

QUESTIONS FOR NEW DAL CANDIDATES

Responses of Robert Druzisky

1. What do you think CFA's core business is?

I believe that the question assumes that CFA has a core business. I do not believe that CFA is a business, or that it should be run as a business. CFA is non-profit Social Welfare Organization. I would suggest that the proper question is, "What is CFA's primary purpose?" I believe that CFA has two primary and complimentary purposes. One purpose is to act as a registry for pedigreed cats. A complimentary purpose is the regulation of Shows. These two purposes complement each other. By licensing shows with a strict standard, CFA encourages the breeding of cats to the highest standard possible. Without shows, CFA's registry would soon become a meaningless compilation of information. Without the registry, shows held under the umbrella of the CFA would have no structure.

2. Do you think that CFA has fulfilled its stated mission to promote pedigree cats? If not, why, and what reasons do you think have contributed to this? How would you rectify this?

I believe that in the past the CFA has rested on its laurels. During CFA's "golden age," publicity and promotion were probably not viewed as a high priority. Over the last few years the leadership of CFA has understood that the promotion and publicity of CFA itself, as well as pedigreed cats is essential to CFA's future. I believe that the marketing of various products with CFA's logo, as well as the Madison Square Garden show and the recent "Catminster" show on the Game Show Network are steps in the proper direction.

The last question, "How would you rectify this?" is difficult to answer. Each of the individuals who sit on CFA's Board of Directors is usually assigned to one or more committees by the President. Should I be elected and assigned to a Committee with oversight over promotion and publicity I will work with the current members. Taking into consideration CFA's recent successes at publicity and promotion, it is unlikely that I would propose any sweeping changes, but would instead work to help refine and expand the current proposals.

Although CFA has published information on marketing of Cat Shows, it is my understanding that said publication is likely out-dated. I would suggest that CFA encourage clubs with successful advertising campaigns to share information with clubs that have less success. I would also suggest that CFA provide a centralized location for the issuance of press releases. Many clubs issue press releases regarding their up-coming shows. Often those press releases are ignored as they are coming from individuals. The clubs could submit the press releases to CFA, with a list of news agencies, and CFA would then send the press releases to said agencies. It is likely that the press releases would be viewed more favorably coming from a National Organization, rather than from

a small local club. Such a plan could be tested at a minimal cost in time and effort through a limited trial program prior to full implementation.

3. Do you believe in:
 - a. A phenotypic registry
 - b. A genotypic registry
 - c. A combination of a and b

I believe in a pedigree registry. CFA is a registry of pedigree cats and not a registry of phenotypes or genotypes. Nor should CFA begin to register cats based upon Phenotype or Genotype. CFA should continue to register based upon pedigree.

As for registering new cats that are not currently registered with CFA, I believe that each breed council should be free to choose whether they want to accept new cats based purely upon phenotype, or whether the new cats must have a certain genotype (to the extent that genotype can be established for any single breed). As the Siamese Breed Council is posing this question, I will use that breed as an example. Currently CFA requires an 8 generation pedigree of cats exhibiting a Siamese Phenotype to be eligible for registration in CFA. While I understand that the 8 generation pedigree is intended to attempt to verify that the cat's genotype is the same as a Siamese, this is not conclusive. The 8 generation pedigree does not contain information regarding all other kittens from a litter. It is entirely possible that a sibling of a cat seeking registration in CFA was the first kitten in 8 generations with Longhair. The 8 generation pedigree would not show this kitten. I would support the Siamese Breed Council's decision to require a genotypic verification prior to allowing this cat to be registered as a Siamese in CFA.

By the same token, should the Oriental Shorthair breed council take the position that phenotype is sufficient to determine whether a cat is eligible to be registered as an Oriental Shorthair, I would support that decision as well.

4. What can CFA do to increase revenues via our core business?

CFA is currently taking various steps to increase the "core business" as well as develop additional sources of revenue from non-core activities. I believe that CFA is taking many of the steps necessary to increase revenues related to its primary purposes, registrations and shows. These steps include the promotion of pedigreed cats through various ventures including the "Cat-Minster" program and the Madison Square Garden show. I believe that continued publicity would help both CFA and its individual clubs. Hopefully, the additional publicity will create additional breeders and exhibitors.

I personally would like to see a trial program created for exhibitors with less than 1 year of showing experience. I would propose that such program could be held in addition to all of the other rings at the show, and would involve a discussion between a judge and the exhibitor regarding their cat. The program could allow the new exhibitors an opportunity to not only display their knowledge of a certain breed, but also to learn from the judge and be given a structured opportunity to frankly discuss the standard as it applies to their

cat. I believe that many new exhibitors are intimidated by the relationships that exist between established breeders and many of the judges. By having time set aside for the new exhibitors to talk with a judge regarding their cat, they will not need to feel pressure or embarrassed at asking the judge for their honest opinion.

I do not believe that there is a feasible method for requiring breeders to register all of their litters or all of the kittens from litters. Furthermore, if any method was found for requiring such, it could have unforeseen consequences (such as driving breeders away from CFA).

5. What do you believe constitutes a “breed”?

Let me start with the definition from the American Heritage Dictionary, “A group of organisms having common ancestors and certain distinguishable characteristics, especially a group within a species developed by artificial selection and maintained by controlled propagation.”

The various breeds of cats consist of groups of organisms having common ancestors and certain distinguishable characteristics. I believe that the various breed councils in conjunction with oversight by the Board of Directors determine which characteristics are important to distinguish a group as a breed. The Siamese, for instance, has a number of characteristics that have been determined to be important in distinguishing a Siamese. These characteristics include, but are not limited to, the pointed pattern (without white) in one of the four approved colors, short hair, and blue eyes. I would suggest that while body type is important for meeting the CFA standard that any cat with those four characteristics could be considered a Siamese. In essence whether a cat is a Siamese or not is determined by the color and the hair length. There are other breeds, where color is not important, such as the Sphynx, where the determining factors are the body style and the lack of hair. Color has no bearing on determining whether a cat is a Sphynx.

It is entirely possible that two cats may have similar appearance while being of two separate and distinct breeds. For instance, the important characteristics for an Oriental Shorthair are that the coat length and the body style. It is my understanding that occasionally a breeding between two Oriental Shorthairs will produce a pointed kitten that is very similar in appearance to a Siamese. In that instance I would distinguish said Pointed Oriental from a Siamese, as it is missing the other important element of belonging to the Siamese breed, that element being the necessity for “common ancestors.” I believe that each breed council should be entitled to determine the size of the group of “common ancestors” which are required prior to a cat being entitled to claim membership in a particular breed.