

# horse



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HORSE CAPITAL DIGEST • 2023 FALL SPECIAL EDITION

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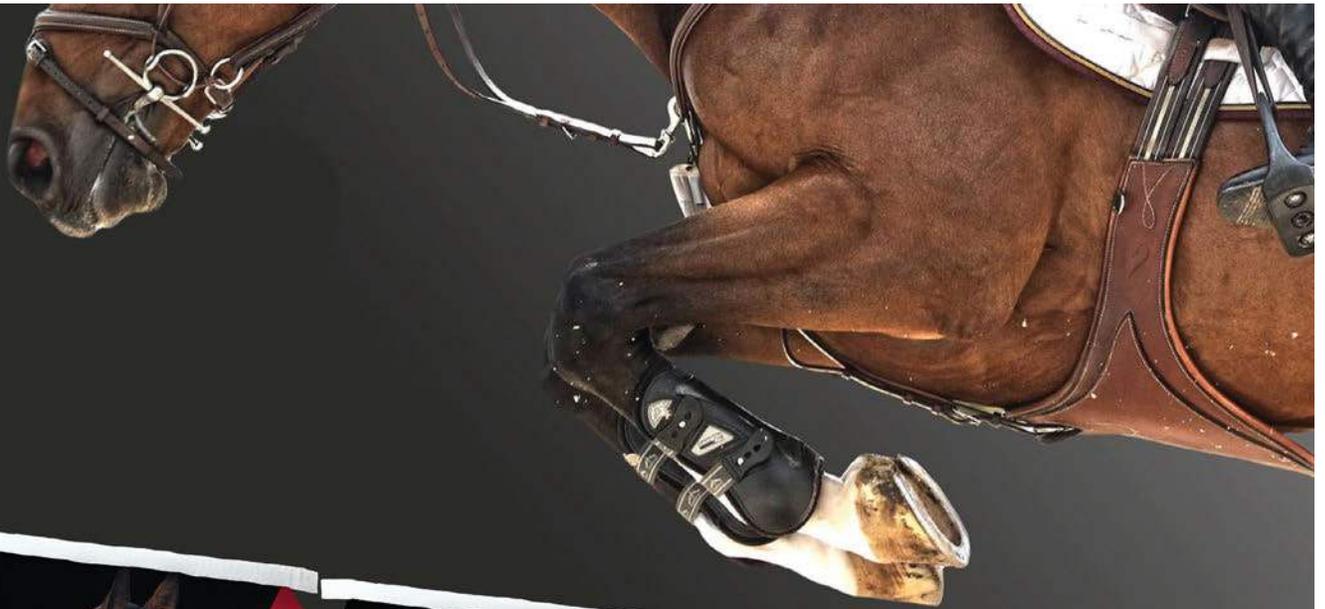
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*Grandview Clydesdale Photo*



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*the* **POWER** *of* **RESULTS™**



*Diamond Oak Farm*

By Tammy A Gantt

It only makes sense that experiencing horses where you are lodging is a natural fit for Ocala. From expansive private mansions, to equine 'play and stay' packages and full farm experiences, opportunities abound. As travelers know with AirBnB, stays in unique houses are well promoted in commercials, but there are also unique attractions on properties.

One of these is Diamond Oaks Farm that features historic turn-of-the-century cottages and RV slots in a park-like setting to relax, reset and recharge while surrounded by and interacting with 16 horses amidst nature. The farm stay also features add-on horse adventures including horseback riding, lessons, a Dude Ranch experience, farm tours and carriage rides. People can even bring their own horses.

The newest ultimate equestrian experience is the premier showgrounds of the World Equestrian Center, followed by a tour of the award-winning Hall of Fame, Grandview Clydesdale farm, a working equine operation only 20 minutes away.

Grandview Clydesdales has a winning legacy, having bred more than 300 national champions in the past 30 years. A two-hour guided tour includes a walk through show, training and breeding barns, a meet and greet with draft stallions and young clydesdales and a talk about what goes into the making of a champion. The package includes a two-night stay at The Equestrian Hotel and a daytime or evening 'Under the Lights' clydesdale tour. Valet is complimentary and a clydesdale souvenir will be on your pillow upon arrival.

If you need more than a room, you also have the option of a \$5,009 a night, eight room mansion villa



*Clydesdale with Karen Cobb -Grandview Clydesdale Photo*

# Unique Hotel - Horse Combos Spring Up in Ocala

that sleeps up to 30, or the choice of three three-bedroom guest cottages available on a 100 acre equestrian estate adjoining the Cross Florida Greenway and Florida Horse Park. You can stroll among horses on the property, take your own horse along the greenway, watch

polo, rent a trail ride horse nearby, ride the property trail, or enjoy the private resort pool after your equine adventures. Country music celebrities and Miami-based celebrities have made the villa, a part of BG Resorts, a destination favorite year after year.



*Diamond Oak Farm*



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Grande Liberté Farm

# Liberté Equestrian Theater Sets Winter Show

Sylvia Zerbini's Liberté Equestrian Theater showcases the mesmerizing, incredible skills, and grace of talented equestrians and equines in motion on Saturdays, Dec. 2, 3, 9, 10 and 16 at 4:30 p.m. at 18550 North-

east 81 Street in Williston, Fla. The venue offers a charming and intimate setting for the breathtaking performances of 20 magnificent horses with extraordinary talent.

Witness the beauty and power of these majestic horses performing daring stunts, intricate choreography and heartwarming acts. From the high-flying acts to elegant dressage routines, the horses will leave guests in awe.

Zerbini comes from a long line of equine trick trainers and she is best known for her role in the equine ballet show Cirque du Soleil equine show Cavalia, which debuted in 2003.

The show is designed for the horse enthusiast, fans of theater and for those looking for a unique and entertaining experience. Tickets range from \$35 to \$60 and are available via [Eventbrite](#) online.



Grande Liberté Farm

# Sun Country Trail Blazers Raise \$15K

The Sun Country Trail Blazers held the Ride for the Cure fundraiser for the Alzheimer's Association at Shangri-La Trailhead on the Cross Florida Greenway from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1 raising \$15,169. The team rode as part of the world's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. The event included a poker ride, best dressed, moonlight ride, campout cookout, scavenger hunt and cowboy church. For more info about the nonprofit club, visit [suncountrytrailblazers.org](http://suncountrytrailblazers.org).



Sun Country Trail Blazers

# THOROUGHBREDS

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### ■ Join the Mission

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*Florida*  
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Tammy A. Gantt, Executive Director

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Grande Liberté Farm



Sun Country Trail Blazers

## Central Florida is Horse Capital of the World®

In 1997, Ocala/Marion County Horse Capital of the World® and Horse Capital of the World® were trademarked by the Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' and Owners' Association. Ever since, the marks have become synonymous with the FTBOA and its Association services. While others periodically try its use, by trademark and literally, Marion county is the Horse Capital with more horses and ponies than any other in the U.S. and Florida ranks third as a state in horse population.

FTBOA trademarked the phrase to create a brand identity for the area and the services it promotes related to equines. The diversity of breeds and disciplines make the area an ideal setting for any horse fanatic, casual horse lover or for services catering to the horse world.

Horses in Florida are more than pretty scenery in a pasture. They are economic drivers for our county and state. The concentration of equine – particularly the Thoroughbred breeding, training and sales industry in Central

Florida – is strongly supported by a network of equine services, such as specialized veterinarians, feed and tack retailers, blacksmith, equine dentists, feed mills and major horse transportation companies by land and by air.

This makes Ocala a great place to enjoy equines with its opportunities to attend world-class horse shows and events, equine venues, recreational activities and farm tours at a variety of venues, farms and showgrounds. Visitors have the chance to go on a farm tour, take a trail ride through our numerous parks and national forest, enjoy a carriage ride, learn polo, visit an equine museum or gallery, attend the world's leading two-year-olds-in-training Thoroughbred sales, watch a horse train at Ocala Breeders' Sales or wager on simulcast horse races from the state's tracks and from across the country. The choices are limitless and local citizens are a daily part of the one-of-a-kind experience that only the Horse Capital of the World® can bring.

### Marion County's Equine Impact

- Equines are 18% of the county GDP
- A top breeding region in the world for Thoroughbreds
- Thoroughbreds sold at Ocala Breeders' Sales in the past decade valued at more than \$1.3 billion
- OBS buyers come from 49 states, 2 territories and more than 42 countries

Source: AHC

### Florida Racing's Annual Impact

- \$1.5 billion in direct economic impact and \$2.7 billion overall
- \$400,000+ in payroll taxes
- 20,000+ thoroughbreds engaged in racing
- 23,000+ jobs

Source: AHC



# Breyer Features Two Discipline Champion



For more than 70 years, the equine model company Breyer has been the premiere brand of horse collectibles, featuring some very famous Thoroughbreds. There's been popular models of Secretariat, Cigar, Frankel, Zenyatta, Rags to Riches, American Pharoah, and now Full Moon Rising.

A Florida-bred gelding, Mooney, as he's known now, made a beautiful model thanks to his rare markings. He debuted in July at BreyerFest, a celebration featuring Breyer models that attracted 30,000 collectors and fans to Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington.

"It's amazing. It's a big thing," said current owner Marsha Hartford-Sapp. "People collect these models from all over the world, little girls, and little boys. Fifty years from now people will still have these models and Mooney will still be in someone's home."

Bred by Betty Jean Cordero and Miracle Hill Farm LLC and owned and trained by Crystal Lanum, Full Moon Rising was winless in 10 starts, two at Gulfstream

Park and eight at Tampa Bay Downs in 2019 and 2020. The son of Allamystique's best finish was a sixth.

When it came time to retire the gelding, "Crystal wanted to make sure she could find a suitable home for him," said Hartford-Sapp, a decorated equestrian and former equestrian coach at Florida State University. "I got this horse when they offered to sell him. At the time I was looking for a horse for the Retired Racehorse Project."

While Full Moon Rising didn't tear it up on the track, he certainly did in other disciplines. In his first year off the track, he was USEF Horse of the Year Western Dressage Open Intro and Western Dressage Suitability, National Champion Western Dressage, and the first Thoroughbred to earn National Pony Cup.

"He won two national championships in two disciplines in the same year but couldn't bother to win a race," said Mooney's owner Hartford-Sapp.

Because of Full Moon Rising's unusual markings and success, Breyer contacted Hartford-Sapp a year ago about the possibility of making Mooney a model. They seek out interesting horses to make portraits of and he has very rare markings for a Thoroughbred. Officially listed as a chestnut by the Jockey Club, Full Moon Rising is described by Breyer as sporting dramatic splashes of white of his face, chest, belly, and tail, as well as four eye-catching long white stockings.



Full Moon Rising - Calico and Chrome Photo

Full Moon Rising



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**Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' and Owners' Association**

Executive Office – 801 SW 60th Avenue Ocala, Florida 34474

(352) 629-2160 • Fax: (352) 629-3603 • e-mail: info@ftboa.com • www.ftboa.com

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.

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Peggy Yost

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Brock Sheridan

**ASSISTANT EDITOR -  
OPERATIONS & DEVELOPMENT**

Steve Koch

**CONTRIBUTING EDITOR -  
SALES & INDUSTRY AFFAIRS**

Tammy A. Gantt

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

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**ADVERTISING**

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**SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER**

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Executive Office – 801 SW 60th Avenue Ocala, Florida 34474

(352) 732-8858 • Fax: (352) 867-1979

www.ftboa.com

For subscription and advertising information contact Vicki Davis at (352) 732-8858.

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