



Justin McKee isn't just an announcer, he isn't just a cowboy, he

isn't just a ranchman; Justin McKee is a man of many talents and titles. He affectionately is known as "the Renaissance Man" of rodeo, though he says, "I'm not even sure what that means." Many people recognize Justin McKee as a rodeo announcer; he's been a PRCA announcer since 1993 and has announced major rodeos such as Cheyenne Frontier Days, Pendleton Roundup, and Ellensburg Rodeo just to name a few. Justin was also "the voice of the Professional Bull Riders" for 10 years, commentating on TV and interviewing cowboys, a job that Justin parted ways with in 2011.

First and foremost though, Justin McKee is a family man. He, his wife Jeanna, and daughter Kassidy run McKee Ranches in Lenapah, Oklahoma. As a family they raise purebred bucking stock, beef cattle, handle semen sales, and Jeanne is nationally known for her quarter horses, barrel horses, and horse training. Justin feels that being a rancher helps him relate to rodeo audiences; he grew up traveling with his father traveling to some of the biggest ranches in the country buying and shipping cattle. Growing up submersed in ranch life taught Justin a work ethic, as well as teaching him to set selfishness aside for both animals and neighbors.

Today Justin has over 700 beef cattle of his own and his ranch has become a safe haven for young men and women in the area to come and learn the skills it takes to be a rancher and a cowboy;

"It's just so rewarding to me to help mentor these kids who haven't had the opportunity to learn," Justin boasts. Justin's fellow PBR announcer Brandon Bates is one of the many who has come through the ranch, meeting Justin when he was just 18. Justin helped Bates not only in the ranch world but the announcing world as well, helping Bates obtain his job announcing with the PBR. The McKee household and ranch has become a continuous bustle of kids willing to pitch in and learn skills, something the McKee family is more than happy to teach them.

Justin also teaches in other ways, he's one of the preachers at the Lenapah Cowboy Church; though he'd rather you call it "talking" instead of "preaching". When things began deteriorating with the PBR Justin began thinking about what he would do alternatively, he felt called to the idea of building a cowboy church in his hometown, coincidentally the same time the local preacher reached out to him about forming one. Today the cowboy church consists of 2 pastors, 12 families, and about 250 people collectively, though it's steadily growing. Justin also travels to other cowboy churches to meet with people but prefers to be home as much as possible, "I missed the first ten years of my daughter's life, I don't want to miss anymore."

Justin often has to turn down job and career opportunities because of his schedule and also because of where his priorities lie. Many people in the rodeo world know that Justin McKee is not

only an infamous announcer; he's also a cowboy. In 1999 Justin finished in the Top 35 in the PRCA standings for steer roping, in 2004 he won the 1st go-round at Cheyenne Frontier Days, was 2nd in the average at Pendleton, and missed the National Finals Rodeo by 3 spots. In 2005 he was once again in the short-go at both Cheyenne and Pendleton but his schedule kept him from competing enough to qualify for the NFR. Justin competed in the short-go at Cheyenne again from 2010-2013. Justin says, "I know if I went to enough rodeos I could go back to the NFR, realistically though, my family comes first. I certainly enjoy competing almost as much as I love announcing."

Today Justin juggles his ranch, cowboy church, competing in steer roping, and working with both Xtreme Bulls and RFD-TV. However Justin doesn't mind being busy, "I don't take anything for granted. My life is heaven on earth, it's bigger than every dream possible." Justin also makes sure his work life allows him to be home as much as possible, a positive change from years past. As far as the future of rodeo Justin hopes to continue to see continued unity among the cowboy nation, "We have got to stick together, the administrators, the cowboys, the ranchers." Justin appreciates his job at RFD-TV because he feels the network really helps bring people together, trying to undo the notion that cowboys and ranchers cannot see eye to eye. "The cowboy attitude is a great attitude to have in life; you're thankful, hardworking, you fight for

what's right, you do the right thing, you're patriotic, and that's no different than a rancher's or a farmer's attitude."

If anyone has the right attitude, it's Justin McKee. He is a firm believer that life is not about being a consumer, but being a contributor, "The key to life is to give it away, giving your time to help other people find a purpose in life. You have to get your mind to believe what you were created to achieve, and that's greatness. Everyone is capable of greatness no matter where they come from or what their background is."

Justin McKee is at peace with his current life, he's happy and content with where life has led him and the opportunities that have come to him as well. His title of "Renaissance Man" certainly rings clear as Justin is talented and knowledgeable in many areas of life, and he is a firm believer in sharing that knowledge with others in hopes that their dreams come true too.