



**Stacy Westfall '97**  
Owner/Operator  
Westfall Horsemanship

Waltenberry

# Unbridled Passion

Stacy (Glidden) Westfall '97 inspires people everywhere she goes. In 2003, Stacy entered the arena at the National Reining Horse Association (NRHA) Futurity dressed in a dark trench coat, black hat and bandanna; the “mystery rider” completed her freestyle ride, earning top marks from judges, without a bridle or reins.

In 2005, Westfall won six key reining events including the Tulsa Reining Classic and a repeat win at the NRHA Futurity. She repeated her Tulsa championship in 2006 without a saddle or bridle.

Also in 2006, Westfall was the first woman ever invited to compete in the Road to the Horse colt-breaking challenge in Murfreesboro, Tenn., and she won, using the same unique training techniques she uses with her horses at home. “It is an honor just to be chosen and to be the first woman because I’m not the only woman out there doing this,” she said. “To go down there and win was amazing and a blessing.”

Westfall loves to inspire and educate, and she gets to do just that every day. She and her husband, Jesse, own and operate Westfall Horsemanship in

Mount Gilead, Ohio, where they live with their three sons – Caleb, Joshua and Nathan.

“Inspiration is so needed because learning isn’t always fun,” she explained. “The inspiration part is what I love, and I think that’s why it shows up in what I do. Inspiration keeps you going when it’s freezing cold outside, and you’re out in it working. It’s the hundreds of hours in the dirt and manure, and hot and cold, when it’s hard to remember why you’re doing it.”

An average of 20 horses are under the Westfalls’ care at any given time, and the horses are trained using Stacy’s philosophy and training methods, which she develops during private quiet time with her own horses.

“I can learn so much from my horse by paying attention to the signals he gives me,” said Westfall. “Through body language, the horse will tell me what he does and doesn’t understand. I love to turn around and share that information with the girls who work for me. Getting them to understand how the horse is thinking is what I aim for.”

On the days Westfall isn’t working at home or on the road to a competition, she and Jesse conduct clinics across the United States and Canada. The couple has been asked to travel overseas, as well. They have been able to reach more people than she ever thought possible and have even sold training videos to people in Australia, Japan, Norway and Germany.

There was a time after college when Westfall questioned her decision to pursue a career in the equine industry. After a very short career in banking, however, she knew what she wanted. She and Jesse began actively pursuing their dream of Westfall Horsemanship. In 2000, they bought their current farm and built an indoor arena while Jesse was still working another job.

During the first few years, the Westfalls were working long days and building clientele. She remembers lying awake at night wondering if they had made the right decision. Today, she’s sure that they did. Both Stacy and Jesse enjoy working full time at the farm now while taking turns caring for their children, all of whom are home-schooled and travel with their parents.

Not only does Westfall love what she does, but she also loves working with her husband, an NRHA judge. One reason she believes they have been successful is because when she and Jesse are in the barn together, they are able to bounce ideas off each other. “I can come up with lots of crazy ideas, and he’s good at helping me decide which ones are worth chasing,” she said.

With a long list of championships and successes to her name, the accomplishment Westfall is most proud of is being a wife and mother while doing what she loves to do. “So many people think you can only chase one dream at a time, but I chased both of mine.”

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Heidi Nyland