

Wellington Garden Tour for 2024
An Exclusive Tour of Private Equestrian Estates

This year's Equestrian Farm Tour was a giant success. The farms were chosen to give a diverse selection of the many styles and disciplines in The Village of Wellington. We got rave reviews from all who attended the tour with requests to please do it again.

We had Santa Rita Polo Stables owned by Melissa Ganzzi. Melissa is an excellent rider and has a very successful ladies league. She has four polo fields and opens her barn to other teams to rent stalls for the season. We were lucky enough to see two games in action. One at 10:00 and the other on a different field, at 11:00. The barns were open to all to visit and see just how lucky these horses are and how well cared for. Many of Melissa's horses will move to Aspen, Colorado for the summer to play summer polo. We needed golf carts to be able to view this 50-acre farm

River Run Farm, owned by Phoebe Westley is primarily a hunter barn. Phoebe is a world class hunter rider with many championships beautifully exhibited in her gorgeous private owner's lounge. The visitors were given a private tour by Phoebe that everyone commented about in which they learned all about hunters and how they are cared for.

Eagle Tree Farm, owned by Lourdes Fernandez Miranda is an exclusive dressage barn with a beautiful, covered arena. The visitors were lucky enough to see many of the riders who rent for the season practicing their highly trained mounts in what could easily be called dancing on horseback. I heard that many of the riders spoke to the people about what they were doing and what their plans were going to be.

Our next barn was Helgstrand. This barn had both dressage horses and show jumpers. Their covered arena was attached to the rider's lounge where we were able to have our vendors. In the future we need to have signs to guide people to their tables. This stable is extremely large and just like Santa Rita, we needed the golf carts to be able to see the jumper ring, the grass jumping arena and the many barns and paddocks.

The final barn was the one most talked about since it was the most unusual. Mida Farm, owned by Victoria McCullough, houses the largest but gentlest horses on the tour. The Clydesdales were the hit of the tour as the visitors were able to walk through the barn petting and feeding these gentle giants. Victoria even took the horses out of the stalls for all to see. Although the tour was a little limited to handicapped visitors, Victoria told me that one visitor in a riding chair was surprised when one of the horses reached down and placed his head in her lap looking to be petted. I believe we have pictures of this that I hope we will post. At the end of the tour, we had a drawing for one lucky person to have a carriage ride with Victoria.

My sincere thanks go out to Melissa Ganzzi, Phoebe Westley, Lourdes Fernandez Miranda, Melissa Taylor, Helgstrand Farm Manager and Victoria McCullough for your generosity and participation in this very important fundraiser for the Wellington Garden Club.

And, thank you to the Village of Wellington for allowing us to use the parking lot in front of Village Hall for ticket sales and distribution of tour information on the day of the event.

All in all, a fabulous tour on a spectacular day and one that will be remembered. I don't know how we are going to top this one in two years' time. Thank you to everyone involved from all the committees. We have an amazing club and one I am proud to be a member of.

Carol Coleman
Chair
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