

News from Home

Hendrick Home For Children Newsletter

COWBOY TURNS DANCER TO BENEFIT HENDRICK HOME FOR CHILDREN



The inaugural Dancing with the Abilene Stars (DWTAS) was held on January 21, 2010, in the Conference Center of the Abilene Convention Center with 45 tables (approximately 450 people), 12 dancers and 2 professionals. DWTAS has become the best event in town. Every year, our amazing “Stars” have set the bar higher and higher. Fourteen years, 165 dancers and numerous professionals, 129 tables on the floor, 40 seats in the balcony, hundreds of volunteers, and thousands of guests have raised millions of dollars.

Clay McCullar said he was “set up” by his wife and their friends to be a dancer in the 2024 Dancing with the Abilene Stars. He explains that his wife invited friends over and they were all in the loop and challenged him to dance. He does not regret saying “Yes.” He says that doing something uncomfortable is the only way to grow.

Clay grew up around horses and hunting. He would travel to West Texas to hunt quail and became acquainted enough with the area that he decided to attend Abilene Christian University. He met his wife, Kristi, and they began their life together. Clay knows a thing or two about cutting horses, but cutting a rug was a new venture. He said he had no idea how much he would learn from Professional Dancer Meghan Martin. She asked him what kind of music he enjoyed. He quickly replied, “All of it.” The dance he performed on January 11, 2024 was a compilation of dancing through the decades.

Clay learned through the tour of Hendrick Home how his dancing would benefit the Home. While touring, he had the opportunity to talk with House Parents and children. One child, Liam, was dressed like a cowboy, but was missing a key item: a belt buckle. Everyone watched as Clay took off his 2008 award winning belt buckle and gave it to Liam. They both learned a little bit more about giving up something to raise up someone else.



Newsletter Highlights

Dancer Spotlight

DWTAS Recap Highlight

DWTAS Committee Guiding Light

A Word from the President



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THE DANCERS: THE MOVERS & SHAKERS



2024 DWTAS Dancers

The community members who performed at the annual Dancing with the Abilene Stars event were: Dr. Travis Craver, Regan King, Dr. Bob Leedy, Clay McCullar, Matt Price, Liberty-Grace Bland, Jamie Brady, Cynthia DeFoore, Tiffany Gutierrez, Julianne Sitzes, and Kaleigh Wilson.

The winners were:
Big Money - Matt Price
Best Male - Dr. Bob Leedy
Best Female - Julianne Sitzes
Showmanship - Clay McCullar
Best Costume - Tiffany Gutierrez
Best Video - Regan King

THE ORGANIZERS: DWTAS COMMITTEE

Who organizes the 165 dancers, 129 tables on the floor, 40 seats in the balcony, hundreds of volunteers and thousands of guests? The DWTAS committee does. Neil Shultz, Shea Woodard Hall, Mikea Glenn, Sara Stevens, and Kassidy Nygaard serve on the committee. Dancers are teamed with professional dancers who are led by Kim Hudson and Peyton Bourland. They are a small committee, but mighty in their work. Beginning in the summer months, they select the dancers to ask to participate in the January event. By September, dancers are matched with a professional dancer and practice begins. The committee stays busy with planning the event, arranging for videography, photography, and various details that culminate into one fantastic event. Susie Brecheen, Director of Engagement at HHC, serves as a liaison between the committee and HHC. She provides the administrative and logistical support needed to keep the event running smoothly. The committee is important for the success of any event, but in the case of DWTAS, HHC is fortunate to have these individuals. Keep posted on the event - past, present and future - on Facebook @dwtas1.



DWTAS Committee

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Robert Marshall,
President/CEO

When I first became President of HHC, I could not believe that there was only one fundraising event. Then I was told not to worry because there was a committee that handled it. After three consecutive DWTAS events, I have to admit that this is one amazing event led by incredible volunteers. Community members ask me two main questions about the event: How is the money raised used at Hendrick Home? and How do I get tickets? The amount raised (minus expenses) is used in our operational budget. It helps to cover the cost it takes to provide services to nearly 100 individuals per month. Children and families enter and exit our program continuously which requires our ability to accommodate a variety of needs. The answer to the second question is: contact a dancer when they are announced. Dancers are the ones who sell the tables. There are some continued sponsors, but for the most part the tables are sold within the first two weeks a dancer is announced. Thank you to the committee, staff, contractors and volunteers who make this a great event. Thank you to you, our donors, for continuing to support the work we do to care for children and families. We look forward to seeing you at the next DWTAS event.

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