



## Winter In Wellington With Old Salem Farm

Story by Lindsay Brock • Photos by Jump Media

*When snow flies in the Northeast, many show jumping barns begin a pilgrimage south. One of those barns, Old Salem Farm based in North Salem, N.Y., leaves winter behind each year and moves to the ideal training and competition conditions found in Wellington.*

Led by top trainer Frank Madden and assistant trainer Stella Manship, Old Salem Farm brings riders of varying levels to Wellington each year to compete in the Winter Equestrian Festival and to enjoy a "winter in Wellington."

While sunshine and palm trees are better for riding than a New York winter, and make for ideal working conditions for Madden, Old Salem Farm riders also view Wellington as a land of opportunity.

"WEF offers so much, from leadline all the way up to five-star grand prix and everything in between," Madden said. "I feel that you can get six to nine months' worth of training for horses and riders in a three-month span of time. When we are done, we come home with much more seasoned horses and riders."

The Old Salem Farm team will be made up of riders competing in a broad

span of divisions, including junior jumpers, equitation, adult jumpers and hunters, and high amateur jumpers, according to Madden.

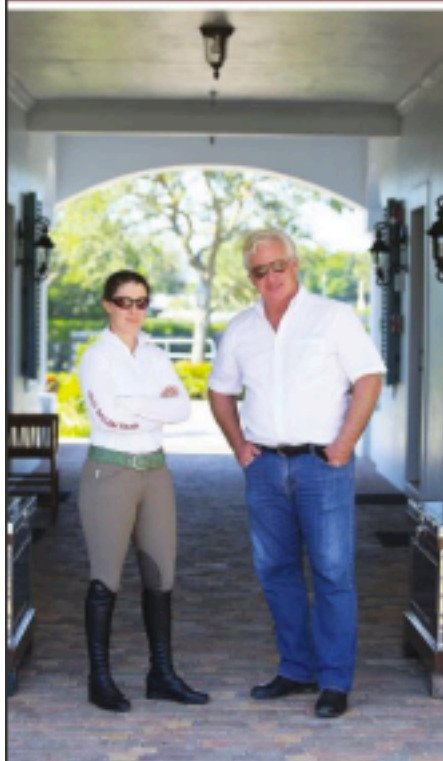
"This year we have some new horse-and-rider combinations, and I am most looking forward to seeing how those work out," said Madden, who also puts his judging expertise to use at WEF during the season.

One rider who will be piloting two new mounts, 16-year-old Klee Hellerman, will also be making her first-ever winter trip to the horse haven that is Wellington after having previously competed for the past two years in Ocala.

Hailing from New Haven, Conn., Hellerman has been riding at Old Salem Farm for nearly two years and splits her time in the saddle with her responsibilities as a junior at Cheshire Academy in Cheshire, Conn. ▶

(Above) Old Salem Farm head trainer Frank Madden with Checker at Old Salem Farm South. (Below) Klee Hellerman aboard Cupid Shuffle.





Catching a Wednesday afternoon flight each week with her textbooks and assignments in tow, Hellerman has devised a plan to stay on top of her studies while seeking success in the show ring. "It's all about being organized and having constant contact with your teachers," she said.

While this winter marks her first season in Wellington, Hellerman is looking forward to traveling with her fellow Old Salem Farm riders and trainers. "I love the organization and the community at Old Salem Farm," she said. "I am excited about having one week of shows right after the other for three months. Both my horses are new, so it is an opportunity to get to know them and start being competitive with them in the equitation and junior jumper divisions."

As Hellerman dips her toes into the Wellington community, Old Salem Farm rider Tegan Treacy, 20, of Needham, Mass., is returning to familiar territory. She joined Old Salem Farm while competing at WEF in 2013 and

has called Wellington her winter home since her early teens as a junior rider. Treacy is a sophomore at Duke University in Durham, N.C., and has "winter in Wellington" down to a science.

"I try to be in Wellington for eight or nine weeks during the winter and fly down after my classes on Thursday, and return on Sunday afternoon or Monday morning," she said. "One year I stayed at school for four weeks straight, and it was actually more difficult to be out of my travel routine. That schedule makes it easier for me to focus on school while I am in Durham and focus on the horses when I am in Wellington."

Treacy is a regular top finisher in high and low amateur-owner jumper competition, but hopes to use the 2017 WEF season to move into the Under 25 ranks. The Hollow Creek Farm Under 25 Grand Prix Series was developed as a bridge to the international level of grand prix competition, allowing up-and-coming riders the opportunity to gain experience competing against

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their peers. "There are so many opportunities to show in Wellington," Treacy said. "The circuit runs for 12 consecutive weeks and is very competitive with large classes, good footing and beautiful show grounds."

At home just one hour north of New York City, Old Salem Farm is the site of its own renowned training program, as well as 26 weeks of horse shows from local and regional events to the highest level of international show jumping competition. But for three months, riders like Hellerman and Treacy, under the tutelage of trainers such as Madden and Manship, make up a small piece of Wellington's booming horse show community that draws from all corners of North America and beyond during the winter months.

"There's no better environment for competition or training, and we consider ourselves lucky to be able to call Wellington home during the winter," Madden said. "Myself and my riders love our facilities at Old Salem Farm in

New York, but if you have to escape the weather, Wellington is the place to be."

Old Salem Farm is one of the top equestrian competition venues in North America, as rated by the North American Riders Group. Host of the FEI 2\* and 3\* Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows, the prestigious American

Gold Cup CSI-W 4\* and year-round competitions, the facility offers a state-of-the-art turf grand prix field, indoor riding arena and two all-weather footing rings.

For more information about Old Salem Farm, visit [www.oldsalemfarm.net](http://www.oldsalemfarm.net) or call (914) 669-5610. ■

(Far left and below) Trainers Stella Manship and Frank Madden at Old Salem Farm South in Wellington.



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