

60th ANNUAL GOLD RUSH DAYS
FEBRUARY 7th – 10th, 2008

MEDIA RELEASE

WESTERN FUN RIDES IN WITH GOLD RUSH DAYS
“OUT WICKENBURG WAY!”

This event celebrates the town's origins as a ranching & gold mining center in the days before there was a Phoenix. The heritage event was founded 60 years ago, and today Gold Rush Days draws tens of thousands of visitors, during the three days of activities.

Festivities begin on Thursday, February 7th, with a Red Hat Rendezvous on Frontier Street with the gals from Buckshot Babes from 12noon-2pm; followed by the Family Fun Carnival opening at 4:00 p.m., in the downtown district, and the 1st Performance at 7:30 p.m. in The Webb Center with Asleep at the Wheel.

The official opening gets underway on Friday, February 8th with the Opening Ceremonies on Frontier Street at 10:00 a.m. with gunfights, and gold rush officials kicking off the event. Friday is the only day you will be able to see beautiful classic cars on Frontier Street from 9am -3 p.m.

The main festival area on Valentine Street in the historic district will see 200 arts/crafts exhibitors, a family fun carnival, photography exhibit, art show, free stage entertainment, and gold panning daily from 9:00 a.m. – 5 p.m., with the carnival running throughout the evening. One of the highlights on Friday is the first show of the Desert Stagers old fashioned melodrama, held in the historic Saguaro Theatre at 7:00 p.m., nightly throughout the celebration.

On Saturday the main event activities are the same, but include the additions of a Beard Contest, Western Barbeque, and the first performance of the Senior Professional Rodeo held at 2:00 p.m. at the Everett Bowman Arena, located off of Constellation Road, just one mile east of the downtown area. The *Arizona grown band “MOGOLLON”* is the entertainment for the Rodeo Dance on Saturday night, inside the Wickenburg Community Center from 8:30 p.m. –12:45 a.m. This high energy band brings to Wickenburg their great western rock music. Admission is \$8 per person.

The parade on Saturday at 10:00 a.m., is one of the largest in Arizona, with over 125 entries including 1,000 horses, classic auto's, floats, marching bands, and youth groups participating. Spectators line the street as one of the largest parades in Arizona passes by. The parade theme is: ***“Ranchers, Miners, Railroads & Gold!”*** Joining the parade this year will be the *World Famous Budweiser Clydesdale Hitch*.

This annual celebration is one of the signature heritage events for Wickenburg, and was selected to the Library of Congress as one of America's Living Legacies. Joining us in Wickenburg for special performances is western entertainers “Asleep at the Wheel” who will appear on Thursday February 7th and Saturday, February 9th, at the Del E. Webb Center for Performing Arts.

On Sunday, the activities include the arts/crafts area, gold panning, family carnival, rodeo performance, melodrama, and special day events such as the Young Life Pancake Breakfast at 8am – 11 am inside the Community Center; traditional Mining events - Mucking & Drilling Contest at 10:00 a.m. where contestants compete for money and prizes and spectators can bid in a Calcutta Auction for a contestant; and the Arizona Gold Panning Championship, where contestants compete for money and prizes while panning for gold starts at 1:00 p.m. The second performance of the Senior Pro Rodeo is at 2 p.m.

For more Information, and tickets call The Chamber at 800-942-5242 or visit our Website at: www.wickenburgchamber.com. Rodeo and Dance tickets are also available at www.ticketweb.com