

PALMETTO BLUFF

Longfield Stables Names Vanacore Equestrian Manager

Melissa Vanacore has been named Equestrian Manager for Longfield Stables, the expansive Palmetto Bluff facility that is currently under construction and slated for an early 2008 opening.



Vanacore spent 10 years in Ocala, Florida – considered the “Horse Capital of the World” – and brings a wealth of experience riding and managing horses and equestrian facilities.

A native of Hollywood, Florida, Vanacore credits her association with the United States Pony Club during her early teens with introducing her to the importance of proper horse husbandry for a successful riding program. She went on to hold Yearling Manager positions at Ocala’s Winter Haven Farm, a 160-acre thoroughbred breeder that produced multiple stakes winners of more than \$5 million; and Kinsman Farm, a 700-acre thoroughbred breeding and

training facility in Ocala owned by George Steinbrenner. Her crop of yearlings at Kinsman Farm included “Diligence,” who went on to run in the Kentucky Derby, as well as multiple stakes winners.

In 1997 Melissa married Kevin F. Vanacore, a well-respected thoroughbred breeding farm and estate manager, in Yankeetown, Florida. The couple relocated to the greater New York City area, where Kevin accepted the management position of Old Salem Farm, a premier boarding and show facility in North Salem, New York. During this time, Melissa decided to make a career change to administrative/business management. However, while in New York, she continued her involvement with horses on a personal level, including foxhunting with Golden Bridge Hounds in Westchester County, and a working student position with Dressage Olympian Lendon Gray in Bedford, New York.

In 2001, the Vanacores relocated to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, where Melissa accepted a position managing the private equestrian facility on the Wrigley Estate. Her responsibilities in this capacity included:

- Developing a care and exercise program for 24 professional-level polo ponies and children’s playing ponies
- Hosting polo matches for the Chicago Polo Club at the Wrigley Estate
- Providing recreational riding opportunities for family members and guests on the estate
- Horse selection for the Children’s Hunter Program
- Event coordination for private and corporate functions on the estate.

Additionally, in 2005 she took on the renovation and management of an equestrian program on 1,100 acres at Winter Haven Farm back in Ocala.

“We are extremely pleased to have Melissa join us as Equestrian Manager,” said Zachary Zoul, Operations Manager for Palmetto Bluff. “Her credentials in the equestrian business are impeccable and she will be a great asset in managing Longfield Stables and providing services and programming that meet the high standards that we have established at our existing facilities.”

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Vanacore has played a key role at Longfield Stables already, serving as a consultant during the design and development phase. She will live on site and oversee all programming and facilities, which include three barns, a covered riding arena, a cross country practice area and approximately 173 acres of pastures.

“I am very excited about joining the team at Palmetto Bluff and being part of the upcoming opening of Longfield Stables,” said Vanacore. “Having been in the horse industry for many years, I believe that Longfield Stables is one of the finest equestrian facilities built to date. I am very proud to have played a small role in the creation of the stables. Now I look forward to my larger role in developing a first-class equestrian program distinguished by a level of service that is comparable to these world-class facilities.”

Vanacore is an active amateur dressage rider in her free time, training and campaigning young horses at the amateur level with Maryland’s Jessica Jo Tate, who recently represented the U.S. at the 2007 FEI Young Horse Championships in Germany; and Ocala’s Stacy Larrison, who won the Three-Year-Old Filly Championships at Dressage at Devon in 2005. Vanacore also enjoys boating and exploration of the Bahamian Out-Islands, and she describes herself as a “closet artist.”

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