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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Turf Valley Teams Up With National Guard, Bob Lucido to Honor Veterans
Preakness® Celebration Hot Air Balloon Festival Celebrates Armed Forces Day

Ellicott City, MD (May 5, 2014) – Turf Valley is joining forces with the Maryland Army National Guard and The Bob Lucido Team of Keller Williams Select Realtors to honor veterans and wounded warriors during its three-day Preakness® Celebration Hot Air Balloon Festival. The annual festival will be held at Turf Valley in Ellicott City, MD from Thursday, May 15 - Saturday, May 17, 2014, concluding on Armed Forces Day.

Hot Air Balloon Festival activities on Thursday and Friday will include tethered balloon rides, children's crafts, food and retail vendors, and live entertainment, as well as other family-friendly activities. The Maryland Army National Guard is bringing added excitement to the festival with their rock climbing wall, several armored vehicles, and helicopter to be on display.

The Preakness® Celebration festival will also feature over 20 hot air balloons, including special-shaped Armed Forces balloon "Eddie & Rickenbacker," flown by Pilot Andy Cayton and sponsored by The Bob Lucido Team. Saturday morning's Balloon Launch and Armed Forces Day presentation will conclude the three-day event as several wounded warriors take flight in Eddie & Rickenbacker, following a color guard presentation and small band performance.

"I flew in the Army for 22 years in Special Operations, and I've been flying balloons professionally for 15 years since I retired," said Eddie & Rickenbacker Pilot and Retired Army Aviator Andy Cayton. "I wanted to combine the two, so I designed the Eddie & Rickenbacker hot air balloon. It's designed to be a fun balloon for the kids, and being named after Eddie Rickenbacker, America's first ace in World War I, it also promotes the history of Army aviation. It's all about family values, and it's a great family sport."

In addition to his accomplishments and service in the United States Army, Cayton holds three world records in hot air ballooning and has been on the United States World Cup team for seven years. He also made the world's longest solo hot air balloon flight in history.

"The Bob Lucido Team is committed to several Wounded Warriors Projects," said Bob Lucido of The Bob Lucido Team of Keller Williams Select Realtors. "We are very proud to give back to this noble cause and recognize those who have served us so fearlessly and unselfishly, making a better life and country for us all. This cause touches at the heartstrings of all Americans because of the sacrifices members of the military have made, and sponsoring this year's "Eddie & Rickenbacker" hot air balloon is just one way for us to show our appreciation and gratitude."

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Aside from its name, the Eddie & Rickenbacker hot air balloon is full of history, as symbol of Rickenbacker's squadron is on the tail of the airplane. Years and dates marking important periods of history also cover the Army-dedicated hot air balloon. The balloon has "Eddie" the dog piloting and "Rickenbacker" the cat in the rear gun turret.

All festival parking will be available at The Howard County Fair Grounds with shuttles providing transportation to and from Turf Valley. The cost of parking, to be paid in cash, is \$10 per car and will be collected by the Elkridge Adult Athletic Association. Sunrise Balloon Launch parking only, including Saturday's Armed Forces Day launch, will be available at Turf Valley.

For event and schedule details, visit www.ballooningusa.com/preakness or call 410.465.1500 ext. 2874. Updates will also be posted on Twitter @TurfValley and Facebook.com/TurfValley.

About Turf Valley

Located in the Baltimore/Washington Corridor, Turf Valley features 40,000 square feet of event space, Wi-Fi High Speed Internet in guest rooms, meeting rooms and public areas, Spa and 36 holes of Championship Golf.

About Preakness® Celebration

Preakness Celebration, Inc. is a 501 © (3) organization established in 1988 to produce a series of events in and around Baltimore to celebrate horse racing's famed Triple Crown thoroughbred race, the Preakness Stakes.

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Story Ideas

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