

Northeast/Mid-Atlantic

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NEW JERSEY NEW YORK PENNSYLVANIA RHODE ISLAND VERMONT VIRGINIA WEST VIRGINIA

Steadfast Support



COURTESY VAL MCNEELY

Val McNeely, shown with winning homebred 4-year-old gelding El Hermano and her Welsh springer spaniel Echo, has long been a mainstay of the Midlantic region breeding program

Longtime breeder Val McNeely stays the course at Equivine Farm

BY CHRISTINE OSER

EVEN IN A CONSTANTLY changing world due to a global pandemic, Val McNeely has been able to find solace at her Equivine Farm near Coatesville, Pa.

“On this farm we also now have grapes. My husband put a vineyard in and we have an orchard. We do have people haying some of our fields, so it’s a working farm,” McNeely said. “We love it out here. It’s a little bit of the

old school, but there’s no coronavirus out here, and it’s just a good way to get away from the real world in a way.”

Though McNeely, 68, has not attended the races or sales in recent months because of the COVID-19 pandemic, she’s still been steadfast in her support of the Midlantic region.

She chose to send her Pennsylvania-bred Declaration of War filly out of the stakes producer Newstouse (by Unbridled’s Song) to the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic fall yearling sale as

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2020 LEADING SIRES IN NEW YORK



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Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2020 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstret SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2020 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative		
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	BIG BROWN (05, Boundary), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions	\$5,000	126/54	2/4	1/2	(Somelikeithotbrown, \$275,860)	\$2,331,389	*816	26	1.04	1.45
2	CENTRAL BANKER (10, Speightstown), McMahon of Saratoga Tbreeds	\$7,500	98/37	2/2	2/2	(Bankit, \$211,850)	\$2,112,253	174	5	1.32	1.19
3	FREUD (98, Storm Cat), Sequel Stallions New York	\$6,500	99/32	5/5	3/5	(Dot Matrix, \$180,500)	\$1,750,518	*1337	54	1.48	1.22
4	MISSION IMPAZIBLE (07, Unbridled's Song), Sequel Stallions New York	\$5,000	92/41	2/2	2/2	(Dream Bigger, \$106,350)	\$1,489,167	236	7	1.10	1.17
5	BELLAMY ROAD (02, Concerto), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions	\$5,000	114/44	0/0	0/0	(Hell N Wild, \$99,055)	\$1,366,402	*706	32	1.14	1.23
6	BUSTIN STONES (04, City Zip), Waldorf Farm	\$5,000	56/26	2/2	1/2	(Jakarta, \$194,170)	\$1,339,532	233	10	1.34	1.29
7	LAOBAN (13, Uncle Mo), Sequel Stallions New York	\$5,000	29/6	2/3	1/2	(Simply Ravishing, \$404,600)	\$1,033,350	68	2	1.98	1.13
8	COURAGEOUS CAT (06, Storm Cat), Questroyal North	\$2,500	73/24	0/0	0/0	(Our Last Buck, \$114,060)	\$832,109	219	7	0.89	1.07
9	FROST GIANT (03, Giant's Causeway), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions	\$2,500	61/21	0/0	0/0	(Smithwick's Spice, \$62,375)	\$687,052	*440	15	1.13	1.13
10	GIANT SURPRISE (09, Giant's Causeway), Rockridge Stud	\$4,000	36/20	0/0	0/0	(Groovy Surprise, \$77,875)	\$634,352	113	2	1.33	1.23
11	MICROMANAGE (10, Medaglia d'Oro), Rockridge Stud	\$4,000	31/12	0/0	0/0	(Microsecond, \$117,660)	\$472,625	55	0	0.75	1.30
12	TEUFLESBERG (04, Johannesburg), McMahon of Saratoga Tbreeds	\$3,000	33/12	0/0	0/0	(The Great Johanna, \$95,219)	\$412,547	162	4	1.16	1.05
13	HONORABLE DILLON (10, Tapit), Rockridge Stud	\$4,000	49/10	0/0	0/0	(Disciplinarian, \$51,198)	\$391,927	104	0	0.55	1.07
14	BANK HEIST (07, Maria's Mon), Kaz Hill Farm	\$5,000	27/8	0/0	0/0	(Robber Bob, \$49,220)	\$307,702	91	1	0.78	1.29
15	WAR DANCER (10, War Front), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions	\$7,500	23/3	1/1	0/1	(Step Dancer, \$96,100)	\$301,041	67	1	0.76	1.26

opposed to the yearling sales in Kentucky. The filly was consigned by Paramount Sales—McNeely is good friends with Paramount’s Lesley Campion—and was one of the standout hips of the auction, selling to agent Liz Crow of BSW Bloodstock for \$135,000.

“I think we all need to support each other. We all try to kind of work together, and you have to help each other,” McNeely said. “My one consideration when I sell in Kentucky is I don’t have horses come back to Pennsylvania very often, if ever. The breeders awards are important for us here. It’s one thing to sell a horse for a little more money in Kentucky, but if you don’t get the breeders awards...you’re doing better almost by selling for maybe a lower price but having a local trainer so you’ll have it given

back to you in the bonuses.

“I had a horse run about two months ago, a 2-year-old, one of the first ones. She ran in an open maiden special weight. I think the purse was around \$42,000, somewhere around there, so my breeders’ fund—the horse) was (by a) Kentucky stallion—was about \$8,500,” McNeely explained. “I had a 6- or 7-year-old, one of my older horses I no longer own, run at Presque Isle for \$20,000 and she won, and I had a bonus purse of \$6,500 because she was from a Pennsylvania stallion. You can see where they’re really trying to help the local farms with the local stallions; making it worth their while to stay home.”

The circuit on which the yearling filly will run is yet to be determined, but her family has remained active this year.

Newstome, her 3-year-old half brother by Goldcents, picked up a third black-type stakes win over the summer—the Woodstock Stakes at Woodbine—and has earned \$228,646 for Midlantic trainer Michael Trombetta, whose wife, Marie, campaigns the horse. Last season he won the Mark McDermott Stakes at Presque Isle Downs and the James F. Lewis III Stakes at Laurel Park. He also placed in the Pennsylvania Nursery Stakes at Parx Racing.

Equivine also has bred and campaigned Pennsylvania champion Redaspen. The daughter of Bianconi won multiple stakes in the Midlantic region and scored her top victory in the 2007 La Prevoyante Handicap (G2T) at Calder Race Course. She was then honored as that year’s champion older female in Pennsylvania.

A love for horses has been present in multiple generations of women in McNeely’s family.

“It’s a female gene,” McNeely quipped.

Her mother, Rosamond Clark, who passed away two years ago, grew up riding horses in Europe and became invested again when McNeely and close friend Lee Vosters went into the Thoroughbred business together more than 40 years ago. McNeely and Vosters, of Randalia Farm near Chesapeake City, Md., ran horses at the old Keystone Racetrack (now Parx). McNeely has been operating at the current Equivine property for about 21 years after moving to the area.

McNeely said when she began working in the racing business, her mother, “at first thought it was terrible. Then we took her to the track, and she totally fell in love with



FASIG-TIPTON PHOTO/ECLIPSE SPORTS WIRE

McNeely’s Pennsylvania-bred Declaration of War—Newstouse filly brought \$135,000 at the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic yearling sale in October

Results You Can Take to the Bank



New Stakes Winner **COLLEGEVILLE GIRL** went 7 wide to win Belmont's Iroquois Stakes Oct. 24

Sire of 9 Black Type Horses | 6 in 2020!

Sire of 15 Winners of \$100,000+

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NEWLY MINTED (\$516,738)	PIER CHIC (\$272,160)	SIX PERCENT (\$150,578)
BANK ON SHEA (\$349,900)	DARK MONEY (\$220,037)	SHE'S SO SHEA D (\$126,906)
COLLEGEVILLE GIRL (\$270,526)	LEAKY CUP (\$185,720)	WAYNE'S FOOTSTEPS (\$116,329)
SASSY AGNES (\$198,782)	BEBE BANKER (\$163,002)	BANKER'S DAUGHTER (\$100,058)

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2020 LEADING SIRES IN PENNSYLVANIA



For daily updated sire lists visit BloodHorse.com

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2020 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	BT SWnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2020 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	JUMP START (99, A.P. Indy)	Died, 2019	150/64	1/1	1/1	(Galerio, \$196,080)	\$2,818,305	*1455	52	1.39	1.26
2	WARRIOR'S REWARD (06, Medaglia d'Oro), WynOaks Farm	\$5,000	153/76	5/6	4/5	(Night Ops, \$334,000)	\$2,778,088	*606	20	1.03	1.33
3	EL PADRINO (09, Pulpit)	Died, 2017	82/36	2/2	1/2	(Introduced, \$118,272)	\$1,767,427	187	4	1.29	1.25
4	FLASHBACK (10, Tapit), Diamond B Farm	\$3,500	113/50	0/0	0/0	(All West, \$90,914)	\$1,746,097	227	1	1.00	1.48
5	POSEIDON'S WARRIOR (08, Speightstown), Equistar Training and Breeding	\$5,000	93/40	1/3	0/1	(Firenze Fire, \$526,500)	\$1,721,148	*219	2	0.97	1.11
6	BOISTEROUS (07, Distorted Humor), Diamond B Farm	\$3,000	56/24	0/0	0/0	(California Kook, \$162,860)	\$1,002,207	115	1	0.87	1.07
7	DUBLIN (07, Afleet Alex)	N/A	43/21	0/0	0/0	(Shamrock, \$70,735)	\$792,226	177	3	1.08	1.12
8	SMARTY JONES (01, Elusive Quality), Equistar Training and Breeding	\$3,500	55/17	0/0	0/0	(Dreams Untold, \$146,400)	\$784,324	*814	27	1.35	1.68
9	WEIGELIA (01, Safely's Mark), WynOaks Farm	Private	43/20	0/0	0/0	(Johnny Ritt, \$68,540)	\$687,700	*154	7	1.39	1.06
10	TALENT SEARCH (03, Catienus), Diamond B Farm	\$2,500	41/17	0/0	0/0	(Final Shot, \$87,005)	\$665,530	*167	3	1.02	1.17
11	UPTOWNCHARLYBROWN (07, Limehouse), Diamond B Farm	\$7,500	28/9	2/3	2/2	(Wait for It, \$197,510)	\$638,138	61	4	1.79	0.88
12	ICE BOX (07, Pulpit), Cabin Creek Farm	\$3,500	69/30	0/0	0/0	(Its Cold in Dehere, \$71,869)	\$633,218	298	2	0.62	0.98
13	DESERT PARTY (06, Street Cry), Godstone Farm	\$2,500	44/17	0/0	0/0	(Desert Lights, \$39,466)	\$519,855	248	6	0.94	1.29
14	NORMANDY INVASION (10, Tapit), Pin Oak Lane Farm	\$2,500	35/10	0/0	0/0	(Bella Invasion, \$38,850)	\$347,179	70	0	0.46	1.17
15	ALBERT THE GREAT (97, Go for Gin)	Pnsd	21/8	0/0	0/0	(Geebert, \$53,045)	\$339,296	*413	9	1.09	1.09

it; within two days she had turned 180 degrees.

"After my father passed away almost 20 years ago, the horses were really what kept her going," McNeely added. "She would read *The Blood-Horse* every week faithfully, and she watched TVG every day. She passed away at almost 98. It kept her going the last 20 years. And she could bet. She would raise her hand once in a while by mistake when we went to an auction. I've ended up with a horse or two that I had no expectations to buy. It was really thrilling for her. As my husband says, 'it's a gene.'"

As McNeely's children grew up, she served as district commissioner of the Pony Club of Radnor Hunt Club and participated in foxhunting. Her two daughters, Andrea and Frances, both trained, and though her son David is not in the business, McNeely said his two daughters have begun taking riding lessons.

"His two girls are learning to ride, so it's coming along," she said.

Equivine Farm covers 145 acres in Chester County, Pa. McNeely said her husband, Peter, stays busy with the vineyard and the orchard while she manages the

15-20 horses the farm averages at a time.

"There's a little bit of something here on the farm for anybody and everybody," she said.

About 10 of the horses currently on the farm are weanlings. In addition to breeding and selling, Equivine is also able to train its own horses that are either 2-year-olds learning how to be racehorses, or racehorses that are currently away from the track. The farm has a quarter-mile Tapeta track that allows for basic training as well as a Eurociser. Though McNeely does not call it a commercial farm, she said once in a while if they know a client well, they will foal and prep horses other than their own. They also foaled all the Pennsylvania-breds for the late Phyllis Wyeth, whose Kentucky-bred Union Rags went on to win the 2012 Belmont Stakes (G1).

"This is the key I think to any successful businesses: wonderful guys who take care of these animals for me. They are very good at everything," McNeely added.

McNeely is also sure to support the Mid-lantic stud farms and sends mares to both local stallions and those in Kentucky. In the region she is part of a syndicate for Diamond B Farm's Uptowncharlybrown and Northview's Hoppertunity. She has also sent a couple of mares to Mosler



COURTESY VAL MCNEELY

Equivine Farm comprises 145 scenic acres of the Pennsylvania countryside

Special Note For Sire Lists:

For example, the average North American purse in 2019 is \$25,300 or 53% of the 2019 average purse in Japan. To put earnings on par, all Japanese progeny earnings are multiplied by 53% before being credited to a sire's progeny earnings. Hong Kong earnings are adjusted by 17%; Singapore by 85%. Current year stakes winners include all N.H.-foaled black-type stakes winners worldwide. *Foal counts include Southern Hemisphere. Cumulative stakes winners include all countries. The columns represent the following: Rnrs = number of runners or starters; Wnrs = number of winners; BTWnrs = number of black-type stakes winners; BTHrs = number of black-type stakes horses, which include runners that won or placed in a stakes; GSWnrs = graded/group stakes winners; and G1SWnrs = grade/group 1 winners; AWD = progeny average winning distance. All percentages are from runners. Cumulative stakes winners include all available countries.

*AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX and COMPARABLE INDEX: Lifetime AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX indicates how much purse money the progeny of one sire has earned in relation to the average earnings of all runners in the same years; average earnings of all runners in any year is represented by an index of 1.00; COMPARABLE INDEX indicates the average earnings of progeny produced from mares bred to one sire, when these same mares were bred to other sires. Only 32% of all sires have a lifetime AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX higher than their mares' COMPARABLE INDEX.

UPTOWNCHARLYBROWN

Pennsylvania & Mid-Atlantic's #1 stallion

#1

In the Nation

Moving mares up: AEI/CI Ratio 1.83/0.74

In the Mid-Atlantic

By Black Type Winners/runners: 10.8% lifetime

In the Mid-Atlantic

By Black Type Horses/runners: 18.9% lifetime

In Pennsylvania

By 2020 Average Earnings/runner: \$23,542

In Pennsylvania

By 2020 Black Type Winners/runners: 7.7%

In Pennsylvania

By 2020 Black Type Horses/runners: 11.5%

\$80,852 Lifetime Average Earnings/runner



WAIT FOR IT

Multiple Stakes winner of \$463,428



DIXIE SERENADE

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MIDTOWNCHARLYBROWN

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2020 LEADING SIRES IN MARYLAND



For daily updated sire lists visit BloodHorse.com

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2020 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstret SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2020 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative			
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index	
1	GREAT NOTION (00, Elusive Quality), Northview Stallion Station	\$7,500	89/37	6/7	6/6	(Kenny Had a Notion, \$130,125)	\$2,056,516	388	26	1.49	1.21	
2	GOLDEN LAD (10, Medaglia d'Oro), Northview Stallion Station	\$5,000	51/21	1/1	1/1	(Brilliant Chase, \$130,530)	\$1,270,768	112	2	1.41	1.29	
3	FRIESAN FIRE (06, A.P. Indy), Country Life Farm	\$4,000	72/26	2/2	2/2	(Fiya, \$121,846)	\$1,176,754	232	8	1.16	1.24	
4	BANDBOX (08, Tapit), Northview Stallion Station	\$2,500	40/22	1/1	1/1	(Artful Splatter, \$188,717)	\$1,149,576	85	2	1.35	1.27	
5	BOURBON COURAGE (09, Lion Heart), Anchor & Hope Farm	\$5,000	42/19	1/2	0/1	(Double Crown, \$150,625)	\$986,530	85	2	1.20	1.10	
6	SEVILLE (GER) (08, Galileo)	Died, 2017	78/22	0/0	0/0	(O K Game On, \$95,912)	\$955,109	*205	2	0.58	1.24	
7	SUPER NINETY NINE (10, Pulpit), Country Life Farm	\$3,000	51/23	0/0	0/0	(Breviary, \$94,194)	\$913,265	88	0	1.01	1.34	
8	ORIENTATE (98, Mt. Livermore)	Pnsd	52/24	0/0	0/0	(Cannon's Roar, \$105,353)	\$842,582	*863	32	1.22	1.54	
9	STREET MAGICIAN (04, Street Cry), Legacy Farm Stallions Standing at Roland Farm	\$2,000	41/15	1/1	0/1	(Street Lute, \$110,220)	\$798,482	143	5	1.10	1.28	
10	IMAGINING (08, Giant's Causeway), Anchor & Hope Farm	\$7,500	43/12	1/1	1/1	(Monday Morning Qb, \$120,155)	\$763,055	93	1	0.98	1.38	
11	REDEEMED (08, Include), Northview Stallion Station	Pnsd	36/11	0/0	0/0	(Our Man Luke, \$102,413)	\$441,219	103	0	0.95	1.07	
12	NICANOR (06, Dynaformer)	Pnsd	19/8	0/0	0/0	(Seany P, \$110,785)	\$344,256	44	0	0.75	1.03	
13	OUTFLANKER (94, Danzig), Shamrock Farm	\$2,500	18/6	0/0	0/0	(Nick Papagiorgio, \$124,577)	\$340,687	*572	21	1.32	1.11	
14	TRITAP (09, Tapit)	Died, 2016	17/8	0/0	0/0	(Tap the Mark, \$81,985)	\$332,399	41	1	1.21	1.35	
15	PETIONVILLE (92, Seeking the Gold), Murmur Farm	Pnsd	23/11	0/0	0/0	(Graves Island, \$67,179)	\$331,507	*762	42	1.25	1.28	

at Country Life Farm.

"We have our local stallions we kind of like to go to, and some of them are really quite nice," McNeely said. "I don't think Kentucky really has much interest in any of them, but some of them really throw runners, and that's what you want. You have to have sound runners."

In Kentucky, McNeely shares a season to WinStar Farm's Good Samaritan, and in a normal year without a pandemic, breeding to Kentucky stallions provides a good excuse to visit the state's stud farms.

"I've been very fortunate. I have some good friends from Kentucky, and Lesley at Paramount has been a really good friend, and I love to pick their brains because it's hard to get information up here," McNeely said. "Whether they work out or not...It's a crapshoot in the end, but it's fun to go down there. I really enjoy it. I used to love to go to the stallion barns, but with COVID I'm relying on other people's eyes. I do plan to send a few (mares) down this year; I'm going to keep that going. Maybe a few more since some of the stud fees have gone down."

McNeely's passion for horses extends outside of the business of getting horses to the racetrack. Her mother was heavily involved in Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association's Turning for Home, a non-profit that helps former racehorses transition into a safe retirement, and McNeely is thankful Equivine has

the facility and resources to welcome back some of its horses that had careers with other connections.

"We're in a business because we love these animals. If you're in the business



COURTESY VAL MCNEELY

As its name implies, Equivine Farm nurtures both equines and fruits of the vine

for that, you can't throw them away when they're finished," she said. "Most of the time I know where my horses go, most of them, and we don't push them early. Two-year-old sales are not something I normally do. I have one horse that was still doing point-to-points last year at 12."

Though McNeely doesn't ride as much as she used to, when she is in Florida, where she also has a residence, she'll hop on a Paint horse owned by her daughter Frances and they will go riding together.

"I have one horse I'm running right now,

a 5-year-old about to go back to the track. He had some time off. Half of me wants to ride him myself, and the other half says 'no, he's got to earn his living,'" she laughed. "Some of our horses here, we ride our own racehorses. I don't mind riding."

While the COVID-19 pandemic lowered purses at tracks across the country and sales saw a drop in numbers, McNeely was thankful the horse side of the farm was not Equivine's only financial means.

"Breeders didn't breed as many mares this year, so we may see a real drop in numbers next year," McNeely said, also noting the pandemic shut many businesses down as breeding sheds were in full swing in mid-March. "I do think that some of the small breeders, who really don't have the financial ability to go through these things, may not survive. COVID is definitely an issue to some degree still. Day in and day out on the farm, no, it has not changed. Hay prices have stayed the same; grain has stayed the same. Brook Ledge still runs as normal."

Though she hasn't made trips to the Bluegrass this year to visit stallions or been to the sales to see friends and the progeny of young stallions, she anticipates a day when the industry can return to normal and when breeding and the sales market will rebound.

"I didn't go to the sales. I did everything online—which you could still see it—but it's the back barns that I love. It's seeing people and just looking at new horses and new stallions and that sort of thing," she said. "It'll come back again. I really think it will."