

#### by Joyce Markovics

Consultant: Laura Matthews Breeder, Persian & Exotic Shorthair Cats



New York, New York

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## Contents

Top Puffball	. 4
Cats of Persia	. 6
Love at First Meow	. 8
Pansy Face	. 10
Silky Coats	12
Groom Time	14
Cat Care	16
Mothers and Kittens	18
Lounge Lizards	20
Lounge Lizards  Persians at a Glance	
•	. 22
Persians at a Glance	. 22 . 23
Persians at a Glance	. 22 . 23 . 24
Persians at a Glance	. 22 . 23 . 24
Persians at a Glance	22 23 24 24 24

# 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.



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

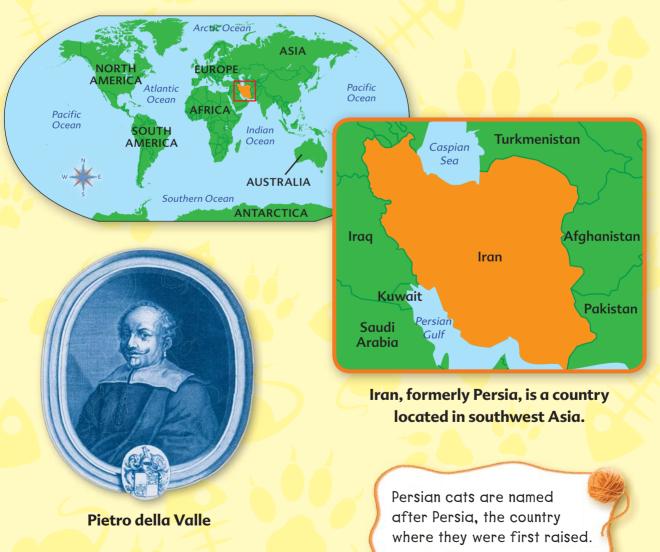
Gorilla is not only a champ, but he's also a wonderful pet. "He follows us around like a puppy, and he loves to climb up in our laps," said his proud owners, Justin Pelletier and Eric Valencia. The loving relationship that Gorilla has with his owners is typical of a Persian. The special **bond** between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



#### Index

Atlanta 4-5 Best in Show 4–5 cat shows 4-5.15 coats 12–13, 14–15, 22 color 13, 22 companions 6, 8, 11, 21

della Valle. Pietro 7 health 16-17 Europe 7.8-9 eyes 4, 11, 16, 19, 22 fur 7, 12–13, 14–15, 19 Gorilla 4–5,6 grooming 14-15, 16

Iran 7.22 kidnev disease 16 kittens 18-19, 20 life span 20, 22 muzzle 9 Nightingale, Florence 9

pansy 10 Persia 7.22 personality 6, 20–21, 22 Oueen Victoria 8 teeth 17 United States 5.9 veterinarian 16-17

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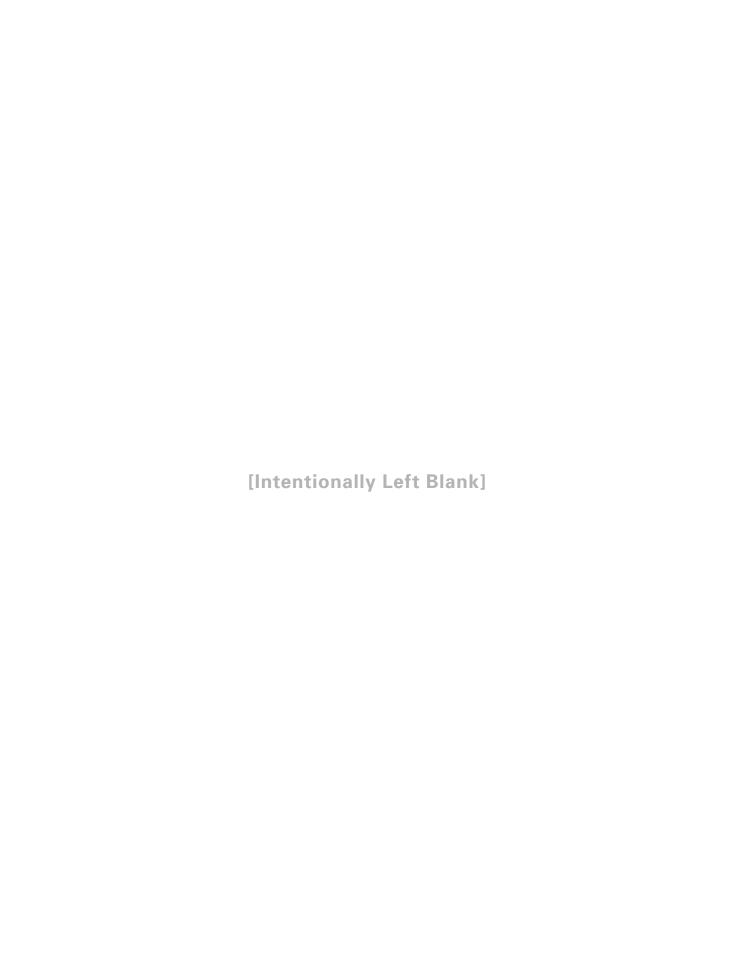
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### Learn More Online

To learn more about Persians, visit www.bearportpublishing.com/Cat-ographies

### **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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in Atlanta, Georgia. More than 600 cats were
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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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