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Editor's note: Photo available upon request

Charles Fenwick, Jr. Receives Robert N. Clay Conservation Award

Lexington, KY – September 12, 2022– Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR) is pleased to announce that Charles Fenwick, Jr. was recognized as the recipient of the 2022 Robert N. Clay Conservation Award during the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA) National Awards Dinner on September 10th in Lexington, Kentucky.

The Robert N. Clay Conservation Award was established in 2014 as a partnership between TOBA and ELCR to help increase awareness of the importance of land conservation in the Thoroughbred industry and to serve as an inspiration to members of the industry. The award is presented annually at the TOBA National Awards dinner.

Charles Fenwick Jr. was honored with the Robert N. Clay Conservation Award for his leadership in organizing the efforts to protect a portion of Shawan Farms in Baltimore County, Maryland from the threat of residential development and rebranding it as Shawan Downs, which has grown into a first-class equestrian center and steeplechase course.

Prior to World War I, Shawan Farm a 2,500-acre estate near Hunt Valley in Maryland was filled with horses and cattle. Local equine enthusiasts enjoyed frequent cross-country races and the annual Worthington Valley Horse Show, which benefited the Women's Hospital in Baltimore. Over time the expansive estate was divided among several descendants of the original owners living on nearby farms, all a part of the original acreage.

Between 1982 and 1992, Baltimore County lost 16,000 acres of farmland to development despite some of the nation's strictest zoning. Concerned about the loss of local farmland, in 1997, area residents foresaw the possibility that the core of Shawan Farms could be saved from development and conserved as open space for farming and as an equine facility to support local equine traditions.

Horseman Charles Fenwick, Jr. was one of the local leaders that made this dream a reality shoring up support from 19 neighbors to acquire the property under the aegis of the Land Preservation Trust (LPT), a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. An additional 175 neighbors donated at least \$10,000 each to share in creating an equestrian venue, notably the current steeplechase course and its amenities.

Re-branded as **Shawan Downs**, the property is in preservation to maintain its agricultural legacy, allowing no new residential development with the facility developing into a first-class equestrian center over the years. Today, over 250 acres are preserved as open space while hosting equine events including The Legacy Chase, The Green Spring Valley and Shawan Point to Points, Steeplechase Schoolings, The MCTA Three Day Horse Trials, The Junior Hunt Cup, and for many years, The Pony Club tetrathlon – with the addition of farming over 150 acres for hay. In keeping with the center’s preservation mission, no significant infrastructure is required to accommodate the equestrian facilities.

“Shawan Downs is an important example of conservation of horse lands in our local communities,” said ELCR President Ken Haddad. “Not only did these efforts prevent additional sprawl in this community but agriculture land was kept open and accessible to support our equine industry, heritage, and tradition. We are thrilled to honor Charles Fenwick, Jr. with the 2022 Robert N. Clay Conservation Award for his leadership in this effort.”

About Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR): *ELCR builds awareness of the loss of lands available for horse-related activities and facilitates the protection and conservation of those lands working to ensure America’s equine heritage lives on and the emotional, physical, and economic benefits of the horse-human relationship remains accessible. ELCR serves as an information resource and clearinghouse on conserving horse properties, land use planning, land stewardship/best management practices, trails, liability, and equine economic impact. For more information about ELCR, visit www.elcr.org or call (859) 455-8383.*

About the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA): *TOBA, based in Lexington, Ky., was formed in 1961 and is a national trade organization of leading Thoroughbred breeders and owners. TOBA’s mission is to improve the economics, integrity, and pleasure of the sport on behalf of Thoroughbred owners and breeders. Projects managed by TOBA include the American Graded Stakes Committee, Claiming Crown, Ownership Seminars, Ownerview.com and the Sales Integrity Program. TOBA provides international representation for U.S. owners and breeders on the International Grading and Race Planning Advisory Committee, International Cataloguing Standards Committee, and International Breeders Federation. Thoroughbred Charities of America (TCA) is the charitable arm of TOBA. TOBA is the owner of The Blood-Horse Inc. and is represented as a founding member on the board of directors of the National Thoroughbred Racing Association and the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium.*