



Ottawa Valley FARM SHOW

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WWII VETERAN AND PROMINENT HORSEMAN TO OPEN FARM SHOW

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Armed Forces veteran, veterinarian, former racetrack and airport manager, former municipal politician, horse trainer and member of the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame, Dr. Rolly Armitage, 90, recently found time to become an author.

Last fall, Armitage published “The Way it Was and Now”, a memoir of his wide range of experiences told through a series of vignettes. With his health intact, he thought it was time to add a book to his list of accomplishments. Armitage will sign copies of the book when he appears at the 88th Ottawa Valley Farm Show on opening day March 10. “I can’t think of a better representative of Canada’s Armed Forces and the area agricultural community,” said Barry Dean who asked Armitage to attend. Dean is a member of the board of directors of the Ottawa Valley Seed Growers Association which organizes the show.

This year, the show will take on a more patriotic flavour and honour Canada’s military. Armitage will march in a procession of farm show directors to be bagpiped to the podium at 12 noon on the first day. The Maple Leaf will be raised – loaned by exhibitor Ontario Flag and Pole – and “O Canada” will be sung. Seed Growers president John Roosendaal said directors felt it was time to salute the country’s front line troops.

Wounded in Normandy, a teenage Armitage fought across the battlefields of Europe from 1942 to 1946. Following the war, he attended Ontario Veterinary College, graduating in 1951. He went on to earn a reputation as a leader in the harness racing industry and as a successful breeder of Standardbreds.

Fittingly, the featured art at this year’s show is “Wild Horses”, an original by Joan Hopkins, 83, now residing in Russell. Hopkins began drawing as a young girl living at her grandfather’s farm in rural England during WWII. The painting will be auctioned Thursday March 12 during the annual Prestigious Pedigreed Seed Sale.

Other attractions this year are chainsaw carver Josh Dagg who’ll create on site a large corn cob to be offered at the seed sale, and a contest to accurately guess the weight of a fiberglass bull and the brass bell attached to its neck with a custom leather strap. And here’s a bonus... On Wednesday March 11 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Grey Cup will be on display in Kubota booth 615, a big draw with the Canadian Football League back in Ottawa.

This year, there are 360 exhibitors occupying every available square-foot of space at the EY Centre adjacent to Ottawa International Airport. Come check out the latest in machinery, equipment and services available to farmers and the rural community. “We’re the oldest farm show in the province, the largest east of Western Ontario and, and one of the most prominent trade shows of any type held in Ottawa,” said General Manager Tom Van Dusen, adding that the OVFS is a member of the prestigious Farm Show Council which strives for excellence among its members across North America.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Tom Van Dusen, GM, OVFS, 613-445-3407.

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