

## AMHA MASTER: MARY ANN VIRGO

Mary Ann Virgo has been involved with horses for over 55 years of her life. It all started at age 3 upon the back of her uncle's swaybacked plow horses in south central New York State. Her love of horses has never faulted. Riding lessons started at age 8 and continued on through high school mostly riding hunt seat style. Along the way she acquired her first horse for trail riding and eventually a throughbred jumper which she had when she met her husband. Showing was now part of her experience. After marriage there was a brief two year period of withdrawal symptoms when the horse was sold. However, that didn't last long. During that time she introduced her husband, who had never been near horses, to the horse world. He was smitten as they say. For the next 22 years what started out as one lonely Morgan horse being boarded out turned into a farm with indoor facilities, turnouts, pastures and all that goes into the horse business. Being proficient in saddleseat equitation, lessons and showing were a large part of her operation. Over those years her riders garnered countless awards both locally and statewide. Calm, quiet and reassuring she instilled confidence and a winning spirit in her girls. In 1992 her husband, a New York firefighter retired and they deemed that a rest was needed. The horses were all placed in caring homes with no thought of reentering the horse world. But as they say, horses are a passion or a disease that does not leave. In 2000 she purchased a Morgan trail horse and next year she and her husband found themselves back in the show ring after purchasing a spirited 5 year old Morgan gelding from a onetime student who now has a very successful training and breeding operation. Mary Ann is a kind caring individual and a dedicated horsewoman who has touched and shaped many young persons lives over the years. She is an asset to the horse world and her influence is still being felt as these young persons have gone on to participate in the various aspects of the horse world such as vetting, shoeing, training and just owning and riding the love of their lives. She is to be commended for her contribution to our world.

