 **Former HHI Man of the Year Whelan Honored** 

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 20, 2013

Chicago, Illinois…Jim Whelan, a former Harness Horsemen International Man of the Year, has received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubliee Medal, given to a select group of Canadians.

The medal was created to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II’s accession to the Throne as Queen of Canada and serves to honor significant achievements by outstanding Canadian citizens.

Whelan, also an Ontario Harness Horsemen’s Association director, is one such Canadian.

"Jim has served as a director for the Ontario Harness Horsemen's Association (OHHA), an association of approximately 5,000 members, for 26 years and also served as the association's President for nine years,” said Lisa Raitt, presenter. “Jim grew up in a horse racing family and has been involved in the industry in various capacities his entire life.

"Racing has been his full-time occupation for about 40 years and he earns his livelihood by breeding, owning, training and driving horses,” Raitt continued. “He is a fixture in the rural part of our community and a strong advocate for horse racing, and the betterment of the horse industry."

Whelan has also been active within HHI, through his involvement with the OHHA.

HHI will be represented at the 2013 Harness Racing Congress, set for February 28-March 4 at the Fort Lauderdale Westin Beach Resort & Spa, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Other participating organizations include the U.S. Harness Writers Association, the U.S. Trotting Association and Harness Tracks of America.

Six panels—three each on March 2 and 3—will explore a wide range of topics featuring some of the sport's most influential leaders, as well as experts from outside the world of harness racing who will bring fresh perspectives to the discussions.

Registration for the Congress and the Dan Patch Awards Dinner, to be held on Sunday (March 3), at which the Horse of the Year awards will be presented, can be made by contacting Judy Davis-Wilson at 302.359.3630 or zoe8874@aol.com , or by contacting Scott Warren at 302.222.1222 or voiceofrcr@aol.com .

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