

Meet Cle Elum Roundup Queen Ava LaValley

CLE ELUM – Back in 2019 Ava was a Roundup junior queen. In 2020, COVID-19 cancelled the Roundup after she had been named queen. By default, her reign carried over to 2021.

This year the 17-year-old is a senior at Ellensburg High. Why did she get involved in the Roundup?

“Rodeo has always been an important part of my life. When my friend Chloe Brown was the Roundup’s queen in 2017 – it sparked my interest. There are so many things about the Roundup I like. For example, I think the dedication athletes have for the sport is inspiring. They work on their skills every single day and never give up.”

After she graduates from Ellensburg High



CLE ELUM ROUNDUP Queen Ava LaValley carries herself like a winner with a big heart for people and for animals.

Photo courtesy of Ava LaValley

she said she’d like to study veterinarian medicine with a specialty in equine at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas.

“I’ve taken quite a few animal sciences classes in high school,” she said, “and that’s helped me further my interest in that career.”

Who does she admire and why? “My mom. She’s so hard-working and dedicated. She’s the best human being I’ve ever met in my life and I’m so thankful I can call her my mom.”

What’s her motivational quote?

“It’s a quote on a bracelet I have: ‘She thought she could, so she did.’”

Asked what changes she would make to her community if she had a magic wand, she replied, “None at all. I love our community just like it is: supportive, encouraging and accepting.”

Ava lives on a farm. She said the family has a number of dogs and cats, and that she helps raise the beef cattle.

“Taking care of cattle,” she laughed, “already makes me a veterinarian.”

For 4-H, she also raises lambs. In 2019 she earned the Champion Senior Showman in lambs.

She has two horses, Harper and Whiskey, and as for being a cowgirl, Ava is not only an ambassador for the sport of rodeo she’s also a contestant. She said she competes at the WA State High School Rodeo in the roping, goat tying, barrel racing and pole bending events, though she said her favorite is pole bending.

“It’s more challenging than barrel and takes a little more work.”

As the 2020/21 Cle Elum Roundup Queen, she said she wants to share with everyone the sport of rodeo and its traditions and values.

Bird of the month Western Meadowlark

Kittitas Audubon Society
kittitasaudubon@hotmail.com

KITTITAS COUNTY – Anyone walking through the hayfields, grasslands, and sage in the Kittitas Valley from late April until August is likely to be serenaded by the distinctive and lovely melodious call of a Western Meadowlark perched on a shrub or utility wire. This cheerful bird, with its bright yellow chest emblazoned with a bold black V, is about the size of a Robin, but with a longer bill and shorter tail. Although the chest is bright, the back is marbled with streaks of brown, tan and black, to keep it well camouflaged in the fields it calls home. The male and female are similar in shape and color. When flushed from the grass or brush, it appears to be rather chunky and bottom-heavy, flashing white on either side of the tail in flight.

Here in Kittitas County, Meadowlarks arrive from their wintering grounds in the Southwest and Northern Mexico in mid-March. Nesting begins about a month later. The nests are on the ground, a grassy cup with a dome and side entrance that is well concealed in tufts of live grass. Eggs are white, speckled with brown and sometimes purple. Incubation is about 15 days, and the young fledge from their nest about 12 days later. They may have two broods, but the first brood is often done prior to first haying at



WESTERN MEADOWLARK
Photo courtesy of Mick Thompson

the end of June, which prevents much mortality. A second brood, if it occurs, is more risky on cultivated lands.

During breeding, the adults and young eat a lot of insects (probably for the high protein content), but soon shift to seeds, which is their main food for the rest of the year. Meadowlarks have a very interesting feeding technique called “gaping”, where the bill is inserted into a group of grass stems and forcibly opened wide. When they do this, their eyes rotate slightly forward, allowing the bird to see directly between their jaws into the hole they have created, to pull out seeds and feed on the ground!

To learn more about our birds of Kittitas County, check out the Audubon website at KittitasAudubon.org, or meetings, which are held on the third Thursday of every month except summer.

Thank You

Pioneer Queen Rose Badda’s coronation and reception following the Pioneer Days parade were great successes! For helping make these events successful, we would like to thank...

- Snoqualmie Casino Charity Division for donating decorations
- Floyd Rogalski and Louie Osmonovich for their music and helping with clean up
- Senior Center volunteers who helped setup and clean up
- Parker Casey, Kelsey Greene, George Greene, and Diane Barr for helping with clean up
- Reagan Sherrill and Andi De Vere for the dance performance
- Pat and Rose Weaver for the loan of the one-armed bandit
- Mary Jo Iverson for the loan of the easels
- Cheri Marusa for the Seahawks gift
- Mayor Jay McGowan for being our Master of Ceremonies and Susan Daniel, for assisting him
- The Badda family for their help with the program
- Steve Talerico for the torchetti
- Judy Graham for helping Sena Lanphere carry the Queen’s banner in the parade
- Glondo’s Sausage Co. for allowing us to have the queens’ reception in their lot
- Michael Richard for setting up the reception area in Glondo’s lot
- Jim Fossett at the N.K.C. Tribune for his always excellent coverage of the event

We would like to thank the people who provided classic cars for our current and past queens to ride in the Pioneer Days parade. The queens enjoyed their rides and escorts!

Bob Cernick • Debbie Cernick • Cliff Winfrey

We would like to thank our sponsors again, because without them, this event would not be possible.

City of Cle Elum • N.K.C. Tribune

A special thank you to the local communities for supporting the Upper County Pioneer Queen tradition!

Thank you one and all from the Pioneer Queen Coronation Committee: Sena Lanphere, Gail Berndt, Nikki Dearing, Toni Fields, Tasha Lanphere, Sherry Osmonovich, Rachele Rogalski, Tiffany Greene, and Teri Greene

Do you want to volunteer at the Cle Elum Roundup?

CLE ELUM – About 45 volunteers are needed for the week before the July 30-31 Cle Elum Roundup, for the two days of the event, and for the day after the event.

“We need some muscle,” laughed Bev Miller, “especially for setup and takedown,

but we have all kinds of jobs for people of all ages.”

If you’d like to get onboard, text Bev at 509-674-9299 today.

“Daily lunches are provided for volunteers, along with discounts on Roundup merchandise,” she said.

Summer STEAM

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<https://forms.gle/Pk1NXFXH8majFQCT9>
Need help registering? Email: selzler@cersd.org

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or call: 509-649-3420

PLEASE INCLUDE:

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- Address & Phone Number
- Email Address
- Age(s) and Current Reading Level(s)
- (3) Things That Interest Them
- Does your family have a library card? (We can get them one if needed.)