

## Rodeo Time

by Beverly Denver

In many parts of the country, March is synonymous with cold, blistery weather. In sharp contrast, the only current of air we Houstonians can routinely identify with this month is the prevailing whirlwind of activity that accompanies Rodeo Houston!

Ah, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo! Twenty-one straight days of down-home country fun and frivolity!

I love to go to the barbecue cook-off, ride (in a chuck wagon) in a trail ride, watch the parades, see the kids and their animals at the Livestock show, jump on a carnival ride, play the games along the midway, shop at the on-site boutiques, catch the nightly performances, see the stars, eat the junk food.

There's so much to see and do during Rodeo Time. What could be more appealing than enjoying it all?

"Nothing," say many of us.

Still, participating in all that fun takes time away from the workplace and other people who are trying their best to connect with us.

If the motive for all the merriment weren't so worthy – raising scholarship money for Texas children – spending most of the month of March out at Reliant Park (the way many of us professionals do) would be awfully hard to justify.

Even so, being involved in the Rodeo shouldn't be the excuse we use to ignore everything else?

While we're out there volunteering, our absences from the workplace often frustrate those who are still there, "holding down the fort."

One friend of mine, who has been volunteering out at the rodeo and running her own business for 20 years, credits the frustration of her clients during Rodeo Time as the impetus for buying her first cell phone.

"It was back in the late 80s," Mary said. "I was a volunteer, working on a very time-intensive committee. I was also trying to manage a still-young business. I needed to be in the office, servicing my clients. I also needed to be at the rodeo to do what I'd committed to do. Buying a cell phone solved the problem. I transferred my office phone line to the mobile number. It allowed me to be in two places at once. It still does."

Flash forward 20 years to the present. Women I know who've never even considered owning a Blackberry are now taking possession.

One such friend said, “I didn’t think I needed a Blackberry. I had a PDA, a laptop and a cell phone. I used all three. But, things have changed. Today, clients expect me to check and send email all day long. To stay on top of things, I simply have to be able to respond immediately – no matter where I am and what I’m doing! During the run of the rodeo, I’ll be out there a lot, but I will also be using my Blackberry. It’s the only way I can volunteer and keep everybody else happy too.

Another friend of mine, Karen, is a national speaker and success coach. She talks often about change and how important it is for us to accept the inevitability of it.

Clearly, savvy professionals today, even those who volunteer all month long at the Livestock Show and Rodeo, are embracing the wisdom of this truth.

God bless them all!

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