

Maryland Judge: Barbara Kirchner Magrogan Celebrates 50 Years as a Horse Show Judge



Barbara Kirchner Magrogan with the famous Olympian Touch of Class outside the Capital Center at the 1984 Washington International Horse Show where Magrogan was filling in for Joe Fargis' regular groom Laurie Pitts.



Barbara Kirchner Magrogan with fellow judges Rodney Jenkins and Timmy Keys at the Pimlico 2017 Totally Thoroughbred Show.



Barbara Kirchner Magrogan's newest passion, photographing wildlife.

pany in 1999 due to personal injuries that prevented her from continuing as an EMT.

Memory Lane

In 2019 Magrogan judged the Canadian National Pinto Show saying, "It was up near Calgary and man, where those really long days. But it was a super cool experience." It is experiences like these that Magrogan remembers fondly. "I've gotten to do so much through being a judge and it's been so much fun," she added.

Breed shows are probably top on the list in terms of what Magrogan enjoys judging most. "I've judged almost all the breeds you can think of!" she said, explaining that she even has a Welsh judging certification that allows her to judge Welsh shows anywhere in the world. "I judged the Welsh big national show in California a bunch of times."

While in California, or wherever judging takes her, Magrogan makes new friends, connects with people she doesn't get to see that often and even takes in a local concert or two. That's life on the road for a horse show judge!

"I have to say, I hate judging leadline and love judging leadline at the same time," she said laughing. "It's just so hard to pick a winner but I love giving the kids a tip or two." The educational part of judging is also why Magrogan enjoys working 4-H shows. "It's basically like giving the kids a mini clinic. I love to teach them something." She added, "those kids are really eager to learn, and their parents are also eager to learn. You know they walk away having learned something."

"But it's the Thoroughbreds I love judging most!" she exclaimed. Magrogan has had a strong connection to Thoroughbreds all her life and says one of the highlights of her judg-

ing career was being a judge at the All-Thoroughbred shows held at Pimlico a few years back. "I get goose bumps just thinking about all those good looking Thoroughbreds!"

50 Years

This March, Magrogan celebrates her 71st birthday as she heads into her 50th year of judging. "I was going to retire last year but with COVID, there just weren't a lot of shows to judge at so I really wanted to give it another year," she explained. But at the same time, Magrogan said she is ready to move on from the show world.

Photography is a huge passion for Magrogan, and she's looking forward to having more time to concentrate on wildlife photography, especially birds. Magrogan, who has been living in Leonardtown with her husband, Mike since 2007, pointed out that not judging in 2020 gave them more time to explore their own community. "We did a lot of walking along the water and in the parks," she said. "I can't wait for the ospreys to start nesting again! I really love capturing them in pictures."

She added, "Mike and I are planning a cross-country road trip once all this COVID stuff is more under control. And that also means lots of taking photos!"

Magrogan does not plan to leave the horse world completely as she still loves meeting up with riding friends, taking photos of morning workouts at the tracks here in Maryland and in Aiken, South Carolina, and helping friends at shows. "I'm just ready to enjoy life in a different way and do things at my own pace," she said. "It's been a good life and I can't complain. I've done a lot of stuff!"

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