



JAMES H. FISHER MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

James. H. Fisher Memorial Grand Prix raises over \$100,000 for Hunger

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 25, 2019:

Blowing Rock, NC

It was a perfect fall day on Saturday, September 21st, as approximately 500 spectators gathered at the Broyhill Equestrian Preserve to cheer on horses and participate in a lively Calcutta where riders were “auctioned off”. Proceeds supported MANNA FoodBank in Asheville and The Hunger and Health Coalition in Boone. One-hundred percent of auction funds and ticket sales were donated to the two charities. The winning “bidders” of the top 6 finishing horses received prizes valued at over \$20,000; including a week’s stay on the Caribbean Island of Bonaire.

Sponsored by the James H. Fisher Memorial Foundation, the event was produced by the family in memory of their son and brother, a young and popular horseman who grew up riding Grand Prix Show Jumpers. The Fisher Memorial Grand Prix was begun two years ago in Marshall, NC, on one of many Fisher family Preserve Community developments. The Fisher Memorial Foundation serves as the giving arm for the company, and James’ father Jack is the guiding hand of both the company and the Foundation. This is the first year the competition has been held in Blowing Rock.

Jack Fisher said, “After raising over \$50,000 at last year’s event, we knew we had outgrown our venue. When Vick Russell suggested we consider moving the event to Blowing Rock, I knew immediately the event would be successful, but I am truly amazed by the outpouring of support we have received from the Blowing Rock Horse Show Foundation and the town of Blowing Rock as a whole. Seeing so many of James’ friends from the horse world come together to raise money in his honor is amazing and helps his memory live on. James was an avid horseman and a lover of the mountains, so having this event here is fitting.”

Charlie Sellers, Mayor of Blowing Rock was among the many dignitaries attending the event. He said, “My wife and I attended the Grand Prix on Saturday and were so impressed with how well organized and fun the event was. I am so pleased to see another event at the Broyhill Preserve. Many thanks to Jack, Libba, and the whole Fisher family for bringing this wonderful event to Blowing Rock. We hope you have found a permanent home here in the High Country.”

The Grand Prix itself offered \$50,000 in prize money, the largest purse ever offered at the Broyhill Equestrian Preserve. 24 horses representing 6 countries competed in the event. First place went to Venezuelan Luis Larrazabal and his horse Cassini Mira Flores. American Christina Kelley was second on Shining de Reve and German rider Christoph Schroeder was third. It was Larrazabal’s first time in Blowing Rock and he was grateful to be invited to participate. “It was my first time here and we are very happy we came. The Preserve is a beautiful place, it is a great venue. I loved the atmosphere and people; we are very happy.”

Larrazabl is a young but accomplished rider. He was nervous about drawing first in the early round because that is rarely a good placing, but he and Cassini left all the rails up and got no time-allowed faults. In the second round, he knew going in it would be fast round, but he planned and executed the blistering pace perfectly to take the top prize and the winner's share of the \$50,000 purse.

Along with MANNA in Asheville, the Proceeds of this event support the Hunger and Health Coalition. Elizabeth Young, Hunger and Health Director said: "The Hunger and Health Coalition team extends their profound gratitude to the Fisher family for bringing this extraordinary event to Blowing Rock. There was such an incredible pulse of excitement that extended through the whole day.

Our Food Assistance Programs and Free Pharmacy are helping thousands of local residents each month to create a more stable environment for themselves and their families. This funding will help to ensure that all residents of the High Country can access their most basic needs; nutritious foods and life-sustaining medications. In an area where 1 in 4 children are food insecure, this funding will make all the difference in so many lives".

Based in Asheville, MANNA FoodBank was the original beneficiary of the first two Fisher Grand Prix events. Mary Nesbitt, Chief Development Officer said: "MANNA FoodBank is extremely grateful for our extraordinary partnership with Jack Fisher, his family and the Fisher Foundation. Their generosity will provide enough food for 180,250 meals and serve many who do not know where their next meal is coming from or how to feed their families that day". We cannot thank the family, The Blowing Rock Horse Show Foundation and all of the participants enough for all their generous support."

Photos follow on on Pages 3 & 4

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2019 Fisher Grand Prix Winner Venezuelan Luis Larrazabal and Cassini Mira Flores on their way to winning the third James H. Fisher International Grand Prix



Luis Larrazabal of Venezuela riding Cassini Mira Flores realizes he has just won the 2019 Fisher Grand Prix



(L-R) Christina Fisher, Competition Manager Vick Russell, Libba Fisher, and Jack Fisher, Present awards to Luis Larrazabal of Venezuela and his partner Cassini winners of the 2019 Fisher Memorial International Grand Prix