

Meadowlands to host benefit for Ontario fire victims

from the Meadowlands Media Relations Department

East Rutherford, NJ --- The Meadowlands Racetrack and its horsemen are joining together this weekend (Friday and Saturday) to raise funds for the victims of a devastating fire at Classy Lane Training Center in Ontario on Monday that killed more than 40 Standardbred racehorses.

"This is every horseperson's absolute worst nightmare," said Jason M. Settlemoir, General Manager and CEO of Meadowlands Racing & Entertainment. "Many thanks to Jennifer Bongiorno here at the Meadowlands for taking the lead on this fundraiser that we hope will raise a significant amount of money for the six trainers who lost horses in this awful tragedy."

Meadowlands chairman Jeff Gural will kick off the fundraiser by pledging a \$10,000 donation. In addition, harness racing's leading trainer, Ron Burke, has pledged 2.5 percent of his trainer earnings plus five percent of the money earned by the Burke Racing Stable at the Meadowlands this Friday and Saturday. The partnership of Mark Weaver and Michael Brusceci has also pledged five percent of the earnings their horses make this weekend as well.

The Meadowlands is encouraging drivers, trainers, and owners competing this weekend to make a pledge as well. Pledge forms will be available in the Meadowlands race paddock on Friday and Saturday night. An online pledge form will be posted on the Meadowlands website for horsemen that would like to help, but will not be attending the races this weekend. After racing is complete, the Meadowlands will collect the funds from the horsemen and donate them to the fire victims.

"One thing that is so special about this sport is that the hardworking men and women in harness racing always come together during challenging times and this tragedy is no different," said Settlemoir.

In addition to horsemen donations, the Meadowlands will also set up donation baskets at the Players Club for fans that wish to help.

Live racing at the Meadowlands takes place this weekend on Friday and Saturday nights. Each night features a 14-race program beginning at the new earlier time of 6:35 p.m.

For more information, visit www.playmeadowlands.com.