



BerNews

Summer 2007 Volume 4, Issue 3

Special Interest Articles:

- President's Letter
- Maximum Effort at the Draft Test
- RCC Update

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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.

Letter from the President

-Shannon Cihlar (Eli, Brielle, Chaska, & Ruger)

It's summer time and the weather has been hot for our Berners already. Our next club meeting will be July 21 at the Bassett Creek Park in Crystal, MN. This is the same park where our draft test is held. It has plenty of shade and always seems cooler than other areas. This will be a cookout and picnic, so bring a dish to share. In the same location in the morning, there will be a seminar on grooming your Berner. See inside for more details.

Other events coming up this summer include the Berne Swiss Fest in Berne, MN, the weekend of August 4 and 5. If you haven't been, it is a little bit of Switzerland, a lot of fun! For more information see www.swissfest.org. On Friday, August 24, we will be holding our first regional specialty at the Washington

County Fairgrounds. There will be CERF exams, heart exams, and a microchipping clinic on Saturday at the show site. As we will not be having a health and wellness day to offer these services this year, it is a good place to get it all done at once. For more information see www.onofrio.com. And on September 15, there is an event called Linden Hills Days for Dogs. Now in its third year, the event is a fun afternoon festival with dog-friendly contests, pet parade, and shopping stroll. No pet parade is complete without a group of carting Berners! If interested, contact Alice Berry at 612-929-8000 or alice@entertainingtheidea.com.

Lots of events for everyone so have a fun and safe summer and keep those Berners cool. ●

Maximum Effort at the Draft Test

-Adam Conn (Orca & Bison)

The second annual draft test was held June 16th at Bassett Creek Park in Crystal, Minnesota. This is the same location as the test from last year (and the workshop the year prior). We had 11 dogs entered this year – 9 Berners and 2 Rotties; however, one Berner and both Rotties didn't show up for the test, so we proceeded with the 8 remaining dogs. Our judges were Patti Davieau and Eden Jonas.

The draft test consists of multiple tests of the dog and handler team, including Basic Control (heeling plus a recall), harness and hitch, maneuvering (circles, figure 8s, narrows, turns) and practical draft work (working slow, backing up, stopping), control with distraction, loading and unloading the cart, a group stay, and a half-mile freight haul. ►

Club Meeting Notice

SATURDAY, JULY 21, 2007

BASSETT CREEK PARK

6001 32ND AVE. N.

CRYSTAL, MN

12:00 TO 3:00PM

COOKOUT AND POTLUCK—BRING A DISH TO SHARE

COME EARLY AND LEARN ALL ABOUT GROOMING THE BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

What: Grooming Seminar
Date: Saturday, July 21st
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 (time just prior to BMDGTC Club meeting)
Cost: **FREE** to BMDCGTC Club Members, \$10 for individual non-BMDCGTC Club members or \$15 per couple.
Location: Picnic Shelter, Bassett Creek Park, Crystal, MN
<http://www.twincitiesbmd.org/Events.html>
RSVP: If you are planning on attending, please send an e-mail to jal@saintpaulfoundation.org
Prerequisites: Lawn Chair, notebook, pen and leashed dog, if desired

This is a hands-on seminar: bring a freshly washed dog, grooming supplies, and your own grooming table, if you wish to learn how to groom your individual dog. Dryers will be available on-site. If you don't have any equipment, but still want to learn - you are more than welcome to attend! Please plan on staying for the BMDGTC club barbeque and club meeting which will follow the Grooming Seminar at the picnic shelter.

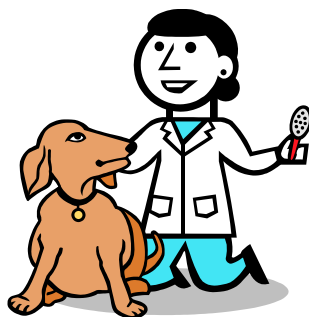
Note: The Grooming Seminar will be located in the shade under the picnic shelter, so should be sheltered from rain and/or the sun.



MORE ABOUT THE GROOMING SEMINAR...

Ever wondered how to keep your Berners coat looking its best and keep shedding to a minimum? What grooming tools are best for the Bernese coat? What are some easy and quick ways to have your dogs look freshly bathed all the time? Come hear our speaker, Anne Wolff Nichols, give grooming tips on these topics to begin the day. Following basic grooming, Anne will dive into the world of preparing your Berner for the show ring in regard to grooming. Anne is very open to sharing all her tips to help bring out the most in your dog for the show ring and how each individual dog can be better presented - and therefore increase your chance to win - if groomed correctly for the ring. For those of you that have watched Anne in the ring over this last year, you have seen first hand her skill at preparing a dog for the ring and the big results of the well-prepared dog. With our first regional specialty just around the corner, come get grooming tips to aid your Berner in looking their best for the big show!

Our speaker, Anne Wolff Nichols, has worked as a professional dog trainer and groomer with a wide variety of breeds over the last 30 plus years. She is also an accomplished owner/handler/trainer with 3 generations of group placing Bernese Mountain Dogs, with each generation having group placements from the classes. Find out more about our speaker by going to her website: www.BecomeDogSavvy.com.•



**Update from Regional Club Council
Louisville, KY
By Julie Latterell, RCC Representative**

The annual in-person meeting of Regional Club Council Representatives was held on Thursday, May 10th in Louisville, Kentucky during National Specialty week!

Some highlights from the meeting were:

✓ **Discussion of AKC judge mentoring program**

In the past, educating judges about proper breed type was facilitated by pairing up of an experienced judge, with a judge that was looking to gain a better understanding of a particular breed standard. The less experienced judge in that breed would be in the show ring with the more experienced judge and would have an opportunity to see and feel the dogs that were being presented that day.

Mary Alice Eschweiler, Judges Education Chair for the BMDCA spoke to the RCC Representatives about the AKCs' revised process for mentoring judges. The new program allows parent clubs to identify "mentors" who have gained experience in variety of ways in their breed. These mentors are then paired with judges ringside at conformation events. Mary Alice also indicated that it is preferred that judge mentoring occur at shows where there are supported entries and/or regional specialties. These shows typically draw larger entries of BMD's and provide judges with an opportunity to view dogs that most closely typify the breed standard.

Please contact Mary Alice Eschweiler at sheppatch@aol.com to discuss the qualifications for becoming a breed mentor.

Mary Alice's discussion of this topic was in response to an agenda item submitted by the Seattle BMD Club

✓ **AKC Licensing/Sanctioning and Supported Entries and Regional Specialties**

Susan Henderson, BMDCA Specialty Coordinator spoke to the RCC Representatives about the BMDCA rules about Supported Entries and hosting of Regional Specialties. These rules were approved by the BMDCA in April 2007.

○ **BMDCA Designated Regional Specialties**

BMDCA recognized clubs that have existed five or more years as of 2005 and are not yet AKC-licensed may hold **a maximum of three** annual designated regional specialties under the BMDCA name. If AKC sanctioned status is not obtained prior to holding the third designated specialty, annual extensions may be granted provided the club submits proof to the BMDCA Specialty Coordinator of continuous progress toward achieving AKC sanctioning/licensing

○ **BMDCA Supported Entries**

BMDCA recognized clubs are limited to one supported entry per year under the BMDCA name.

○ **Sweepstakes**

BMDCA recognized clubs wishing to hold Sweepstakes in conjunction with a supported entry or a designated regional specialty under the BMDCA name must submit proof to the BMDCA Specialty Coordinator that they are actively working towards becoming AKC sanctioned.

(a full copy of "Regulations for Regional Specialties and/or Supported Entries" guidelines may be obtained by contacting Susan Henderson, Specialty Coordinator or Julie Latterell, RCC Representative)

A full listing of Supported Entries and Regional Specialties may be found in the BMDCA Membership Handbook.

It should be noted that the BMDCGTC is not currently AKC sanctioned or licensed, but the board has voted to approve pursuing AKC sanctioning. ►

As of April 2007 the status of all regional clubs is as follows:

- 9 regional clubs are AKC Licensed
- 5 regional clubs are AKC Sanctioned
- 10 regional clubs are BMDCA recognized only
- 1 regional club has conditional approval for BMDCA recognition
- 3 regional clubs initiated the process for BMDCA recognition
- 2 regional clubs are in contact with the BMDCA and are in the initial stages of formation

✓ **DNA/Tissue Sample Repository – Partnership with Regional Clubs**

Mary Maliarik, BernerGarde Trustee spoke to RCC Representatives about the possibility of regional clubs sponsoring a DNA/Tissue Sample collection drive similar to what was done in Louisville, Kentucky. Mary reported that over 160 BMD's participated in the program in Louisville. There is opportunity to get even more samples through similar regional club events. For more information about the DNA/Tissue Sample Repository, please visit <http://www.bernergarde.org/repository.aspx>

Stay tuned for information about how our club is going to participate in this important breed-health project!●

Maximum Effort Continued...

We had two dogs competing in the open draft dog level. This level is open to dogs who have earned the Novice Draft Dog title. The work is conducted entirely off-leash, and the handlers go out of site during the group stay. Additionally, these dogs haul their body weight on the half-mile freight haul with a minimum of 60 pounds carried in the cart.

In this first group, Carol Westaway had driven in the day before with Tempo, but her husband, David, had his flight from Ohio cancelled. He fortunately arrived while the judges were showing the exhibitors the freight haul course. He managed to guide Tempo successfully through the maneuvering course and freight haul and qualified.

A typical pass rate for a test is between 30% and 45% -- although the pass rate at Nationals was less than 20%. After Open, we were sitting at a very nice 50%. However, that number was to decline tremendously. We had six dogs in the Novice class, all belonging to club members. At the Novice level, all work is done on-leash and the dogs carry 20 pounds on the freight haul.

Unfortunately, none of these six dogs passed the test. Each dog worked well with their handler; however, crucial mistakes were pretty clear for each team. Fortunately, we all have until the September test in Wisconsin to "retool" and prepare.

On Sunday, our judges conducted a workshop for 10 dogs, including a Bouvier des Flanders and a Belgian Shepherd. Almost none of the dogs had ever pulled a cart before. Only one exhibited any fear of the equipment in the beginning, but by the end of the workshop, all 10 dogs were not only pulling a cart, they all successfully and confidently negotiating the narrows!

If you are interested in drafting with your dog, please contact me at AdamConn@aol.com – I will be organizing regular practices throughout the summer at Bassett Creek Park.●



Navigating a Turn



Coaxing Thru the Narrows

Scientist Studies Mystery Behind Child to Berner Bonding

-Catherine Muenich (Chester)

A local German scientist is taking time away from her regular work studying the intricacies of String Theory to find a scientific explanation for the strong attractions observed in the natural world between Bernese Mountain Dogs and children. Of course, all of us Berner owners have often witnessed this firsthand.



Example A

The doctor states that the bonding that occurs between children and BMDs "...ist sehr gut fom der hund," and if better understood might lead to new technologies that could be transferable to the manufacturing industry and medicine.



Dr. München at work.

Perhaps NASA's space program may even be able to apply Berner Bonding theories to their work on the next space shuttle. The

shuttle might be able to more safely enter and exit the earth's treacherous atmosphere without breaking up if Berner bonds are incorporated into the basic structure of the aircraft.

The doctor states that Berner bonding is not as strong as some magnetic forces previously studied. However, they are more powerful than ionic, covalent, or Van der Waal chemical bonding. In addition, she explains that this is a very good thing. If the forces between BMDs and young people were any stronger, they both might become susceptible to undergoing a rather unpleasant process known as "spaghettification." See Neil deGrasse Tyson's latest book, **Death by Black Hole**, for further details.

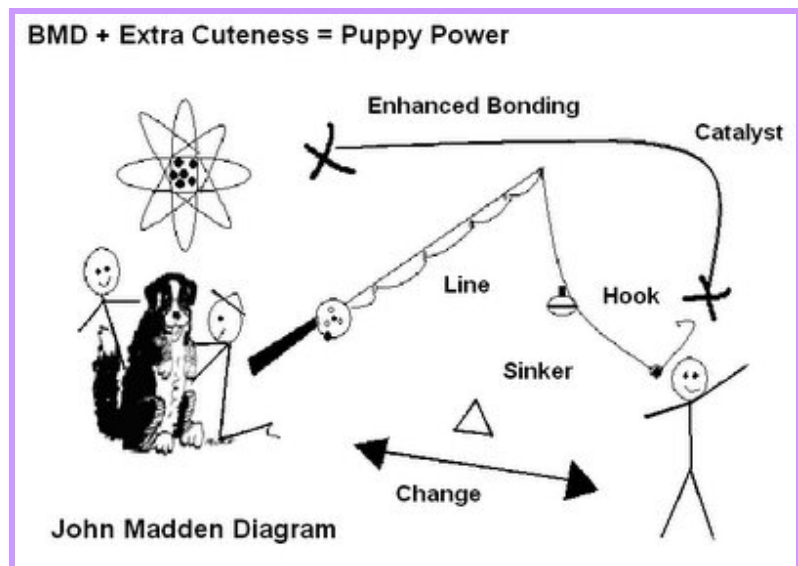
The doctor has actually formulated an equation that describes the interactions between BMDs and kids. (See John Madden Diagram of Berner physics). Dr. München assures that there is nothing to fear. She explains that this phenomenon of Berner bonding is harmless and has been occurring with little or no

incidence since Bernese Mountain Dogs appeared in Switzerland many years ago.



Example B

The doctor hopes to test the validity of her hypothesis when she returns to her laboratory in Zürich this fall. She doubts there will be any problems reproducing the experiments in a controlled environment. "It happens without fail almost every time," she says. "Put a BMD and a child within 20 ft. of each other and before you know it, they're stuck to each other like super glue. Ich verstehe nicht. One thing is for sure, it's always wonderful to observe!" (See Example C on last page).▶



RABIES CHALLENGE FUND \$20,000 MATCHING PLEDGE

Two anonymous donors have generously pledged to match all donations of **\$100 or more** to **The Rabies Challenge Fund** up to **\$20,000** from May 1st through November 1st. The Fund is more than halfway towards reaching its immediate goal of \$177,000 to cover the two concurrent challenge studies' first year expenses so the research can begin.

The donors state that, *"We are unabashed dog lovers and will do anything in our power to promote their health, longevity and overall well-being. That is the reason we have established a \$20,000 matching gift program for the Rabies Challenge Fund. If you believe, as we do and as W. Jean Dodds, DVM, has stated, that "Rabies is the vaccine most associated with adverse reactions because it's so potent", then please support this initiative, particularly now so that your \$100.00 or more donation will be doubled."*

The Rabies Challenge Fund Charitable Trust is a 501 (c) (3) tax-exemption organization founded by pet vaccine disclosure advocate Kris L. Christine of Maine in 2005 to finance 5 and 7 year long-term duration of immunity challenge studies on the canine rabies vaccine. Two world-renowned giants of veterinary vaccine research -- **Dr. W. Jean Dodds of Hemopet** and Co-Trustee of The Rabies Challenge Fund and **Dr. Ronald Schultz** of the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine -- have volunteered their time to ensure this important research is conducted in the United States. The vaccine studies will be performed by Dr. Schultz at the University of Wisconsin according to USDA vaccine licensing requirements.

"This matching pledge offers a marvelous opportunity to reach our goal soon and begin the study!" Dr. Dodds stated.

The concurrent vaccine studies will determine the duration of immunity conveyed by the canine rabies vaccine, with the goal of extending the state-mandated interval for boosters to 5, and then to 7 years. Scientific data suggest that vaccinating dogs against rabies every three years, as most states require, is unnecessary. Studies have shown the duration of protective immunity as measured by serum antibody titers against rabies virus to persist up to seven years post-vaccination, and results of a 1992 French challenge study led by Michel Aubert demonstrated dogs were immune to rabies five years after vaccination. Researchers believe the rabies vaccine can cause adverse reactions in animals and concur that it should not be given more often than is necessary to maintain immunity. Adverse reactions to rabies vaccination can include autoimmune diseases affecting the thyroid, joints, blood, eyes, skin, kidney, liver, bowel and central nervous system; anaphylactic shock; aggression; seizures; epilepsy; and fibrosarcomas at injection sites.

Fund founder and Co-Trustee, Kris Christine, noted that, *"This generous \$20,000 matching pledge presents pet owners with a wonderful opportunity to double their contributions of \$100 or more to help get the studies underway as soon as possible. The USDA does not require manufacturers to conduct long-term duration of immunity studies on canine vaccines, so rabies immunization laws reflect the minimum, not the maximum time for which vaccination confers immunity. Vaccine manufacturers lack the financial incentives to conduct this research, thus it is up to concerned pet owners to fund these studies to determine whether state laws require their dogs to be overvaccinated against rabies as current scientific data indicates."*

More information on The Rabies Challenge Fund and the concurrent 5 and 7 year challenge studies it will finance can be found at the fund's website designed by volunteer Andrea Brin at: www.RabiesChallengeFund.org. To hear *Animal Talk Naturally's* April 25th 2007 interview with Dr. W. Jean Dodds and Kris L. Christine **The Vaccine Challenge**, click on <http://www.animaltalknaturally.com:80/2007/05/01/the-vaccine-challenge-show-91/> .

The BMDCGTC has donated \$200.00 to this important cause. ●



Upcoming Regional Specialty

August 24-27, 2007

The St. Croix Valley Cluster is now twice as nice ---four days of shows, beginning with our first specialty!

Lake Elmo, Minnesota

- FRIDAY** **Regional Specialty**
 Breed and Non-Regular: Ann Milligan
 Puppy & Vet Sweeps: Lynn Griffin
 Junior Showmanship: Daryl Cooper
 Supported Entry for Obedience
- WEEKEND** **St. Croix Valley Kennel Club**
 Conformation, Rally, Obedience, Agility, Juniors
 Supported Entry Saturday
- MONDAY** **Northstar Working Group Association**
 Breed: Nancy Stewart

Come See the Berners!

We will have Berners from all over coming into Minnesota to compete on August 24th at Washington County Fairgrounds in Lake Elmo in agility, obedience, rally, and conformation. Your best opportunity to see them up close will be to help out! We desperately need volunteers for our first Regional Specialty in the following positions:

- Inside Ring Steward --- assists judge by calling dogs into the ring, handing judge ribbons and trophies, recording placements in stewards book. Experience required.
- Outside Ring Stewards --- hands out armband numbers and ring favors to exhibitors. Experience preferred.
- Set-up/Breakdown --- help set up and take down prize table, information table, etc.
- Ways & Means --- sell club merchandise at the event. No experience required.
- Workers Hospitality --- coordinates coolers filled with water and pop for volunteers. No experience required.
- Raffle Ticket Sales --- sells raffle tickets during test day
- Public Education --- provides information on the breed, club, and event for potential puppy owners, potential club members, and exhibitors.
- Judges Hospitality --- House our sweeps judge, Lynn Griffin (Bull Valley Bernese).
- Judges Transportation --- Transport Ann Milligan from the hotel, airport, and fairgrounds to where she needs to be.

This will be an all-day affair – the more volunteers we get, the shorter the shifts will be. If you are exhibiting, we can schedule your time to work with your schedule. We will position most of the tables near the ring so you can still get a good view! Please contact Adam Conn at AdamConn@aol.com if you can help out. ●

Club Officers

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Nancy Arndt

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Board Members:

Susan Acklen

Micky Trent, DVM

Darwin Missling

Jim Sheehan

Peggy Bebeau

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.twincitiesbmd.org



Example C •

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 cited.

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