

MARCH TRIPS TO ASIA

By Mark Hannon

I was invited to attend the CFA International Cat Show / Asia the weekend of March 17-18 in Bangkok, Thailand. Since there was a CFA cat show in Hong Kong a week earlier, I decided to extend my trip so I could attend both shows. As I have only flown outside the USA twice before in my life, I opted to tag along with Wain Harding who is a friend and who judged both shows.

For those who have not flown from the USA to Asia, these are long flights. I had a six-hour flight from Washington DC to San Francisco and a 15-hour flight from San Francisco to Hong Kong. I passed the time watching two movies and reading a book on my Ipad. I do not sleep well on either a plane nor in a hotel, so this was a very long trip for me with little sleep. While there were lengthy stays between connecting flights, Wain got us into the United Club which was significantly better than sitting at the gate.

When we got through the Passport check-point in Hong Kong, Show Manager Michael Cheng and his wife Sylvia Lam were waiting for us and drove us to the upscale hotel that was being used for the judges. It is typical for judges to arrive several days prior to the show in order to be rested for their judging assignment and not suffering from jet lag. I left Washington on Wednesday morning and due to time change I arrived in Hong Kong on Thursday night. I had lost an entire day due to the time change but I would get it back on my return flight. Friday was spent sight-seeing. Hong Kong is the most densely populated region in the world with 7.4 million people living in a very small area. It has the largest number of skyscrapers in the world. I never saw a house nor yard, only very tall apartment buildings and office buildings. Public transportation is terrific and widely used. While in Hong Kong I used Uber, the subway, buses, and a ferry in addition to rides from local cat fanciers in their own cars.



The Felidae Beyond Infinity cat show was a one-day show with five rings. The 108 entries were judged by USA judges Wain Harding & Gary Veach, Japanese CFA judges Edward Maeda & Etsuko Hamayasu and Hong Kong CFA judge Suki Lee. The show was scheduled to start at 11:00am but the club did not have access to the showhall until 8:00 that morning, so they were still busy hanging rosettes, setting up the judging rings, and checking in exhibitors at 11:00 which resulted in a late start. Typical of the cat shows in Asia, all the exhibitors brought their own cages, usually Sturdi enclosures or similar cages. There were large classes of Exotics and Ragdolls. These two classes included some terrific examples of the breeds. Due to quarantine restrictions, the show was limited to cats residing in Hong Kong and the



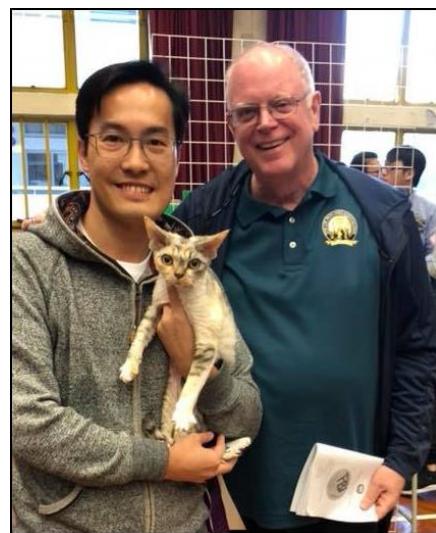
size of this show, I was told, is the norm these days. The large entries seen at shows in China is not seen in Hong Kong. Since I was neither judging nor exhibiting, I had a lot of time to visit with the exhibitors and watch the cats in the judging rings. I learned a lot.

As Wain is co-chair of the ID-Asia Committee and I am CFA President, we held a meeting Sunday night in a wonderful restaurant which had a private room for our use. All local exhibitors were invited to attend and about 20 people took us up on the offer. There was a lot of one-on-one discussions

where they discussed their concerns with us and we provided feedback. Wain hopes to conduct similar meetings in the various areas of Asia to open communications. I found it very helpful to me in understanding the issues before our cat fancy in Hong Kong. It was similar to Regional meetings conducted in some USA Regions where there is give-&-take between the Regional Director and his or her constituents.



Judge Suki Lee & Maggie Kwan



Andy Yeung & Mark Hannon



Judges and Exhibitors at the
Felidae Beyond Infinity CFA cat show.

Bangkok, Thailand

From Hong Kong we took a 2-1/2 hour flight to Bangkok where the CFA International Cat Show / Asia was scheduled to be held. This was a 10-ring two-day show with 227 entries. The show was hosted by Cat Fanciers' Club of Thailand under the guidance of Patti Tangkawattanakui. Guest judges from other associations are often invited to judge CFA shows in Asia; however, for this show all ten judges were CFA judges. They included five from the USA, four from Asia, and one from Europe. We were housed in a very upscale hotel at one end of a six-story shopping mall with the showhall at the opposite end of the mall. This club has used this facility and date in the past and usually receives almost 100 entries but had a significantly larger entry this year due to it being the only CFA show permitted in Asia this weekend and being designated at the CFA International Cat Show for Asia. They attracted entries from many countries in Asia. There were 7 AB rings and 3 Double Specialty rings. At the end of the show, four of the judges' names were picked out of a hat to judge the Best In Show just as is done at the CFA International Cat Show in the USA.



Royal Canin was the major sponsor. There were a large number of vendors and some of them were also sponsors of the show. There was no charge for the public to visit the show and thanks to the popularity of the shopping mall, there was an enormous gate. There were vets present in the vendor area providing free inoculations for spectators' pets and there was a low-cost neuter/spay right there. The fee was about \$9.50 for a neuter and \$16 for a spay. The club provides some financial assistance to make those low fees possible. You bring in your cat and about an hour later you can take the cat home. They estimated that about 300 cats were altered.



*Wain Harding with Show Mgr.
Patti Tangkawattanakul*



Seen during a boat tour of the local floating mall

The layout of the showhall was not unusual for Asia but is not at all typical of shows in the USA. The cats and judging rings are behind a waist-high wall and the spectators are on the outside of that short wall. The judging rings face that wall so the gate can watch the judging but they can not easily see the cats in the benching area. Typical of our shows in Asia, most of the exhibitors are young and there are far more men exhibiting than seen at USA shows.



The club was gracious in providing a tour for the visiting judges prior to the show and there was a judges' dinner each night. The club appreciated the long flights many judges had in order to attend this show and the club treated them well.



Judges, Show Committee and Top Winners