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JOHN ALKIRE NAMED CHAIRMAN OF CALIFORNIA AUTHORITY OF RACING FAIRS (CARF) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John C. Alkire has been elected Chairman of the Board of Directors for the California Authority of Racing Fairs (CARF). Mr. Alkire, C.E.O. of the Big Fresno Fair, will succeed outgoing Chairman Joe Barkett who had previously presided as C.E.O. of the Solano County Fair in Vallejo. Mr. Alkire will assume the chairmanship effective December 1, 2008.

CARF was created in 1985 for the purpose of conducting horse racing and satellite wagering at California Fairs. CARF will be instrumental in executing the future expansion of Fair racing in Northern California brought about by the 2008 closure of Bay Meadows Race Course.

“John is an excellent choice to carry out our strategy and lead Fairs in reaching a new level in racing,” said Christopher Korby, Executive Director for the California Authority of Racing Fairs. “He is well-respected across the industry and has the depth of experience and vision to help the organization unite racing in Northern California.”

John Alkire grew up in Bakersfield, CA, where he and his family raised quarter horses and was involved in the purebred and the commercial livestock industry. He graduated from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo with a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science. While attending Cal Poly, John was a member of the livestock judging team and was the national intercollegiate livestock judging champion at the National Western in Denver, CO. He was also the high individual livestock judging horse individual at the Fort Worth Stock Show in Texas.

Prior to working at The Big Fresno Fair, John worked at The California Mid-State Fair. His journey to The Big Fresno Fair began as a child as he grew up in a “fair family”. His father served as a fair CEO and consultant for more than 22 years. John has since continued that tradition with a lifelong interest in agriculture and livestock and a 25-year career in the industry.

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John Alkire Appointed to Chairman of CARF cont...

John's dedication to the horse racing industry is apparent in both his professional life and personal life. Mr. Alkire, along with his dedicated Board of Directors and staff, have worked hard to improve the appearance of racing at The Big Fresno Fair. Due to generous support from the community and California Authority of Racing Fairs (CARF), over the last several years the following improvements were made the Fair's horse racing facilities: tote board remodel, reconstruction of the Fair's paddock, construction of the luxury deck and VIP Suite, the addition of more than 4,000 trees around the track and along the perimeter of the Fairgrounds, grass added to the Infield and 39 wash racks added to the "backstretch" area. These improvements appeared to have all paid off at the 2008 Big Fresno Fair, which yielded an unprecedented 44% increase in out-of-state satellite wagering.

"Racing is the true backbone of the Fair industry," said John C. Alkire. "In my new role, I will look to collaborate with all those involved to continue to improve the racing product for California racing and expose a new generation of individuals to this prestigious sport."

About The Big Fresno Fair:

The Big Fresno Fair, founded in 1884, is the fifth largest fair in the State of California and represents the 21st District Agricultural Association. Nearly 550,000 people from throughout the state visit The Big Fresno Fair each year making it the largest event in the Central Valley. Members of the Board of Directors include: Larry Serpa, President; Tim Bakman, Vice President; Joseph De Los Santos, Secretary Treasurer; Ardie Der Manouel, Elizabeth Hudson, Debbie Jacobsen, Vernon Jones, Wangyee Vang and William White. John C. Alkire heads daily operations in his role as Chief Executive Officer. Additional information about The Big Fresno Fair can be found at www.FresnoFair.com.

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