

## A LOVE FOR EACH OTHER, HORSES AND TENNESSEE LURE A SPECIAL COUPLE TO LONG BRANCH LAKES

Being in the right place at the right time, along with a bit of luck, can make all the difference in life.

And so it is with the story of Lamar and Vanessa Wright, and how these two extremely skilled and experienced equine professionals came to be the new Resident Managers of the Long Branch Lakes Equestrian Center. But before the good fortune of meeting each other, both were enjoying successful careers.

Vanessa, a graduate of the University of Illinois where she was a member of the school's equestrian team, holds countless championships from the Northern Illinois Hunter Jumper Association. (In fact, she won the Adult Equitation Trophy so many times they retired the trophy—the first in the NIHJA's 30-year history.) Along with her outstanding talents as a rider, competitor and instructor, Vanessa possesses strong business skills gained in her management positions at various riding centers and equine businesses. She is a member of the American Quarter Horse Association and the American Show Horse Association.

Lamar, a native of Georgia, also brings a rare blend of business and horse skills to Long Branch Lakes, most recently as director of sales for an Indiana-based horse trailer manufacturer where he set all-time sales records. He is a skilled rider and instructor and is a member of the American Quarter Horse Association and the American Paint Horse Association.

In early 2007, Lamar was selling horse trailers at an Indiana horse show where he had the luck to meet Vanessa. In the process of selling her a trailer (ask Vanessa for the full story), the two got to know each other and, with a common love for horses, soon fell in love.

In early March of that year, the two (again with luck on their side) were returning from a horse show and happened to pass through Tennessee on their way back north where they knew ice and snow were waiting. And for the second time, Vanessa fell head over heels in love—this time, with the state of Tennessee. “The weather was mild,

the scenery was beautiful and I just wanted to stay,” remembers Vanessa. “I joked to Lamar that he should go get our horses and things and come back for me!”

The two returned to Illinois, all the while keeping



Tennessee—a state Vanessa knew to be a mecca for trail riders—on their minds. All during 2007 they dreamed of returning and in early 2008, decided they could resist no longer. With faith that a bright future together awaited them in Tennessee, they quit their jobs, loaded their horses in that trailer that had brought them together and headed south.

Temporarily settling in Kingston, Tennessee, they quickly found jobs and began to search for a place to build their lives and careers around each other and horses. Vanessa,

diving into the internet to look at every equestrian community and facility in the state, soon came across [longbranchlakes.com](http://longbranchlakes.com) and immediately liked what she saw as she read about the community's vision for a premier equestrian center.

In March of 2008, Lamar and Vanessa met with Edmond Cash and Rick Klewein. And it's clear from the recollections of that meeting by all four that there was an immediate chemistry that linked the owners' goals and Lamar and Vanessa's desire to play a part in reaching them. They were soon hired as the Resident Managers for the Long Branch Lakes Equestrian Center.

And the timing was perfect. Architect Lorri Hayward was, at the time, shaping the final plans for the Center's facilities and the new managers were able to provide Hayward, Cash and Klewein with valuable inputs and suggestions. And as true resident managers devoted to the Center's constant care and attention, Lamar and Vanessa now live in a home in the Equestrian Village just a short stroll from the new barn where their horses, Jack and Wart, are kept.

“We feel we were very lucky to find Long Branch Lakes,” says Lamar. And all the riders and residents who enjoy the pleasures of the Equestrian Center in the years to come will know that Long Branch Lakes was just as lucky to find Lamar and Vanessa.