

# HOME IS WHERE THE HORSE IS

That Thoroughbreds are a tricky investment is well-known to all participants in the industry. There is a lot of money passing hands for a most-fragile commodity, meaning that the care and welfare of the animal should be of paramount importance to all involved. Choosing where to board your broodmare and, subsequently, where to raise your foal, are crucial decisions not to be made without careful study and examination of all alternatives. A proper facility should have the tools, experience, and horsemanship to ensure the safety and welfare of its Thoroughbred charges, as well as the proper physical layout and access to top veterinary care. You'll want staff members who are well-versed in timely communications with you, the client.

Fortunately, many such top-shelf boarding operations exist throughout the country to give that special care to your Thoroughbred. What follows are profiles of some of the leading facilities.

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### MILLENNIUM FARMS

Located on 530 acres along picturesque Paris Pike near Lexington, Millennium Farms is a full-service breeding, boarding, sales prep, and lay-up farm whose unwavering commitment to its customers, and the horses entrusted to its care, shows in everything it does.

"Every customer relationship is different, and we work hard to provide the same individualized approach to each customer that we do for their horses," said general manager J. Ted Neel. "We're happy to offer our perspective and experience to help breeders make educated decisions about which stallions are the best fit for a mare based on their specific

goals or if and when to sell their stock publicly or privately."

In addition to matings/sales advice, portfolio management, and regular communications with the farm's staff, owners are updated on their horses' well-being regularly. Customers can choose to receive updates on their horses as often and in whatever manner they wish from customer relations manager Erin Darlington.

At Millennium Farms, raising a sound, competitive equine athlete is not just its goal, but its passion.

The farm's pasture maintenance protocol ensures horses are receiving the optimum vitamin and mineral content

from the pastures. In addition, an individualized feed program includes customized concentrates from world-renowned Hallway Feeds, as well as the highest quality forage.

"We utilize the latest scientific research, combined with an individualized approach, to determine the nutritional needs of each horse, whether it be a gestating or nursing mare, weanling, sales yearling, racehorse on lay-up, or breeding stallion," said Anthony Koch, sales and marketing manager for Hallway Feeds.

Proper veterinary care is paramount when raising high-caliber equine athletes, and being centrally located in the epicenter of America's equine industry affords Millennium Farms access to the best equine health practitioners in the world. The farm utilizes the services of Dr. Arnaldo Monge of Hagyard Equine Medical Institute, who specializes in equine reproduction, acupuncture, and chiropractic techniques and helps the farm achieve some of the best in-foal rates in the area. The farm also routinely works with horses' attending veterinarians in post-operative and layup cases. Should an emergency arise, the farm is ideally located within miles of several of the world's premier veterinary hospitals.

"It all starts with the horse, and horse care. We are horse people through and through, and we take very seriously the



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

Mares and foals in a paddock at Millennium Farms

decision made by each of our customers to place their horses in our care,” said Neel. “To us, this is more than a business. Our customers’ success is our success, and we celebrate right along with them when their goals are achieved.”

In addition to offering boarding, sales prep, and layup services, Millennium Farms stands stallions Even the Score, Hakassan, Ice Box, I Want Revenge, and K One King.

### SILVER SPRINGS STUD

Owner Steve Johnson can sum up his 225-acre Silver Springs Stud to prospective clients pretty succinctly: “I wish I had discovered this place 30 years ago; it’s just magical. It’s the soils; it’s the lay of the land; it’s the water. We have everything the horse needs.”

He should know. An experienced horseman, Johnson has been in the business since 1971 and has served as president of the Kentucky Thoroughbred Farm Managers Club.

Silver Springs Stud lies just outside Paris, Ky., on high-quality loam soil long valued for raising Thoroughbreds. However, Johnson will also tell you it’s more than just rich, rolling hills of bluegrass that makes Silver Springs Stud special.

“We focus on two things,” Johnson said. “One is the physical conditioning and development of the horse, and the other is the mental conditioning and development of the horse.”

“The horse is an athlete; they need room to run to develop. We instill that to our staff, and of course, that in turn gets transferred over to the horses.

“We are minimalists,” Johnson continued. “These horses are outside 22-23 hours a day. The foals come into the barn for four to five hours a day to get them socialized then they go back out as well. We try let the horses be horses in a natural environment with the natural resources that we have.”

Over the years the fields of Silver Springs has turned out top



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

Grade 1 Dixiana Breeders’ Futurity winner Noble’s Promise is a product of Silver Springs Stud

runners—and sires—such as the breed-shaping Harlan’s Holiday and Elusive Quality, along with stars such as Elusive City, Elusive Miss, Star of Paris, and Noble’s Promise.

Johnson’s pride in his staff is another key selling point to the Silver Springs Stud operation.

“It’s an incredible group of young folks on the farm,” he said. “They are here for much more than just a paycheck on Friday. They’re here for the lifestyle; they’re here because they have the passion. It’s in their mind, spirit, and blood...and all of that gets transferred over to the horses.”

As with any well-run farm, key staff members are vital to the day-to-day operation, and to maintain the long-standing relationships with its clients. Johnson leans on farm manager Erik

## BOARDING IN CENTRAL KENTUCKY

*Unparalleled Horse Care  
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*“We’ve been in this business for decades and we’ve been lucky enough to work with some of the top farms in Central Kentucky. We consolidated our stock to Millennium Farms, including multiple Grade 1 winner VOODOO DANCER, and we couldn’t be happier. I love how well our horses are cared for and appreciate the quality of communication we receive from the staff.” – Barbara Montayne, Green Hills Farm*



# MILLENNIUM FARMS

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Johnson, a Darley Flying Start grad who was born and raised on Margaux Stud; broodmare manager Jeannie Agee; yearling manager Camilo Martinez; office manager Michele Holbrook, a graduate of Midway College who has worked with Johnson since 1997; and office assistant Jessica Sears, who has a BS in Animal Science from Washington State University.

The group at Silver Springs is not standing still. Three new barns have been put up and they are developing a 100-acre tract that has never been “horsed”...just everything the horse needs.

#### WALDORF FARM

At Dr. Jerry Bilinski’s Waldorf Farm, “hands-on” service is more than a catchphrase or marketing tool.

As a leading equine veterinarian with 48 years of experience, Bilinski is an equine reproductive specialist and co-owner of a veterinary clinic located across the road from the 400-acre farm near North Chatham, N.Y. He also resides on the premises.

In operation for more than 30 years, Waldorf is an ideal facility for breeders wanting to take advantage of New York’s lucrative state-bred program, which the Waldorf’s owner and management ardently support.

The farm has a full-service veterinary hospital and colostrum bank, employs a night watchperson, offers boarding and lay-up facilities for mares, foals, and other horses, and sells breeding stock and seasons and shares.

Bilinski’s expertise and attention to detail might be one reason the farm has a high production rate.

“This year we had 96 foals born, 100% live, which is not easy but we did it. I attended a majority of foalings. You have to be there quickly if something goes awry.”

Waldorf is also home to two stallions—Bustin Stones and Japan. Bustin Stones, an undefeated grade 1-winning son of City Zip who stood in 2017 for \$5,000, is consistently among the leading New York-based sires and was leading sire in North America in 2016 in the category of winners from runners, with a 71% win rate.

While his progeny excel in New York, Bustin Stones’ 2017 stakes winners include Bustin a Move, winner of the Oklahoma



COURTESY WALDORF FARM/BRANDON BENTON PHOTO

Grade 1 winner Bustin Stones, a son of the versatile City Zip, is an integral part of the New York breeding program at Waldorf Farm

Classics Lassie Stakes at Remington Park, and Bustin Out, a stakes winner at Monmouth Park in New Jersey.

Japan, a stakes-winning son of Medaglia d’Oro, entered stud in 2016 and stood for \$3,500 this year.

Bilinski is particularly proud that Waldorf is home to two mares with progeny that have excelled at the highest level this year.

Waldorf resident Rule One is the dam of Jockey Club Gold Cup Stakes (G1) winner Diversify while My Every Wish produced Champagne Stakes (G1) winner Firenze Fire, one of the favorites for the Sentient Jet Breeders’ Cup Juvenile (G1).

“It’s exciting for the farm to have mares of that quality,” Bilinski said. “They’re getting the Waldorf treatment.”

Also, two yearlings raised at Waldorf brought hefty prices at the Keeneland September yearling sale, with an Into Mischief colt out of Indian Rush going for \$750,000 and a Candy Ride colt produced from My Dixie Doodle selling for \$525,000.

“You have to be detail-oriented and treat the horses as individuals—we take no shortcuts,” Bilinski said of Waldorf’s philosophy. **BH**



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# WALDORF FARM

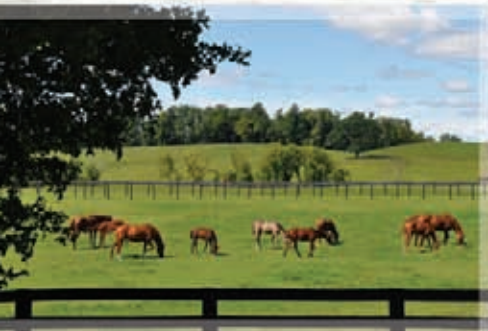
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