



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jay Lugar**  
**Marketing Director, SFVA**  
**(804) 539-3226**  
**jlugar@statefairva.org**

## **SFVA BREAKS GROUND AT THE MEADOW EVENT PARK**

**NAMING RIGHTS PARTNERS ALSO ANNOUNCED**

**CAROLINE COUNTY, Va. (April 22, 2008)** – With the assistance of an old-fashioned plow and two mules, SFVA broke ground today at The Meadow Event Park in Caroline County. Virginia's First Lady Anne Holton, joined SFVA President Curry Roberts and Board Chairman Bill Mistr; U.S. Congressman Robert J. Wittman; former Virginia governor Mark Warner; and Vice Chairman of the Caroline County Board of Supervisors Jeff Sili, to unveil plans for a year-round venue for a variety of events, including the State Fair of Virginia and the Richmond Highland Games & Celtic Festival.

Four major partners, also announced today, have secured naming rights to the first four buildings of The Meadow Event Park's Phase I plans, which include the 75,000 square-foot **Farm Bureau Center** (exposition hall), the 10,000 square-foot **Americraft Pavilion** (multi-purpose facility), the **Southern States Legends Stable** (horse stall barn with 143 stalls), and the renovated 13,000 square-foot **Union Bank & Trust Hall** (Meadow Hall). (See enclosed schematics.) Phase I plans also include an equine facility with four show rings that will accommodate local and regional horse shows, activities and memorabilia.

According to SFVA, the not-for-profit organization that presents the State Fair of Virginia, Strawberry Hill Races and the Richmond Highland Games & Celtic Festival, the location off of I-95, next to Kings Dominion and virtually equidistant between Richmond and Fredericksburg, will be a major draw for the approximately 2.3 million people living within a 60 mile radius of The Meadow Event Park.

Plans call for the approximately 360-acre site to be maintained at a level befitting its rural and equestrian character and historical significance. It is, after all, most famous for having been the birthplace of 1973 Triple Crown winner Secretariat, as well as the home of Riva Ridge, the 1972 winner of the Kentucky Derby and Belmont Stakes.

"We believe," said Curry Roberts, SFVA president, "that The Meadow Event Park will become a gathering place for people from across our Commonwealth to produce and participate in events throughout the year. And at the annual State Fair, rural traditions will be preserved and presented to new audiences, while hard work and achievement in the annual State Fair competitions will be rewarded through scholarships."

"The intrinsic value of having Caroline County as the home of the State Fair of Virginia is immeasurable, and this is truly an exciting moment for the County and the Commonwealth," said Jeff Sili, vice chair of the Caroline County Board of Supervisors.

"The Meadow provides a perfect setting for education, recreation and entertainment that will no doubt draw people to the area and generate additional tax revenue."

For more information about SFVA or The Meadow Event Park, please contact Jay Lugar, Marketing Director, at (804) 539-3226 or at [jlugar@statefairva.org](mailto:jlugar@statefairva.org).

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### **History of The Meadow**

The Meadow is best known as the Thoroughbred Breeding Farm started by Richmond native Christopher Chenery. Created in 1810 when Charles Dabney Morris purchased 3,837 acres, formerly part of the North Wales plantation, the property remained in the family until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1936, Christopher Chenery, a descendent of the original owners, purchased the Meadow to begin a thoroughbred breeding operation. Chenery's operation reached its pinnacle of success when Riva Ridge won the Kentucky Derby and the Belmont Stakes in 1972, and Secretariat won the Triple Crown in 1973.

Mr. Chenery died in 1973, and the property was sold in 1978. SFVA took possession in January 2004.

### **About SFVA**

SFVA is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization not affiliated with state government. In a world where Virginia's open land and traditions that shaped our culture are rapidly vanishing, SFVA's goal is to keep cherished ideals and experiences alive in the Commonwealth. Visit us at [www.statefairva.org](http://www.statefairva.org).