

# She's the cat's meow when it comes to feline shows

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

In describing her job as a cat show judge, Rachel Anger compares herself to a grandmother. "I get them for the weekend. I hug and kiss them and I send them home to mom. If I had the means and the space, I'd have 100 cats. This is my way of doing this."

She will once again play grandmother this weekend to more than 350 pedigreed cats and kittens as well as household pets at the Midwest Persian Tabby Fanciers show 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 24-25, at the Dearborn Civic Center, 15801 Michigan Ave., Dearborn.

The cost is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for children with all the proceeds going to the Michigan Humane Society. The two-year alliance between the two organizations has brought in more than \$1,300 in donations to the MHS.

Anger, formerly of Farmington Hills, has scrutinized cats since 1993, but her love of cats surpasses that.

Growing up in Midland, Anger was forbidden to have cats. Like most children, however, she found a loophole.

"We were not allowed cats; we were dog people," she said. "We got around that by giving my mom a kitten for Mother's Day. We told her, 'It's not polite to turn down a gift, so you have to keep this cat.'"

Perky, a black random-bred cat with a little white locket on her chest, found her way into the hearts of her family.

Anger began her cat-showing career by attending local shows with her pets. At that time, the events were few and far between.

"Twenty years ago there were far fewer shows than there are now," said Anger, who works during the day as a paralegal. "Now every weekend there is a show within a three- or four-hour drive and sometimes there are several to pick from."

"On any given weekend in the country there could be up to 15 CFA shows."

The more she learned about cats, the more she became interested in becoming a judge. Organizations such as the Cat Fanciers Association require their judges to be knowledgeable in all cat breeds. The best way to do that, she decided, was to live with different breeds. Anger has worked with Siamese and Per-

sian cats. The breed she has worked with the most is the Maine Coon. It's the largest breed of pedigreed cat, and males can weigh up to about 20 pounds.

"They're also a very comfortable cat to look at," she added. "There's no extremes except for its size."

When she applied for a judge position, Anger was required to show her history of exhibiting, show producing and involvement in the CFA. The CFA officers and directors look over all the applicants' materials and vote on the judges.

"Actually, by the time you apply to be a judge, even though the officers and directors are from all over the country, they know who you are," Anger explained. "They want to have judges who have a real strong moral character because it would be so easy to say, 'That's my friend's cat; I want to give her a win.' That's not how it goes, though."

Each cat begins with 100 points, some of which are deducted if the cat doesn't measure up to the standard for his or her breed. The points are allocated to the different features of the cat that are most important to

that breed. One breed may give 40 points to the coat. In another cat, it may only be worth five to 10 points.

Judges look for "nice healthy animals. A cat that you can tell is well cared for and well-loved."

"Once we see a cat that has these things, we start to apply the standard," Anger said. "We put the cat on the table. We observe it from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail and everything in between. We really give it the once over."

Then there's something special over and above that, the show presence. There are no points for it and it's never really addressed anywhere, according to Anger.

"One particular cat will do something; he or she will look at me like 'Aren't I beautiful? Aren't I just the most wonderful cat? You should give me the Best Cat rosette,'" she added. "Every once in awhile there's a cat that's just so spectacular it makes you want to give it the Best Cat rosette."

At the Dearborn show, there will be six judges. The club determines how many rings there will be, and each ring will have a judge. Generally there are four, six or eight rings, and each ring is like a separate show.

"If I were to enter my cat into a six-ring show, there would be six different judgments," Anger explained. "It's different than dog shows. People who show

dogs, they may travel all that way and as soon as they lose they go home. With cats, you can always get another opinion."



Grandmother figure: Rachel Anger, with her Maine Coon named Perry Ellis, feels like a grandma who has the kids for the weekend when she judges cats shows.

## ENGAGEMENT



**BEDARD-MALLON**  
Judith Bedard of Livonia and Ernest Bedard of Redford

announce the engagement of their daughter, Danielle, to Robert Mallon of Farmington Hills, the son of Francis and Claudia Mallon of Livonia.

The bride-to-be received a bachelor's degree from Michigan State and a master's degree from Wayne State. She is employed by the Wayne County Family Independence Agency.

Her fiancé earned a BS degree in aeronautical engineering from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and is employed as an engineer with Alumax Mill Products in Farmington Hills.

A May wedding at Newburg Church in Livonia is planned.

## Have a treat and help

Metro Detroit TCBY Treants Shops are holding their annual "Have A Heart for UCP" promotion now through March 1.

In order to receive a 50 cents off coupon just visit your local TCBY shop and donate \$1 to United Cerebral Palsy.

TCBY will present you with a paper heart to personalize and hang in their store to show off your donation. A TCBY shop is located at 30086 Grand River in Farmington Hills.

TCBY has been a corporate

sponsor of UCP for 10 years, donating over \$1 million per year to help UCP continue its mission of Turning Obstacles into Opportunities for people with disabilities.

Most of TCBY's corporate donations come from donations canisters and national programs, but Have A Heart for UCP which takes place around Valentine's Day was conceived by Michigan TCBY franchise owners as a way to raise more money locally.

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