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Royal Canadian Mounted Police Musical Ride Returns as Featured Attraction of the 86th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

TORONTO, ON – The precision and pageantry of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Musical Ride returns to The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair this November with four performances over opening weekend, November 7th through 9th.

The first officially recorded Musical Ride was performed in 1887 and put on public display for the first time in 1901. The Musical Ride was first performed at The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in 1948 and has appeared every two to three years since then.

"The prestige of performing at The Royal is overwhelming for all the members of the Musical Ride. It is undoubtedly the premium indoor competition in Canada. We thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to perform before an audience of national and international horse enthusiasts. The riders are extremely proud to be able to, once again, represent the RCMP and Canada at this event." remarked Bruce Whillans, Insp., Officer In Charge of the Musical Ride.

Members of the Musical Ride are police officers from across Canada who, after at least two years of active service, volunteer for duty with the Ride. Most are non-riders prior to joining the Ride. RCMP members only remain with the Musical Ride for three years, ensuring an annual rotation of approximately one third of the riders.

In keeping with tradition, thirty-two riders and horses, plus the member in charge perform today's Musical Ride. The Musical Ride consists of the execution of a variety of intricate figures and cavalry drill movements choreographed to music. Demanding control, timing and coordination, the movements are formed by individual horses and riders, in two's, four's and eight's at the trot and at the canter. Months of training, practice and many miles around the riding school make horse and rider one. The horses not only appear in the Musical Ride, but on Parliament Hill, in parades and special events. They must also have the ability to travel and adapt to different environments,

not to mention hours of petting and photo-taking by their fans.

One of the more familiar Musical Ride formations is the "Dome," once featured on the back of the Canadian fifty-dollar bill. The highlight of the Musical Ride is the "Charge" when lances are lowered and the riders and their mounts launch into the gallop. The conclusion of the performance is the March Past performed to the strains of the RCMP's Regimental March where the Musical Ride traditionally salutes the guest of honour.

The RCMP Musical Ride will appear four times over opening weekend at this year's Royal Horse Show: Friday, November 7th (evening), Saturday, November 8th (afternoon and evening), and Sunday, November 9th (afternoon) as part of the Ontario Toyota Dealers Royal Rodeo. Horse Show tickets are required for each performance and may be purchased through www.ticketmaster.ca.

In total, over \$795,000 will be awarded during the ten-day Royal Horse Show, making it one of the richest and most prestigious events of its kind in the world. For further information and complete schedule please visit www.royalfair.org.

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ATTACHED PHOTOGRAPHS

"The pomp and pageantry of the RCMP Musical Ride returns to The Royal Winter Fair this November 7th, 8th and 9th."

Photo Credit - Michelle C. Dunn

Photographs may be used free of charge in relation to the above press release.

Photograph also available in high resolution, please e-mail: mdunn@royalfair.org or download directly from <http://www.royalfair.org/media.php>