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# Fine Vintage

*Stallion business growing at Leigh Ann and Kerry Hopper's RichWine Farm*

BY CLAIRE NOVAK  
PHOTOS BY SHELLEY WINTER

**WHEN LEIGH ANN** Hopper talks about building an Indiana breeding operation from the ground up with her husband, Kerry Hopper, she's not kidding. Every fence post, every bit of the barn, all of the layout and the pasture space were painstakingly created by the couple, who bought a 40-acre hay field in late 2009 and opened their Thoroughbred farm for the 2010 season.

"It was lush and beautiful, with lovely green fields, and is located close to I-69," Leigh Ann Hopper said of the property she and her husband developed into R Star Stallions at RichWine Farm. "It was available at the right time and it was a nice piece of land that spoke lots of promise to us."

Four years later the Hoppers are working to build their business, too. They stand five stallions and provide a home to a group of client-owned broodmares along with their own, staying active in the breeding and foaling business. They combined their human families when they got married last December, and joined efforts at R Star Stallions at RichWine Farm as well. With eight children between them, ranging in age from 16-28, the two have a horse-loving crew to share in the pleasures and duties of their developing program.

"Some of the older kids have kids of their own, and they thoroughly enjoy the farm," said Leigh Ann. "The grandkids will come out and ride and they like to watch the horses; they're very drawn to it. Four



Leigh Ann and Kerry Hopper at their RichWine Farm near Anderson, Ind.

of the kids are relatively active here, and, hopefully, this is a business where they're really able to use their God-given talents and where the family can work together and grow together."

Both Hoppers grew up appreciating the Thoroughbred breed, although Kerry Hopper had more hands-on experience than Leigh Ann.

"A career with horses had actually been a lifelong dream for me; I just have always loved them," Leigh Ann said. "Unfortunately, as a kid I wasn't in a position to be able to ride, so it's a beautiful thing that I can now and that the kids can. I tried to give my kids every opportunity to be around horses, and they grew up with a love of horses as well. I also tried to make sure they had access, and that's how we came to be in contact with Kerry and his family. The real talent behind the business originated from him; you can tell this is what he was made to do."

Kerry Hopper has been around horses all his life and spent a career as a stallion and farm manager before starting R Star Stallions at RichWine with his wife.

"My experience would be very different from Kerry's: He's had at least the past 12 years in the Thoroughbred industry; mine would be over the past five," Leigh Ann said.

Jesse Hopper, 23, is also an integral part of the operation.

"Jesse is very watchful and knowledgeable; he's always looking for clues from the mares as to whether they need something, and he's very observant as far as the foals are concerned," said Leigh Ann. "He's very much ready to manage, although he doesn't have a particular title because we're all very much hands-on."

During foaling season on the farm near Anderson, a "day in the life" really begins the night before. The couple takes turns on the evening foal watch, and while Leigh Ann generally stays up the majority of the evening, Kerry is also on call.

"If there is a foal to be born in the middle of the night, the two of us go into the barn together," she explained. "He can sleep during the night hours, and I'll catch a nap around 7 a.m., after the two of us have had some time to touch base and find out what the plan for the day is."

Then Kerry is off to feeding and turnout, managing stalls, appointments with vets and farriers, all the tasks that go into running a full-time Thoroughbred breeding operation, while Leigh Ann works with clients on bookings and reports.

"A lot of folks in this business have

strong opinions on how things should be done," she said. "They want to be able to call up and get in touch with somebody who knows what's going on with their horses."

Last year the Hoppers foaled out around 56 mares, and expect the same number this season.

"We take great pride in safe foaling and the care that we give to the mares and babies," said Leigh Ann. "We're able to do all of it here in one facility, between

foaling, mare care, and breeding back to the stallions.

"This time of year is my favorite part; I stay up and watch for these mommas to be ready, and that hands-on care is something we take great pride in."

The farm stands Deputy Storm, Saintly Look, Charging Indian, Smitty, and Drinkwiththedevil.

Drinkwiththedevil, by Smart Strike out of the Deputy Minister mare Approve, is the sire of 2013 Indiana Fu-

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## 2014 Leading Sires in Canada

 Go to BloodHorse.com for daily updated sire lists

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2014 Stud Fee Can\$	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstret SW/BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2014 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	WILKO (02, Awesome Again), Highfield Stock Farm	\$2,000	33/8	1/1	0/1	(Sheza Smoke Show, \$68,400)	\$234,314	*144	3	1.00	1.28
2	BADGE OF SILVER (00, Silver Deputy), Colebrook Farms Stallion Station	\$7,500	35/8	0/0	0/0	(Tetradrachm, \$55,000)	\$177,689	*272	9	1.28	1.43
3	MILWAUKEE BREW (97, Wild Again), Adena Springs	\$7,500	39/7	1/1	0/1	(Flipcup, \$20,000)	\$170,223	*479	22	1.18	1.60
4	GOTTCHA GOLD (03, Coronado's Quest), Strideaway Thoroughbreds	\$2,000	30/5	0/0	0/0	(Making Havoc, \$21,705)	\$114,445	*69	0	0.91	1.56
5	SILENT NAME (JPN) (02, Sunday Silence), Adena Springs	\$7,500	19/2	0/0	0/0	(Fanticola, \$24,980)	\$87,367	*212	8	1.45	1.24
6	OLMODAVOR (99, A.P. Indy), Dunroven Farm	\$1,250	25/6	0/0	0/0	(Cuppy Cake, \$21,350)	\$81,027	*250	9	0.86	1.34
7	QUEST (99, Seeking the Gold), Dunroven Farm	\$1,000	9/3	0/0	0/0	(Questlie, \$25,800)	\$72,189	93	2	0.83	1.44
8	FORMAL GOLD (93, Black Tie Affair), Esquirrel Farms	\$2,500	21/5	0/0	0/0	(Crimson Giant, \$13,810)	\$45,080	494	19	1.09	1.30
9	SLIGO BAY (IRE) (98, Sadler's Wells), Adena Springs	\$5,000	23/0	0/0	0/0	(Irish Beau, \$6,720)	\$40,661	*338	10	1.15	1.47
10	FINALITY (99, Dehere), Red Rock Farm	\$2,500	10/2	0/0	0/0	(Vinoterra, \$11,220)	\$32,732	216	15	0.65	0.77

## Special Note For Sire Lists:

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in North America (stallions exported prior to the 2010 breeding season are excluded), and have runners in North America. All available statistics listed for the Northern Hemisphere through February 17, 2014. As supplied to *The Blood-Horse* by The Jockey Club Information Systems, Inc., earnings exclude monies from Japan and Hong Kong. Current year stakes winners include all N.H.-foaled stakes winners worldwide and any S.H.-foaled horses that won a N.H. stakes. \*Foal counts include Southern Hemisphere. Cumulative stakes winners includes all countries. (A ¶ indicates a sire represented by his first crop to race.)

\*AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX and COMPARABLE INDEX: Lifetime AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX indicates how much purse money the progeny of one sire has earned in relation to the average earnings of all runners in the same years; average earnings of all runners in any year is represented by an index of 1.00; COMPARABLE INDEX indicates the average earnings of progeny produced from mares bred to one sire, when these same mares were bred to other sires. Only 32% of all sires have a lifetime AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX higher than their mares' COMPARABLE INDEX.

turity winner Bisque, who was named champion 2-year-old Indiana-bred male of 2013 by the Indiana Thoroughbred

Owners and Breeders Association. Bred by Marvin Johnson out of the Blumin Affair mare Sheso and raised on the Ne-

braska Hall of Fame trainer's farm near Grand Island, Bisque raced through his first two starts for Johnson before he was sold to Maggi Moss and switched to trainer Tom Amoss.

"When we first started with the colt, he was very intelligent," Johnson told Bob Hamar of the Grand Island *Independent*. "He did things right from the beginning, but that doesn't tell you anything. I guess it tells you they might be all right, but it's not going to tell you they'll be great. I liked him from the beginning, but that doesn't mean much until they actually prove themselves."

Prior to the sale Johnson saddled Bisque off his debut maiden victory to a runner-up finish behind eventual \$1 million Delta Downs Jackpot Stakes (gr. III) winner Rise Up in the \$100,000 Mountaineer Juvenile Stakes last August. The trainer also has a full brother to Bisque, 2-year-old Onemorequickone.

"Particularly after he sired the 2-year-old colt of the year, this season should be



RichWine stallion Charging Indian

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## 2014 Leading Sires in Indiana

➤ Go to BloodHorse.com for daily updated sire lists

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2014 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2014 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative		
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	<b>DOMESTIC DISPUTE</b> (00, Unbridled's Song), Indiana Stallion Station	\$2,000	20/5	0/0	0/0	(Gypsy Heart, \$26,790)	<b>\$86,108</b>	*312	4	0.91	1.22
2	<b>STRONG HOPE</b> (00, Grand Slam), Midwest Equine & Veterinary Hospital	\$1,800	19/3	0/0	0/0	(One Roll, \$12,150)	<b>\$44,084</b>	302	5	0.97	1.76
3	<b>DEPUTY STORM</b> (01, Forestry), R Star Stallions at RichWine Farm	\$1,500	9/3	0/0	0/0	(Olde Bay, \$15,600)	<b>\$43,688</b>	67	2	1.15	1.31
4	<b>GOLDEN SLEW</b> (99, Seattle Slew)	N/A	5/1	0/0	0/0	(Golden Grammar, \$38,750)	<b>\$42,350</b>	61	0	0.33	0.57
5	<b>WILD ZONE</b> (90, Wild Again)	Pnsd	6/3	0/0	0/0	(Te Rapa, \$24,730)	<b>\$39,347</b>	*481	14	0.80	1.07
6	<b>ENTREPRENEUR</b> (97, Cure the Blues), Nicks Farm	\$750	5/1	0/0	0/0	(Chief Ted, \$19,400)	<b>\$24,970</b>	67	0	0.58	0.88
7	<b>STAR CAT</b> (07, Storm Cat), Breakway Farm	\$2,500	3/1	0/0	0/0	(Eltanin, \$21,000)	<b>\$22,520</b>	17	0	0.80	0.97
8	<b>GOLD CASE</b> (94, Forty Niner), Nicks Farm	\$500	13/1	0/0	0/0	(Silent Purpose, \$7,320)	<b>\$16,488</b>	*584	21	1.04	1.11
9	<b>MUSTANFAR</b> (01, Unbridled), Indiana Stallion Station	\$2,000	2/1	0/0	0/0	(Anmaat, \$14,463)	<b>\$14,967</b>	22	0	0.78	1.11
10	<b>DESERT WARRIOR</b> (00, Deputy Minister)	N/A	9/1	0/0	0/0	(Speak Few Words, \$3,564)	<b>\$14,842</b>	*247	0	0.88	1.00
11	<b>VIBANK</b> (03, Silver Deputy), Hidden Springs	\$1,000	1/1	0/0	0/0	(Party Lad, \$12,120)	<b>\$12,120</b>	80	0	0.98	1.31
12	<b>HEART OF THE STORM</b> (04, Storm Cat), Southern Indiana Equine	\$5,000	13/0	0/0	0/0	(Skylar Bleu, \$2,360)	<b>\$10,748</b>	39	0	0.51	0.93
13	<b>ELITE SQUADRON</b> (04, Officer), Swiftly Farms	\$2,500	10/0	0/0	0/0	(Shirota, \$3,600)	<b>\$9,722</b>	42	0	0.41	1.16
14	<b>GOODS</b> (03, Tale of the Cat)	N/A	1/1	0/0	0/0	(Delsie Lu Burger, \$7,500)	<b>\$7,500</b>	45	0	0.67	0.70
15	<b>INAMORATO</b> (00, Tale of the Cat)	N/A	3/0	0/0	0/0	(Personalsweetheart, \$2,520)	<b>\$7,240</b>	76	0	0.25	0.41

## 2014 Leading Sires in Ohio

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2014 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2014 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative		
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	<b>THE CLIFF'S EDGE</b> (01, Gulch), Fair Winds Farm	\$2,500	20/3	0/0	0/0	(Frazil, \$38,200)	<b>\$74,987</b>	225	4	0.86	1.19
2	<b>LUNARPAL</b> (02, Successful Appeal), Mapleton Thoroughbred Farm	\$2,000	22/2	0/0	0/0	(Jias Pal, \$12,500)	<b>\$64,860</b>	100	2	0.90	1.03
3	<b>TROPICAL STORM</b> (00, Storm Cat), Raimonde Farms	\$1,500	9/3	0/0	0/0	(My Storm Trooper, \$28,200)	<b>\$48,850</b>	*91	0	0.64	0.79
4	<b>WESTERN PRIDE</b> (98, Way West), R.C. Cline Farm	N/A	12/1	0/0	0/0	(Old Man D, \$6,300)	<b>\$22,592</b>	97	1	0.57	0.95
5	<b>COMPETITOR</b> (98, Seeking the Gold)	N/A	2/2	0/0	0/0	(Mr. Much, \$7,790)	<b>\$14,090</b>	7	0	0.22	0.73
6	<b>MERCER MILL</b> (94, Forty Niner), Fair Winds Farm	N/A	2/1	0/0	0/0	(Geppetto, \$10,695)	<b>\$10,915</b>	216	15	0.69	0.90
7	<b>AENEAS</b> (99, Capote), Poplar Creek Horse Center	\$1,000	12/1	0/0	0/0	(Sara Sara, \$6,420)	<b>\$9,996</b>	83	0	0.31	0.85
8	<b>MOBIL</b> (00, Langfuhr), Mapleton Thoroughbred Farm	\$2,500	3/1	0/0	0/0	(Oilton, \$9,000)	<b>\$9,300</b>	*150	5	1.39	1.42
9	<b>KENTUCKY DANE</b> (00, Danehill)	N/A	3/1	0/0	0/0	(Chug, \$5,331)	<b>\$8,946</b>	18	2	0.54	0.51
10	<b>WAIST GUNNER JOHN</b> (98, Rhodes)	N/A	3/1	0/0	0/0	(Sweet Epic, \$6,290)	<b>\$6,833</b>	10	0	0.27	0.07

good for Drinkwiththedeevil," Leigh Ann said. "Bisque has proved him."

Deputy Storm, by Forestry, won the 2003 Tyro Stakes at Monmouth Park and the 2005 King Cotton Stakes at Oaklawn Park when campaigned first by Todd Pletcher and then by Ralph Nicks for owner James C. Spence. A Kentucky-bred out of the two-time Canadian champion

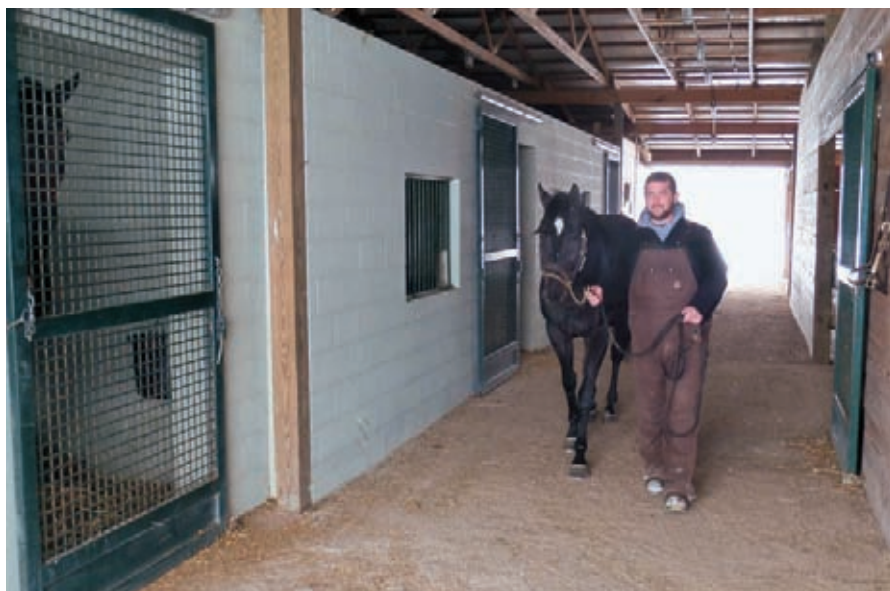
Deputy Jane West (by Silver Deputy), he also placed in two graded stakes, the 2003 Sapling Stakes (gr. III) at Monmouth and the 2004 Hutcheson Stakes (gr. II) at Gulfstream Park.

Deputy Storm is a recent addition to the R Star Stallions at RichWine Farm roster for 2014. At Northview Stallion Station in Maryland for his first eight years at

stud, he sired Deputy Fling, Magalen O. Bryant's winner of the 2011 Gilded Time Stakes and Bert Allen Stakes for trainer A. Ferris Allen III. He is also the sire of 2010 Miss Shenandoah Stakes winner Twelve Pack Shelly, who took Monmouth Park's Colleen Stakes that year and was runner-up in the Maryland Million Lassie Stakes and third in the Kentucky Juvenile Stakes (gr. III) at Churchill Downs when campaigned by John E. Salzman Jr. and partners.

"We are very grateful to have him this year," said Leigh Ann. "We appreciate the confidence Northview Stallion Station has in our quality of service. Followers familiar with Deputy Storm's progeny at the sales and his excellent wins per start percentage are excited to have such a consistent producer in Indiana. He's a proven sire of some very consistent earners, and he has a good current crop. His progeny wins per start percentage is 18%, and his progeny's average earnings per starter are at \$41,011."

Saintly Look, a son of Saint Ballado out of the Roman Majesty mare Sensational Eyes, is also a strong producer; he ranked seventh of 95 stallions on the 2013 Indiana leading sires list on BloodHorse.com by progeny earnings with \$440,542.



COURTESY RICHWINE STALLIONS

Jesse Hopper is an integral part of the operation

# 2014 Leading Sires in Illinois

Go to BloodHorse.com for daily updated sire lists

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2014 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2014 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative		
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	<b>CHEROKEE RAP</b> (01, Cherokee Run)	Died, 2012	7/2	0/0	0/0	(Our Domain, \$37,200)	<b>\$47,843</b>	67	5	1.10	1.13
2	<b>ELHAYQ (IRE)</b> (95, Nashwan), JB Stables	\$1,000	1/1	0/0	0/0	(No Crime, \$8,400)	<b>\$8,400</b>	54	0	0.35	1.19
3	<b>CASHEL CASTLE</b> (99, Silver Ghost), Hill 'N Dale Farm	\$1,000	5/0	0/0	0/0	(Sorta Sassy, \$6,840)	<b>\$8,132</b>	89	1	0.89	0.99
4	<b>INDY SNOW (GB)</b> (01, A.P. Indy), Hondo Ranch	N/A	2/0	0/0	0/0	(Faithful Servant, \$3,925)	<b>\$6,925</b>	36	1	1.26	0.87
5	<b>BUCKLE DOWN BEN</b> (98, Devil His Due)	Died, 2012	1/1	0/0	0/0	(Gusto At Dawn, \$6,600)	<b>\$6,600</b>	38	0	0.68	0.93

# 2014 Leading Sires in Iowa

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2014 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2014 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative		
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	<b>SHORE BREEZE</b> (98, Danzig), Iowa State University Horse Farm	\$1,000	11/2	0/0	0/0	(Van Demon, \$16,100)	<b>\$32,989</b>	162	1	0.88	0.77
2	<b>WOKE UP DREAMIN</b> (00, Holy Bull), Madison County Thoroughbreds	\$2,000	6/1	0/0	0/0	(Daybreak Dreamer, \$11,100)	<b>\$22,185</b>	122	6	0.75	0.96
3	<b>WILD GOLD</b> (90, Wild Again)	N/A	5/1	0/0	0/0	(Wild for Glory, \$2,860)	<b>\$7,065</b>	239	4	0.78	0.86
4	<b>ADDED EDGE</b> (00, Smart Strike), Special K Stables	\$2,000	2/0	0/0	0/0	(Added Sparkle, \$3,440)	<b>\$5,990</b>	131	5	0.91	0.86

“He’s had a limited number of foals, but if you measure what those foals have done, he has outstanding percentages,” Leigh Ann said.

Charging Indian was impressive in his first four outings but was injured and retired to stud. He is by Indian Charlie, out of the Marquetry mare Charging Water.

“Given his bloodlines, Indian Charlie out of a Marquetry mare, combined with the things he showed on the track, his owners felt he had the potential to be a great stallion,” said Leigh Ann.

Smitty, a son of Menhal out of the Pleasant Colony mare Devilish Look, followed a similar path to stud, and is new for 2014 at R Star Stallions at RichWine Farm.

“He’s the favorite horse of a partnership that is an experienced group of horsemen,” she said. “They acquired Smitty and just fell in love with him, but unfortunately he was injured after racing for a few years, and they wanted to see what kind of potential he has as a stallion. They love that he’s a grandson of Danzig out of a Pleasant Colony mare, and they feel he’s going to provide some great runners down the road.”

The Hoppers offer clients stays for mares from a breeding off the trailer to year-round care. During the busy season an average of 50 mares inhabit the farm. Although the Hoppers hire seasonal assistance, they handle the bulk of the work at their fledgling operation on their own.

“It’s a beautiful thing because we are right here at home, and this is a business that is based around family and the potential for it to grow through generations to come,” Leigh Ann said. “From our 6-year-old grandson spending time with the horses to my daughter helping out when the farrier was here, given the opportunity to see Jesse and work with him on a daily basis, everybody is busy with their hands full. We’re not the least bit afraid of the hard work and dedication it takes to keep this going.”

R Star Stallions at RichWine Farm features a specifically designed breeding and foaling facility complete with camera-monitored foaling stalls. The operation also offers sales prep services and has mares and foals listed for sale on its website, which promises “honest, straight-forward business practices.”

“Really, that is what we strive for,” said Leigh Ann. “We want to be a refreshing alternative. Our goal is to give good, quality service. We felt like people were looking for that. We operate our business in an honest manner, and when people see the kind of dedication and attention we put into the care of these horses, hopefully our reputation will speak for itself.” **BH**

## INDIANA'S LEADING SIRE OF 2014



### DOMESTIC DISPUTE

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**G1-placed Multiple G2 winner**

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2013 Stakes Winners include **FERSMILEY** (\$344,808), winner of the 2013 Banjo Picker Sprint S. at Parx Racing after setting all the fractions; and **DAYDREAMIN GRACIE** (\$258,917), 8-length winner of Pimlico's Shine Again S.

2014 FEE: \$2,000 LIVE FOAL

Special Consideration to Approved Mares Nominated to Indiana-Bred Program

Owners: Joe and Amy Landwehr

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