2nd Lady Pace Honoree for Delaware, Ohio Grand Circuit is Laverne Hill

By Tom White February 25, 2002

Delaware, Ohio--Laverne Hill will be the second honoree of the Lady Pace to be raced opening day, Saturday, September 14th at the Delaware, Ohio County Fair. Mrs. Hill is vice-president of Scioto Downs and a member of the Little Brown Jug Society. She and her late husband Charlie Hill have played vital roles in the success of harness racing in Ohio for many years.

The \$18,750-estimated Lady Pace is an early closing event and is open to pacing mares four years and older. Standardbred owner Ed Mullinax of Amherst, Ohio is the Lady Pace Sponsor. Helen Thomson, the late wife of Tom Thomson, was the first honoree in 2001. The first Lady Pace was won by Bang The Door in 1:55.2.

Along with the Lady Pace, the \$104,000 three-year-old filly trot is also on Saturday's opening race program. First post Saturday will be 12-noon. The Delaware Grand Circuit continues through Thursday, September 19th.

Born in Hayes, Kansas, Laverne's first involvement with horses came with the family's draft horses. Her father would let the kids hitch a ride aboard the work horses as they pulled the combine. The family moved to Chicago hen

Laverne was just six and it was there that her first career was born. She started dancing school and while in high school, she and twin sister Lorraine became involved in show business.

After graduating from high school, the sisters took their act on the road where they shared the stage with such performers as comedians Ted Lewis and the Ritz Brothers, Bob Crosby and the Les Brown Orchestra. It was during a 1949 performance in Columbus that a gentleman introduced himself. Before long, Laverne started a new career as the wife of Charles D. Hill and became a vital part of harness racing in the Buckeye State.

Laverne stood side-by-side with her flamboyant husband as he built Scioto Downs into one of North America's finest harness tracks. She and Charlie also purchased Hill Farms, the longtime home of Charlie's beloved world champion pacer Falcon Almahurst.

Laverne remains the charming hostess and harness racing goodwill ambassador at Scioto Downs, "Ohio's Showplace of Racing."