

# LYNN THOMAS

## From the Hair Salon to the Horse Barn: Back to Lynn's Country Girl Lifestyle

Graduate: Class of 1980    Occupation: Owner of a Horse Stable

Lynn (Schnell) Thomas graduated from Forest Park in 1980. She is currently living in St. Augustine, Florida. Growing up in Schnellville, where she worked and lived on a farm, taught her hard work and family values.

In high school, most of her memories came from band and drill corps. The yearly teepeeing--an annual Halloween custom--of her band director, Mr. Keusch, has still stuck in her head. She wasn't sure what to major in, but she chose to go to the University of Southern Indiana because it was close to home. After two years at USI, she could not find a major that she could make a career out of, so she attended Roger's Hair Academy. She believes "college gives you opportunity."

In 1986, Lynn married Larry Thomas, and they have two sons. Her oldest, Zac, is 20 years old, and Taylor is 18 years old. They are both involved in rodeo, and Taylor also plays football. She describes her family as "diverse." Lynn believes one of her greatest achievements is "raising the best kids ever."

Lynn has gone from the office to the hair salon, but none of them relate to her career today. In 2006, her family established the Rockin' T Ranch Boarding Stables. The main objective of the company is "to provide a safe and healthy environment for horses along with their riders." Work responsibilities include feeding, treating, and exercising the horses--and cleaning the stalls. She also has to train and work with her newest horse, which is two years old. For four years, she has done hippotherapy, physical therapy using horses. Autistic children are her main focus. She uses "a natural form of medicine that uses accupoint technique and chiropractic on animals." Sometimes, it can be a challenge with people--not all of them understand natural medicine. However, knowing that she is helping animals stay healthy is fulfilling to her and it keeps her going. At times, she thinks some of the horse owners "don't see past what they can comprehend," but she must always remember that the final decision is up to the owner. She is definitely proud to say that she is in this line of work; however, if she chose a different career, she would pick physical therapy. She would still work with kids and horses. Lynn does not see this as a job or career. "It is just what needs to be done." She believes she is helping the world through her work with autistic children.

Her advice to high school teens is to “enjoy the rest of your high school career and never take any friend for granted. Treat others like you want to be treated. You are no better than anyone else.” Her goal was to be the best at what she does. I believe she has accomplished this goal.