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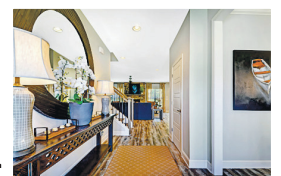
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Countless memories made at sprawling Walnut Spring Farm

By *Susie D. Hillard*
CONTRIBUTING WRITER
Keeping kids safe and close to home as they grow up can be a challenge. Lexington businessman Brian Wood’s solution was to make Walnut Spring Farm the most fun place imaginable for his three sons and their friends.
“It’s all about my boys,” said Brian, father of Clark, 20, a student at Auburn University; Thomas, 18, a senior at Lexington Catho-

lic; and Witt, 15, a sophomore at Sayre School.
From the moment you pull up to the bluestone parking pad, it’s obvious that formality is out and fun is in at 1893 Muir Station Road. A pair of rod-and-reels laying on the front porch suggest someone recently came in from the farm’s 5-acre pond. Substitute camo jackets and boots during hunting season.
“My sons’ activities have evolved from riding skate-

boards in the house to fixing up their cars and riding motorcycles around the farm,” Brian said, reminiscing about the 16 years they have lived on the 269-acre property in northern Fayette County.
“The one goal I had with the house and farm was for the boys to always be around, for their friends to come over, and for their friends to be comfortable here — versus the boys going out around town and me not

knowing where they are.”
As his sons grew and their preferences in recreation and entertainment evolved, Brian added amenities to keep them busy — and close.
“Within the last year, we put in a skeet trap range for Clark, who shoots on the skeet team at Auburn, and for Thomas, who shoots for Lexington Catholic,” Brian explained. The boys also repurposed sections of a roof that blew off as distance markers for a farm-style golf driving range.
Only when the boys were older (and strong swimmers) did Brian consider putting in a pool. The 30-by-50-foot salt-water pool was worth the wait, he said.
Giving credit where it’s due, Brian found the design for the 654-square-foot pool/guest house on Pinterest. Built and furnished to accommodate wet, messy, hungry teenagers as well as house

guests, it has a kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, den and covered porch. A freestanding fireplace and an outdoor kitchen with counter seating for eight complete the family’s backyard oasis.
Inside the sprawling two-story home, there’s a gym, climbing wall, game room with billiards, theater and a “project room.” Thomas, who likes to tinker with cars, spends a lot of time in the four-car garage. He and Witt describe the last 16 years of living at Walnut Springs as a dream.
“There’s always something fun to do,” Witt says, “If you’re bored, you’re lazy.”
The focal point of the 12,000-square-foot residence is the dry-laid stone arch that stands between the living room and the open, top-of-the-line everything kitchen. Friends of all ages gather there on Thursday for “make-your-own-pizza” night. Floor-to-ceiling windows offer views of the pool area and rolling hills beyond.
“You can see everything going on outside from in here,” Brian noted.
Around the corner, the library projects a decidedly masculine ambiance. The stained bead board ceiling contrasts handsomely with the thick, gleaming white moulding of the coffered ceiling, which Brian installed himself. A working fireplace adds to the cozy feel. “We spend a lot of



time in here,” Brian said.
The home features six bedrooms, seven full and two half-bathrooms and big mud/laundry rooms on both floors. The expansive first-floor owner’s suite is decked out with a working fireplace, steam room and separate sauna.
While the Wood home will always be a place where relationships are strengthened, Brian and his sons are ready to do something different. “I wouldn’t trade the memories we’ve made here for anything, but it’s a great

time to look at downsizing,” Brian said. “I don’t need as much house. I don’t need as much farm.”
Wood’s farm got its start in 1929 when Robert Sterling Clark of New York City decided to get into the Thoroughbred breeding business. A grandson of a co-founder of Singer Sewing Machine Company, he bought approximately 175 acres from J. Stuart Tracy and an adjacent tract of 85 acres from Jay D. Weil the next year, according to “The Bluegrass Horse Country.”

Clark spent \$40,000 to build the original part of the house and made improvements to the property. When he suddenly lost interest in breeding Thoroughbreds, he sold the farm back to Weil in 1931.
Today, the farm offers 66 stalls in seven barns, miles of plank fencing, and paved roads. Walnut Spring Farm is listed with Bill Justice of Justice Real Estate. To schedule an appointment to tour the property, contact Justice at 859-255-3657 or justicerealestate.com.

