

Woolgathering

Vol. 4 No. 4
December, 1997

Selkirk Rex Breed Club, a CFA Affiliated Club

Results of our Election

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Election Results

It was a very good turn out this year for our elections. Except for one write-in vote for Breed Council Secretary, the nominated officers were elected. Our new Board is thus:

- President:** Nancy McMullen
Vice President: Pam Sharp
Treasurer: Carolyn Koval
Secretary: Donna Bass
Breed Council Secretary:
Donna Bass
Directors: Sandy Babcock
Robin Bary
Kathy Hummer

Now we have to work together to get the Selkirk Rex accepted into Provisional Status in CFA. Your support is needed: Show up in Houston, TX the first weekend in February (2/7-8) with your very best Selkirk Rex and a positive attitude and maybe we can get advanced this time. In addition, we will be trying to get the outcross situation resolved correctly so that Persians, Exotics and Brits are our outcrosses, not Brits and Americans.

Any help you can give for the costs of copying of the proposal would be greatly appreciated.

About the proposal:
16 mbytes on my hard drive
66 pages - all in color, all printed on my printer.
20 color pictures!

Web Page Announced

I have created a web page for the Selkirk Rex Breed Club. You can check it out at <http://www.slip.net/~dbass>

There is a button on the home page that you can check if you would like to send comments about the web page. It will get emailed to me. Don't be shy, my feelings won't be hurt (well. . . maybe not too badly) by your honesty. It is changable - if it doesn't "work" for you, let me know.

Also, if you would like to be included on the list of breeders, write a brief summary of the colors, hair lengths, etc. you are working with, the outcrosses you are using (persian, exotic, brits - no specific lines, just general), your name, cattery name, phone number, *optional* mailing address, email address, web page if you have one and would like it linked and anything else you can think of. If you have a picture you would like to have as your "hot button" send it along, preferably already scanned!

This page is for the members of the club - if there is something you would like included, let me know.

Also, you don't need to have an email address to be included. I'll just indicate that you have to be called, and include your phone number. Free advertising!

Donna

Woolgathering

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: Nancy McMullen
Vice President: Pam Sharp
Treasurer: Carolyn Koval
Secretary: Donna Bass
Directors: Sandy Babcock
Robin Bary
Kathy Hummer*

Pictures Received

1 black/white curly boy born 9/2/97



Akitleetivytu "Ivy"

2 sh blue tortie girls born 7/9/97

For pedigrees and further information about the above kittens, contact Bob & Sandy Lowenstein

From Stephanie Zabel
Starstream
St. Paul, MN



Thanks to everyone who has sent pictures - either by email or by snailmail. Some examples are below:

Kittens Available:

From: Bob and Sandy Lowenstein
Ringlet Ranch
Austin, TX

1 blue boy, 1 red boy both 9 months old both curly
1 sh female brown tabby 9 months old

1 spotted brown tabby curly male born 7/8/96 (AB blood type)

Sire: Starstream Mewsprint
Dam: (tica) Ch Oaktree Silver Sparkle of Starstream
Born 10/6/97 (some LH & some SH)

1 female silver mackerel tabby & white curly
1 female black and white curly
1 male black curly
1 female brown mackerel tabby and white straight

Expected 11/3/97

Sire: Ch Sootypaws Charmin Tad of Starstream (Per)
Dam: Oaktree Ariel of Starstream

(all LH)
Expecting shaded tortoiseshell females and shaded cameo males.

Expected 12/6/97
Sire: Ch Sootypaws Charmin Tad of Starstream
Dam: (tica) CH Oaktree Kaitlyn of Starstream (socrates daughter)



Expecting all LH, shaded silver males and females, shaded tortoiseshell femals, shaded cameo males.

For further information and pedigrees, contact Stephanie Zabel at 612-793-0116.

From Donna Bass: I still have the following available:

1 cream cameo SH curly male - very loving!
1 cream point male - a little shy, almost too extreme in type.
1 black male, just about perfect, but doesn't like to be handled, unfortunately.

All curly males, all from Pixelpoint Tequila Sunrise and Cheri Jubilee of Pixelpoint.

Also available: If you want those hybrid colors, I have a SH ST natural mink female who is 3/4E Exotic and 1/4 Selkirk - good for outcrossing! Very typy, just straight hair!
From Woolibaar Suddenly Seymour and Wilnbri Dreamcycle of Pixelpoint.

I also have a homozygous female from Pixelpoint Tequila Sunrise and Woolibaar Bon Bon of Pamacs - a tortie lynx (mink?) Point. Also her brother, a lynx mink.

I have some adults available for breeding, stud service available and neutered curly pets.

Contact Donna at (510) 689-9209 or email to dbass@slip.net.

If you have kittens available or are expecting kittens soon, let me know and I'll put them in the Woolgathering so everyone will know who has what.

Don't forget to check out the web page

<http://www.slip.net/~dbass/>

and send in your information so you can be included!

President' Message

by *Nancy McMullen*

We "cat" people all know that our "babies" display many characteristics similar to us human beings. Little did we know how close they are to us deep into our very cell structure! Just how much cats and humans have in common is a serious subject for study by the National Cancer Institute's

Laboratory of Genomic Diversity in Frederick, Maryland. Stephen J. O'Brien in National Geographic, June, 1997 writes about his research group, which has been studying for almost 20 years the genes that make a cat a cat - its GENOME.

Well, how come these big shots are studying our kitties? How come not dogs, or monkeys? It's my hope to explain this in "layman - laywomen's" language, without scaring away any of you that haven't a scientific background!

Actually, many genome studies are being done on dogs, mice, flies and worms. And, of course, humans. The HUMAN GENOME PROJECT is an attempt by international scientists to find out what gene in our bodies causes a particular characteristic - like where is the gene that causes my curly hair, my brother's curly hair, my father's curly hair? These research scientists call themselves "map makers".

Steve O'Brien has done extensive work in cheetah genetics. To make his work more understandable to the lay person he wrote an analogy:

The genome is an encyclopedia of information that we would like to read. The chromosomes are the volumes of the encyclopedia. The genes are the sentences in the "volume." We all know that sentences are made of letters. Well, these are the molecules of DNA in the

genes. If you can't read the letters you can't figure out the sentences and you can't read the book! So all these scientists are just trying to learn how to read!

The interesting things they have discovered so far are:

1. Cats and humans have the same number of genes.
2. The sequence of the DNA (the way the "letters" are lined up in the words and sentences) are so similar for cats and humans that it is possible to determine which gene is which just by comparing their DNA sequences.

For example: presuming that curly hair is caused by only one gene, if they can find a curly haired gene on people, they can just look at the same gene on a cat to find the curly DNA. (It may take them a while to do this.)

Long strings of human genes are repeated when the same genes are mapped in cats. If you could rearrange (or flip) just a few cat chromosomes, you would convert its gene order into a human pattern. (To do that for a dog or mouse would require at least 100 flips.) Another way of putting it is: if you were reading the genetic "sentence" that describes a human and then read the one describing a cat, the spelling would be switched around in one of the words, but all the rest of the words are the same! Not so for dogs or mice.

Web Page for the Selkirk Rex Breed Club is <http://www.slip.net/~dbass/>

This is a new URL (address) for the web page. I changed I SPs when I discovered that tdl.com was a toll-call (at .05 per minute!). Slip.net is a local call.

If you would like to be included on the web page (you don't need to have email, a computer or anything - just a phone and an address!), send in your name, address, phone, email address, fax number, web page URL (I will link your info to your web page), a brief description of what you are doing with selkirks (long hair, short hair, colors, outcross breeds, etc. etc.) and any other information you would like to have included.

You can either:

email to dbass@slip.net; fax to 510-689-9209 (call first so I can set it up);
snailmail to P.O. Box 461, Oakland, CA 94604

Make your presence known. I have submitted this page to several search engines, so some time in the next few weeks, when you do a search on "selkirk rex" (among other things), it will bring up this page! If anyone is interested, they can also reach the page and search for a breeder nearby. Be sure to be included!

Houston Update:

From CFA:

The room is 1400 square feet with dimensions of 30' x 36'. We will request 12 tables for all of you, so that each group would have 4 tables 6' long. Four tables butted up against each other should hold 6 double cages. I think it is safe to say you can bring 6-8 cats and you should still have plenty of room. I am telling all of the groups the same thing. Also, we are requesting green skirting (I believe it is a hunter green) for the tables. You must bring plastic to cover the tops of the tables.

The hotel is the Houston Airport Marriott; phone number is 281-443-2310.

That should just about do it. I'll look forward to seeing you there. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to call me. Best wishes for a Happy New Year!

I would like pedigrees of the cats that will be shown in Houston, so I can make nice placards for each one (and a scanned picture if you have one!). Send them by 1/15/98 so I will have time to get everything entered. Let me know (see addresses above!) as soon as possible if you are planning on bringing a cat.

Let's have a great turn out at this meeting!

People have 100,000 genes. 7,000 have been “mapped” so far. Cats have 100,000 genes. 100 have been mapped so far.

So - why go to all this trouble - comparing cats to humans? They want to find the DNA sequences (those “letters” in the encyclopedia) that have to do with hereditary DEFECTS IN CATS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO HUMAN AFFLICTIONS such as hemophilia. Cats suffer from some of the same cancers as people and also have some of the same viral infections, including a version of the one that causes AIDS.

“Because cats and humans and humans are such a close genetic fit and because cats, both wild and domestic, have evolved genetic solutions to various diseases, understanding these strategies can provide important clues about our own responses to those diseases. By unlocking the secrets in genes, we are hoping to find better treatments, and even cures, for fatal maladies in humans and cats as well.” (p. 80)

Viruses can jump from one species to another. AIDS and Ebola are the worst for humans but there are others, such as influenza, hantavirus, rabies and dengue fever.

Just to show how a research project can get started from a coffee break, Steve O’Brien related his conversation with a medical researcher named Bob. Bob had mapped the DNA of the FIV virus. The men

wondered what would happen if the FIV jumped to wild cats, many of which are very inbred due to low populations. Their immune systems are genetically uniform and are easy targets for viruses.

So Steve studied Florida panthers and Serengeti lions in Africa. They did not have FIV! So, how do wild cats stay healthy and domestic cats die of FIV? Well, they don’t know exactly! They think maybe the genes in the cats and the genes in the virus can mutate, maybe both at the same time. So if a cat has a virus invade its cells maybe the genes in the cat cells mutate to make the virus’ genes neutral. Scientists are now searching for cat genes that are resistant and are also searching for virus genes that might have changed in response to the host.

If they can find the cat genes that are resistant, they can look at the “matching” gene on the human chromosome and hopefully modify it to resist viruses that invade our cells. So this is why we cat breeders have been asked to send blood to Leslie Lyons of the Genome Project.

I love this sentence he wrote at the end of the article: “If you think about it, the cat may really be man’s best friend.”

For more details (and colored pictures!) see National Geographic, June 1997, p 77-85

Houston Board

Meeting Update:

We need to have as many people as possible at the Board Meeting. We are scheduled to be on the agenda around 10:00 am Saturday morning. We will need help setting up the room with our cats, since we will be sharing the room with the Sphynx and Ragdolls.

We will be allowed about 5 double cages, so we need to have the best examples of the breed brought to Houston for the Board meeting.

Sandy and Bob Lowenstein will be arranging the cages; I’ve already emailed the Sphynx person and she is willing to chip in on “munchies” for the Board members, so we need bodies!

We will have from about 8:00 am to 10:00 am to set up our cats. I would like to meet everyone at the hotel for breakfast around 7:00 am so we can discuss what our options might be, depending on how things go.

If you want to attend, but don’t have any cats, I’m sure there would be some people willing to share rooms. Call Donna Bass at (510) 689-9209 or email dbass@slip.net and let me know. I need this information no later than January 15.

Hope to see you all in Houston!

International Show Update



Miss DePesto of Noface and her son, Snowman

by Donna Bass

I was alone at the International and spoke to a lot of people. It was difficult, however, doing such mundane things as going to the bathroom or getting something to eat, or even taking a cat up to a ring, since I had to leave everything alone!

Michael Brim came up to me and thanked me for showing up. He told me how disgusted he was that the Ragdoll people didn't see fit to show up and how he was no longer going to support their efforts, since they hadn't made the effort to be at the show. He mentioned that someone had flown down from Connecticut just to see the Ragdolls!

I told him that I had to beg, borrow and steal money to get to the show, but I knew I had to be there. It was nice being appreciated by at least one person!

Pam Delabar, Kim Everett, Wain Harding, Vicki Nye, Craig Rothermel and Stan Barnaby were the judges who got to see the Miscellaneous breed. Stan got to see them because the judge who was supposed to see them (Wayne

Trevathan) was showing two of them (two European Burmese).

I had four kittens (1 show, 3 exhibition) at the show to be seen, and Pam, Kim and Wain saw all of them. Wain said how thrilled he was to see such wonderful consistency! Wain picked the red solid girl as his best. Pam liked the kittens and picked the red solid girl as the best. Kim spoke quite some time about the miscellaneous cats and picked the red tabby girl as her best. She also made

some very pointed remarks about the Selkirks NOT being wirehairs, since Bradshaw was sitting in the front seat, waiting for the judging to start on the Wirehair kittens! He, of course, ignored her as best he could, but I overheard him saying to Betty White he didn't like the use of the word "Rex" in the name!



Noface Oscar Kowalski

n't there. It was a great experience, despite the hotel problems!

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