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AETA International Trade Fair Robust

Commerce and camaraderie converge in Baltimore, Md., on Aug. 2-4 for inaugural event

THE AMERICAN EQUESTRIAN TRADE ASSOCIATION POSTED ROBUST attendance, and market-goers experienced much more than the opportunity to buy and sell. Networking, friendly competition and conviviality were also benefits of attendance.

Five hundred and forty-eight buyers from 262 stores attended, representing 34 of the 50 United States, five foreign countries and four Canadian provinces, to purchase from 160 exhibitors representing 328 companies in 431 booths.



HAUTE CHEVAL CROWNED MISS AETA BALTIMORE 2008

Exhibitors dressed mannequins, some traditionally in beautiful equestrian apparel and others in creative arrangements of their products. The winner, Susan Fox, president of **Haute Cheval**, combined the traditional with the festive flair of a boa and "tutu" of championship ribbons to highlight her Haute Cheval Classique Polo Shirt. Fox's creativity will be rewarded with the use of two complimentary mannequins during the Winter 2009 Trade Fair.

BEST STAND AWARDS: A REAL HORSE RACE

Buyers were asked to play a major role in honoring the best exhibits at the Trade Fair. To encourage participation, their ballots were entered for a chance to win a Platinum Ticket for the Jan. 31 - Feb. 2, 2009 AETA International Trade Fair. Kristin Roberts of **Clip-ity Clop Inc.**, Brecksville, Ohio, was the winning drawing entrant.

The winners of the Best Stand Awards were **g.r.a.s.s.** of Hood River, Ore., for Best Small Stand; **Beval Saddlery** of Gladstone, N.J., for Best Medium Stand; and **Perri's Leather** of Lincoln University, Pa., for Best Large Stand.

Judges were asked to consider the following criteria in making their choices: 1) Overall Appearance; 2) Functionality; 3) Creature Comforts; and 4) Design. Size categories were determined by the number of booths: three or fewer for small exhibits, four to seven for medium exhibits and eight or more for large exhibits. The winning small and medium exhibitors each were awarded one free exhibit space, and the winning large exhibitor was awarded two free exhibit spaces at the Winter 2009 Trade Fair. In addition to complimentary exhibit space, each received an engraved-pewter Paul Revere Bowl, a certificate mounted on a plaque and a "Best in Show" ribbon.

For more information about AETA, e-mail Sherri Oken, executive director, at equestriantrade@verizon.net.