

Slaten takes helm of Rodeo

He has been a big fan of the cowboy trade since his childhood

By **CINDY SANTOS**
The Salinas Californian

Jim Slaten, president of the California Rodeo Association's board, says he's been a rodeo fan since childhood and involved in the Rodeo for more than 30 years.

Slaten, appointed to the presidency at the association's October stockholder's meeting, volunteered for years on the Rodeo's maintenance and construction committees.

He also served as a board member before becoming vice president for six years.

Slaten, 53, will serve a two-year term as president, overseeing the 2006 and 2007 California Rodeos, before being "put out to pasture," he said.

"It's the biggest honor I've ever had," he said of being association president.

Leading the Rodeo's hundreds of volunteers feels like being the head of

a big family, Slaten said. That's not surprising, because his wife, Cindy Slaten, serves on the Rodeo's gala committee, and his nephew, several in-laws and many of his lifelong friends also volunteer for the Rodeo.

He spends 15 to 20 hours a week donating time to the Rodeo in the off season as well. He's also owner of Monterey Transfer & Storage in Salinas and has moving businesses in Fresno and Livermore.

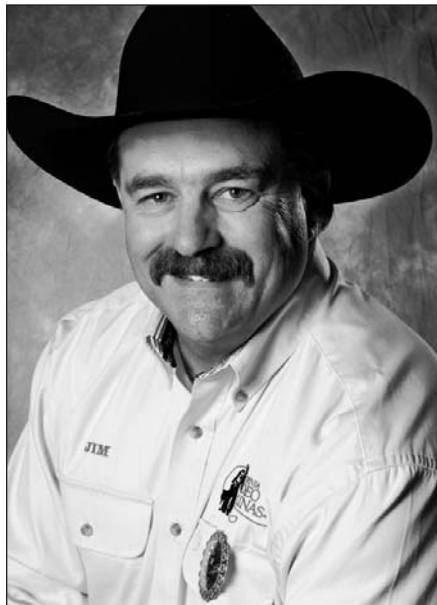
"He personally represents a new generation of Rodeo presidents," said California Rodeo spokeswoman Sally Hamana. Slaten is younger than most who've held the position.

"I think the Rodeo will flourish under his leadership," said board director Cyndie Fournier-Ferrell.

Board presidents don't get paid for their services, Hamana said. Because of the time demands of the position, most are self-employed.

"He does this in his spare time," she said. "You have to have that kind of flexibility."

Originally from Durango, Colo., Slaten moved to Salinas at age 7 and fell in love with the Rodeo. He became a team roper and competes at amateur levels.



THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN

Jim Slaten, president of the California Rodeo Association's board, will oversee the Rodeo in 2006 and 2007.

Slaten said he hopes to increase Rodeo attendance during his term, which will mean more money for the annual event. That, in turn, helps the

JIM SLATEN

- n **AGE:** 53
- n **EDUCATION:** Graduate of Salinas High School.
- n **OCCUPATION:** Owner of Monterey Transfer & Storage and president of the California Rodeo Association board.
- n **EXPERIENCE:** Member of the Rodeo's maintenance and construction committee for several years, chairman of the Rodeo's maintenance and construction committee for 10 years and Rodeo board vice president for six years.
- n **PERSONAL:** Lives in Chualar with his wife, Cindy. Together they have two grown daughters, Jennifer, 28, and Suzanne, 24.

community through business and hospitality revenue, charitable donations from the California Rodeo Association and the scholarships it gives to Monterey County students.

Hamana said the Rodeo generates at least \$11 million for the local economy through food sales and hotel accommodations.

"It's the best thing I've ever been involved with," Slaten said.