

MC Breed Committee Candidate Statement – Tereasa Brainerd

I've been a proud TICA exhibitor for over 15 years. I've been blessed to be able to show my cats all over the USA and Canada, and by spending many hours in the show hall I've had the opportunity to get to know Maine Coon breeders and fanciers from all over the world.

Between them, my Maine Coons have earned 6 IWs (including Best Maine Coon Alter, International in 2009 and 2014; Best Longhair Alter, International 2014; and Best Maine Coon Kitten, International in 2020), as well as numerous top-10 RWs (including Best Alter, NE Region in 2014 and 2018; and Best Kitten, NE Region in 2020).

I'm deeply passionate about, and committed to, the Maine Coon breed. I honestly can't imagine life without Maine Coons in my house because they are, without a doubt, the best companions I've ever had and they seem to be as just as devoted to me as I am to them. Because of my work commitments I have not had the right life circumstances to breed any of these wonderful cats myself so, at least for now, mine is an "alters only" cattery (Concordance).

I was delighted to have the opportunity to organize and moderate a half-day Educational Seminar at the 2018 Maine Coonvention in Kissimmee, FL. The seminar brought together Maine Coon breeders and TICA judges for an exciting program that ranged from the care of neonatal kittens, to Maine Coon genetics, to the history of the breed. The program included formal talks by experts and lively round table discussions.

I'm committed to education (particularly about breed-related health issues) and to maintaining a breed standard that is consistent with the current standard, which states "Overall balance and proportion are essential to the Maine Coon and no one feature should dominate the eye's attention over any other." I have, frankly, become dismayed by social media posts over the past 5 years or so that show images of adult Maine Coon cats that are the complete opposite of overall balance and proportion.

I would like to see the Maine Coon breed committee work on a fully-updated version of Beth Hick's outstanding breed seminar from years ago, aimed at the continuing education of our dedicated TICA judges, as well as new Maine Coon breeders. I would like to see this updated breed seminar expanded to include examples of adult cats who exemplify the balance and proportion we seek in our breed, as well as examples of adult cats whose type deviates too far from this ideal.