009 fundraising has exceeded everyone's expectations. Despite the tough economy, our fundraising proceeds as of June 30th has reached \$9,875 – just shy of our \$9,950 forecast for the entire year! We've got even more in store for the second half of '09.
- Speaking of fundraising, our many existing and new members in the Louisville and Cincinnati area have organized some wildly successful fundraisers. The Blazing Saddles event in Louisville alone raised more than enough money for SMRA to become a Gold-level sponsor of the Louisville AIDS Walk! This is a major milestone for SMRA.

Back in Nashville, SMRA is opening new doors this year. We are expanding our outreach to different venues in town, including Play Dance Bar, where we are starting First Friday Dances, the Stirrup, and other venues around town. We are bringing country dancing back to Nashville's GLBT community!

SMRA membership has grown tremendously during 2009 and shows no sign of stopping. We who serve on the Board of Directors are humbled by the excitement that so many of you have for our organization and are always busy planning new fundraisers and fun events. Member suggestions are always welcome. Even more welcome is member participation.

SMRA has plenty of exciting opportunities where new members can plug in and get involved. Our Board provides a good mix of experienced and new members, and we have lots of room for Committee Chairs and others who want to focus on a particular area. We encourage new members to run for office, volunteer for a committee, participate in IGRA University, and serve as a delegate at Convention.

Thank you, again, for making the first half of 2009 a rousing success! We look forward to seeing you during the second half!

Justin Walden
Trustee

Michaela Ferris
Vice President

Barry C. Pahl
Rodeo Director

Brutt A. Wickers
Treasurer