



Press Release
For Immediate Release
April 8, 2024

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***A Summer of Donkey Fun begins in Cripple Creek, Colorado,
with the Release of the Donkeys from the Winter Pasture into the City***

Cripple Creek, Colorado - The Two Mile High Club (TMHC), caretakers of the Cripple Creek Donkeys, welcomes you to the official Donkey Release on Memorial Day, May 27th, when the donkeys leave their winter pasture behind for the "greener pastures" of city lawns and gardens in Cripple Creek. Most residents welcome these lovable city mascots back to their free-roaming ways until they return to winter pasture in October. The release begins at 11:00 a.m. at C Street and Thurlow.

"President Teddy Roosevelt" will mark the occasion with a bully welcome to the donkeys and officially kick off summer in the Gold Camp. Everyone is encouraged to pack a lunch and enjoy a town picnic at the City Park, 128 East Bennett Avenue, immediately after the release. This old-fashioned picnic will feature Barbershop Harmony with the "Alitones" quartet. Members of the Woodland Park Wind Symphony Mountain Brass Band will also perform. Cripple Creek Mayor Annie Durham will fill the air with old-timey tunes on the keyboard. A limited number of premade old-fashioned box lunches will also be available for donation.

"The Release begins an exciting summer of Donkey-related activities in Cripple Creek," said Brandon Westhoff, TMHC President. "As a nonprofit all-volunteer organization, we rely on these celebratory fundraisers, grants, donations, and sponsorships to provide year-round care for these donkeys... and have done so since 1931. But, it's more than raising funds; it's about giving back to the community that supports us and the donkeys year-round."

The next Donkey event is the granddaddy of them all, the 93rd annual Donkey Derby Days, on June 28, 29, and 30. "We're excited to showcase "Wild Blue Country" from the United States Air Force as the headliner band on Friday and Saturday nights, and the live concert schedule is packed with other tremendous musicians the entire weekend!" Annie Valades, Donkey Derby Day chair, shared. "This year, Donkey Races will happen on Saturday and Sunday and run up Bennett Avenue, as they did 90-plus years ago! We have a tremendous Saturday morning parade planned, along with vendors, beer gardens, food trucks, and an expanded Kids Zone. Festivities begin on Friday night, June 28th."

Finally, "Fall Fest" on October 5-6 rounds out a fantastic summer of Two Mile High Club celebrations in Cripple Creek. Attendees will enjoy live music, delicious food and beverages, chainsaw carving, pie baking contests, pumpkin carving, the "Fall Photo Booth," and shopping at a variety of vendors all in the glory of the beautiful changing leaves.

None of this happens without donations, sponsors, and volunteers. To learn more about the Cripple Creek Donkeys, please visit our website <https://www.cripplecreekdonkeys.com>. And on Facebook @CCDonkeys and on Instagram: @ccdoneysofficial and on TikTok@ccdoneysofficial

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MORE INFO:

In the early 1900s, the original herd of working donkeys, released from their deplorable work underground in the mines, was set free to roam in the city. Local legend ties President Teddy Roosevelt to that release, believing that he was the reason the miners set the donkeys free from their burdensome work, where they often didn't see the light of day. How they came to roam free in the city is up for debate, but what is known is that a group of caring and responsible local businessmen came together to propose a solution to provide the care needed by these beasts of burden. They established the Two Mile High Club to give that needed care as the donkeys made their home in Cripple Creek. In the ensuing years, other donkeys adopted by the TMHC made up the herd, which numbers 15 donkeys today.

TMHC operates on 100% donations from Colorado businesses, club memberships, individual and family sponsorships, and grants. Donkey Derby Days is its largest fundraiser of the year and helps to provide money for vet care, food, and shelter at approximately \$2,000 per donkey annually. Club volunteers work tirelessly to care for this herd of donkeys 365 days a year, rain or shine, sleet or snow.

The next goal of the Club is to build a new barn for the herd. The current barn shows its age and needs replacing and upgrading. The new barn will feature a storage room for merchandise, stalls for individual donkey care, a large pen inside the barn for the whole herd to get out of the elements, an office to keep all health records, a clean/vet room to perform necessary care the donkeys need onsite and a lean-to off the new barn for a new group feeding area. The Club cares for several senior donkeys that require more care and attention, and a new barn is just what they need. For us to provide the care they need, please consider partnering with us to build a new barn to give these precious "BEASTS of burden" the life they deserve.

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And the City of Cripple Creek