

Today we are celebrating the National Day of the Cowboy, and there is no more appropriate place than Dubois, with its rich history and western way of life, to honor the mission of the National Day of the Cowboy, which is to contribute towards the preservation of America's Cowboy Heritage.

As part of this, Dubois Main Street, which, in addition to supporting economic development activities, works to preserve and promote Dubois' unique cultural heritage, has created the Dubois Western Heritage Award, which in this, its inaugural year, is being presented to Sandie and Rodger Leseberg for their dedication, volunteer spirit, passion for team roping and rodeo, and their love of and commitment to the community of Dubois.

Sandie and Rodger have long been immersed in the western tradition that envelops this valley. Rodger's grandparents were Dubois ranchers, and Sandie and Rodger, along with their son Ty, developed a personal love of team roping and rodeo that they chose to bring to residents and visitors by establishing rodeo events in the community.

While the Dubois Western Activities Association held a rodeo for years in town across from what is currently the post office, there was a need to develop a new arena and parking to accommodate a larger audience and a greater number of participants.

With the vision of bringing this western sport to more people, Sandie and Rodger worked tirelessly, volunteering an enormous amount of the time, labor, laborers, equipment and knowledge to build and manage what is now the Clarence Allison Memorial Rodeo Arena, where the weekly Friday night rodeos are held each summer. Once the arena was complete, the Leseberg's continued their generosity by providing their own stock for team roping and calf roping events.

It is with great pleasure that this award is given to Sandie and Rodger, who are so deserving.

I asked Kate Lucas (Pres. of DWAAA) what made these two people so special. Because she summed it up in the most precisely simple manner, I'll close with her words.

Kate said, "There's a saying that applies to Western ethics that states, "If someone asks you to walk a mile for them, give them two. If you ask Rodger and Sandie to walk a mile for you...they'll each give you five."

Congratulations and Thank You to Sandie and Rodger Leseberg!