

Lip syncing will fill Shuler with fun . . .

By Tim Keller
Correspondent
The Chronicle-News

RATON – When the annual Lip Sync Contest hits the Shuler Theater stage Friday and Saturday nights, it will be the 36th consecutive year that Raton's Eileen Gonzales has produced the benefit show. Twenty-five contestants — individuals and groups — signed up to participate in this year's popular show.

"It's a night of laughter and family entertainment," Gonzales says. She keeps admission prices low — \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for children 12 and under — so everyone can afford the show.

Proceeds provide insulin, blood-sugar monitors and other medical supplies to diabetics throughout the area, stretching from Raton to Clayton to Cimarron to Trinidad. Gonzales started the program when her mother had diabetes. She lost her mother to the disease, but the show has lived on.

"I go around and collect door prizes and donations

from sponsors. They're fantastic. They give and give," Gonzales says. Door prizes range from expensive quilts and Afghans to auto parts to restaurant dinners.

Coming from Raton, Clayton, and as far away as Albuquerque, contestants pull out all the stops, performing in costume, portraying such stars as Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, Miranda Lambert, Carmen Miranda, Huey Lewis and Kenny Rogers. The complete show runs for two full nights, Friday and Saturday, with judges scoring every performance. After Saturday night's show, judges tally the scores from both nights to determine the winners, who will be announced on stage after the show.

First prize is \$200, second prize \$150, third prize \$100, fourth prize \$75, fifth prize \$50, and honorable mention receives \$25. Last year, KRTN radio personality "Billy D" Donati won the contest with his performance of Michael Bublé's "Feeling Good." He'll defend his crown this weekend but says he will not



Photo by Franky Mahannah

Billy Donati channeled his inner Michael Bublé singing "Feeling Good" on the Shuler Theater stage at last year's Lip Sync Contest. Good enough to win the cherished first prize, he'll be back to compete against 24 challengers Friday and Saturday night.

reveal which song he'll be lip syncing.

Gonzales keeps the cover charge low for a reason. "I want everyone to see the Shuler Theater! She's like a

beautiful woman: She ages beautifully. A lot of people here on the east side think you have to be rich to go to the Shuler. You don't. Everyone can afford to

come to this show. Relatives and neighbors come to see relatives and neighbors. Once people come once, they keep coming back year after year."

Show time is 7:00 p.m. both Friday and Saturday nights at the Shuler Theater. For further information, call Eileen Gonzales at (575) 779-3483.

Get your motor runnin' – Raton revs in the mud this Saturday

By Tim Keller
Correspondent
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RATON – Raton Mud Bogs returns to the Raton Rodeo Grounds Saturday for a second year of sloshy high-speed racing to benefit the scholarship funds of the Raton Rodeo Association. Jim Young Arena opens to competitors at 8:00 a.m. Saturday morn-

ing, with timed competitions beginning at noon and running all afternoon. A drivers' meeting is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. Admission to the grandstands is \$10; children age six and under are admitted free.

The Raton races are affiliated with others in Taos, Wagon Mound, Clayton, Española, and other New Mexico cities, as well as Lamar, Colorado and other cities in the state. Drivers bring their vehicles from

all over to compete, and series information, rules, photos, videos, posters, schedules and results are available at batcaveracing.com.

Five divisions based on vehicle type include Stock, Super Stock, Modified, Outlaw and Super Modified. Each vehicle makes two timed runs through a wet, muddy course. Times are combined to produce a score, with the fastest drivers win-

ning cash awards.

Additional information is available from Doug Williams, (575) 707-0210, and Steve Ross, (575) 447-3709. From Trinidad, reach the races by taking I-25 south to the last Raton exit, 450. Turn west immediately on Highway 555, York Canyon Road. The Rodeo Grounds are about a mile west.



Photo courtesy of Jolynn Powers

Spectators should expect a muddy mess at Saturday afternoon's Raton Mud Bogs races. Held at Jim Young Arena on the Raton Rodeo Grounds on Highway 555, the event will include five classes of vehicles competing in double timed runs, with participants coming from hundreds of miles in all directions to compete.

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