

THE SIAMESE BREED COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
APRIL 2009

The show season ends this weekend, and we once again have the privilege of showing our support for our friends' winning cats by sponsoring their awards. It's a wonderful opportunity that the Siamese Breed Council offers us, allowing each of us to take part in our friends' successes by sponsoring their awards. This year people have been taking full advantage of this and we have many of the spots already sponsored. So if you have a friend getting a Premiership or Color award, please be sure to contact Mary Kolencik (mdsiamese@yahoo.com) or Carolyn Self (siamesecircus@comcast.net) to sponsor the cat of your choice.

We also have a nomination for the Lifetime Achievement Award, Dee Johnson and Connie Roberts of San-Toi cattery. The LAA Committee has forwarded this nomination to the Breed Council without comment. A copy of the essay detailing the San-Toi accomplishments is attached to the newsletter, along with the ballot. All ballots must be returned by May 31st to myself (The voting timeline has been extended, as I was unable to get the newsletter out sooner due to my work schedule). All ballots must be signed, and Breed Council membership must be current in order to vote. Any unsigned ballots will be discarded.

The Breed Council Breakfast will feature a talk by Gerri Fellerman, a well known Persian breeder and Paralegal, titled: "Preparing You and Your Cat for the Three D's: Disaster, Disability and Death". The talk is very timely, and was prompted by the death of Kathy Baron last year, who had made no provisions for her cats. If you know anyone from a different BC who would like to come just to hear the talk, the cost will be \$5.00 and can be paid at the door.

You will also have the opportunity to pick up a special Siamese figurine at the silent auction that will be held as a fundraiser during the Breakfast. San-Toi, Thaifong, Ayuthaya, Shimasu and Haute-Ming catteries have already donated figurines. We also anticipate receiving others from well-known Siamese breeders. If you would like to donate a special piece or need additional information, please call Marilyn Moriarty at 858-947-5199. More detailed information regarding this fund raiser is posted on the website.

As you all know, this is the year when we elect our Directors At Large. Traditionally, I have posed a number of questions to the candidates to learn how they stood on issues that would affect the Siamese breed. This has been useful in the past, and has helped to elect CFA Board members who have the same philosophies as those of us who love and cherish the Siamese breed.

The drawback to all of this is that we remain dependent on the good will of the Board for the survival of the Siamese breed. Each year we hold our breath and hope that this year's Board will continue to enact policies that won't allow pointed OSH to be shown in

Siamese classes and that will continue to respect the integrity of the Siamese as a breed, not a color of a particular body type. Each year new challenges to that position arise, and we have to spend our energy in fighting for our breed's survival rather than in supporting other causes in our CFA community. Right now we face the challenge imposed by the Board decision to allow LH Exotics to be shown as Persians. How long will it be until we are fighting to keep pointed OSH out of our Siamese classes?

There is an alternative before us this year, and it is this alternative that has prompted my decision not to challenge candidates on their positions on Siamese breed issues. Amendments to the Constitution will be proposed this year that will codify the acceptance of new breeds, making the Breed Definition Report that was accepted by CFA delegates and Board members many years ago a permanent part of the constitution. These amendments are important for all of the breeds that allow outcrosses that produce AOVs that resemble the parent breed. In the case of the Siamese breed, they will prevent the showing of pointed OSH in the Siamese classes. (Other breeds would derive a similar benefit, depending on the use of the breed as an outcross) It is the only way in which we can stop the continual erosion of CFA values by outside forces. It is the only way in which we can protect and save our Siamese breed.

The Board is not the answer. The Board can change on a yearly basis, and it takes continual vigilance to ensure that there are enough members who feel the same way as we do to represent us. And face it, we are only one breed, albeit an important one, and can only influence the choice of Board members to a certain extent. This issue of breed integrity is broader than just our breed, and when we raise it in isolation from other breeds, it makes it just that more difficult for us to continue to keep the Siamese breed safe.

The decision made by the Board in February to allow LH Exotics to be shown as Persians has the same earmarks of failure as did the previous decision to allow pointed OSH to be shown as Colorpoints. It may eventually lead to the same level of hostility as the previous decision did, and may tear CFA apart, as this is a much larger group of breeders who will be affected. The proposed amendment solves those problems. It will stop the continual erosion of our CFA breeds, and will stop the Board from making impossible political choices. It will also provide an opportunity to unite breeders in the common purpose of creating continuity across all breeds.

Imagine how confusing it is for the general public as well as aspiring breeders to learn that some breeds can be shown as other breeds but receive awards as their original breed? It's confusing to write about it, yet alone understand it. And this is the situation we are faced with if we continue to allow the Board to make these kinds of decisions on a breed by breed basis. When it comes to issues that apply to all breeds, there should be one way of doing things, and the CFA way has never been to allow the offspring of outcrossed hybrid breeds to be shown in the classes of the parent. The proposed amendments would take that false choice away from the Board, and create a uniform code by which all breeds would be recognized and shown.

As Siamese breeders we have the opportunity to make our voices heard in a positive way, by supporting the amendments within our clubs and within the cat shows we attend. We need to encourage our clubs to vote in support of the amendment. And further, we need to speak out loudly at shows, to our fellow exhibitors of other breeds, and to our current and potential Board members. This is the chance we have been waiting for, our chance to ensure that the Siamese breed will continue in perpetuity for future generations to enjoy. These cats have given so much to us, it our time to speak out for them. I hope that I am able to hear all your voices raised in strength in the time leading up to the Board meeting, and for all you delegates, on the floor of the meeting. We owe this breed very much, and it's time to pay it back.

Warm regards,

Debbi Stevenson
Siamese Breed Council Secretary