

Cat-ographies

Persians

Long-Haired Friends



by Joyce Markovics

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by Joyce Markovics

Consultant: Laura Matthews
Breeder, Persian & Exotic Shorthair Cats

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Top Puffball

Meows and cheers filled the 2009 International Cat Show in Atlanta, Georgia. More than 600 cats were **competing** for the top prize—**Best in Show**. A black Persian (PUR-zhun) cat named Gorilla gazed at the crowd with his shining copper-colored eyes. He was among the youngest and fluffiest of the competitors.

Gorilla's full name is Kuorii Gorilla of Cuzzoe, but his owners affectionately call him "Gorilla," or "Go-Go" for short.



The judges carefully examined all the cats, including Gorilla. Each animal was a great example of its **breed**, but the judges had to pick a favorite. After much discussion, they finally made a decision. One judge held up the winning cat. The crowd went wild. Gorilla had won!



Gorilla is shown here after winning Best in Show at the International Cat Show—the biggest cat show in the United States. Each year it is held in a different city, such as Atlanta, or “Catlanta” as cat lovers call it.

According to **The Cat Fanciers’ Association**, Persians are the most popular cat breed in the world.

Cats of Persia

Gorilla is not only a champ, but he's also a wonderful pet. "He follows us around like a puppy, and he loves to climb up in our laps," said his proud owners, Justin Pelletier and Eric Valencia. The loving relationship that Gorilla has with his owners is typical of a Persian. The special **bond** between these cats and humans dates back hundreds of years.



Gorilla poses with his owners, Eric Valencia (left) and Justin Pelletier (right), and breeder Paolo Carnevaletti (middle).

In fact, Persians are one of the oldest cat breeds. They were first raised in Persia, which is now the country of Iran. The cats were prized for their long, soft fur. An Italian explorer, Pietro della Valle (1586–1652), is believed to have discovered these long-haired cats during a trip to Persia. He thought the cats were beautiful and decided to bring some back to Europe with him in 1620.

Where Persian Cats Came From



Pietro della Valle

Iran, formerly Persia, is a country located in southwest Asia.

Persian cats are named after Persia, the country where they were first raised.

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About the Author

Joyce Markovics is an editor, writer, and orchid collector. She lives with her husband, Adam, who is allergic to furry animals, and their pet land crab, Dirk.

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Meows and cheers filled the 2009 International Cat Show in Atlanta, Georgia. More than 600 cats were competing for the top prize—Best in Show. A black Persian cat named Gorilla gazed at the crowd with his shining copper-colored eyes. He was one of the youngest competitors and definitely one of the fluffiest. After much discussion, the judges made a decision. One judge reached over to pick up the winning cat.

Would Gorilla take home the top prize?

Look inside to find out more about Gorilla and other outstanding Persians—as well as surprising facts about the cat's history, its physical appearance, and its personality. It won't be long before you discover what every Persian owner knows—that these cats make the purr-fect pet.

Abyssinians
Egyptian Royalty?

Persians
Long-Haired Friends

American Shorthairs
Pioneers

Ragdolls
Alien Cats

Maine Coons
Super Big

Siamese
Talk to Me!

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