

NEWS RELEASE



Waterford at Harwood Groves

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tall tales prevail at Waterford with cowboy poetry and root beer floats

FARGO, N.D. – The public is invited to Waterford at Harwood Groves Friday, July 24 at 3:30 p.m. for root beer floats followed by poetry and stories with cowboy poet Jay Barr Tescher. This is Tescher's first visit to Fargo.

There is no charge for the event, which will be held at 1200 Harwood Drive. People are encouraged to "dress for the west." (Bandanas and western hats will be available for city slickers in need.)

The youngest of 12 children, Tescher grew up in Beach, North Dakota. "My father, Alvin, had learned cowboy poetry over the years, and used to recite it to the family while feeding the horses, traveling on road trips and nearly any opportunity," says Tescher. The poem "Shag Bronte," about a gunfighter, is an example of a poem passed down from his father.

Tescher also recites lyrics from a few songs, such as "Strawberry Roan" by Marty Robbins, which opens thus:

*I was hangin' 'round town, just spendin' my time
Out of a job, not earnin' a dime
A feller steps up and he said, "I suppose
You're a bronc fighter from looks of your clothes."
"You figures me right, I'm a good one." I claim
"Do you happen to have any bad ones to tame?"
Said "He's got one, a bad one to buck
At throwin' good riders, he's had lots of luck."*

Tescher's dad and uncles followed the rodeo circuit, but his mother, Betty, gave her husband a choice: the rodeo or the family. He chose the family. Uncles Jim and Tom later were among the original class of inductees in the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame.

For 17 years, Tescher spent his summers in the Theodore Roosevelt National Park near Medora, where his family owned and operated Tescher's Trail Rides at Peaceful Valley Ranch. During college, he worked for the park service, and started doing weekly recitations of cowboy poetry. Then, for several years, he stopped. About five years ago, he began again.

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“I enjoy dressing up, putting on the chaps and performing,” he says. He performs a few times each year and especially enjoys older audiences.

“Older folks tend to relate to the stories I tell. I also tell some jokes.” He chuckles and says, “People often ask me what it was like growing up the youngest of 12 children. I reply that I never knew what it was like to sleep alone until I got married.”

According to Tescher, cowboy poetry originated on cattle drives. “When a cowboy came upon other cowboys sitting around a campfire, and he wanted to bed down by the fire or get a cup of coffee, he would have to entertain them with a story.”

When he’s not performing, Tescher, 43, lives in Warren, Minnesota, with his wife and their three children. He works as an accountant.

Waterford offers a wide range of retirement homes and lifestyle options and is home to more than 150 people. Visit WaterfordFargo.com for more information.

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