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**Trust and Faith: The Wholehearted Ways of Wanda Polisseni**

Wanda Polisseni does not horse around when it comes to the wellbeing of her Standardbreds as she approaches the \$1.6 million New York Sire Stakes Night of Champions. The Purple Haze Stables owner has had a successful season thus far because of it – lending her to take part in multiple final events on Friday, Sept. 10, at Yonkers Raceway.

With roughly \$245,000 in earnings this season, Polisseni says she is looking forward to race day, whether that means some of her horses taking home a title or just doing the best they can.

“You can’t ride the crest of the wave every year and if you don’t know that, this is not a business for you to be in,” said Polisseni. “I don’t have to win to be happy. If they cross the finishline, I am just as happy.”

Polisseni has three horses racing in the finals with two different trainers. Chapheart, a 2-year-old trotting colt, starts from post 6 in the third race for trainer Trond Smedshammer and trainer Jessica Okusko sends out 3-year-old filly pacer Purameri from post 8 in the seventh race and 3-year-old pacing colt Natermi from post 6 in the ninth race.

“When I first got into the business years ago, I was told I shouldn’t have all my eggs in one basket, so I started with one or two trainers. You then sort out the trainers you feel you can work best with and those with outstanding reputations. I would never allow a horse with someone who treats them any way other than natural.”

And that is where Polisseni’s trust and faith come into play. She has worked with Trond Smedshammer for nearly 10 years. Smedshammer is the trainer she sends her trotters to.

“You must have trust in your trainer and that’s what I have in Trond,” said Polisseni. “I know he is looking out for the best interest of my horses and myself. That’s how you enjoy the business; to have trust and faith in those around you.”

Polisseni also has a long history with trainer Okusko and her husband Howie, who train her pacing finalists.

Polisseni's wholehearted ways don't end there. Some would say that many retired horses put their trust and faith into Polisseni as she opened the Purple Haze Standardbred Adoption Program (PHSAP) three years ago.

The adoption program is located on a beautiful farm with 20 stalls in Oxford, NY, and ensures retired Standardbred horses transition well into a second profession.

"I am so proud of how far we have come with the adoption center," said Polisseni. "Like any person, the horse wants a job, whether that is being a companion or ride the trails, so it is our mission to adopt them out."

In the meantime, Polisseni's horses such as Chapheart and Purameri have a job waiting for them as the New York Sire Stakes Night of Champions takes place Friday at Yonkers Raceway. Post time is 7:15 p.m. You can find out more about the Purple Haze Standardbred Adoption Program at <http://www.phsap.org/>.