



BerNews

Summer 2009 Volume 6, Issue 3

Special Interest Articles:

- President's Letter
- 4H Dog Project
- Drafting Titles
- Regional Specialty

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Bernese Mountain Dog Club of the Greater Twin Cities

The BMDCGTC was formed in 1988 to help promote the best possible breeding, training, health, and well-being of the purebred Bernese Mountain Dog.

President's Letter

-Denise McCabe (Mick & Lily)

The corn is as high as an elephant's eye....that must mean that summer is upon us...and speaking of corn, please be sure to keep your Berners away from those corn cobs as they can cause serious blockage issues.

Of course, the Berners are thoroughly enjoying the cool July weather.

The club's biggest news to share is that we have been approved to hold B matches by the AKC. In order for us to move forward with this, however, we must make some minor modifications to the club's by-laws. To address this, we will be holding a very brief club meeting to vote on the proposed changes in conjunction with our Regional Specialty on August 21st. You will receive a letter that outlines the proposed changes and will have an opportunity to vote on those changes at the special meeting.

Please check the article in this issue on the upcoming Regional Specialty; it's a wonderful event and we encourage you all to attend.

As always, we welcome any feedback on our programs, events, newsletters and all things Berner. ●



4H Dog Project – Designed for Kids and Their Dogs

-Deb Wilkins

Our dogs are family companions and as such should be the responsibility of the entire family. When I began raising and training Bernese Mountain Dogs in 1988, I realized that raising a puppy goes hand in hand with raising children.

When my children entered elementary school I learned about a 4H program called the 4H Dog Project. Having been raised as a city kid, I considered 4H to be for farm kids in rural areas. Little did I know that 4H was very much an all inclusive urban program. My children joined our local 4H group with the intent to do just the dog project. What we found was a wealth of educational projects that included participation in projects that benefit the community in an environment that nurtured their self esteem. The children run the club meetings, elect their officers, and learn and use Roberts Rules of Order. Adults are only there for guidance and volunteering for teaching and mentoring the children in their self directed projects.

My children participated in 4H Dog Project training classes in obedience, showmanship, agility, vet science, dog bowl, and therapy dog activities. I volunteered to teach classes in all of the above. The children are allowed to show their family dog regardless of the dog's "pedigree". They are required to become well versed in the care and keeping of their dogs. They study veterinary science, purebred dog breeds and their purpose, and grooming.

These are the objectives of the Minnesota 4-H Dog Project:

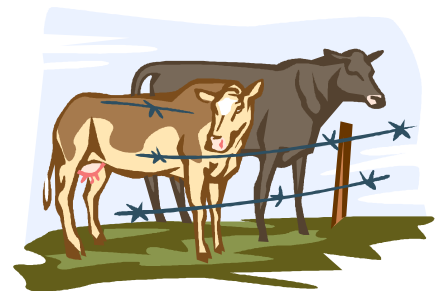
- develop leadership, initiative, self-reliance, and sportsmanship
- experience the pride and responsibility of being involved with a dog
- learn a greater love for animals and develop a humane attitude towards them
- prepare for citizenship responsibilities by working together in groups and supporting community dog projects and activities

These are the classes offered in 4H dog competition: (These classes may be broken down by exhibitor's age, dog's jump height, etc.)

Obedience:
 Beginner A
 Beginner B
 Graduate Beginner
 Novice
 Graduate Novice
 Pre-Open
 Open
 Graduate Open
 Pre-Utility
 Utility
 Veterans
 Brace
 4-Dog Team ►

Showmanship:
 Novice Showmanship
 Open Showmanship

Agility:
 Beginner
 Elementary
 Intermediate
 Senior
 Advanced
 Jumpers 1
 Jumpers 2
 Jumpers 3



4H Dog Project continued...

Additional classes to may be offered: Grooming and Manners, Costume Classes, Tricks, Heel Down, Timed Recalls, Herding, Tracking, Rally, Free Style, etc.

The Minnesota 4H Dog Project is one of the best programs in the country. Classes are taught by volunteers and parents are welcome to volunteer. The 4H philosophy encourages children to learn through self directed projects. As an AKC judge of Junior Showmanship competition, I can easily pick out the children trained through a 4H program. These children have a sense of confidence, sportsmanship, compassion, and a genuine knowledge of dogs. There is little cost involved for children to participate in 4H.

For more information about 4H and the Minnesota 4H Dog Project, visit their website:

<http://www.fourh.umn.edu/mndog/index.html>

<http://www.fourh.umn.edu/downloads/programhandbook/index.asp>•

Dutch, Draft Test Virgin

-Dutch Latterell

Editor's Note:

A special thanks to my new friend, Boomer. Boomer lives in Grinnell, Iowa with his mom and BMDCGTC Club member, Jennifer Krohn. Boomer welcomed my mom and me and my friend Mick McCabe and his mom, Denise, to stay with him while we were in Iowa.

My first experience with drafting was at the BMDCA National Specialty in 2006 in Michigan. My mom signed up for a drafting seminar just to see what it was all about. I was secretly hoping it had something to do with beer, but found out when we got there, that it really is MUCH more fun than beer for a Berner!

My mom brought along a cart to the seminar in Michigan that my dad had built. The folks at the seminar helped my mom with some initial training. It included lots of treats, so I was pretty happy. By the end of the seminar, they had the cart hooked up to me and I was pulling it around! It was a little scary at first, as it made rattling noises behind me, but my mom kept giving me treats, so it wasn't quite so scary.

My mom found out that our club was going to have a 2-day draft test on October 31, and November 1. She thought we should try going for our Novice Draft Dog (NDD) Title. We began working on our training in more earnest. She was still giving me treats along the way, so I humored her and went along with it.

Then she got a hair-brained idea that we should enter the spring draft test that the Heartland BMD Club holds in Iowa over Memorial Day weekend. I talked my friend Mick McCabe into entering too. Then we REALLY got serious about training. The major elements of a draft test are pretty simple. At the novice level they are all done on-leash. They are designed to show the natural working elements we Berners possess:▶

Elements of the Test:**Basic Control – Heeling and Recall****How It's Supposed to work...**

The handler demonstrates a short heeling pattern. The leash is taken off and handler calls dog.

How I did...

It wasn't pretty, but we passed this element. Did I mention it was hot in Iowa? They don't give points for style, so I figured why bother doing anything fancy? I started out my heeling pattern from a prone position. The judges said they had never seen that before, but geesh, I was trying to conserve energy for later!

Harness and Hitch**How It's Supposed to work...**

Demonstrate the handler can correctly harness the dog in preparation for the Practical Draft Work portion of the test

How I did...

Did I tell you it was HOT in Iowa? I stood steady, as it was really too hot to move around much. We passed this part with flying colors!

Practical Draft Work – Basic Commands, Control with Distractions, Loading and Unloading, Maneuvering**How It's Supposed to work...**

The team has to maneuver in a ring around a course designed by the judges. They must halt, pick up and drop off a small load, work around visual and auditory distractions, back up 1-foot while hooked to the cart and go through a narrow.

How I did...

This is the part where I really screwed up. Did I mention that it was really **HOT** in Iowa? I forgot how to halt and wouldn't back up for my mom. It was just too much work!!! I think my mom and I need to do some more training. Maybe if she would have been able to give me some treats.... HELLO, what happened to the treats???? They tell me they're not allowed in an actual draft test, so I figured what's the point then?

Group Stay**How It's Supposed to work...**

This is done with up to 6-draft teams in the ring at once. Dogs can either sit or lay down and must stay in that position for a full 3-minutes with the owner across the ring from them at the novice level.

How I did...

Well, they FINALLY gave me something where I could relax and cool off a little. I got to lay down in the shade for three whole minutes! Of COURSE I passed this part of the test! But then came the last part of the test my mom conveniently neglected to tell me about...

Distance Freight Haul**How It's Supposed to work**

Dogs and handler go on ½ mile freight haul over varying terrain pulling 20 lbs. This element is done on-leash for the novice level.

How I did...

Good grief, did I mention it was **BEASTLY HOT** in Iowa???? And then they wanted me to pull 20 lbs over ½ mile! There was some shade along the way and we did make a water stop in the middle, but it was still hot! I wanted to know when we could go back and repeat the Group Stay exercise. Hanging out in the shade was much more fun--and less work! I passed this element too, even though it was hot...▶

Dutch continued...

When we got back a nice lady vet took me into the shade and rubbed ice on my belly and stuck my feet in ice water to cool me down. I panted a little harder for effect so she would do it a bit longer. She was really nice!

My mom told me we're going to do some more practicing this summer so we're ready to enter our club's fall draft test. Now that I'm not a draft test virgin anymore, I realize how much fun it is! I won't be so scared and nervous when we enter our next test. Ok, it was really my mom who was nervous ☺

We made some new friends in Iowa, and I'm sure we're going to make some more at the draft test this fall. Everyone was really encouraging to me and my mom—they even clapped for us! And the best part about our club's test is it's going to be in the fall and it will hopefully be cool. I'm secretly hoping for snow, but don't tell my mom.

I hope we see some other BMDCGTC Club members entered at the draft test in the fall. If my mom and me can do it, trust me, anyone can do it! Even though we didn't pass, we sure had fun!

You might want to ask Denise and Mick McCabe how they did at the draft test—they entered the May test after trying out drafting at the April 2009 "Taste of Activities" Club Event! The nice lady that helped me cool down with the ice said Mick is a drafting natural! I think Mick thought drafting was about beer too--after all, his registered name is Dou-Hils A Cold One Michelob!

For information on the club's upcoming draft test visit the Events page on our club website: www.twincities.org.

For a link to draft test rules and regulations go to:

http://www.bmdca.org/Draft/Draft_Regulations/Draft_Test_Regulations_2007_Edition.pdf •

Drafting Titles

-Shannon Cihlar

Now that your interest has been piqued by Dutch's tales, I want to tell you about the titles you and your dog can earn in drafting tests. There are two different classes, which can be done with one dog or two dogs at the same time (Brace). The novice class is done entirely on leash, the handler remains in the ring for the long (3-minute) stay (sit, lie down or stand), and the dog pulls 20 pounds on the 1/2 mile freight haul. The open class is done entirely off leash, the handler goes out of sight for the long stay, and the dog must pull their weight (within 10-pound increments; example, a 67-pound dog pulls 60 pounds, a 92 pound dog pulls 90 pounds) on the 1/2 mile freight haul. Both tests start with a basic obedience pattern and a recall. Next is the harness and hitch to the cart. Then the maneuvering course of obstacles which can include right and left turns, circles, weaves, and/or figure 8s. Also included is a "narrows" which is 1 foot wider than the widest part of your cart, a light load, greeting strangers, an audio distraction, ►

Drafting continued...

a visual distraction, a SLOW, a movable obstacle, and a back-up of 1 foot for novice class and 4 feet for open class.

The titles you can earn are:

NDD (novice draft dog)—pass novice class one time

DD (open draft dog)—pass the open class one time

BNDD (brace novice draft dog)—pass novice class one time with 2 dogs

BDD (brace open draft dog)—pass open class one time with 2 dogs

ANDD (advanced novice draft dog)—pass novice class 5 times under 7 different judges

MDD (master draft dog)—pass open class 5 times under 7 different judges

Starting next year at the national specialty, which will be very close in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, wooden plaques will be presented to dogs earning the ANDD or the MDD at the annual club meeting of the BMDCA.

Our club will be holding TWO draft tests this fall, on October 31 and November 1, where you can work toward earning the above titles. If you have never seen a draft test, this is a great opportunity to do so. We will need stewards (no experience necessary) to help in the draft tests as well, which is a really great way to get up close and personal to see the workings of the draft test. If interested contact either of our chief ring stewards, Darwin Missling at DarwinMissling@msn.com, or Craig Schwarten at info@littlebearberners.com. •

BMDCGTC invites you to
TWO back-to-back DRAFT TESTS
 October 31 and November 1, 2009
 Bassett Creek Park, 6001 32nd Ave N. Crystal, Minnesota
 Entries close at the address of Nancy Mayer, Test Secretary, at 6:00 PM, October 21, 2009
 Our distinguished judges are Peggy Granger, WI and Stacy Temples, CO
 Shannon Cihlar, Chair, kscope@rimestone.net, Nancy Mayer, Secretary, jnbmd@hinet.net



For details please visit our new & improved website www.twincitiesbmd.org
New 2010 Calendar; available this fall from Wayz & Meant

The Regional Specialty Show is Coming – So What's the Big Deal?

-Julie Latterell

For the past two years, you have likely heard the hoopla that precedes our club's regional specialty show, which is held each year in August. There is a lot of discussion about the volunteers that are needed to put on such an event and excitement among exhibitors and club members leading up to the event.

So what IS all the hoopla about and why might you too catch the "Regional Specialty Fever?"

Specialty shows are events limited to a single breed. Some specialty shows may be held in conjunction with an all-breed event and others are independent of all-breed shows. That is the case with our club's regional specialty show. We sponsor a show limited to just Bernese Mountain Dogs on Friday, August 21st. It is held with a number of other breed clubs who are also holding regional specialty shows that day. St. Croix Valley Kennel Club sponsors a 2-day all-breed show on August 22nd and August 23rd and the NorthStar Working Group sponsors a 1-day show on August 24th that is limited to dogs in the Working Group, which include BMD's.

So why should we all be excited?

For the Exhibitor...

- An opportunity to show their dog over 4-days of shows! With the high cost of showing dogs these days with increases in gas prices and entry fees and limited opportunities for major wins (determined by the number of dogs entered), entering a 4-day show makes a lot of economic sense—especially when it's so close to home!
- The regional specialty show will draw a large entry of Berners to compete against! Our shows over the past two years have maintained an entry of over 50 Berners. This compares with a typical all-breed show in our area that draws on average 2-10 Berners!
- If you think your dog has missed their calling in the show ring, you have an opportunity to enter them in the Veterans Sweepstakes class! The Veterans Sweepstakes class is open to dogs 7 years of age. Dogs competing in the Veteran Sweepstakes classes may be spayed or neutered. Puppies may enter both the regular puppy classes and a special Puppy Sweepstakes class.
- A chance to win the coveted Best in Specialty Show (BISS) title!

For the spectator...

- It's a chance to see a large representation of Berners from all over the country!
 - Connect with breeders and exhibitors to ask questions about the breed.
 - An opportunity to see many other dog breeds competing at the 2-day all breed show on Saturday and Sunday
 - Support your fellow club-members
 - Get information about how dog shows work and an opportunity learn more about other AKC events you can participate in with your dog!▶
-

Regional Specialty continued...

For the volunteer...

- See the action in the ring with a seat as close to the ring as you can get—you would only be closer if you were the judge or an exhibitor!
- A chance to help out the club in a meaningful way!

For Everyone...

- A chance to win some terrific items at our specialty raffle and silent auction.

Hip X-Ray

Inver Grove Animal Hospital

OFA Certification

Stillwater Animal Hospital

Stone Mountain

Weekend Stay (Friday – Sunday) (\$200 value)

Benda Photography

Photo package

- Attend the terrific post-show banquet which will be catered by Byerly's!
- Socialize with other Berner owners and club members!

We are looking for volunteers on Friday, August 21st to help out with Raffle Ticket sales, Ways and Means sales and our Rescue/Public Education Booth.

We also have a post-show banquet on Friday immediately following Best of Breed judging. You don't need to be an exhibitor, spectator or volunteer to come out and enjoy the fun of the post-show banquet!

For information about the show visit the Events link on our website

www.twincitiesbmd.org

For information about helping out the day of the show, contact show chair, Julie

Latterell jal@saintpaulfoundation.org

For information about the post-show banquet, please contact our banquet co-

chairs, Mary Pearson mpearson@fredlaw.com or Bethany Pearson,

bbpearson1@gmail.com

For information about how to donate items for the raffle contact our raffle chair,

Teresa Schwarten info@littlebearberners.com •



Greetings from Your Raffle Chair

-Theresa Schwarten

I'm just sending you an update/reminder that items or services are still being accepted for the Raffle at the Regional Specialty on Friday, August 21st. Today is August 1st, so it's now less than 3 weeks away. I have been contacted about a number of GREAT items that will be donated, BUT I am still in need of more. We want to make this Raffle a big success and the opportunity is good as there will be out-of-towners and other breed folks at the show.

So, as your Raffle Chair, I'm encouraging you to give me a call ASAP!! We can still use your help and we know....You HAVE it, we WANT it and we STILL want it now!! ☺

Here are several options on how to get things to the Raffle:

1. If you want to come for a visit and drop it by our place that would be GREAT! Our address is 34570 Ivan Ave, Stacy, MN 55079. Just give us a call first.
2. If you're out of the area and want to mail it to us, that's good too.
3. If you want your donation picked up, just call me at 651-408-0007 or e-mail me at info@littlebearberners.com and we can figure that out.
4. If you know a board member or committee chair from the club, you can give them your donation.
5. Or, our final option is to bring your item the day of the show, early morning. If you're doing this, please call or e-mail to let me know so we can be ready for it.

Thanks for your time AND patience and I hope to hear from you soon! ☺
Until then.....BMD hugs to you all.....●

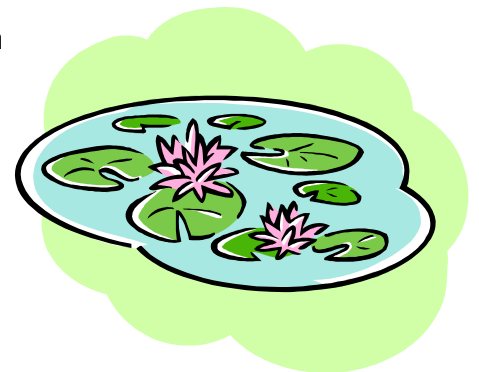
Chester Goes Fishing

-Catherine Muenich

Recently, I was invited to go fishing with a friend of mine. As I thought about going, I turned to look at Chester lounging on the floor. He seemed bored. I wondered if we should bring Chester along with us. It would most likely be great fun for him too. My friend explained that we would walk to a secret pond on some farmland about a half mile away. It was a great place to catch keeper-sized bluegill and bass. We could easily fish from shore using night crawlers equipped with orange-yellow bobbers.

We decided to take a chance and bring Chester along on the expedition. Thankfully, all of the obstacles we were worried about encountering on the way to the pond turned out to be no problem for him.

Would Chester be able to get over a barbed-wire fence?
Not exactly. However, if we lifted the lowest wires stretching across the wooden posts up a little, he was agile enough to creep underneath.▶



Fishing continued...

Would Chester get into trouble with the cows?
No. He was curious about them, but he stayed close to us upon our request.

Would Chester scare the fish?
Only a little. Of course, Chester had to wade into the pond to cool off and get a drink. The fish scattered but returned shortly. Sunfish don't spook as easily as some other kinds of fish such as trout.

Would Chester chase the baits into the water?
No. I was sure he would not do that. He has almost no fetching instincts whatsoever. The only thing he likes to chase is other dogs.

It was a lovely summer day. For a while, Chester simply ran beautiful and free. I wished I had brought my camera. Once he was done exploring the surrounding area, he bedded down in the shade just behind us. Chester dozed protected from the afternoon heat as we experienced the emotional rollercoaster ride that often accompanies the sport of angling. I hadn't been fishing for a few years, so my skills were admittedly rusty. I cursed in frustration when a cast didn't launch from my pole as planned and my line became a tangled mess. I screeched with delight when I reeled in a big bass

without the use of a net. Later, Chester observed closely as we used up two dozen large worms and hauled in 20 plump sunfish. He soaked it all in. After a couple of hours, we packed up our bounty and repeated our steps back to the cabin home. We were tired but at the same time feeling happy.

What's the moral of the story?
I guess it is to take your Berner fishing when you can. You'll both enjoy the adventure. ●



Are You Interested in Becoming an AKC Judge?

-Mary Alice Eschweiler, BMDCA Judges Education Chair has provided the following information about an upcoming AKC Judges Education Institute class:

Judges Education is happy to announce that two AKC Basic Judging Institutes have been scheduled. The Institute will be April 10, 2010 in DeKalb, Illinois. The Institute format has been changed with an eye to practicality and affordability. The agenda has been streamlined to only one day but will concisely address all skills necessary to jump start judging careers. Presentations will be made by the AKC Staff.

Topics will include:
RING PROCEDURE/CONTROL EVALUATING DOGS

THE APPROVAL PROCESS EVALUATING JUDGES

Tuition: \$150.00 includes all materials, morning and afternoon breaks.
Attendees are responsible for their own hotel and travel arrangements.
Tuition does not include accommodations or meals; attendees may stay and eat where they wish, so each may control their own costs. ►

Becoming an AKC Judge continued...

Newer judges and aspiring judges should not miss the opportunity to take advantage of this unique experience to benefit their future judging careers.

Space is limited.

Information on each AKC Basic Judging Institute can be found on the AKC website, under Seminars, or you may contact:

Mrs. Kathy Caruana,
919-816-3862 or kac1@akc.org
(mailto:kac1@akc.org)

If anyone is interested in attending, please contact Mary Alice Eschweiler privately or

contact AKC Judging Operations. Mary Alice indicated that attending such a seminar was going to be required for new judges. However, such a requirement is not currently on the AKC's downloadable forms. If anyone has any questions regarding becoming a judge, please contact Mary Alice and she will try to assist you.

Mary Alice Eschweiler,
Bernese Mtn. Dog Club of America
Judges' Education Chair
32022 W. Hwy. K, Hartland, WI 53029
262-367-6564 (home) 414-614-6564 (cell)●

Club Calendar of Events

August 21 - 24

BMDCGTC Regional Specialty (21st)
St. Croix Valley Kennel Club Show (22nd - 23rd)
Northstar Working Group Show (24th)

PlayPals

Date to be determined

September 12 - 13

Rochester Kennel Club Show
Rochester, MN

September 19

Tentative BMDCGTC Club Meeting Date

October 3 - 4

Wright County Kennel Club Show
Hutchinson, MN

October 10 - 11

Mason City Kennel Club Show
Mason City, Iowa

October 31 - November 1

BMDCGTC Draft Test

For detailed info on upcoming events check out the club events calendar●

Club Officers

President

Denise McCabe

715-531-0344

President@TwinCitiesBMD.org

Vice President

Shannon Cihlar

320-283-5378

VicePresident@TwinCitiesBMD.org

Secretary

Karen Johnson

Treasurer

Julie Latterell

Board Members:

Colleen Carroll

Micky Trent

Darwin Missling

Debra Wilkins

Sarah Tennesen

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.twincitiesbmd.org



In June, Catherine and Chester enjoyed attending an outdoor retirement party in Cornell, WI.

About BerNews

The content of BerNews represents the views and opinions of the authors, and not necessarily those of the BMDCGTC or its members, nor does publication constitute endorsement.

Articles written by members of the BMDCGTC on any subject that may be of interest to members are welcome. All works must be sited.

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