

## **PRESS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*

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## **McKeever's First Ride part of Verona Horse Fair**

November 9, 2011 – Verona, Italy – McKeever's First Ride™, the therapeutic horsemanship program of OPAF & The First Clinics was recently a featured part of the 113<sup>th</sup> annual Verona Horse Fair also known as "Fiera Cavalli". The event has been running continuously since 1898 and draws over 250,000 attendees to the four day festival that celebrates all things horse related. Deenie McKeever, the program founder of McKeever's First Ride, along with international horse trainer and clinician, Ed Dabney, were on hand to introduce Italy to our program and to the benefits of equine therapies to anyone with a physical challenge.

Both Deenie and Ed were interviewed by the national Italian TV, Allitalia TV and gave overviews of what McKeever's First Ride has accomplished in the United States. With their cowboy hats and Ed's towering height of well over six feet tall, they were easy for the fair attendees to spot. Luigi Fedeli and Pierandrea Rebella, both amputees from Italy, were demonstration riders along with a 90 minute seminar with video from the recent clinics in Atlanta was presented by Ed and Deenie and Italian equine experts. Multiple types of riding and costumes were present as well as carriage driving as part of the four day event, which ran from November 3-6. Franco Barbagallo served as their interpreter and event organizer in Italy.

The Atlanta McKeever's First Ride 2012 will be an even bigger and better event than last year. It will be held on Saturday, April 21, 2012 at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds in Atlanta, Georgia, hosted by Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. The full day event will include riding, grooming, groundwork, carriage riding, and live music from noted Nashville artist, Templeton Thompson, arts and crafts and so much more. For more information, visit the OPAF website at [www.opfund.org](http://www.opfund.org) or [www.mckeeversfirstride.com](http://www.mckeeversfirstride.com) or call Robin Burton, OPAF Executive Director at 319-235-4318 or [rlb@opfund.org](mailto:rlb@opfund.org). Hope to see you at a First Clinic, down the road!

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