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## **Cowboy Poet Rudy Gonzales to perform at IWU**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Rudy Gonzales, a "real cowboy" turned entertainer will ride into Illinois Wesleyan University's Evelyn Chapel, 1301 N. Park St., Wednesday, March 7 at 7 p.m.

The cowboy poet will share old tales, poems and songs about cowboy life, some of which are published in a book of his poetry entitled, Trading Horses with Rudy and Rose.

Born into the cattle business in Ragged Mountain Colo., Gonzales was trained as a farrier (blacksmith) and horse trainer and remains a "real cowboy" today, as he still manages a small ranch outside Boise, Idaho, despite his many performances across the United States and Canada.

He has performed at several major venues, including the World Forum, and has entertained former President Gerald Ford and others as the world's representative of the American Cowboy at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. In addition to his publications and performances, Gonzales has produced several videos on cowboy entertainment.

Through entertainment, Gonzales educates his audiences about the reality behind the stereotyped cowboys of popular culture, specifically those in movies and on television. A gifted poet and songwriter, Gonzales sings of the cowboy's respect for the land and environmental issues, the roles of women in cowboy society and the real racial-economic makeup of the American cowboy.

Gonzales' performance is sponsored by IWU's Alpha Eta chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, an international English honorary society, and the Student Senate.

"Last year, Sigma Tau Delta brought the Tibetan Monks to campus," said senior English-literature major and Vice President of Sigma Tau Delta Lynne Seago. "Everyone on campus was intrigued and when we were planning events for this year, we were looking again for those repeat crowds. We wanted to sponsor a speaker that would appeal to a diverse audience."

"Planning to bring Rudy Gonzales to campus started last spring," said Dan Terkla, IWU professor of English and faculty sponsor of Sigma Tau Delta. "I'm intrigued by his presentation. He raises environmental, gender, sociological and broader cultural issues. He works hard to counter the stereotypes of the American cowboy."

According to Gonzales' website ([www.cowboyrudy.com](http://www.cowboyrudy.com)), there are over 200,000 cowboy poets in the world today.

"I'm truly blessed to be one of only a few to make a full-time living entertaining with my cowboy poetry and cowboy music shows," Gonzales said.

In addition to his March 7 performance, Gonzales will perform "Cowboy Kiddies" for children in the basement of Evelyn Chapel on March 6, at 4:30 p.m. At 7:30 p.m. that evening, he will

participate in a music colloquium in Presser Hall, sponsored by the Phi Mu Alpha music fraternity. While in town, he also will entertain at Sheridan Elementary School.

"I think it is enough of an unusual event that we will draw people," Terkla said. "curiosity will be a factor."