

## Siamese Named Cat Idol at N.Y. Show

**Meet the Breeds brought together cats and dogs for family-friendly event.**

*By Nikki Moustaki*

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Chandler Horn holds Fresco, his Siamese and new CFA Iams Cat Idol. With him is CFA President Pam DeLaBar. Photo: Keith Kimberlin, courtesy CFA

Purrs and meows replaced the usual sounds of urban life Oct. 17-18 in New York City as 36,000 pet lovers attended Meet the Breeds, a first-of-its-kind event which put 41 cat breeds and 160 dog breeds under one large roof — the 115,000-square-foot main hall of the Jacob Javitz Center in midtown Manhattan.

The American Kennel Club, in conjunction with the Cat Fanciers Association, held the family-friendly event, designed to inform people about the charm and predictability of purebred cats and dogs. But this wasn't just any cat show; this show allowed the public to pet, cuddle and hold the champions and kittens, from well-known breeds like the Siamese to rarer breeds, like the Siberian.

One of the fun events of the weekend was the selection of the CFA Iams Cat Idol, voted on by the public. The winner was Fresco, a seal-point Siamese, owned by Melissa and Chandler Horn. The first runner-up was an American Wirehair named Porkay, and second runner-up was an Egyptian Mau, nicknamed Scooter.

A Somali observes the activity at Meet the Breeds, while a Norwegian Forest Cat, below, patiently attends to observers. Photos: Mary Kolencik, courtesy CFA Art Graafmans, secretary of the Burmese Breed Council and a member of the Ambassador Program for Cat Fanciers Association, was pleased with the show's attendance.

"It's absolutely fabulous," says Graafmans. "We've been able to educate thousands of people as they've come through here. I hope we can start doing these across the country. It's important for people to understand that breeders are not kitten mills and puppy mills, but that they are responsible people who care deeply for their animals."

Cat agility demonstrations and cat show judges entertained and educated the cat-loving crowd.

"The show is great for the kids," says Sandee Willen of Maryland, breeder and fancier of Manx cats. "They love the fact that they can handle the cats and pet them. We have our kitten here on a leash and harness, where at a cat show he would never be out of the cage. He has been having a ball — he has run the agility course twice and he has been playing with the kids."

Gina DiNardo, assistant vice president of the AKC, says that the groups would like to hold the event again next year, and that they are looking into holding it in other cities as well.