

## La Pine Rodeo Association Queen tryout Speech

A Tall Tale about La Pine Rodeo Assoc. Board member Kerri Raymond, performed and written by Mikaela Koellermeier 11/12/11.

Just a cat's whisker beyond the northern city limits of Phoenix, Arizona, lays a place too tough to die with its rough and tumble prospectors and "devil-may-care" cowboys such as Curly Bill, Johnny Ringo, Nellie Cashman and Wyatt Earp. Nestled in this land of 100 foot cacti and 400 pound man eating rattle snakes, was the home of a little girl with dark hair and rosy little cheeks and the sweetest face this side the Grand Canyon, Cactus Big Loop Kerri.

"I'm not meant to be a roper daddy!" she would yell every morning at the crack a dawn when her dad shoved her out the door to go practice roping that hay bale. Now her dad was the great saddle maker of the west and a worldwide known roper. So quick, he didn't even need a horse. Some say he had an extra long right arm and super speed. Kerri, on the other hand, was still figuring out the hand eye coordination. After roping herself a number of times and even getting so tangled up she had to have her dad come untangle her. She was slowly getting the hang of it, or at least how to not rope herself. She still could not conjure up a love for roping.

Now Kerri's heart was filled with the love for horses but she felt she had something missing. One hot August evening she decided to take old Blue Bonnet Red Hayes Fire on Wheels Junior the 6<sup>th</sup>, or Blue for short, for a trail ride.

Now her dad a thing for naming each horse he had ever had Blue. Odd may he be, he was lightning fast and acted as though nothing could scare him, and yet, he would fuss over stepin in a mud puddle and would run like a yearlin at the slightest notion of a big, bad bunny or tiny little mouse.

This ride was different; they hadn't encountered any horse eating bunnies so they reached a part of the desert where she had never been. The cacti were super thick and the dust heavy. She was reminded of her childhood nightmares about the great Mexican fighting bull known as Red

Rock. As they continued through the forest Blue became jumpy. Kerri jumped out of her saddle, pistol in holster and rope over the shoulder. She thought she could hear the sound of heavy breathing and pawing on the ground. As she cautiously inched forward, she couldn't tell if there was really something out there or if it was just Blue breathing down her neck. She could make out the outline of a hill ahead. Still 100 rattlesnakes away from the hills base, she began to feel a mist, then a drop on her cheek, then the weight of the heavens poured down upon her and Blue. It was the first rain fall in years. Kerri closing her eyes enjoying the rain decided it was time to head home. She opened her eyes to find the dust had cleared. As her eyes slowly moved up the hillside she was shocked speechless to find the one and only great Red Rock, staring her and Blue down. She flinched, it was just enough to make Red Rock charge. Without a thought she threw the reins up on Blue and flew into the saddle, squeezed her legs on Blues flanks, and they charged straight towards Red Rock with fearless lightning speed. Red Rock arched his neck and dropped his head barring his 30 foot horns as he prepared to collide. Like a seasoned pro with perfect timing, Kerri leaned forward and blue cleared Red Rocks horns but just missin his tail by a wisp. In flight Kerri threw the rope with a healer's perfection catchin not two, but all 4 of Red Rocks sharp hoofs. Blue landed softly, whipped around as Kerri dallied the rope and Red Rock fell to the ground.

When she got home, her daddy had a grin from ear to ear as she drug up big ol' Red Rock, the town gathered and cheered. That was the day Kerri got her name, Cactus Big Loop Kerri. She was born to rope. (AKA Kerri Raymond)