

Woolgathering

Selkirk Rex Breed Club, a CFA Affiliated Club

Results of the February Board Meeting, Inside

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Is This You???

This message was received by Lorraine Shelton via e-mail about a Selkirk Rex exhibitor. If this was you, please don't show a cat that does not want to be shown. **You are not helping!!**
>From Tord Svenson:
Somebody was showing a Selkirk Rex at the CP&F show in Boston last weekend. The cat was absolutely nuts. Late Sunday afternoon the whole showhall went silent as the PA system called for the emergency kit in a ring where a judge had apparently been mauled and the cat escaped. I witnessed one ring where the judge was completely unable to handle the cat. Hell of a way to approach trying to get this breed advanced. I've handled some Selkirk myself and found them to be good, friendly cats. NOT this one! This lady set you guys back a long way. She impressed me as the type who would go on showing the cat! After the way the cat behaved in the ring I witnessed earlier in the day, I wouldn't have shown it again. She did -- over and over -- and it got worse and worse -- until, apparently, a judge was injured.
Tord

"Things determined by the most voices
Are not the Greatest Truths, but
Noyses"

Sam the Butler

The previous message was brought to you by raptord@zipnet.com, who is entirely responsible for its content. fanciers and the tica list are unmoderated discussion lists.

A New Resource for Sphynx & Rex Enthusiasts

E-mail conversation has been carried on between Nancy McMullen, Fitzgerald Usmany in the Netherlands and Donna Bass. This is the most complete description of what Fitzgerald is into, from e-mail to Dbass:

Dear Donna,

Forgive me for this delayed answer. I took the weekend and Monday off! It has been very hectic the past weeks. The editing of SARA's MAGAZINE, the forwarding etc.

I just finished the breed description for the SARA site. Whenever it is on line, I will contact you and Nancy. It is based on the folder of Nancy and since it's for internet, very short and the photo of Socrates will be used. In SARA's MAGAZINE 1997_2 I planned to do a big article, based on the article in Cat World and of the CFA brochure. I will have you check the final draft first. If possible I would like to receive (good) pictures from Selkirks for this issue. The deadline is approx. 21 April, please send them by regular mail. (SARA's homepage is <http://www.xs4all.nl/~sandress/>) Sphynx and Rex Association (SARA),

c/o Donna Bass
P.O. Box 461
Oakland, CA 94604-0461

*A CFA affiliated breed club,
organized to provide information
and support the Selkirk Rex in
CFA.*

*Membership dues are \$15 per year
for individuals, \$20 for two
members at the same address.*

Dues include the Woolgathering,

*published quarterly.
Club Officers are:*

President: Lorraine Shelton

Vice President: Pam Sharp

Treasurer: Carolyn Koval

Secretary: Donna Bass

Directors: Sandy Babcock

Kathy Hummer

worldwide and independent
(<http://www.xs4all.nl/~sandrass/index.html>). For any questions or remarks please e-mail to: sandrass@xs4all.nl

As written to Nancy, I will make space available for the Selkirk in every issue. You (the Selkirk Breed Club) may use it as you think will promote the Selkirk best. The Selkirk is very unknown in Europe and therefore the best thing to do is to write about them and show them (PHOTO's are very essential!!!) as much as possible. Maybe then people will become interested enough to introduce the breed overhere. It doesn't matter if you haven't anything to announce, a simple picture (kittens, litters ..etc) will keep the attention alive. Although they may not (immediately) sell their kittens because of it, Selkirk members may announce their newly born kittens or expected/planned litters free of charge. Surely lots of our members will ask "Selkirks?" whenever they read it in our KITTENS? KITTENS! section.

It is strange that people judge Selkirks as "non-Rex-breed" because of assumed lack of hair. I can't tell you by heart but either Devon or Cornish is believed to lack hair as well. Anyway, Devons and Cornish are genetically unrelated (Devon is in fact related to Sphynx) so why should they be ranked under the same name (i.e. Rex)? Rex stands for "curly coated" and Selkirk is definitely curly coated!

I love Socrates. A Selkirk breeder I once contacted offered me one kitten for a very cheap price. Very tempting! But I already have 4 breeds and several hybrids walking around.

In fact I have invited LaPerm people as well (I think that's what we overhere call the Oregon Rex) to join SARA. It doesn't matter how the breed is called. For instance, they could have called the Selkirk Rex "Sheepy" in the past or the Sphynx "Baldy" ..etc.

In a genetic way I am interested in any curly coated and "hairless" cat. I find it amazing and fascinating what one simple gene (or two if it's recessive) can do to the phenotype.

To complete this e-mail (I have problems with short messages): SARA's aim is to unite breeders, fanciers and breed clubs, regardless of their nationality or association they are affiliated with. So far we have a reciprocal printing agreements with

- The Devon Rex Newsletter, Ellen Crockett
- The Progressive Sphynx Alliance, Jon Gour/Blake Gipson/Teresa Salino-Hugg
- National Association for Sphynx and Rex, Maureen Roddick and further more SARA has good relationships with
- The English Sphynx Cat Club, Jan Plumb
- The Aboriginal Russian Cat Club, Olga Shidlovskaya

We are very much interested in having a good relationship with the Selkirk Breed Club as well! We have no problem whatsoever to refer people and kitten inquirers to other breed clubs. Competition between clubs doesn't help the promoting of the breeds in general, only co-operation.

Have to stop now.
My dogs insist to be walked with!

Hope to hear from you soon.
Sincerely
Fitz

People who want to join SARA are requested to send the dues in an untransparent envelope to SARA, P.O.Box 19040, NL-3001 BA Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The ordered magazines will then be forwarded a.s.a.p.

Also, Fitz will be doing his Selkirk article in 1997_3, not _2 as listed above. I'll print what I can in the issue following the publication of his article.

President's Message:

Well, I have some bad news and some good news to report. The bad news is, of course, that our kids were turned down by the CFA board for advancement to Provisional status. So we're still at Miscellaneous for at least another year. But the good news is that we've been given a job to do by the CFA board... and IT IS DOABLE!!

I have been attending CFA board meetings for the past few years. The politics can be pretty daunting, but I actually was very encouraged about what I heard at the board table regarding the Selkirk Rex. Keep in mind we only lost by TWO votes! We received many votes of confidence and no one was more surprised than I was to hear my regional director, Phil Lindsley, fight for our acceptance. His statement that, "FOR THIS STAGE of breed development, 2/3 of the judges reporting that the cats were consistent is not unreasonable", helped us a lot. Phil had addressed some concerns to me in the past about everything from using the name "Rex" (he is a Cornish Rex breeder) to the perceived similarities between the Selkirk and Wirehair. I was pleasantly surprised to see such strong support of us at the board table.

After seeing the board members debate the issue amongst themselves, we now have a much better idea of where we stand and what we need to do to gain advancement. Diana Doernberg wants "proof" about the genetics of the Selkirk. This is simply a matter of educating the board about the differences between dominant (Selkirks), incomplete dominant (Wirehairs) and recessive genes (Bohemian Rex, Cornish, Devon). I had been warned by the editor of

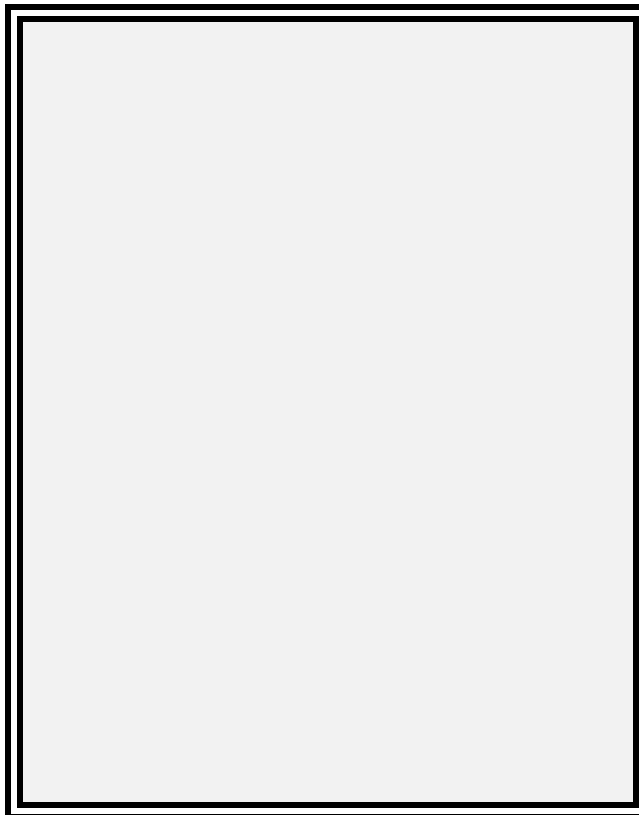
Persian News that the recent article in that publication on Bohemian Rex would raise questions about the Selkirk. I did NOT, however, count on Diana Doernberg not being aware that the Selkirk Rex is a DOMINANT gene and the Bohemian Rex is a RECESSIVE gene. I personally thought the article was quite clear in stating that the Bohemian Rex is a RECESSIVE gene resulting from the deliberate hybridization of Cornish Rex with Persians.

We have a statement from Roy Robinson stating that our gene is different from the Wirehair and other Rex genes, now we simply need to follow that up with a statement by Dr. Leslie Lyons to put even more credibility behind this issue. Get those blood samples into her!! The

more samples she has, the more she will be willing to reach conclusions about our breed. (DONNA: I'm assuming you are going to print the "how to's" on this in this issue?)

Diana Doernberg raised an objection to the number of points given to various features defining the coats of our cats. No problem... we just need to combine the points into a general "Coat" description. Others objected to our outcrosses, a problem that will be solved this year with the elimination of the American Shorthair. If you hear this argument from judges about the number of outcrosses, try this approach: "We only have two outcross breeds: persians/exotics and british shorthairs. We must incorporate them both in order to create a type distinct from either breed. If we just bred to Brits, we would develop into a curly coated version of the British Shorthair, rather than into our own distinct breed." Persians and exotics are not distinctly different breeds in type, so we are really just crossing to two breeds, not three.

Joan Miller stated she has problems telling LH's from SH's. We need to get more in front of her to help her get more comfortable with this. The question was brought up about "tweeners". This is a term that came about from a judge's seminar on the Manx. Apparently Manx breeders occasionally have cats that are



neither longhairs or shorthairs. We must emphatically state that we do NOT have this problem with our Selkirks. Because we use persians (extreme longhairs) as the source of the longhaired gene, our longhairs are obviously different than our shorthairs.

Donna Jean Thompson stated she isn't too fond of the LH's. They "took her by surprise". She just needs more experience with them and I think we can win her over.

Craig Rothermel stated that if he had seen the quality, quantity, and presentation that he saw at the board meeting IN THE SHOWS, he would have voted for us. Dick Kallmeyer echoed the same sentiment. Dick gave me an excellent suggestion... instead of showing one or two Selkirks at a show, we need to pick a couple of shows, large "campaign" shows, and come out IN FORCE. He told me that this was how the Devons gained acceptance. They didn't show as much at small local shows, but then put together LARGE classes at the big shows.

Talking with some of our members at the board meeting, a concern was expressed about the financial burden of getting this breed accepted. I wish I could tell you that there was an easier, inexpensive way to get this job done, but there isn't. Money talks in CFA. But there are ways to be smart about where we spend that money. Instead of spending \$50-100 twice a month to show locally, save up those entry fees for a BIG show

or two... even if it means flying out of your region. Most of the judges have, by now, handled our cats. That job is done. Now we need to focus on getting the KEY PEOPLE in CFA to fall in love with them. And that is done at the larger shows and by presenting the cat fancy with large classes.

The International Show is certainly a MUST for us to have a large presence at. Start saving now for Atlanta. What is the largest campaign show in YOUR region? Let propose a few of them and decide amongst ourselves to show up with a large class, wonderfully presented. I was always told that in order to advance in a company you should dress and act like someone in the position you WANT, not just at the level of the position you are at. The board has stated that they want to see more from us than the minimum stated in the guidelines for the acceptance of new breeds.

Instead of simply fulfilling the requirements for advancement from Miscellaneous to Provisional, they want us to fulfill many of the requirements for advancement from Provisional to Championship: more cats shown and in all regions of CFA. Yes, that's not "fair", but think of it this way: it will only make it easier for us to make that final leap into championship competition if we get the hard work done at this level! The harder we work to fulfill their every wish and whim at this stage, the more they will be willing to not make us "stagnate" in Provisional.

Hard work gets noticed. When the board was discussing the acceptance of new clubs, it was mentioned that a contingent from Japan had travelled to the International Show in order to speak to the various members of the board and gain their approval. One board member excitedly mentioned, "These people paid the admission fee ALL THREE DAYS!". What did **that** have to do with the benefits of having this new club in CFA? Apparently, it had EVERYTHING to do with it!

We are never going to get the vote of the "purists" of the board...those who would like to see CFA go back to only seven breeds. Think about this when you sit with your other clubs and decide for whom to cast a vote in the upcoming Director At Large election. Michael Peterson, Betty White, and Bob Bradshaw, for example, would certainly not be as receptive to our breed as Jean Grimm, Will Thompson, and Pam DelaBar.

A statement was made by Craig Rothermel and echoed by Diana Doernberg at the meeting that "The decisions we reach about breeds and colors is NOT made based on science, but based on politics". Nothing we do is going to change that basic fact. We simply need to play the game by the rules that are given to us. YES, I know how frustrating that is... but we CAN win this game.

Let's learn a little about politics. Our acceptance is going to be based on the INDIVIDUAL vote of each board member at the table. We need to focus our efforts on them. Go out of your way to be LIKEABLE. This sounds silly, but if the individual board members **like** the individual breeders, it makes the path easier. SMILE. Dress nicely at the shows. They are not just voting on the CATS, they are voting on US. It shouldn't be that way, but it is. If a judge makes a statement against our breed, state: "I understand your concerns. In fact we are working on that issue in this way..." DO NOT get argumentative or combative.

VALIDATE what they have just said, then gently refute it. Practice! Rehearse some phrases so they come out easier. Pretend that Mr. B just told you that "These are just bad wirehairs!". How would YOU respond?

Yes, we have some politics to overcome. The Norwegian Forest Cats had to fight the Maine Coon people for years. The Ragdoll people have a neverending battle with the Birman people. And we will have to fight the more vocal Wirehair folks. The best way to do that is to make sure we don't bring cats to shows that are "american" in type. If a cat is going through a coat stage where it is not curly, but rather a bit on the kinky side, KEEP THE CAT AT HOME. If the cat is "acting up" in the ring, PULL IT. And remember: GROOMING, GROOMING, GROOMING. Presentation is of the

UTMOST importance. Check those ears and eyes before every ring. Don't try a new texturizer, shampoo, or conditioner without going through a "dress rehearsal" many days before the show. When in doubt...DON'T SHOW THE CAT. For every negative experience in the ring, it takes dozens to overcome that stigma. If you hear rumors of problems with a breeder or their cats, tactfully CONFRONT THEM with it. That is the only way they can learn and we can avoid problems that reflect badly on our breed.

Get folks talking about our breed and appreciating them. Don't just bench together with your friends... bench next to people who may not have seen these cats before. Identify the "movers and shakers" in CFA in your region and get to know them. Let them get to know our cats. The more friends YOU make, the better it will be for our breed.

Craig Rothermel, Willa Hawke, Laina Aitken, Dick Kallmeyer, Jody Garrison, Becky Jones, Wayne Trevathan, Diana Doernberg, Mark Hannon, Donna Jean Thompson, and Don Williams. These are the people who voted against our advancement. If you don't know who these people are, FIND OUT. Talk to them one on one. Find out how we can win them over.

I had wanted so much for this President's Message to be a celebration of having our breed advanced to Provisional status. But we all knew when we started out on

this path that the going would NOT be easy. Or cheap. Or fast. As the Nissan commercials say: "Enjoy the ride!". Have fun exposing our cats to new people. Celebrate the beauty of our cats, even if they aren't eligible for awards yet. Hug those kitties. We must keep our heads up and continue on this long and windy road. We only have to win over TWO board members... and at least three stated personally to me that they see themselves voting FOR this breed in the future. Don't get discouraged at this minor setback. Our day will come!

--Lorraine

Another Way to Look at the Problem

by Nancy McMullen

Suppose your family decided it would be nice to have a second car. Not a necessity, butnice. You are willing to spend \$2000 plus fix up costs. The salesman has one for you which needs several minor repairs, not very costly. However, in all honesty he warns you that even if you faithfully do these repairs you may never be able to drive the car on the freeway. Would you spend the \$2000 on the car or renovate part of the kitchen (or.....)???

So, if you haven't figured this out, the car is CFA. The costs for repairs is our entries into cat shows during the year. The

driving on the freeway is Selkirks getting accepted. What is your perspective on this? Each of us has to decide for him/herself. CFA likes people to spend money. If you don't spend the money and shine up to people you're not going to get anywhere, the Board is saying. You can jump through all the hoops we have set up for a new Breed to be accepted and after you spend lots of time and money to present your cats, we'll set up some more hoops. Hoops that we have never requested any other breed to jump through. Example: DNA testing. Example: Having to defend our breed against breeds that might come up in the future (La Perm, Bohemian Rex and the what if curly cat that might show up years down the road).

Some board members don't know the difference between dominant and recessive? The first thing you learn in high school genetics? These people are supposed to be knowledgeable, rational people to have arrived at this position in CFA. Or, are they saying they know their genetics, but don't care?

Nothing regarding the acceptance of other breeds in the past has anything to do with our getting accepted. There is no point in our getting

upset with them bringing up worries they might have about curly to curly breeding and health problems. Never mind the breeds that have been accepted that have had kittens if they don't outcross. If there were logic taking place Selkirks would be accepted. If you were doing business with these people in the real world, would you continue doing business with them?

This is why I question just how DOABLE this job is and whether this is a MINOR setback. We presented many lovely, consistent looking cats. The magnificent proposal, explaining the genetics and other differences between our cats and other cats (wirehairs) was not even read by some board members (or not understood due to lack of genetics knowledge). Would our coming out in force make a difference? Maybe yes, maybe no. Remind you of a bowl full of Jelly?

Are you willing to work really hard with a group of people who set up rules and don't follow them, are proud that they are not making decisions based on science (logic) but politics, and are influenced by things as trite as the fact that a group of Japanese paid to get into the Anaheim show for 3 days.

What is our alternative? Probably to continue as we have for the past 5 years. Go to the shows you can afford to go to. Bathe your cat first in a grease cutter like Dawn and then in a moisturizing shampoo. NEVER use a conditioner before a show. Rinse, Rinse, and Rinse and then (as one Persian breeder told me 5 years ago) when you think you're finished rinsing, start the whole rinse process over again. Do not show a cat that is only a breeder!!! If all your kittens come out with flat faces don't show them just because they have curls. That's not enough for these judges anymore. It must have type and be consistent with the standard or you are going to have those judges, who are looking for a negative, filling out those sheets not emphasizing the good things they've seen.

Remember - this is supposed to be FUN! Go to the shows with your friends and have fun if that is what you want. It's CATS, only CATS, just our fun sweet CATS. I don't think there is a Selkirk breeder that is in this to make money, or to improve their self esteem, or to conquer the cat world. This isn't the breed to be in if someone wants cats to do these things for them. If you want to fly to cat show and you want to sit with new people rather than

a friend at a show, be sure to that. But don't lose your perspective. Have FUN.

Things to Do at a Show

by Donna Bass

You may think that once the judge has looked at your cat and written out his report, that is the last chance you have to make any comments. Well, you're wrong. Believe it or not, you have the right to see the judges' sheets after your cats have been judged - any breed. The Master Clerk at the show is required to post the results of each ring's judging where everyone can see them (per show rules). That includes the Miscellaneous sheets the judges fill out about our cats.

However, before that stage, when you are showing your cat, ask the judge for his opinion. Don't accept "It's okay" or "No comment" from a judge. Ask specifically if they found anything wrong. Ask specifically if they have any comments on what we should be doing to improve our cats. If the judge still gives you "It's okay" or "No comment", then you have ammunition!

After your cat has been judged and you have a few minutes, wander over to the Master Clerk and ask to see the Miscellaneous sheets. If the judge is one who waits until the end of the day to turn them

in, you will have to wait until the judge finishes his/her last final before getting them.

If you have never clerked, you may not know what the process is. The judge fills out all official CFA forms (breed, finals, etc.) and gives them to the clerk to verify. The clerk gives or takes them to the Master Clerk who writes them in his book, verifies the accuracy and then **returns a copy to the judge**. Until the copies have all been returned to the judge, the judge **may not leave the showhall**. This is your opportunity.

Look at those forms, and while the judge is waiting for the Master Clerk to finish, request the judge to explain any problems he/she may have found with your cat (unbathed, ungroomed, difficult to handle, etc.) If the judge refuses to address your concerns, write a "protest" about the judge's inaccurate assessment of your cat, and his/her unwillingness to respond, ask a couple of friends to be witnesses and turn it in to the Master Clerk.

This is all legal, allowed and is covered under several sections of the show rules. I use the word "protest" lightly, because I don't want anyone to think that we have a bone to pick with anyone. We just want a valid opinion about our cats being turned in to CFA. This is one way to at least get a

dissenting viewpoint across. Unless the judge is willing to make a change to his evaluation, this is the best we can do, right now.

It requires extra work on your part, but may pay off in the long run, once judges start hearing that we are responding to inaccurate or undiscussed problems. It's up to us to insure that our cats are fairly evaluated, since it is obvious the judges are unwilling to do so!

The Miscellaneous process is supposed to be a two-way street. Let's make sure it is and that the information on both sides is accurate!

A Devil's Advocate Viewpoint:

by Donna Bass, responding to Lorraine's message, above.

The board has stated that they want to see more from us than the minimum stated in the guidelines for the acceptance of new breeds.

At the Board meeting, it was obvious to me that most of the people who made the comments about "more cats being shown" or "more than the minimum" have not read the rules for advancement for CFA. Nowhere in those rules does it even state that any cats of a new breed or color have to be shown. Nor is it even suggested that any should be shown to advance from Miscellaneous to Provisional.

From May, 1995 through January, 1997 we had **27 different** Selkirks being shown, and they have been shown in every region (even region 7!). This is the minimum

required for consideration for advancement from Provisional to Championship. Are we going to be expected to have 25 times more than required to advance (using the ratio between 0 - 1 and 27 as a comparison) because of the board's whim? The next time we present before the board are we going to have to have 50 cats shown in every region?

If the rules change every time the board changes, then there is something seriously wrong with the process. I'm not concerned about what

the rules are, just that they **are applied equally to everyone, everytime, and that they are stated, in writing.**

Accepting that ~~At~~ the whim of the Board~~@~~ is a valid criterion for advancement is to say that there are no rules for advancement, so it's suck up time and we'd better dig deep for bribes to the ~~A~~right people~~@~~. My principles fight vehemently against the idea that bribery and sucking up is an acceptable way to do business with anyone!!!

Before 1979, there were no rules for advancement. Any breed

could come along and after being shown for a while could be accepted into Championship status. **Until the Tonkinese came along.** At this point, the ~~A~~purists~~@~~ on the Board did not want the Tonkinese as a separate breed, coming as they did from Siamese and Burmese (and since the Burmese actually came from a Tonkinese - Wong Mao), they made up these ~~A~~rules for advancement~~@~~ to keep the Tonkinese out of CFA.

Interesting numbers from the March, 1997 Almanac.

	1996		1995		1986	
Breed	Litters	Kittens	Litters	Kittens	Litters	Kittens
American Wirehair	26	82	44	129	15	34
Selkirk Rex	36	136	43	154	0	0
Difference	10	54	-1	25	-15	-34

Breed Registration Totals 1/1/96 - 12/31/96, compared to 1/1/95 - 12/31/95

	1996	1995
American Wirehair	54	74
Selkirk Rex	72	64

Is it any wonder Bradshaw doesn't want us around?

Well, as you know if you go to shows, Tonkinese are in championship status. In 1979 they asked for recognition, were told they had to go through the brand-new Miscellaneous process and then Provisional status and then into Championship. In 1984, Tonkinese were accepted into championship status. They did not go away, they followed the rules **and so did the Board!**

If the CFA board can accept a breed they blatantly wanted to keep out, by making all these new rules, then what does that tell us when we have worked very hard to show our cats at shows, prepare a tight standard and present our proposal that covered much more than they needed or wanted to know, and no one has said they want to keep us out - except Bradshaw, of course? And they still turn us down? According to the

numbers that Diana Doernberg read, of those 27 different cats judged in all 7 regions, the results of judges comments were as follows (prior notice in *italics*):

- #1 How many of the entered cats did you handle from 27 breeds already accepted for (Previous indicated 45 judges comments, unknown ~~Championship status~~ by CFA?
- #2 Is this the first time you have handled this breed in the judging ring?
Y7 N136 (Y=4.9% N=95.1%)
Y17 N28 (Y=37.8% N=62.2%)
- #3 Were the cats in good physical condition?
Y133 N13 (Y=91.1% N=8.9%)
Y38 N6 (Y=86.4% N=13.6%)
- #4 Were the cats well-behaved in the judging ring?
Y141 N4 (Y=97.2% N=2.8%)
Y41 N2 (Y=95.3% N=6.5%)
- #5 Were the cats consistent in type?
Y66 N32 (Y=67.3% N=32.7%)
Y16 N16 (Y=50% N=50%)
- #6 Did you find any genetic problems in these cats?
Y4 N138 (Y=2.8% N=97.2%)
Y1 N41 (Y=2.4% N=97.6%)
- #7 Do you feel that this breed is distinctive enough to set it apart from 27 breeds already accepted for Championship status by CFA?
Y91 N45 (Y=66.9% N=33.1%)
Y29 N13 (Y=69.0% N=31.0%)
- #8 Do you feel these cats merit consideration by the CFA Board for Provisional status?
Y72 N63 (Y=53.3% N=46.7%)
Y19 N24 (Y=44.2% N=55.8%)

These are better numbers than we got the last time the numbers were presented to the board. If that is not considered a plus, what is? When a majority of the judges feel that a breed should be considered for advancement, why can't the Board?
"The harder we work to fulfill

their every wish and whim at this stage, the more they will be willing to not make us "stagnate" in Provisional." Not necessarily. If, as I am beginning to feel, this particular board will never accept us, if we jump through every hoop and dance every dance they require, they will continue to require more hoops and more dances until we give up.

"Nothing we do is going to change that basic fact. We simply need to play the game by the rules that are given to us." (Politics being more important than genetics). There is something that will change that basic fact and "the rules" and change them quick. Help vote those members off the board who do not understand the difference between a dominant and a recessive. Help vote off the board those members who believe that politics is more important than science in determining what happens to a breed. There are 17 people running for the seven Director-At-Large positions. A list is enclosed.

Join every club you can get your little paws into. Urge the members of your club to vote for board members who understand that the stated mission of CFA is the welfare of cats, not exhibitors or judges. Talk to people about the future of CFA and its breeds. Read the *Time* magazine article about what is happening to dogs genetically and change canine to feline in every instance and you will see it could be talking about CFA cats in the next few years!!

As much as I prefer CFA over TICA in just about every regard, the one area where TICA is far superior to CFA is in its genetic emphasis. While I have disagreements with some of their genetic decisions (the Bengal, the Munchkin), for the most part their decisions are based on genetic issues, not political ones.

So where do we go from here? That is certainly up to each of us. If you want to show at every show in your region with one or two cats, do

so. If you would rather be part of a large contingent at a few large shows, then help determine what shows and who will be involved.

According to comments told to me by others, the following are the reasons we weren't accepted. I'll try to respond to these and maybe you might find different answers.

Craig Rothermel, President and the one who is supposed to lead CFA on its quest to fulfill its stated mission of care and consideration of the pedigreed cat, stated that genetics has no place in decisions made by the CFA Board, only politics. And Diana Doernberg agreed!

Diana Doernberg believes that we haven't yet described what our cats are!

Don Williams, former president and current director-at-large indicated that the only reason he accepted the breed for registration 5 years ago was because he loved the "flowing, curly coat" on a white cat that was presented to the board.

Dick Kallmeyer, along with others, mentioned that we needed to show more cats, we needed more consistency and that we were showing dirty cats.

I would like to respond to the statements listed above, since the Board does not allow for dissent or discussion by non-Board members.

1. Craig Rothermel: CFA's stated mission is the registration and exhibition of pedigreed cats, as well as protection of the health and well-being of the breeds. No where in that mission statement does it say that the mission of CFA is to protect the political lives or power of the Board members, judges or exhibitors.

Making the statement that only politics determines the decisions of the Board puts him against the stated mission of CFA. Cats don't play politics. People can, and the CFA Board apparently is willing to, play politics with the lives of the cats. Which do you think is the most

appropriate way to proceed: politics or genetics? Which has the greatest potential for most affecting your breed, negatively and positively? Perhaps you believe that bribery and kissing up are the only ways to move ahead.

My principals tell me that merit should be of more importance than "political" decisions. I won't suck up to anyone and I certainly wouldn't try to bribe anyone. I have always believed and will always believe that it is what you know that counts, not who you know. If more people believed that, life would certainly be a lot fairer! If judges and the Board members cannot separate the good from the bad without bribes or brown-nosers, then they are incompetent and should be removed from their respective offices.

2. Diana Doernberg: Apparently she can't tell the difference between a dominant spontaneous mutation and a hybrid from a recessive. She also apparently believes that we need to use our crystal balls to determine what other curly breeds might be doing in the future.

In addition, remember she is the one who threatened the Persian breeders that Selkirks would want to be accepted as a curly Persian at some later date if Exotics were made part of the Persian breed! Several clubs are working to get her voted off the Board and are sending out resolutions to prohibit her from not accepting the 60% vote of the Breed Councils!

3. Don Williams: Don is remembering a cat that mostly doesn't exist. Yes, there was a cat with a white, flowing coat presented to the Board in 1992. Unfortunately, the cat didn't have much curl, which is why the coat was flowing (and we will be taking the word "flowing" out of our standard for this reason). A properly curly coat does not flow, does not reach the floor, and most of all, probably would not appeal to Persian breeders and exhibitors because the amount of curl makes it look . . .ungroomed. In

addition, the early cats did not then and do not now conform to the standard that we have been working on for the last five years. Over the past few new breeds, the Board has been adamant that the judges should not be determining what a breed should look like. Sounds like Don Williams doesn't believe that, in fact, believes that if a new breed doesn't look like he wants it to, it doesn't deserve to be a breed in CFA.

4. Dick Kallmeyer & Others:

A) *More Cats Shown* There seems to be some confusion here. This is the hardest one to understand, because in the "Rules for Advancement", there is no requirement that any cats be shown in Miscellaneous class. The only requirement for numbers occurs when a breed is being advanced from Provisional to Championship. The minimum is 25 different cats, with cats being shown in every region in the continental U.S. Since we showed 27 different cats around the country from May 1, 1995 through January 17, 1997, does that mean we have completed the requirements for advancement to Provisional status? Then why couldn't we get advanced into Miscellaneous?

B) *Consistency* Consistency comes with years of line-breeding and in-breeding. We are not even close to the time when we can consider only breeding Selkirk to Selkirk. Even some breeds that have been around for a long time are not consistent. How many of you would be able to say that 100% of the non-Selkirk cats you produce are consistent to the standard and to all the other cats out there? Close to 0%, I'll bet. The cats we are showing all meet the standard a lot better than the cats that were originally produced, but we still have a ways to go *as do all breeds!!* The miscellaneous process supposedly is a chance for breeders and judges to learn from each other about what is expected from a new breed. Apparently Dick and others

would rather believe the 1/3 of judges who believe our cats are not consistent than the 2/3 of judges who think they are!

It is not a time for producing consistent grand champion quality cats. That will come. In some breeds, it occurs quicker than others, in some it takes a long time, but there are far better reasons for particular breeding practices than just producing show winners.

One very powerful reason is the sound genetic health of our breed. As some of you are noticing with your breeds, gene pools shrink at an astounding rate. We don't want ours to shrivel up and die in 20 or 30 generations as some are doing.

Someone at a show mentioned that a dog breeder said that the feline stud books had been closed off "centuries" too early. Consider the problems dogs are having now with many centuries more breeding efforts behind them!

C) Some, if not all, of the complaints about "dirty cats" are uncalled for. At the International Show, Larry Adkison wrote that one of the cats being shown was "unbathed". Since I helped bathe over half of them, and I handled the rest, I know none of them was unclean, unbathed or ungroomed. Once again, Dick and others would rather believe the 13 judges who said our cats were not in good condition, rather than the 133 who said they were!

If judges are going by Persian standards, then perhaps they might think them ungroomed. If a judge is so closed-minded as to think that and not ask the exhibitor about it, we all suffer. Remember, this is a two-way street. We can't help you learn if you don't talk to us, and we can't learn if you won't talk to us!!!

Work to ensure that your cats meet the standard, are well-behaved and well-groomed when you take them to shows. We all benefit when we all work toward the same goal!

Standard Changes

As mentioned above, there are two areas that need changing in the standard.

1) Take the word "flowing" out of the description of the long-hair coat. The coat, if properly curly, does not flow. It kind of clumps!

2) Change the points for coat to read:

COAT (30)

Curl, Texture, Density

30

Since all three are necessary for the properly curly coat, we shouldn't break out the three into separate point counts.

3) Change the cutoff date for American Shorthairs to July 31, 1997. Any litters born after that date cannot have an American Shorthair as a parent.

4) COAT: Add: Coat is a random, unstructured coat, and should show curl all over.

5) COAT LENGTH: Change the standard to include: The differences in coat length are most obviously seen on the tail and ruff. On the shorthairs, the tail hair is the same length as the coat and tail curls are plush and lie compactly around the tail. The ruff is the same length as the coat fur. On the longhairs, the tail curls are plummy and stand out away from the tail. The hair length is obviously long. The ruff hairs are also longer and frame the face.

Unless you let me know of your objections by July 1, 1997, I will incorporate these changes into the proposed standard.

Conversation With Kim

I spoke to Kim Everett and suggested some changes to the Miscellaneous process. She agreed that we should attempt to make changes to the process, so here are some suggestions. If we can agree on the proper wording, we can have them presented from the floor at the Annual. We can provide a

copy of these for each delegate before the vote, so each one knows the reasons for the vote. Your comments are desired!!!

1) Remove the following sentences from the "Rules Governing Acceptance and Advancement of New Breeds and Colors (Effective May 1, 1979)"

a) Paragraph 1, sentence 3: "Registration does not guarantee eventual progression to Provisional and Championship status."

b) Paragraph 8, sentence 4: "It should be emphasized that registration of a new breed or new color does not automatically insure future championship status."

Rationale: These sentences say, basically, that there are no rules! Nobody would do anything if everytime they got close to winning the rules changed. Also, by including these sentences, they have opened themselves up to charges of discrimination, since it becomes a whim of the board if a new breed or color is advanced, not the actual merits of the new breed or color.

2) Replace the following sentence:

Paragraph 14: "Compliance with the requirements of these rules will not necessarily guarantee acceptance of the breed or color by the CFA Board." to read "Failure to adequately address or complete all requirements for advancement from Miscellaneous to Provisional shall be the only grounds for refusing such advancement."

Rationale: Same as above. Once a breed has been accepted, as long as requirements are met, including proving its benefit to the fancy,

there should be no impediments to its acceptance.

3) Replace the following sentence: III. Acceptance for Championship show competition, sentence 3: "Again it is emphasized that acceptance at the previous levels does not insure automatic acceptance for Championship status." to read "Failure to complete all requirements for advancement shall be the only grounds for refusing such advancement."

Rationale: Same as above. Once a breed has been accepted, as long as requirements are met, including proving its benefit to the fancy, there should be no impediments to its acceptance.

4) Add to "I. Recognition for Registration requires:"

E. A proposal indicating any genetic problems or genetic abnormalities and the genetic basis for the new breed or new color, based on breeding, not microbiology or other scientific studies, and the benefit of such new breed or new color to the cat fancy.

Rationale: This is the point at which the Board has the decision to make whether to accept a new breed. Such a proposal would indicate a fairly substantial amount of work and should answer any questions about the viability of the breed. The sentence on the basis for such genetic knowledge should be breeding, not scientific studies is to preclude requiring DNA studies for new breeds. The cost and time factors are prohibitive at this time and they may not prove anything!

5) Add to "II. Recognition for status as a Provisional Breed requires:"

H. Proof that at least 25 different cats have been shown throughout all the continental US regions and Canada in CFA shows.

I. Indications that at least 50% of judges who have evaluated the new breed or color agree that the breed is distinct from existing and recognized breeds and also merits advancement.

Rationale: Since there are no requirements for showing cats in Miscellaneous currently, this would address those who feel that the cats must be shown to be advanced. It also requires that a certain percentage of judges who have evaluated the breed accept it as a new breed and feel it merits advancement.

6) Make the following changes and additions to "III. Acceptance for Championship show competition."

C. Change to 35 different cats

D. Proof that at least 75% of judges agree that the new breed or color merits advancement.

E. Proof that at least 75% of judges agree that the new breed or color is distinct from existing and recognized breeds.

F. Proof that at least 50% of judges agree that the cats being shown as a new breed or color meet the proposed standard.

Rationale: This will toughen the move from Miscellaneous to Provisional, but since the move is no longer subject to the whim of the board, requires that a large majority of the evaluating judges approve the new breed or color.

7) Change Miscellaneous Breed

P 12 March, 1997

Woolgathering

Evaluation form, question 5:

From "Were the cats consistent in type?"

to: "Did the cats meet the proposed standard?"

Rationale: If this is something that can be changed by resolution, it needs to be changed. All breeds in the fancy and all advertising by CFA state that cats are not judged against each other, but are judged against a standard. New breeds should be judged the same way. If the standard is too loose, the miscellaneous process is when the standard is supposed to be discussed and tightened.

New Address

I have a new address and phone number (if you haven't gotten my P.O. Box number previously) but my phone won't be in service until mid-May sometime.

Donna Bass
P.O. Box 461
Oakland, CA 94604-0461
(510) 689-9209

Remember, send in any or all of the following:

1. Membership renewals
2. New memberships
3. \$10 B&W copy of Proposal
4. \$25 Color copy of Proposal
5. Pedigrees of your cats
6. Kittens for sale
7. Stud service available
8. Articles, letters and comments!

P 14 March, 1997

Woolgathering

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