



# BerNews

Fall 2005 Volume 2, Issue 4

## Special Interest Articles:

- President's Letter
- Canine Good Citizen Program
- Seniors at Six

## In This Issue:

Club Meeting & Potluck	2
Dog as a Teacher	2
Health & Wellness Day	3
Canine Good Citizen	4
Seniors At Six	5
Fall 2005 Events	6
Licenses	7

## **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: Ways to Make a Difference**

-Julie Latterell (Cooper, Dutch, Owen, & Watson)

### **BMDCGTC Response to Hurricane Katrina**

In the recent aftermath of hurricane Katrina, the BMDCGTC board struggled with what we should/could do to assist the pet-population that was affected by this horrible disaster. What is our ability to help based on the mission of our club? Included in the pets affected by the disaster were a handful of BMD's and their owners, but how do we locate those in need?

Dawn Gabig, President of the Heartland BMD club, located in Kansas City through a network of communication resources heard of a family that was truly in need of assistance. Jeff and Debbie Young were forced to flee from their flooded home in Biloxi, Mississippi with their two Bernese Mountain Dogs, Spunky and Shadow. Jeff was also facing imminent surgery for bladder cancer.

Dawn Gabig publicized the Young's story on several Berner-related yahoo group lists. The majority of the board felt this was an opportunity to help someone in need affected by the hurricane while also making it specific to ensuring the health and well-being of Berners, Spunky and Shadow.

While there were certainly other's affected by this tragedy and other ways to donate to help canine victims of hurricane Katrina, the Young's plight--and the fact that we had a chance to help Berner's--made their story particularly compelling. The BMDCGTC donated \$200 to assist the Young's and their Berners. In addition, we made available through our website, the ability to donate dollars specifically to the Young's. To date, other generous Berner owners have donated an additional \$250 to assist the Young's.

Thank you all for making this generosity possible.

### **Helping BMD's closer to home...**

With the end of 2005 coming up, we are once again going to be looking ahead to a new year! Our club membership has grown to just over 100 people and their BMD's. The board has worked hard to expand our programs and create events that encompass all aspects of BMD ownership.

As we continue to expand our programs, we cannot do this without the support and involvement of club members. In order to organize and hold these wonderful events, we need to work on expanding our volunteer base—whether it's volunteering to host a PlayPals event, or volunteering to help with one event or volunteering to chair a committee or volunteering to sit on the board--we need your help! ►

## Fall Club Meeting and Potluck

**Meeting Date/Time:** Sunday, September, 2005  
11:00 to ?

**Meeting Place:** Scott Dickinson & Julie Latterall's House  
N8323 County Road B  
Spring Valley, WI  
715-772-3121

**Directions:** From Minnesota, merge onto I-94 E toward Madison.  
Take the WI-128 exit- EXIT 28- toward Glenwood City/Elmwood.  
Turn Right onto WI-128.  
Turn Right onto WI-29.  
Turn Left onto WI-128/CR-B/Elmwood Rd.  
End at N8323 County Road B.

- Drinks, burgers, and brats will be provided.
- Please bring a dish to pass and lawn chairs for lounging.
- There is a large fenced yard and ample room for dogs and humans to roam.
- The event will be held rain or shine.
- Enter the yard through the white schoolhouse with yourself and your dogs. Extensive landscaping is underway! •



### If a Dog was your teacher, you would learn stuff like:

- ❖ When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.
- ❖ When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.
- ❖ Let others know when they've invaded your territory.
- ❖ Take naps – often.
- ❖ Stretch before rising.
- ❖ Run, romp, and play daily.
- ❖ Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.
- ❖ When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by, and nuzzle them gently.

Source: *unknown* •

## CANINE HEALTH AND WELLNESS DAY

Learn more about how to keep your Canine healthy and happy!  
This is open to all dogs and their people.

### ▪ Health and Identity services offered

- Cardiac Screening
- CERF
- Von Willebrand's (vWB) (on a pre-registered basis only)
- Microchipping

### ▪ Speakers:

- Breeding Considerations for BMD's Deborah Wilkins
- Canine Chiropractic Health Dr. Cathy Sinning

**Date/Time: Saturday, October 29, 9:00 – 2:00, registration at 8:00**

While you may register on-site the day of the event, pre-registered dogs will receive priority appointments. See our website [www.twincitiesbmd.org](http://www.twincitiesbmd.org) for more information about how to pre-register.

**Place:** St. Paul Dog Training Club  
219 – 13th Avenue South, South St. Paul, MN (map on website)

**Cost per person:** \$15 (BMDCGTC Members) / \$ 20 (Non-members)  
Additional fees charged for health and identity services  
Lunch provided

Please go to [www.twincitiesbmd.org](http://www.twincitiesbmd.org) to pre-register and find out more details about the event!



# The Canine Good Citizen Program

-Catherine Johnson (Chester)

## What is the CGC program?

CGC is a certification program that is designed to reward dogs who have good manners at home and in the community. The Canine Good Citizen Program is a two-part program that stresses responsible pet ownership for owners and basic good manners for dogs. All dogs who pass the 10-step CGC test receive a CGC certificate from the American Kennel Club.

## Can my dog participate in the CGC program?

All dogs, both purebred and mixed breed, are welcome to participate in the CGC program.

## How old does my dog have to be?

Dogs must be old enough to have received necessary immunizations such as rabies vaccine. Puppies who have completed all immunizations and boosters may be tested. Because behavior and temperament can change over time, puppies should be re-tested as adults.

There is no upper age for the CGC test. A dog is never too old to be a good citizen.

## Why should I participate in the CGC program?

As you practice the CGC skills with your dog, you'll discover the many benefits and joys of training your dog. Training will enhance the bond between you and your dog. Dogs who have a solid obedience education are a joy to live with --- they respond well to household routines, have good manners in the presence of people and other dogs, and they fully enjoy the company of the owner who took the time to provide training, intellectual stimulation, and a high quality of life.

Many dog owners choose Canine Good Citizen training as the first step in training their dogs. The Canine Good Citizen program lays the foundation for other ACHE activities such as obedience, agility, tracking, and performance events.

## What are they tested on?

Test 1: Accepting a friendly stranger

Test 2: Sitting politely for petting

Test 3: Appearance and grooming

Test 4: Out for a walk (walking on a loose lead)

Test 5: Walking through a crowd

Test 6: Sit and down on command and Stay in Place

Test 7: Coming when called

Test 8: Reaction to another dog

Test 9: Reaction to distraction

Test 10: Supervised separation

## What causes a dog to fail?

Any dog that growls, snaps, bites, attacks, or attempts to attack a person or another dog must be dismissed from the test. These dogs need to overcome their fear and aggression before they attempt the CGC test again.

## What does one do with a CGC title?

When you complete CGC training, you will have a canine companion who responds to basic commands such as sit and down and who is under good control on a leash. After CGC, be sure to consider obedience, agility, tracking, and performance events. Many dog owners complete CGC training and testing as a prerequisite to therapy dog certification.

Source: *American Kennel Club* •



## The Good Doctor: Seniors at Six

-Dr. Randall Carpenter, DVM1

It is an unfortunate fact relating to our beloved Berners, they just do not live long enough.

Someone once told me that Berners are puppies for the first three years, adults for the next three years, and all additional time we have with them beyond that point is considered a gift. By the time our Berner friends reach the age of six they are senior citizens.

Just like their aging human companions, senior dogs need an increased level of care as they become more prone to multiple health problems, and respond differently to stress, medication, and environmental factors.

While some signs of aging, such as a graying muzzle and slowed activity, are easy to identify in your dog, others are more subtle. Most age-related changes in how your dog looks, acts, and feels tend to be gradual. Therefore, it takes a watchful eye to recognize what may be early signs of disease or health problems.

The following is a list of the most common changes associated with age-related diseases and compromising medical conditions. If you note any of these changes you should consult with your veterinarian to help insure that

your dog enjoys the best quality of life possible throughout his senior years.

### **Behavioral Changes:**

Decreased activity, less interaction with family members, less enthusiastic greeting behavior, sleeping more or not sleeping at night, disorientation/confusion, less responsive to verbal cues.

### **Metabolic Changes:**

Weight gain or loss, changes in appearance (skin or hairloss, loss of muscle tone), changes in eating or drinking habits, increased urination, loss of housetraining.

### **Physical Changes:**

Limping/stiffness of gait, vision or hearing loss, dental problems or offensive breath, increased infections, digestive problems.

It is recommended that all senior pets have basic screening procedures run on an annual basis to allow for early detection of any emerging health problems. The following is a list of common screening to consider for your Berner:

### **Physical examination:**

Includes checking your dog's general appearance, temperature, body weight, heart, lungs, ear, eyes, teeth, thyroid glands, and skin.

### **Complete blood count (CBC):**

Blood test to diagnose cancer, infection, anemia, and bleeding problems.

### **Serum chemistry profile:**

Tests used for assessing the function of the liver, kidneys, pancreas, and other organs.

### **Urinalysis:**

A urine sample will be checked for evidence of infection and to assess kidney function.

### **Fecal analysis:**

Fecal material is checked for evidence of parasites, unusual bacteria, and protozoa plus blood.

### **Other tests may include:**

Radiography, ultrasounds, EKG, thyroid blood test, and adrenal gland testing.

By monitoring your pet's health with an annual wellness exam, it is hoped that any age-related problems will be diagnosed and treated promptly. Our senior dogs certainly deserve this consideration. ●



## Continued Ways to Make a Difference...

In addition to three board vacancies that we are looking to fill for 2006, we are also looking for ways expand our club members' involvement.

Here is a look back at what you've helped make possible during 2005 and a look forward at some new events for 2006!

### 2005

- **January**  
*Successful launching of the Lucy Fund where generous club members raised over \$1,000 to help fellow-BMDCGTC members who are facing unexpected costly medical care for their beloved BMD (see our website [www.twincitiesbmd.org](http://www.twincitiesbmd.org) for more information)*
- **April**  
*2nd Annual Swiss Fun Match and Dessert Auction*
- **June**  
*Drafting Seminar/Workshop open to all dog breeds and taught by Ruth Nielsen*
- **August**  
*Club sponsored attendance at the Berne, MN Swissfest*
- **October**  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Health and Wellness Day- 4 Health Tests offered and 2 speakers will talk about topics of interest to BMD owners*
- **PlayPals Events throughout the year**

### Look forward to in 2006:

- **February**  
*Awards Banquet will recognize BMDCGTC Members who earned titles in calendar year 2005*

We would love your help in ensuring we can continue to bring you the wonderful events we've held in the past—in addition to adding a few new ones for 2006!

We hope you will consider giving of your time and talents in 2006. We thank you for your willingness to assist if you've done so in the past, and challenge you to take on something new in the coming year. For those of you that have yet to step forward, please consider doing so—we need you! ●

## Never a Dull Moment in Autumn 2005

-Catherine Johnson (Chester)

Try not to worry about the price of gas, because you don't need to drive far to have fun. This fall there is no shortage of local events to participate in, so pack your Berners into the car and head out! The following is a list of events and their locations:

### September 22

Dog Lovers Night Out  
Linden Hills Neighborhood  
Minneapolis, MN

### September 25

BMDCGTC Club Meeting & Potluck  
Latterell/Dickinson House  
Spring Valley, WI

### October 1

Dog Day Camp  
Alimagnet Park  
Burnsville, MN

### October 8

Berner Playpals  
Fort Snelling State Park  
Saint Paul, MN

### October 29

BMDCGTC Health & Wellness Day  
St. Paul Dog Training Club  
South Saint Paul, MN

For more events and details go to the BMDCGTC website: [www.twincitiesbmd.org](http://www.twincitiesbmd.org) and click on events. ●

## Club Officers

### President

Julie Latterell  
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Nancy Arndt  
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### Board Members:

Shannon Cihlar  
Peggy Bebeau  
Darwin Missling  
Adam Conn  
Susan Acklen

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.twincitiesbmd.org](http://www.twincitiesbmd.org)

## Owning a Dog ... a Privilege and a Responsibility

-Catherine Johnson (Chester)

Owning a dog is one of the great American pastimes and privileges. Dogs fill the role of companion, guide, hunter, guardian and entertainer. But owning a dog is a major responsibility as well. This responsibility extends not only to proper care and training of your dog, but also to your dog's behavior. A proper understanding of the responsibility of dog ownership is necessary in today's complex society.

### 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.

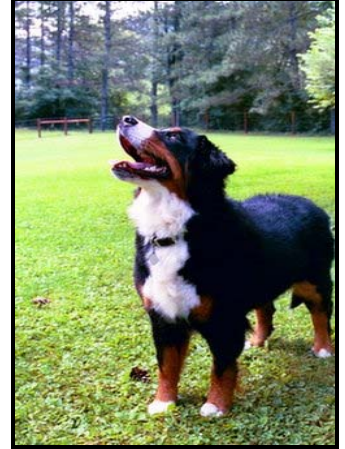
### Licenses

Dogs need to be vaccinated against rabies prior to licensing. Dog licenses can be purchased at your local police department. The license tag must be worn at all times along with the rabies vaccination tag. Dogs and cats, four months and older, are required to be vaccinated against rabies.

Licenses serve several purposes: Aids in the recovery of lost or impounded dogs, ensures that dogs are properly vaccinated against rabies, and places more animal control costs upon the dog's owner.

Source: *Apple Valley Police Department: Guidelines for Dog Ownership.* •

*Darwin Missling's Sophie shows off her dog tag.*



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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