

NORTHEAST

CONNECTICUT MAINE MASSACHUSETTS NEW HAMPSHIRE
NEW YORK RHODE ISLAND VERMONT



The New Hill Farm sits on a serene piece of property in Hoosick Falls, N.Y., a small village in Rensselaer County, near the border of Vermont

Evolution of The New Hill Farm

FULL-SERVICE OPERATION GAINING NOTICE IN EMPIRE STATE

By TERESA GENARO

THE KITCHEN OF the house that Lili Kobielski grew up in looks like the farmhouse kitchen of your dreams. Originally a pre-Revolutionary War stagecoach stop, the house sits on The New Hill Farm in Hoosick Falls, N.Y., about an hour's drive from Saratoga Springs. The kitchen is warm and cozy; the floors are wide wood planks. Kobielski's father talks on his cell phone while keeping an eye on something bubbling deliciously in a Dutch oven on the stove.

The entryway is lined with shoes and boots and big warm jackets, one of which Kobielski offered me, looking skeptically at the fleece I'd donned for a tour in late November. Resisting the temptation to stay in that kitchen, we walked from the farmhouse to the farm's office. As Kobielski opened the door, she warned, "There's a kitten inside."

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Romeo the kitten is tiny, maybe five weeks old, still covered in fuzzed-out kitten hair and utterly irresistible. Someone found him nearby and Kobielski took him in; he shares the office with three other cats, two young ones that were discovered in

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2024 LEADING SIRE IN NEW YORK

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| Rank | Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB, Sire), Where Stands | 2024 Stud Fee | Rnrs/Wnrs | BT SWnrs/Wns | Rstrct SW/BT SW | (Chief Earner, Earnings) | 2024 Earnings | Foals | Cumulative | | |
|------|--|---------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | | | | | | | | BT SWs | A-E Index | Comp Index |
| 1 | Central Banker (10, Speightstown), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds | \$7,500 | 150/77 | 6/8 | 6/6 | (Bank Frenzy, \$293,950) | \$5,436,573 | 431 | 17 | 1.28 | 1.12 |
| 2 | Bucchero (12, Kantharos), Ironhorse Stallions | \$10,000 | 139/80 | 6/9 | 0/6 | (Book'em Danno, \$807,500) | \$5,418,856 | 202 | 7 | 1.14 | 1.05 |
| 3 | Solomini (15, Curlin), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds | \$7,500 | 89/46 | 4/4 | 3/4 | (Doc Sullivan, \$347,650) | \$3,387,578 | 132 | 4 | 1.29 | 1.06 |
| 4 | War Dancer (10, War Front), Rockridge Stud | \$7,500 | 81/37 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Twenty Six Black, \$213,500) | \$2,439,496 | 213 | 4 | 0.97 | 1.06 |
| 5 | Peace and Justice (10, War Front), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions | \$7,500 | 57/32 | 1/3 | 0/1 | (Dontlookbackatall, \$436,975) | \$2,172,276 | 129 | 3 | 1.04 | 1.18 |
| 6 | Bustin Stones (04, City Zip) | N/A | 59/40 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Bustin Bay, \$177,330) | \$1,794,156 | 313 | 13 | 1.25 | 1.17 |
| 7 | ¶ Honest Mischief (16, Into Mischief), Sequel Stallions New York | \$7,500 | 31/12 | 2/5 | 2/2 | (Sacrosanct, \$503,250) | \$1,621,889 | 68 | 2 | 1.66 | 1.30 |
| 8 | Big Brown (05, Boundary) | Pnsd | 54/16 | 1/2 | 1/1 | (The Big Torpedo, \$246,900) | \$1,185,252 | *910 | 30 | 1.00 | 1.33 |
| 9 | Union Jackson (12, Curlin) | Pnsd | 39/19 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Jackson's Dixie, \$167,640) | \$1,145,651 | 93 | 2 | 0.90 | 1.01 |
| 10 | Freud (98, Storm Cat) | Pnsd | 50/23 | 1/1 | 1/1 | (Dakota Gold, \$180,000) | \$1,134,988 | *1445 | 60 | 1.41 | 1.18 |
| 11 | Mission Impazible (07, Unbridled's Song) | Pnsd | 51/23 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (My Last Mission, \$90,550) | \$1,130,985 | 335 | 8 | 0.99 | 1.13 |
| 12 | Redesdale (13, Speightstown), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds | \$2,500 | 39/18 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Midtown Lights, \$191,845) | \$867,954 | 75 | 1 | 0.80 | 0.89 |
| 13 | Frost Giant (03, Giant's Causeway) | Died, 2022 | 24/10 | 1/2 | 0/1 | (Smithwick's Spice, \$273,775) | \$660,595 | *477 | 16 | 1.08 | 1.07 |
| 14 | Micromanager (10, Medaglia d'Oro) | Pnsd | 21/12 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Mason Mania, \$85,468) | \$641,057 | 94 | 0 | 0.77 | 1.15 |
| 15 | Bellamy Road (02, Concerto) | Pnsd | 29/14 | 1/1 | 1/1 | (Ciccibello, \$115,725) | \$618,403 | *756 | 33 | 1.07 | 1.18 |
| 16 | Majestic City (09, City Zip) | Died, 2022 | 37/20 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Paschal Moon, \$137,115) | \$607,689 | 130 | 1 | 0.60 | 0.98 |
| 17 | Slumber (GB) (08, Cacique), Rockridge Stud | \$7,500 | 11/3 | 2/2 | 0/2 | (Fluffy Socks, \$226,985) | \$532,024 | 37 | 4 | 1.96 | 1.02 |
| 18 | Weekend Hideaway (10, Speightstown) | Pnsd | 9/6 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Itsallcomintogetha, \$132,390) | \$484,371 | 19 | 1 | 1.21 | 0.94 |
| 19 | ¶ King for a Day (16, Uncle Mo), Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions | \$5,000 | 18/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Soontobeking, \$197,878) | \$423,421 | 36 | 0 | 0.75 | 1.05 |
| 20 | Courageous Cat (06, Storm Cat), Questroyal North | \$2,500 | 18/10 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Ifihadachance, \$56,440) | \$353,694 | 243 | 8 | 0.84 | 1.02 |
| 21 | Honorable Dillon (10, Tapit) | N/A | 15/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Little Linzee, \$89,950) | \$348,513 | *158 | 1 | 0.69 | 1.07 |
| 22 | Bank Heist (07, Maria's Mon), Kaz Hill Farm | \$1,000 | 12/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Athena Beach, \$146,300) | \$322,014 | 108 | 2 | 0.77 | 1.17 |
| 23 | The Lieutenant (13, Street Sense) | Died, 2019 | 9/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Dr. Kraft, \$142,740) | \$291,317 | *67 | 2 | 1.40 | 1.06 |
| 24 | ¶ Fog of War (16, War Front) | N/A | 27/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (George Briggs, \$41,250) | \$187,092 | 42 | 0 | 0.22 | 0.80 |
| 25 | Teuflesberg (04, Johannesburg) | Died, 2022 | 8/6 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Writer's Regret, \$48,750) | \$185,827 | 183 | 4 | 1.09 | 1.03 |
| 26 | Giant Surprise (09, Giant's Causeway) | Pnsd | 13/3 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Giant James, \$61,519) | \$163,528 | 146 | 4 | 1.07 | 1.16 |
| 27 | Disco Partner (12, Disco Rico), Rockridge Stud | Private | 9/4 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Disco Star, \$74,250) | \$142,634 | 26 | 0 | 0.36 | 1.05 |
| 28 | A Shin Forward (05, Forest Wildcat) | Pnsd | 11/5 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Lord Ace, \$20,734) | \$102,027 | 52 | 0 | 0.55 | 0.83 |
| 29 | ¶ Name Changer (13, Uncle Mo), Kaz Hill Farm | \$2,500 | 5/2 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Storm Changer, \$43,750) | \$100,600 | 13 | 0 | 0.64 | 1.00 |
| 30 | Superestrella (08, Storm Cat) | N/A | 5/1 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Willintoriskitall, \$44,190) | \$99,938 | 17 | 0 | 0.64 | 0.65 |

* includes Southern Hemisphere foals; ¶ Indicates a first-crop sire

a hayloft on the farm and an 18-year-old that moved upstate from Brooklyn when Kobielski and her family relocated to the farm during the pandemic.

The farm menagerie, which also includes two goats and a mini-donkey named Chicken, is as welcoming and friendly to visitors as Kobielski herself is. But while they spend their days with few motivations beyond finding the next human to shower attention on them, Kobielski has considerably more on her to-do list, including tending to the farm's main residents, the approximately 50 horses that call The New Hill Farm home.

Kobielski's mother Jenny Holzer purchased the farm about 40 years ago, around the same time that she married Mike Glier. A mixed-media visual artist, Holzer has won awards in four countries, including the Golden Lion for her work at the 1990 Venice Biennale, and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in Manhattan, N.Y., showcased her work earlier this year. Her father, too, is a visual artist, a professor of art emeritus at Williams College and the recipient of a

“AFTERCARE IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL. WE FOLLOW EVERY SINGLE HORSE THAT WE BREED, AND IF I SEE ONE THAT’S RUNNING CHEAP OR FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS, I CALL THE TRAINER. I’VE BOUGHT BACK MORE THAN A FEW, AND I THINK IT’S 100% THE BREEDERS’ RESPONSIBILITY TO DO THAT.”

—LILI KOBIELSKI

Guggenheim Fellowship.

While studying at the Rhode Island School of Design, Holzer galloped horses at Lincoln Downs, and she stocked The New Hill Farm with ponies,

draft horses, and hunters; Lili grew up riding over some of the very fields on which her husband now grows produce for some of New York City's most highly rated restaurants.

“My mother is totally responsible for my horse problem,” said Kobielski. “She’s a lifelong horse lover and racing lover.”

While watching the 2011 Breeders' Cup with her mother, Kobielski suggested that perhaps they should get a few Thoroughbred mares to breed.

“So we bought maybe three mares, and we bred them very modestly,” Kobielski recalled. “That’s where it all started.”

Kobielski was in graduate school at Columbia University at the time, en route to a master's degree in digital media. While a career with horses was not something that she was contemplating, horse racing was never far from her mind, even as she established herself as a professional photographer, traveling to shoots across the country and around the world.

Her master's thesis was a photography project featuring backstretch work-



Kobielski breeds, raises, preps, and consigns her own horses as well as providing these services to clients

ers and their children; the photo essay appeared in *The New Yorker* in 2012. In 2017, her photographs accompanied an article on trainer Gaston Grant and his grade 1 winner Green Gratto at Narratively. While working for *Vogue*, she pitched a story about the Kentucky Derby, and next year, she will publish a collection of the photographs that she's taken at the Derby over the last decade.

After graduating from NYU, Kobielski lived in Brooklyn, N.Y., settling with her husband and children in Bay Ridge. She regularly covers the international show Art Basel in Miami, and her work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *Mother Jones*. She began teaching photography at her NYU alma mater; her husband, Maciek, also had a thriving photography career, traveling internationally for fashion shoots, and while Lili was often at the farm to check on the family's burgeoning breeding business, the Kobielskis' lives and professions were firmly rooted in Brooklyn.

Until March of 2020, when their lives, like so many others, changed.

They rode out the pandemic at the farm and decided to stay north permanently.

"It was a pretty wild shift," said Lili. "If the pandemic hadn't happened, I'm not sure we would be here. We really were

settled in New York, but once we came back here, we just never wanted to leave."

Since then, the number of mares at the barn has quintupled, growing from about 10 when the pandemic hit. From breeding, raising, prepping, and consigning her own horses, Kobielski has moved on to providing those services for clients.

"Everything was word of mouth," she said. "I never had a real business plan, and I've never advertised, and for us, that's the way to do it, because our clients are people who are recommended to us and people that I know."

Forty years ago, Massachusetts resident Mark Erlandson raced horses at Suffolk Downs. Away from the game while he raised a family, needing a diversion during the pandemic, and with Suffolk closed, he decided to buy some mares to breed in New York.

"Lili was selling some mares, and though I didn't end up buying any of them, we had some conversations, and I respected her opinion," he said. "When I purchased a couple of mares, I sent them right to her."

One of those mares was Mama Yay, an unraced Mineshaft filly that he bought in foal to Arrogate for \$20,000 at the 2020 Keeneland November Breeding Stock Sale. He bred her to Gun Runner in 2021, the year that the stallion's first

runners were hitting the racetrack. Consigned by The New Hill Farm as a weanling, the Gun Runner filly, who later would be named Miss Apricity, sold for \$625,000 at the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Fall Mixed Sale. Buyer Dell Ennis pinhooked her at the Keeneland September Yearling Sale, where she sold for \$1.2 million to Speedway Stable.

"She's in tune with all aspects of the business, not just New York breeding," said Erlandson. "She has very good contacts in Kentucky. She can always tell you when a stallion season or share is available, and she's a great source of information."

"I don't know how she does it," he added. "She's got so many other things going on, but if I send her a text or call her, I always get a response right away."

Kobielski has been assertive in the weanling market, particularly at the Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Fall Mixed Sale. She offered her first consignment there in 2016, with modest results of five of the seven through the ring selling for a gross of \$33,000.

Eight years later, The New Hill Farm was the leading consignor at that same sale, sending 24 horses through the ring and selling 18 for a total of \$914,000 and an average of \$50,778, led by a Jack Christopher colt out of the stakes-winning Fairway Road (by Cuvee). A

weanling filly by Corniche brought \$137,000 and together, these success stories exemplify Kobielski's breeding philosophy and practices. Both foals were bred by The New Hill Farm.

Kobielski purchased the Corniche filly's dam off of Facebook. Yes, really. Facebook. For \$2,500.

"My favorite thing is to find value," she said. "If you have half a million dollars, it's easy to go to Keeneland and get a grade 1 winner. That's the dream, right? I would love to have that budget.

"But this is a business," she continued. "It has to pay for itself, and I've found a lot of mares very randomly online."

Happy as You Go is an Ohio-bred multiple stakes winner with four generations of Phipps breeding behind her on her dam's side and a page full of graded stakes winners/performers.

"As soon as I saw her posted, I got in touch and told the seller that I'd Venmo him immediately," said Kobielski. She sold the mare for \$24,000 through the Fasig-Tipton March 2023 Digital Selected Sale to Stonehaven Steadings, which co-bred Corniche. After Happy as You Go suffered a superficial injury before shipping to her new buyer, Kobielski volunteered to take the mare back, a move that paid off brilliantly when the Corniche weanling sold for more than 50 times what she paid for the mare.

Kobielski bought the dam of the \$140,000 Jack Christopher colt for \$6,500 after the mare was an RNA at the 2022 Fasig-Tipton August Digital Selected Sale, in foal to Knicks Go. The seller wasn't interested in breeding older mares, but Fairway Road, who is now 18, was a stakes winner and produced a grade 3 winner, Just Grazed



The Gun Runner filly out of Mama Yay was consigned by The New Hill Farm and sold for \$625,000 at the 2022 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Fall Mixed Sale



Lili Kobielski with husband Maciek and son Cyprien

Me, who earned \$506,332.

"She's got a beautiful page," said Kobielski. "I had no problem if she had one more foal or three more foals; she'll retire here. The Knicks Go she was carrying brought \$150,000, and she's back in foal to Gun Runner."

"Lili has a soft spot for stakes producers with a few years left in them," said Rachel Holden, manager at Burleson Farms in Kentucky and one of Lili's closest friends and advisers. "And she takes care of them: she's got quite the retirement herd on the farm."

"Aftercare is absolutely essential,"

said Kobielski. "We follow every single horse that we breed, and if I see one that's running cheap or falling through the cracks, I call the trainer. I've bought back more than a few, and I think it's 100% the breeders' responsibility to do that. It's the owner's responsibility, too, and in an ideal world, I wouldn't have to buy horses back, but I don't hesitate. Our clients feel the same way."

Kobielski continues to take some freelance photo assignments, though her husband has pretty much eschewed his photography career in favor of growing the vegetables that

he provides for a handful of New York City restaurants, including the vegan Eleven Madison Park (three Michelin stars). Soon, The New Hill Farm will begin producing its own grains, too, among them alfalfa, straw, hay, and rye.

The farm's staff of 10 includes many who have been with the Kobielskis for years; manager Sandy Washburn began working for Lili's parents 25 years ago.

"I started out taking care of Lili's pony," she said. "Then it was the draft horses and hunters, and then Thoroughbreds, which I knew nothing about. The next thing you know, we're foaling and sales-prepping, and we just nailed it."

"Nailed it," they did. Lili and her husband have brought new life (quite literally, every foaling season) to The New Hill Farm, trading in one career for another, building their businesses from the ground up.

"I know Kentucky is the center of the Thoroughbred universe," she said, "but I feel very lucky to be in New York. I love the program. The breeders awards are incredible. It's a small, close-knit, very supportive community. I'm grateful to be here and for what everyone does to make New York racing some of the best in the country." **BH**