

Northeast/Mid-Atlantic

CONNECTICUT DELAWARE MAINE MARYLAND MASSACHUSETTS NEW HAMPSHIRE
NEW JERSEY NEW YORK PENNSYLVANIA RHODE ISLAND VERMONT VIRGINIA WEST VIRGINIA

Louis and Grace Merryman
at their Anchor and Hope Farm
near Port Deposit, Md.



Moored in Maryland

WAGS MEDIA PHOTO COURTESY ANCHOR & HOPE FARM

Merrymans' Anchor and Hope Farm finding its way

BY LYNNE SNIERSON

GRACE AND LOUIS MERRYMAN were not neophytes, and they harbored no illusions about how hard the horse business is when, as new-lweds, they invested their hopes and dreams in Anchor and Hope Farm.

But even they couldn't anticipate just how much toughness it would take to make a go of it.

"I didn't come into this business starry-eyed, quite the opposite," said Louis Merryman, 43, who is a third-generation horseman and part of a family long synonymous with breeding, training, and racing Thoroughbreds in Maryland. "I've developed some pretty good mental defense mechanisms."

The couple married in 2017 and the year after launched a new stallion operation near the town of Port Deposit, Md., on property that has been in Louis Merryman's family and a Cecil County landmark since 1965. They set goals to

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To Riding Horse



2021 LEADING SIRES IN MARYLAND

For daily updated sire lists
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| Rank | Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands | 2021 Stud Fee | Rnrs/ Wnrs | BT SWnrs/ Wns | Rstret SW/ BT SW | (Chief Earner, Earnings) | 2021 Earnings | Foals | Cumulative | | |
|------|---|---------------|------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | | | | | | | | Stks Wnrs | A-E Index | Comp Index |
| 1 | GOLDEN LAD (10, Medaglia d'Oro), Northview Stallion Station | \$5,000 | 36/14 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Hello Beautiful, \$67,500) | \$478,667 | 152 | 3 | 1.53 | 1.32 |
| 2 | GREAT NOTION (00, Elusive Quality), Northview Stallion Station | \$7,500 | 35/10 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Kenny Had a Notion, \$70,000) | \$468,426 | 427 | 26 | 1.49 | 1.21 |
| 3 | BANDBOX (08, Tapit), Northview Stallion Station | \$2,500 | 36/12 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (The Wolfman, \$42,588) | \$453,030 | 95 | 2 | 1.39 | 1.29 |
| 4 | BOURBON COURAGE (09, Lion Heart), Anchor & Hope Farm | \$2,000 | 32/6 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Double Shot, \$61,600) | \$293,932 | 112 | 2 | 1.20 | 1.13 |
| 5 | IMAGINING (08, Giant's Causeway), Anchor & Hope Farm | \$2,000 | 29/8 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Proper Attire, \$62,244) | \$275,661 | 117 | 1 | 0.99 | 1.36 |
| 6 | SUPER NINETY NINE (10, Pulpit), Country Life Farm | \$2,000 | 28/8 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Market Maven, \$54,840) | \$272,372 | 91 | 0 | 1.02 | 1.34 |
| 7 | FRIESAN FIRE (06, A.P. Indy), Country Life Farm | \$3,000 | 38/13 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Gallinella, \$35,603) | \$262,646 | 244 | 8 | 1.16 | 1.24 |
| 8 | MOSLER (11, War Front), Country Life Farm | \$4,000 | 17/8 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Hello Hot Rod, \$55,000) | \$236,501 | 97 | 2 | 1.01 | 1.29 |
| 9 | STREET MAGICIAN (04, Street Cry), Legacy Farm Stallions Stgdg at Roland Farm | \$2,000 | 20/2 | 1/2 | 0/1 | (Street Lute, \$130,000) | \$195,466 | 156 | 6 | 1.12 | 1.28 |
| 10 | SEVILLE (GER) (08, Galileo) | Died, 2017 | 30/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Solea, \$27,436) | \$150,307 | *206 | 2 | 0.60 | 1.24 |
| 11 | ORIENTATE (98, Mt. Livermore) | Pnsd | 18/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Your Pal, \$42,000) | \$138,824 | *863 | 32 | 1.22 | 1.53 |
| 12 | NICANOR (06, Dynaformer) | Pnsd | 13/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Lngtermrelationship, \$29,800) | \$104,536 | 44 | 0 | 0.79 | 1.04 |
| 13 | BUFFUM (08, Bernardini) | Died, 2019 | 13/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Fancy Princess, \$26,133) | \$98,148 | 48 | 2 | 1.42 | 1.24 |
| 14 | UNCLE LINO (13, Uncle Mo), Northview Stallion Station | \$4,000 | 15/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Golden Key, \$38,025) | \$92,319 | 101 | 0 | 1.02 | 1.42 |
| 15 | PETIONVILLE (92, Seeking the Gold) | Pnsd | 14/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Known Quantity, \$24,696) | \$83,036 | *766 | 42 | 1.25 | 1.27 |

get the best stallions available, build their own quality broodmare band, construct new barns, upgrade existing facilities, and expand the 75 acres the family still had of the farm's original 528.

They got off to a terrific start with the acquisition of three stallions: Bourbon Courage, a grade 2 winner who had run fourth in the 2014 Xpressbet Breeders' Cup Sprint (G1); the grade 1-winning millionaire Imagining, who carries the Phipps family's regal bloodlines on his dam side and is by Giant's Causeway; and Holy Boss, whom Louis had run in his name while the grade 2 winner carried his grandfather John Brodix Merryman's colors. They later added Long River, who had been victorious in a group 1 race in Dubai without Lasix and is the last top-level-winning son of the late A.P. Indy retired to stud.

Then, everything nearly went up in flames.

On the afternoon of Aug. 12, 2019, a devastating fire broke out in the main barn that was a combination of three barns and within five minutes it was totally engulfed. The quick thinking and gallant action by barn manager Heather Cellinesi, somehow got all the terrified horses out of the stalls, and directed them to run away from the danger. She would later be honored with the 2019 Joe Kelly Maryland Million Unsung Hero Award.

Luckily, Holy Boss and Long River were standing in the Southern Hemisphere at the time. All other horses on the farm miraculously suffered only minor injuries and survived. Nevertheless, the Merymans were forced to hold a literal fire sale of the 10 yearlings they had planned to

offer at the fall yearling sales in Kentucky and Mid-Atlantic auctions with a projected gross profit of \$150,000-\$170,000.

Just three of the lot sold, tallying under \$30,000 in total. Even worse, the couple also had to stop prepping sales yearlings for others. Another gut punch arrived when the insurance settlement didn't begin to cover the extensive property damage.

"We had insurance, but we should have readdressed the policy and the building replacement value. We hadn't updated that. It wasn't enough to rebuild the same size barn that we lost, but we made it. We're still here," he said.

In February, Anchor and Hope added to the stallion roster Editorial, a War Front half brother to white-hot sire and 2010 Grey Goose Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1) winner and 2-year-old male champion Uncle Mo.

"It was a no-brainer to go with Louis," said Sean Feld of Climax Stallions. "Louis is a very good horseman. He's one of the best, and that's why this was such an easy call to make. They do a great job, and we're happy to be partnered up with them. They're happy to have Editorial on their farm."

The roster isn't all that keeps building at Anchor and Hope. The construction seems never ending.

"I have the new tack room 90% done," said Merryman in early March. "Our stallion barn was three-quarters of the way done, but the interior wasn't finished. The reason that the stallions were in the foaling barn, which was empty of mares at that time of year, was we were just gearing up



COURTESY ANCHOR & HOPE FARM

The main barn caught fire Aug. 12, 2019, and was totally engulfed within five minutes

2021 LEADING SIRES IN NEW YORK



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|------|---|---------------|------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | | | | | | | | Stks Wnrs | A-E Index | Comp Index |
| 1 | CENTRAL BANKER (10, Speightstown), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds | \$6,000 | 45/16 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Bank Sting, \$78,100) | \$671,710 | 199 | 6 | 1.36 | 1.19 |
| 2 | BIG BROWN (05, Boundary), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions | \$5,000 | 57/14 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Jemography, \$85,800) | \$470,397 | *838 | 26 | 1.04 | 1.44 |
| 3 | MISSION IMPAZIBLE (07, Unbridled's Song), Sequel Stallions New York | \$2,500 | 35/8 | 1/1 | 1/1 | (Espresso Shot, \$67,000) | \$316,184 | 267 | 7 | 1.10 | 1.18 |
| 4 | BELLAMY ROAD (02, Concerto), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions | \$5,000 | 49/11 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Topper T, \$39,000) | \$286,779 | *721 | 32 | 1.13 | 1.23 |
| 5 | BUSTIN STONES (04, City Zip), Waldorf Farm | \$2,500 | 24/7 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Bustin Timberlake, \$54,000) | \$270,749 | 244 | 10 | 1.33 | 1.29 |
| 6 | FREUD (98, Storm Cat), Sequel Stallions New York | \$5,000 | 39/6 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Sadie Lady, \$55,000) | \$244,249 | *1362 | 55 | 1.47 | 1.22 |
| 7 | GIANT SURPRISE (09, Giant's Causeway), Rockridge Stud | \$2,500 | 18/6 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Mebbs Web, \$27,720) | \$168,893 | 124 | 2 | 1.30 | 1.23 |
| 8 | COURAGEOUS CAT (06, Storm Cat), Questroyal North | \$2,500 | 20/8 | 1/1 | 1/1 | (Our Last Buck, \$55,000) | \$162,758 | 226 | 8 | 0.89 | 1.06 |
| 9 | EFFINEX (11, Mineshaft) | Died, 2017 | 14/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Full Moon Fever, \$60,900) | \$155,683 | 54 | 0 | 0.59 | 0.94 |
| 10 | HONORABLE DILLON (10, Tapit) | N/A | 12/2 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Awesome Debate, \$88,800) | \$142,637 | 112 | 0 | 0.55 | 1.07 |
| 11 | MICROMANAGE (10, Medaglia d'Oro), Rockridge Stud | \$2,500 | 16/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Microscope, \$47,000) | \$134,406 | 70 | 0 | 0.77 | 1.25 |
| 12 | BANK HEIST (07, Maria's Mon), Kaz Hill Farm | \$1,000 | 14/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Gratto Swing, \$25,090) | \$125,247 | 97 | 1 | 0.80 | 1.25 |
| 13 | TEUFLESBERG (04, Johannesburg), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds | \$2,000 | 16/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Writer's Regret, \$41,250) | \$114,045 | 173 | 4 | 1.15 | 1.06 |
| 14 | WAR DANCER (10, War Front), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions | \$7,500 | 15/1 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Shesadirtydancer, \$26,950) | \$80,662 | 99 | 1 | 0.85 | 1.23 |
| 15 | ZIVO (09, True Direction) | Pnsd | 7/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Z'finale, \$28,350) | \$78,498 | 31 | 0 | 0.39 | 0.80 |
| 16 | MAJESTIC CITY (09, City Zip), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions | \$2,500 | 17/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Underdog, \$15,800) | \$71,355 | 67 | 0 | 0.54 | 1.05 |

and we had just started excavating to do the front side and the interior of the stallion barn. When the fire happened, we obviously had to scrap the stallion barn plans, get the stallions back in the barn, and put those plans on hold.

"This is our fourth season with stallions, and we've been in perpetual construction. When I see the months of work ahead of us, I think, 'OK. We'll just get some of it done today.' That's how we have to do it: one thing at a time, one day at a time," he continued. "When we complete a project, I definitely get excited. When we move stuff into the tack room, that will be a big milestone."

As if the 2019 fire and its aftermath were not problematic enough, 2020 brought the COVID-19 pandemic with all its ramifications, many still on-going. Consequently, Anchor and Hope reduced its stallion fees across the board for this year, marketing the move as Covid Conscious.

Bourbon Courage, a finalist for the 2020 Maryland Stallion of the Year honor and the state's fourth-leading sire, is now standing for \$2,000 instead of the previous \$5,000. Imagining dropped from \$7,500 to \$2,000. Holy Boss was cut from \$4,000 to \$1,000. Long River's fee was \$3,000, and it is now \$1,000. Editorial stands for \$2,500.

"It's going about as well as we expected it to," Merryman said. "Most of our clients are the small business owners. Because of the pandemic we felt like they were really going to get hammered this year, or at least we worried they would. If you're a

small businessperson that has done well but you still need to watch the bottom line, you can't just throw money away. Probably, the first thing you're not going to do is breed your mares. You'll say you'll take a break and turn them out for a year. We're trying to do our part to prevent that from happening."

Additionally, he is teaming with his father, the renowned trainer Edwin Merryman, to bolster Anchor and Hope's broodmare band.

Jazz Band, an unraced 20-year-old maternal granddaughter of 1977 Triple Crown winner Seattle Slew; and her daughter, the 12-year-old Jazzy Idea, are on the farm. Bred, owned, and trained by Edwin Merryman, Jazzy Idea (Great Notion—Jazz Band by Dixieland Band) won five stakes in 2012, including the Mary-

land Million Oaks and the Laurel Dash Stakes in her last two races before retirement at the end of her sophomore season.

"It would be my father's dream to have Jazzy turn into a foundation mare. She was just bred to Holy Boss, and Jazzy's mother is in foal to Holy Boss," said the son, who added that although they cut down on the quantity of their mares this year, he and Grace have intentions of upgrading the band's quality.

One mare that he and Grace are enthusiastic about is their Elusory, a Kentucky-bred by Broken Vow who comes from a Pin Oak Stud foundation family. She is the dam of Exculpatory, a 3-year-old by 2003 Horse of the Year Mineshaft, whom they co-bred with Finn's Nickel.

So far, so good. As a first-time starter March 5 and while carrying Grace's silks,



Sean Feld on Merryman: 'Louis is a very good horseman. He's one of the best...'

2021 LEADING SIRES IN PENNSYLVANIA



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|------|--|---------------|------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| | | | | | | | 2021 Earnings | Foals | Stks Wnrs | A-E Index | Comp Index |
| 1 | WICKED STRONG (11, Hard Spun), Pin Oak Lane Farm | \$3,500 | 91/20 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Jilted Bride, \$114,000) | \$601,976 | *259 | 3 | 0.89 | 1.28 |
| 2 | JUMP START (99, A.P. Indy) | Died, 2019 | 61/13 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Galerio, \$55,000) | \$455,259 | *1488 | 53 | 1.39 | 1.26 |
| 3 | EL PADRINO (09, Pulpit) | Died, 2017 | 42/11 | 1/1 | 1/1 | (Too Boss, \$46,460) | \$362,279 | 189 | 4 | 1.31 | 1.25 |
| 4 | POSEIDON'S WARRIOR (08, Speightstown), Equistar Training and Breeding | \$3,000 | 46/13 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Gitana, \$39,900) | \$314,509 | *231 | 2 | 0.97 | 1.07 |
| 5 | FLASHBACK (10, Tapit), Diamond B Farm | \$3,500 | 49/10 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Roux Ga Roux, \$30,000) | \$307,258 | 255 | 2 | 1.00 | 1.52 |
| 6 | WARRIOR'S REWARD (06, Medaglia d'Oro), WynOaks Farm | \$5,000 | 60/14 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Night Ops, \$65,000) | \$302,841 | *631 | 20 | 1.02 | 1.32 |
| 7 | SMARTY JONES (01, Elusive Quality), Equistar Training and Breeding | \$3,500 | 24/9 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Ujjayi, \$70,800) | \$292,370 | *825 | 27 | 1.35 | 1.65 |
| 8 | BOISTEROUS (07, Distorted Humor), Diamond B Farm | \$3,000 | 31/8 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Loud Mouth, \$60,200) | \$254,670 | 136 | 2 | 0.87 | 1.05 |
| 9 | WEIGELIA (01, Safely's Mark), WynOaks Farm | Private | 26/8 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Beren, \$79,240) | \$242,758 | *170 | 7 | 1.36 | 1.05 |
| 10 | NORMANDY INVASION (10, Tapit), Pin Oak Lane Farm | Pnsd | 17/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Have a Heart, \$28,570) | \$154,301 | 86 | 0 | 0.52 | 1.15 |
| 11 | UPTOWNCHARLYBROWN (07, Limehouse), Diamond B Farm | \$7,500 | 17/2 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Mr. Doda, \$25,875) | \$111,773 | 87 | 4 | 1.73 | 1.02 |
| 12 | TALENT SEARCH (03, Catiemus), Diamond B Farm | \$2,500 | 16/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Artemis Rising, \$24,640) | \$95,089 | *183 | 3 | 1.03 | 1.17 |
| 13 | LORD SHANAKILL (06, Speightstown), Pin Oak Lane Farm | \$2,500 | 18/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Sacred Sho Girl, \$28,260) | \$89,670 | 226 | 3 | 1.08 | 0.90 |
| 14 | ICE BOX (07, Pulpit) | N/A | 22/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Ice Rain, \$17,088) | \$81,569 | 299 | 2 | 0.62 | 0.97 |
| 15 | CAL NATION (08, Distorted Humor) | N/A | 6/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Ourmationonparade, \$29,850) | \$75,093 | 60 | 1 | 0.98 | 1.09 |
| 16 | MAD FLATTER (05, Flatter) | Died, 2016 | 11/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Flattering Ruby, \$28,692) | \$69,600 | 48 | 0 | 0.87 | 1.24 |
| 17 | LAST GUNFIGHTER (09, First Samurai) | Died, 2018 | 10/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Dollarization, \$22,980) | \$67,918 | 38 | 0 | 0.45 | 0.87 |
| 18 | DESERT PARTY (06, Street Cry), Godstone Farm | \$2,500 | 14/2 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Top of the Game, \$20,688) | \$64,552 | 254 | 6 | 0.93 | 1.28 |
| 19 | SOCIAL INCLUSION (11, Pioneerof the Nile), Diamond B Farm | \$5,000 | 10/1 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Celestial Cheetah, \$25,050) | \$63,295 | 43 | 0 | 0.64 | 1.08 |
| 20 | WELL SPELLED (09, Spellbinder), Godstone Farm | \$1,500 | 9/2 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Johny Lightnin, \$14,544) | \$49,192 | 45 | 2 | 0.90 | 0.95 |

Excupatory was a come-from-the-clouds, half-length winner of a maiden special weight at Laurel Park.

Louis Merryman, who didn't allow himself to get excited about the colt until that day, said because of market conditions and competition, many breeders are reverting to keeping their horses to race. The recently enacted developer's bonus in Maryland is providing an incentive.

"One of the obstacles to owning a race-horse is that the first year of training from breaking through their 2-year-old year to get them to the track, is the most

expensive of that horse's career. The way the claiming conditions are written right now, it's so easy to put in all of that investment up front and then lose that horse if you don't have a maiden special weight, or the waiver we have in Maryland," he explained, adding that if horses can't click through their conditions, they might often need four or five races against lesser competition to build the foundation necessary to develop into a nice runner.

"But by the time that happens, you've lost them. Then you're the one who put up all the initial expense to get them to the

racers and you end up losing them really quickly. That aspect is what we see as one of the biggest deterrents of the breed-to-race people. These people for the most part just love the game. They may have four or six mares and want to keep two (foals), and then they get disheartened when time and time again they have a horse they'd really like to be able to hang on to for a career, even if it's not a world beater, and then they just lose it.

"So with that bonus, 15% of the purse will stay with the person who started that horse for the first time to try to return some of that year of investment that is the really expensive year of investment," he added. "That has played into our going forward. My father owns a barn at Fair Hill, and we've thought about reducing our numbers but keeping a lot more of them and taking them all the way to the races."

The new benefit should help, but running a profitable operation is far from guaranteed.

"You do your best just to break even over those first several years, but you do not always break even, especially if you're carrying a lot of the mares. The whole goal for somebody like us is to at least break even until the 'kids' get to the track with the whole idea to, hopefully, start making



WAGS MEDIA PHOTO/COURTESY ANCHOR & HOPE FARM

The Merrymans are trying to offer services unique to the Mid-Atlantic marketplace

Special Note For Sire Lists:

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in the selected region (stallions that have died or been exported prior to the 2016 breeding season are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available Northern Hemisphere statistics through March 14, 2021. As supplied to *The Blood-Horse* by The Jockey Club Information Systems, Inc., earnings include adjusted money from Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Adjusted earnings are put on par with average North American earnings from the previous year. 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. (A ¶ indicates a sire represented by his first crop to race).



“

Nothing compares to the thrill and excitement of watching your horse coming down the stretch and ultimately crossing the finish line first, followed by the experience of floating on air while you make your way to the winner's circle!

TOBA plays an important role throughout our industry, in particular staying at the forefront of enhancing all experiences related to horse ownership. I am honored to serve on the board to help promote and improve our brilliant sport.

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2021 LEADING SIRES IN VIRGINIA

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|------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | | | | | | | | | Stks Wnrs | A-E Index | Comp Index |
| 1 | FIBER SONDE (05, Unbridled's Song), Beau Ridge Farm | \$1,000 | 59/20 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Fancy Concho, \$28,150) | \$439,516 | 296 | 18 | 1.33 | 0.80 |
| 2 | WINDSOR CASTLE (98, Lord Carson) | N/A | 61/23 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Our Diamond Girl, \$28,200) | \$421,491 | 414 | 16 | 0.99 | 1.00 |
| 3 | BULLSBAY (04, Tiznow), Pellinor Lane | \$1,500 | 16/4 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Maythehorsewithu, \$100,000) | \$172,702 | 117 | 4 | 1.05 | 1.18 |
| 4 | DESPITE THE ODDS (06, Speightstown), Bybee Road Farm on Avonwood | \$1,500 | 23/6 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Keeper in Spite, \$22,230) | \$160,893 | 80 | 0 | 1.05 | 1.19 |
| 5 | EXCLUSIVE QUALITY (03, Elusive Quality) | Died | 15/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Pro Quality, \$42,440) | \$129,440 | 354 | 7 | 0.89 | 1.05 |
| 6 | LIMEHOUSE (01, Grand Slam), O'Sullivan Farms | \$2,500 | 26/2 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Banner Man, \$24,775) | \$94,729 | *491 | 23 | 1.10 | 1.11 |
| 7 | CAPO BASTONE (10, Street Boss), O'Sullivan Farms | \$2,000 | 9/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Azzurra, \$22,217) | \$70,276 | 50 | 0 | 0.84 | 1.26 |
| 8 | OFFICER ROCKET (GB) (04, Officer) | Died, 2019 | 12/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Rocket Appeal, \$23,050) | \$66,599 | 52 | 0 | 0.69 | 0.63 |
| 9 | GARNERED (98, Holy Bull) | N/A | 4/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Super Garner, \$40,740) | \$66,021 | 106 | 0 | 0.68 | 0.69 |
| 10 | SWISS YODELER (94, Eastern Echo) | N/A | 6/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Bop Marley, \$21,219) | \$65,477 | 795 | 15 | 0.96 | 1.01 |
| 11 | GATTOPARDO (05, Johannesburg), O'Sullivan Farms | \$1,500 | 9/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Do I Ever, \$16,632) | \$64,127 | 48 | 1 | 1.04 | 0.76 |
| 12 | BOBALICIOUS (06, Chapel Royal) | N/A | 5/2 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Be Be Bop, \$30,375) | \$47,460 | 15 | 0 | 0.54 | 0.59 |
| 13 | MASTER RICK (09, Master Command) | N/A | 7/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (J J Wedgit Man, \$13,355) | \$45,067 | 30 | 0 | 0.56 | 0.83 |
| 14 | EVANGELISM (02, Pulpit) | N/A | 7/2 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Genesis G G, \$12,644) | \$29,639 | 32 | 0 | 0.46 | 0.51 |
| 15 | DENIS OF CORK (05, Harlan's Holiday), Taylor Mountain Farm | \$750 | 13/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Return to Me, \$6,656) | \$27,458 | *144 | 6 | 0.70 | 1.01 |

some money. But that doesn't always pan out, and when you're in an industry that's contracting, that makes it even tougher," Louis said.

According to the latest statistics available from The Jockey Club, in 2020 there were 806 mares bred to the 29 stallions standing in Maryland, and the registered foal crop numbered 429. By contrast, four years earlier 930 mares were covered by 37 stallions in state and the foal crop was 649.

"I don't think breeding in Maryland is any worse than anywhere else. You can see from the numbers that breeding Thoroughbreds is tough everywhere. It's a tough, expensive business.

"The national numbers are down, and that's at all of the farms everywhere, including Kentucky. Everywhere they're looking for more mares. I'd say that Maryland is even a little healthier than some other places," said Cricket Goodall, executive director of the Maryland Horse Breeders Association. "That being said, there is a lot of competition in this area. Not only are the regional stallions competing with others in this region but they're also competing with Kentucky, and Kentucky can offer some incentives."

To remain relevant while growing their business, the Merrymans carved out their niche in the Maryland market. Louis said that means providing stallions that had soundness and speed during their careers, which is why he went after the ones now standing at Anchor and Hope Farm. Bourbon Courage is a favorite.

"He was sound as a bell after having a grueling racing career and a couple of in-

cidents that would have ended another horse's career. He's the type of horse who could have a runner for a long time and they can run over fences. He has a really good brain, and all the Bourbons have good brains," he said.

Still, a niche is not enough, so the Merrymans are planning to offer services unique to the marketplace. Those include the construction of more heated and air-conditioned foaling stalls so that any babies developing pneumonia or other serious respiratory ailments can be treated on the spot.

"We haven't had a whole lot of foals get to that point in the last several years. At the risk of sounding a little cocky, if the person that does the foaling is the one who has their hands on the foals, is taking the foals' temperatures, and is being on top of the foals every day, it just makes it better. It's a big deal. Heather has learned foal care. Grace has, too," he said.

"I learned foal care the hard way. Foals can get sick and go south on you fast. The whole thing about their care is preventing that by being able to see the real subtle signs early. If you can get ahead of that, you can save yourself, your clients, the foal, and everybody so many headaches."

Though he termed the industry as "unfavorable" to regional stallion farms right now, the Merrymans remain committed. Their hopes are anchored to this farm.

"You have to give them all the credit for not only coming back from that fire, but for the investment they made even before that. A stallion station or a complete operation with foaling, boarding, and all of

it is something that not a lot of people are doing," said Goodall. "Louis and Grace made the call to do that when it's not always the easiest thing to do, and then to have to deal with those challenges they faced. They work really hard, and they have some really good stallions.

"The Merrymans have been in Maryland for a very long time, and Louis is carrying on a pretty important flag. I won't say tradition because he's making a business out of this and trying to make a go of it as a business, and it's not easy. But they know it as well as anyone. They didn't come in with hopes and ideas not knowing how this business works."

Louis had excellent teachers. His grandparents bred and campaigned two-time Maryland Horse of the Year Twixt, who was trained by his aunt Katharine Voss. In addition to his father, aunts Elizabeth Merryman and Ann Merryman and first cousin Michael Merryman are current trainers in the Mid-Atlantic. Another aunt, Frances Merryman, is a retired trainer. His mother is Sarah Small, the sister of the late 10-time, grade 1-winning trainer Dickie Small.

"My mother is awesome. She's almost 70 and almost completely blind, and she mucks stalls with me every single day. She's tough," said Merryman, who handles everything from making the stallion decisions with Grace to driving the tractors. "We're all tough. I guess we don't really have a choice." **BH**

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