

Michael Shelton – Southwest Regional Director

I'm Mike Shelton, and I'm a candidate for Regional Director. Although I'm running unopposed, I think it's important for the clubs, exhibitors, and breeders of Region 5 to know something about who I am and what I'd like to accomplish for the region and for CFA.

For those of you who don't know me, my wife Lorraine and I registered our first litter under our Featherland cattery name in 1988, and we began showing in 1989. We began by breeding Persians and Himalayans, focusing on the rarer chocolate and lilac colors. This culminated in our breeding the first chocolate tabby Persian grand in CFA history, GC Featherland's Weird Science. Since then we have also bred Selkirk Rex and Turkish Angoras, and shown several other breeds along the way, including Somali, Oriental Shorthair, Japanese Bobtail, Bengal, and Khao Manee. For the last 16 years or so, we've focused on breeding Norwegian Forest Cats. I've also been a licensed clerk for over 15 years.



I have been Regional Director before, from 2010 to 2014. During this time, I served as chair of the Awards Committee, helping to develop the CFA Star Award program and the Grand of Distinction, and finalized the site selection for the Las Vegas Annual. That was a time of transition for CFA, as we moved our Central Office from New Jersey to Ohio and worked to improve the financial stability of the association. Now we are again in a time of transition, this time to our post-pandemic reality.

This new reality has posed a number of challenges for CFA and the Southwest Region. The main one that I see is the problem of re-establishing the cat fancy after an extended period of time with no shows and a corresponding loss of breeders and exhibitors. Although the pandemic was obviously a tremendous challenge for all of us, I think it does present some opportunities to re-invent certain aspects of the fancy as we move forward.

One of the challenges we face as a region is the increasing costs in many aspects of putting on shows. I'd like to see us try to work together as a region, instead of as individual clubs, to negotiate lower costs on show venues that are used multiple times per season. We are currently trying to better organize a cage service that will be provided by the region to Southern California clubs to lower those costs. As clubs start to embrace the concept of "bring your own cage" shows, I think we can re-assess our entry fee structure to better reflect true costs to clubs, but without pricing exhibitors out of shows.

I want to rebuild the show schedule, but in a logical, reasoned way. We have an opportunity to fine tune the schedule to address some of the issues we've had in the past. I strongly believe that we have to schedule the entire west coast as a block. I will communicate with RD's of adjacent regions, and of other associations, to give every club that wants to put on a show the best chance of success.

I will be a voice for all of the people in the region – including Nevada, Arizona, and Hawai'i. I want to hear from all of you about how I can help you accomplish your goals. I understand that the western US is not like the rest of CFA, and that we must maintain a strong voice at the board table.

Mike Shelton

cfa.mike.shelton@gmail.com