

# The Bandera PROPHEET

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Despite protests, Bandera Ham Rodeo carries on

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The Bandera Prophet

Neither protestors at the gates, statewide quarantine notices nor vandalism in our community halted Bandera Ham Rodeo organizers from moving forward with the two-day fundraising event.

Though the stands weren't quite as packed as last year, a full crowd filled the Mansfield Park arena bleachers today. Massive precautionary closures and cancellations in response to COVID-19 are likely to blame for the smaller attendance, but the show went on. Sponsored by the Bandera Wranglers, the Ham Rodeo was held to raise funds for the Bandera County Boys and Girls Club, as well as other philanthropic efforts. Tracy Byrd performed in concert last night, and a sanctioned barbecue cook-off, hog-calling contest and wild hog catch were today's main events.

Some time last night, vandals spray-painted the walls of four Eight Plaques and Customs, owned by Bandera Wrangler Jerad Wilcox. Also tagged were the Boys and Girls Club and the Silver Spur Skate Park on Maple Street. One of the insignias painted was ALF - presumably an acronym for the Animal Liberation Front.

ALF, according to PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), "is simply the name adopted by people acting illegally in behalf of animal rights." No leads identifying who is directly responsible have been released by investigators. Today, a group of people from San Antonio, Austin and Dallas gathered outside the gates of Mansfield Park, holding signs and chanting, claiming the hog catch cruel and inhumane.

"We're just volunteering our free time to speak up for the animals, because they don't have a choice, they don't have a voice," one protestor said. "They're not athletes, this is not a sport."

One of the protesters, who had ALF tattooed on her arm, said she arrived in Bandera hours after the gates opened. She said to the best of her knowledge, no one responsible for the vandalism was present. Other protesters reportedly attempted to sneak into the arena through the back, however their efforts were thwarted by Bandera County and City law enforcement.

"Corona Virus didn't shut us down. PETA couldn't slow us down. So these are the tactics that they result to. There is no abuse at our events," the Wranglers wrote on their Facebook page. "We had an amazing turnout last night. Thank you to our amazing artists for putting on such a great show! Thank you to all our hard working and diligent volunteers. And thank you Bandera and Texas for supporting us even through the media scares."