

The Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Returns to Oakland, CA for Action-Packed Weekend in Castro Valley

Two electrifying performances at Rowell Ranch Rodeo Park on Saturday, July 12 at 2:30 PM and Sunday, July 13 at 2:30 PM as part of its West Coast Tour

OAKLAND, CA, UNITED STATES, July 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The nationally renowned [Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo](#) (BPIR) rides into Castro Valley for two electrifying performances at Rowell Ranch Rodeo Park on Saturday, July 12 at 2:30 PM and Sunday, July 13 at 2:30 PM as part of its West Coast tour. This is the 3rd stop of the BPIR Legacy Tour, which includes Denver, CO., Memphis, TN., Oakland, CA., Los Angeles, CA., and Atlanta, GA.

Now celebrating its 41st season, the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo (BPIR) is the only African American touring rodeo association in the world and a proud cultural institution honoring the legacy of legendary Black cowboy Bill Pickett. Audiences can expect thrilling competition in bull riding, ranch bronc riding, ladies barrel racing, relay races, steer wrestling, team roping, ladies breakaway roping, and ladies steer undecorating. The excitement continues with crowd-favorite junior events, including junior breakaway roping, junior barrel racing, and powder puff barrels.

This season, BPIR invites fans to take part in the national Boots in the Dirt competition, an energetic showdown happening across the tour to see which city can groove and clack their fans the loudest to the hit song Boots on the Ground. It's boots on the dirt, hearts in the air, and a whole lot of hometown pride on the line. "The Bay Area crowd always brings the love and the energy," said Valeria Howard-Cunningham, BPIR President and Producer. "We're proud to return to Castro Valley and continue to share the rich stories, family atmosphere, talent, and spirit of the West."



BPIR Texas Connection Bronc Rider

Event Information:

What: Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo – Oakland

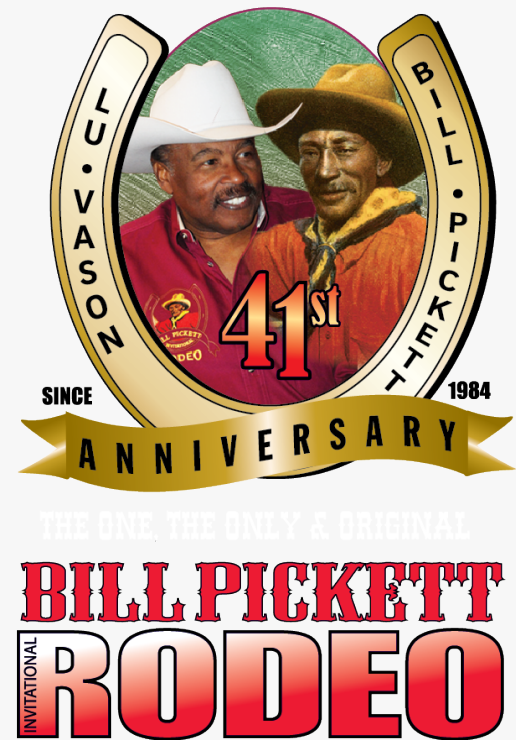
When: Saturday, July 12, 2025 at 2:30 PM

& Sunday, July 13, 2025 at 2:30 PM

Where: Rowell Ranch Rodeo Park, 9725 Dublin Canyon Rd., Castro Valley, CA 94552

Tickets: Available at www.billpickettrodeo.com

As part of its ongoing commitment to community empowerment, the BPIR Foundation has partnered with AVV (Anti-Violence Ventures), USDA and Safeway to host an inspiring workshop for more than 80 young adults from the local bay area on Saturday, July 12th. The session focused on critical topics such as anti-violence awareness, bullying, agricultural education, and the importance of emotional intelligence. Through open discussion and hands-on activities, participants explored how understanding their emotions can lead to better decision-making when dealing with difficult situations, the importance of agriculture and of developing stronger connections to their communities and the land. This impactful collaboration reflects BPIR's broader mission to uplift, educate, and engage the next generation both inside and outside the rodeo arena.



BPIR 41st logo



Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Foundation logo

The weekend also includes a special tribute to Jeff Douvel Shiflet, a beloved member of the BPIR family and a Public Relations/Media staple in the Oakland community, who passed away earlier this year. For more than 35 years, Jeff served as the Oakland co-coordinator and historian for the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo. He was a passionate storyteller, whose voice and vision helped shape BPIR's traveling museum, commercials, and documentaries. His deep commitment and powerful narrations made him one of the voices of BPIR to thousands. "Jeff's legacy will forever be a part of our story," said Howard-Cunningham. "He was more than a historian, he was family."

BPIR is also very proud to announce the release of a powerful new biography: [Lu Vason: From Dreamer to Visionary to Pioneer](#), now available on Amazon, the BPIR Swag Hub, Kindle e-books and BPIR Markets & Souvenir Booths. Formats include hardcover, softcover, and e-book. This inspiring new book tells the untold story of Lu Vason, founder of the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo, whose visionary work in both entertainment and rodeo has created opportunities for

generations to come.

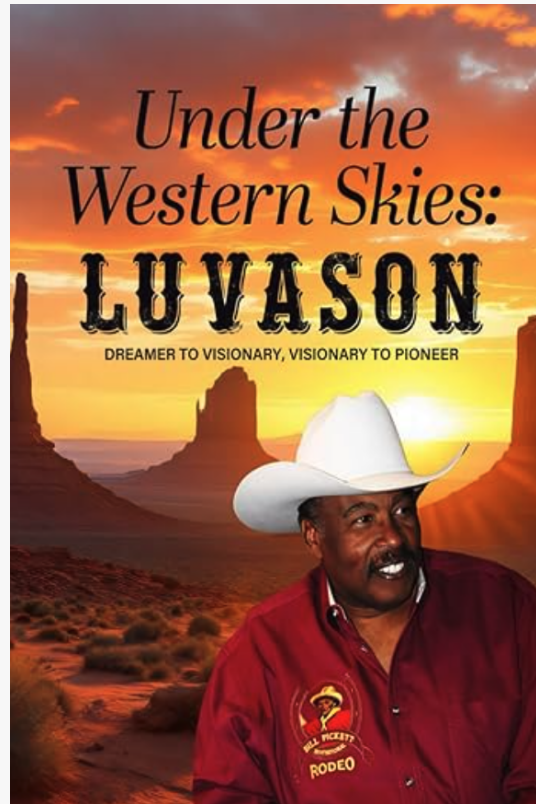
The book features a heartfelt foreword by Emmy Award winning actor Glynn Turman, a longtime friend of Vason and National Grand Marshal of the BPIR for nearly four decades. "Lu was more than a visionary he was a unifier. He brought people together, made us feel like family, and gave our stories a stage. His friendship meant everything, and his legacy continues to uplift communities across the country. Lu didn't just start a rodeo, he started a movement," writes Turman. "I watched him turn a dream into a legacy that redefined what it means to be a Black cowboy in America. This book captures the fire, the fight, and the brilliance of a man who changed the game."

Following the Oakland stop, the BPIR tour continues its West Coast tour as it rolls into Southern California for a Soul Country Rodeo Weekend. The festivities will kick off with the Soul Country Music Star™ competition on Friday, July 18, 2025, at the Autry Museum of the American West in Griffith Park, with the BPIR rodeo action happening at the Industry Hills Expo Center, 16200 Temple Ave., City of Industry, CA, with two thrilling BPIR performances: Saturday, July 19 at 7:00 PM and Sunday, July 20 at 3:30 PM.

About the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo (BPIR):

Founded in 1984 by Lu Vason, the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo is the nation's longest-running African American touring rodeo association in the world. Created to honor the legacy of legendary cowboy Bill Pickett, BPIR showcases the history, culture, and contributions of Black cowboys and cowgirls, while providing a national platform for today's top Black rodeo athletes.

About the [Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Foundation](#) (BPIRF):



Powerful new biography: Lu Vason: From Dreamer to Visionary to Pioneer



BPIR Oakland Coordinator for 39 Years - Jeff Douvel and Daughter

The Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Foundation is the nonprofit arm of the BPIR, dedicated to preserving the legacy of African American cowboys and cowgirls while empowering future generations. Through educational programming, scholarships, youth engagement, and community partnerships, the Foundation promotes cultural pride, leadership development, and opportunities both in and beyond the rodeo arena.

About AVV (Anti-Violence Ventures):

AVV is a nonprofit organization focused on ending cycles of violence in Black communities by creating safe spaces for healing, dialogue, and emotional growth. Through workshops and community engagement, AVV empowers Black men and youth to build healthier futures rooted in understanding, accountability, and connection.

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