

My name is Deborah Kinsley from Oklahoma. I would like to announce my candidacy for the Maine Coon Breed Committee. My love for this breed began in 2014 when I adopted a stray cat and was told he was half Maine Coon. This began my research on what exactly a Maine Coon Cat was. It didn't take me long to come to the realization that I did not, in fact, have anything resembling a Maine Coon. My research certainly piqued my interest in this breed of cat.

I attended my first Cat Show at the Oklahoma City Fairgrounds in April of 2014 and there met my first real life Maine Coon. I was absolutely amazed by the magnificence of a full-grown male Maine Coon. I set about finding a breeder near me and a few months later I picked up my "show kitten". Boy, was I in for the surprise of my life. I may have been excited about showing but my boy had other ideas. After he bit me and slapped a judge's earring across the show room floor, I met a breeder from California who informed me that I did NOT, in fact, have a show cat. Well as crushed as I was it didn't deter me from finding a mentor who had bred Maine Coons for 40 years. She introduced me to a great breeder who trusted me with her prized male kitten to show and to possibly be my first stud as I had already decided I wanted to help ensure the longevity of the wonderful breed of gentle giants.

I spent the remainder of 2015 and 2016 showing my wonderful show male to 3 Regional wins and Supreme Grand Champion. I studied many pedigrees and looked at more kittens than I thought ever existed and with my mentor's guidance, I did indeed build my cattery based on health, temperament and good solid pedigrees. I have learned the importance of DNA testing, Heart Echocardiograms and hip x-rays as well as nutrition for my cats. In addition, I have made breeding to the standard the utmost importance in selecting my breeding cats.

I am pleased to be able to show many of my own breeding to titles and regional wins. I found I dearly love showing cats but more importantly I found so much value in networking with other breeders. I have been very pleased to pay forward all the valuable learning I gained from my mentor, my Pawped classes and my friendships with other breeders, with new exhibitors and new breeders.

During my breeding career, from 2015 to present, I have encountered and faced so many challenges and issues with birthing that has indeed taught me valuable lessons and taught me lessons many breeders, I pray, may never face. This breed is one I cherish and wish very much to see health issues brought to extinction. Maintaining the breed standard is one I feel very strongly about. I wish to see breeders across the world breeding to the same standard without extreme changes to our beloved breed.

During my life I have served as the state teacher in the State of Oklahoma for The Order of the Eastern Star. During the years leading up to that important year I served many times as a District Deputy where I was responsible for teaching the members in the district all the work and bringing all the changes to the work to the membership. This time I cherished as it brought me close to so many of the very special people in the Order.

My work career placed me in several different fields where I was placed in supervisory roles and again it taught me many things about working with people and where I learned how important good cooperation of both give and take was in every aspect of one's life.

I became a member of the Feline Paw Foundation Club and was very pleased to assist in hosting the Regional Show in August 2022. If anyone hasn't been a part of a cat club, I encourage you to find one to

work with. The love of our cats is a strong bond between TICA members no matter your preferred breed.

Please consider me for Maine Coon Breed Committee. The lessons I've learned through my work, my extracurricular orders and my breeding and show career are the ones that can be well used by serving as a committee member for the Maine Coon Breed Committee. I would appreciate your support in continuing my support for this marvelous breed we know and love as the Gentle Giants.

Deborah Kinsley