

Cotton States 2022

C.A. Johnson-Folds

The air was filled with excitement and great anticipation in the Gas South Convention Center on November 5 as the exhibitors arrived and began to set up their benching. Club President, Cyndi Lewis opened the 84th Annual Cotton States show at 10am, and the fun began! While the Gas South Convention Center

has been home to the Cotton States show for many years, this time attendees found a different venue; the space had been greatly enlarged and improved. Appreciative comments were heard regarding the wide spaces in the benching areas with more room to walk between the rows. The extra room was welcome, as

this show was the largest since the pandemic began: 324 entries. This year's show was dedicated to the late Joanne Hardeman, show manager extraordinaire for 11 previous years and highlighted her favorite things in each of the 8 rings.



Cotton States has a well-deserved reputation for decorating, and this year was extra special. To honor Joanne, the decorators worked their magic to make the rings perfect. Ring 1, presided over by Judge Vicki Nye, featured Joanne's beloved cats. Judge Ken Currie saw cats in Ring 2, decorated for Christmas, Joanne's favorite holiday. For his HHP final, Ken even wore his Santa hat for the presentations. Judge Jan Rogers took an African safari in Ring 3, taming a ferocious lion in one corner and a tall giraffe in the other. Joanne was especially fond of seeing the animals when she visited Africa. She also en-



joyed a getaway from the city in the North GA mountains. Judge Russell Webb sported traditional a mountain leisure look in Ring 4, ready to enjoy the out of doors.



Joanne loved flowers, and the plumeria was her favorite. In Ring 5 Judge Jacqui Bennett picked the best blooms for her finals. Joanne and her cats loved to watch the birds, bluebirds, in particular. Ring 6 showcased them and Judge Teresa Sweeney was elegantly gowned in blue-



bird blue both days. Specialty Judge Sharon Powell found her Ring, #7, filled with GA peaches, another of Joanne's favorites. Joanne enjoyed sports, especially football and baseball. In Ring 8 Specialty Judge Pam DeGolyer was ready to cheer for the Atlanta Braves or the UGA Bulldogs.

The competition was exciting for the exhibitors and spectators alike. Whenever there were cats in the rings, all the chairs in front appeared to be occupied. Spectators commented that hearing the judges explain what they looked for in the different breeds was helpful. Likewise, most exhibitors were generous in answering questions from the visitors. Jennifer and Mike Herr brought a "Pet Me" Burmese for visitors to pet and hold. A popular event on both Saturday and Sunday was the costume contest. Costumes ran the range of disguises, from Superman to Baby Shark, A UPS driver to a cat in sheep's clothing. Jacqui Bennett judged the competition on Saturday, Teresa Sweeney on Sunday.

Few folks left the show hall empty handed. The many vendors reported excellent business both days and plan to be back

next year. Not everyone can win Powerball or Mega Millions, but buying a raffle ticket or more at Cotton States increases the probability of a win. Tickets were sold in abundance on both days, and happy winners took home gift cards and baskets.

At the end of the day on Sunday, points were totaled and the best felines were announced. The highest scoring Champion was "Just So Jamie," a cream Persian; the highest scoring Premier was "Copperfield," a white Persian; the highest scoring kitten was "Baby Rays' Elon Musk," a British Shorthair, and the highest scoring Household Pet was "Guimauve Grillee.

A show the size and scope of this one takes a small army of volunteers to produce and one completely dedicated individual to take on the role of Show Man-

ager. For 11 years Joanne Har-deman was that extraordinary person. Her dedication to the job was evident in all the shows Cotton States was famous for over all those years. Even through months of serious illness, Joanne was at work planning and organizing this year's show. She passed the torch to 3 exceptional Co-Show Managers: Cyndi Lewis, Charlene Munro, and Lisa Highlan. Their commitment to produce a show that would honor Joanne did exactly that.