# Happy 75th Anniversary!

# Cotton States

*By C.A. Johnston Folds*

*Cotton States' club members Kerry Ury and Cyndi Lewis (above); Joanne Hardeman (right) and Connie Warlaw (far right). At left: a sampling of the tops of the ring decorations*

Seventy-five years is a long time for a hobby club to exist. Seventy-five years of producing what has become one of the top cat shows in the USA is phenomenal. However, that's what Cotton States has accomplished, and the 2013 show, held Nov. 2 & 3 at the Gwinnett Center in Duluth, GA, was the club's crowning glory.

Show manager Joanne Hardeman opened the event by welcoming judges, exhibitors, vendors, and spectators, and reading a proclamation from Duluth Mayor, Nancy Harris, declaring Nov. 2 & 3 "Cotton States Cat Club Weekend." Judges for the show included Walter Hutzler, Carla Bizzell, Liz Watson, Hope Gonano, Gary Powell and LH trainee John Adelhoch, Jo Ann Miksa-Blackwell, Douglas Myers, Wayne Trevathan, Jan Stevens and SH trainee Etsuko Hamayasu, and Sharon Powell.

Shows such as this do not happen without great effort and assistance from many sources. Cotton States is grateful to the sponsors who contributed to the success of this show, without whose help the show could not have been produced. They include CFA marketing, Dr. Elsey's, Natura Pet, and Kent Pet Group (World's Best Cat Litter and By Nature).

The show's theme, "Diamond Jubilee," was reflected in the 10 rings, each decorated in various colors and color combinations of eye-popping sparkle, including bright blue, hot pink, lavender, bronze & burgundy, light pink, purple, gold, silver & black, and Tiffany blue. Sequins, rhinestones, colored gems, and thousands of lights illuminated the show hall. Oohs and Ahhs were heard all weekend. The comments from judges, exhibitors, vendors, and spectators made all the work in transforming the show hall into "a fairyland," as one judge exclaimed, worthwhile to the club members who assembled acres of decorations over two days, transforming the bare hall into a jewel box. "FANTASTIC." "Best show ever!!!" "…a show I'll never forget." "An awesome event…fantastic show." All this excitement and splendor was captured by Larry Johnson, whose portraits made beautiful cats and kittens look even more glamorous. He even found time to take candid shots during the show. Judy Pristash, likewise, found models all over the show hall for nearly 1,000 pictures. Their work can be seen at their respective websites -- animalphoto.smugmug.com and judypristashphotos.com.

Coming from 31 states and Canada, exhibitors brought 317 cats and kittens to compete. Those chosen for finals in each ring were awarded not only ribbons indicating their positions but also a special diamond shaped crystal paperweight reflecting the color of the ring. Several of the high scoring entrants amassed quite an enviable collection of jewels. All of the nearly 20 new grands received champagne, each bottle covered in dazzling bling matching the different rings. The champagne rewards for new grands are a Cotton States tradition. Commemorative handmade cat teasers and computer calendars were presented to every judge and entrant with their catalogs.

*Judges at the show included (from left to right) Gary Powell and trainee John Adelhoch, Sharon Powell, Wayne Trevathan, and Liz Watson.*

Shoppers at the show were greeted by 26 vendors who brought specialized cat related merchandise not available in retail stores. Everything from cat trees and other types of furniture, to the best in grooming tools and products, to fine jewelry, art, apparel, and giftware, were available in abundance. Exhibitors were able to restock their favorite products, and first-time cat show spectators commented on products new to them. Shoppers also enjoyed samples of new products distributed by Randy Bish, representing Natura Pet, and Laurel Destry and Ingrid Gamez from the Kent Pet Group. Holiday shopping for cats and their humans seemed to be taking place with great vigor.

Local no-kill rescue shelters are always invited to the Cotton States show to bring information about their organizations and show some of their adoptable cats and kittens. This year Furkids, Peachtree Pet Partners, GSPCA, Siamese Rescue, Good Mews, and Noah's Ark were all on hand, and some of their animals competed in the Household Pet class. At least 2 adoptions were approved at the show and many more applications were submitted.

Show cats 10 years or older, retired or still competing, are honored every 5 years at the Cotton States show. This year, 16 cats comprised the "Golden Oldies" celebration. Judge Walter Hutzler presented them and their owners to the spectators. The cats ranged in ages from 10 years 1 month to 15 years 3 months. Judge Hutzler gave a brief profile of each cat, describing their achievements in the show ring and their retirement activities. Each received an amber colored "diamond" and a bejeweled tote bag.

It is common knowledge that exhibitors come to cat shows not only to win points and prizes; they also come to have FUN! Cotton States show attendees expect to have a good time and are rarely disappointed. This year's show offered numerous prizes for exhibitors, judges, and spectators. Door prizes for spectators were drawn twice each day. Exhibitors whose cats had not made a final on Saturday were eligible for a drawing on Sunday morning. Ten numbers were drawn, and the holders were presented with a diamond paperweight. Exhibitors who found a diamond attached to the underside of their chairs were given prizes, as were those who found a cat sticker in their catalog. Each judge presented a sit-upon to a chosen exhibitor for any reason that judge thought was deserving. For example, a cat they liked but did not use in a final, or a cat with an exceptional attribute such as a pleasing personality or perfect grooming might qualify for this recognition. These awards were given at the judges' discretion. Highest scoring cats received engraved diamond paperweights and embroidered sit-upons, and the owner of the best decorated cage received an embroidered sit-upon. All the judges and clerks were given diamond paperweights to commemorate

*Fabulously decorated rings only enhanced the judging experience!*
*(from left to right) Walter Hutzler, Hope Gonano, trainee Etsuko Hamayasu, Gary Powell, and Douglas Myers.*

their participation in the 75th annual show.

More fun was had on Saturday after the judging concluded. A celebration for everyone in the show hall included snacks and a special anniversary cake. It was a time for visiting with old friends, making new friends, and dancing to the music, which was provided by "The Band of Desperate Men," a local trio of talented musicians who play their original folk/rock/ballad style of music.

The final awards were presented on Sunday afternoon. The Mary Kate Carroll Award for highest scoring cat in show went to "Belamy Desiderata of Cinema," a Persian presented by Connie Stewart and owned by C. Stewart/Adler/Mayes. The Lilliput Cattery Award for highest scoring kitten was won by "Dotdotdot BornintheUSA of Wild Rain," an Ocicat, owned by Roger & Nancy Brown, D/C Freels. The Dorothy & Ernie Otten Award for highest scoring cat in premiership was awarded to "Leggs Flower Drum Song," an Oriental Shorthair, owned by Gail & Dennis Rampke. The Gert Greenspan HHP Award was won by "Awesome Amber of Careycats," owned by Al & Tanya Walbrun/Sherry Green. The Dot Alred Award for best cage decorations interpreting the show theme was won by two exhibitors this year, Jean Dugger and Martha Auspitz.

Cotton States members are already looking forward to their next production, show number 76. As of this writing, the theme has not yet been announced, but based on the club's history, it will be something special. For information about the 2014 show and photo galleries of past shows, please visit the club website, www.cottonstatescatclub.org. The club hopes to see the largest entry ever in 2014. It will be a not-to-be-missed event!

*Below clockwise: Connie Stewart, Sophia Staples, Priscella Eldredge, Bobbie Rubel, Jack Sweeney and Roger Horenstein, Jean Dugger and Pat Licthenberg.*

*Joanne Hardeman presenting awards to (top to bottom) Roger Brown for Best Kitten, Connie Stewart for Best Cat, Gail and Dennis Rampke for Best Cat in Premiership, and Tanya Walbrun for Best HHP.*