



BerNews

Fall 2007 Volume 4, Issue 4

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.

Special Interest Articles:

- President's Letter
- International Symposium
- Berner Grooming

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Letter from the President

-Shannon Cihlar (Eli, Brielle, & Chaska)

Our next club meeting will be on November 3, at the home of Randy and Peggy Bebeau, in Anoka, MN. You can find directions on the club web site. Dress up your dogs and yourself for Halloween! This is an important meeting and we hope we have a large turnout. We will be voting on the new Code of Conduct which has been in the works for the last 2 years. We need a quorum of the membership in order to vote on it, so please try to attend. You will be receiving a copy of the new Code of Conduct in the mail very soon. We will also have our own Micky Trent, DVM, giving a presentation on bloat, something we all need to be aware of.

Also coming in the mail is a nomination form for club officers. We have four openings this year, president, treasurer, and two board members. Please give it some thought and get the permission of the person you would like to nominate. The ballot will come out toward the end of October/early November, and results will be announced at our next club meeting, the Winterfest, which will be December 15th at the home of Rick Brown and Coleen Carroll in Mahtomedi.

We will be doing a club survey to find out what interests you in regard to educational seminars. Let us

know what you want to hear about. The survey will be handed out at the November 3 meeting as well as the December 15 meeting. In an effort to encourage return of the completed survey, we will be having a raffle of a fabulous Berner-related prize at the November meeting.

In addition to the November 3 meeting and December 15 meeting, coming up early in 2008 is the Annual Club Banquet February 9, time and place to be determined, and February 16 and 17 is the Pet Expo, where the club will have a booth for the first time. Please contact Julie Latterell, jal@saintpaulfoundation.org if you would like to volunteer.

We have a busy schedule and hope you can join us! •



**McCabe's family dog Mick
(Photo by Denise McCabe)**

**3rd Annual International Symposium
Increasing the life expectancy in Bernese Mountain Dogs
Burgdorf, Switzerland, August 10, 2007**

BMDCA report from Debby Wilkins

Attending this symposium reminded me of a United Nations meeting, translation headsets and all. Close to two hundred fanciers and breeders from twenty three different nations from around the world participated in the symposium as part of the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Bernese Mountain Dog in Switzerland.

Martha Cehrs, President of the Bernese Mountain Dog of Switzerland, welcomed our group promptly at 9:00 A.M. In her opening statement she explained that the symposium supports the objective which the International Working Group (IWG) set forth at the 2005 symposium, organized in Salzburg by the Schweizer Sennenhund Verein Osterreich (VSSO) to encourage world wide cooperation in matters of health and longevity to achieve an average life expectancy of at least ten years for the Bernese Mountain Dog along with the 2006 symposium organized by Societa Italiana del Bovaro del Bernese (SIBB) in Como, Italy, which focused on global research being done on illnesses that dramatically shorten the life span of the breed such as tumors and malignant hystiocytosis. The goal of the 2007 symposium was to provide a progress report on the status of this global research that was initially presented in Italy.

Life Expectancy and Genetics, Is it possible to breed for longevity? presented by Dr. Gaudanze Dolf, PhD, Institute of Genetics, Vetsuisse Faculty, University of Berne. Dr. Dolf's focus was the question whether there is enough genetics behind longevity in the Bernese Mountain Dog to breed for longevity. While environmental factors do have an impact on longevity, there must be a strong genetic component as well. He gave examples of why a little mouse can only live four years but an even smaller bat can live for thirty years and species of fish can only live for twelve years but a close relative of that species may live for two hundred years. Species age according to a genetic plan and the genetic influence on longevity is very complex trait. Furthermore, genetically based illnesses and environmental issues impact longevity. The most important factor in increasing longevity is data collection and complete analysis of environment, pedigree, date of birth, date of death and cause of death, sex, litter size, kennel, and more. He concludes that "based upon knowledge on longevity in other species, it should be possible to increase longevity in dogs by breeding, provided the data necessary for analyses is available or can be generated."

Life Expectancy and Environmental Factors: Maintaining Behavioral Health presented by Dr. Andrew Urs Luescher, Dr. med vet PhD DACVB ECVBM. Dr. Luescher stated: "I have not found any publications that studied the relationship between stress and longevity in dogs. However, the documented detrimental effects of stress on physiological wellbeing allow the conclusion that appropriate management of distress will contribute to welfare and longevity in our dogs." Dr. Luescher's presentation was informative and insightful in respect to animal behavior but did not really provide any correlation to longevity.

Practical Breeding Rules Adopted by the SSV (Swiss Mountain Dog Club of Germany) to Improve Life Expectancy, presented by Ms. Christal Fechler, Head of SSV Breeding Commission since 2002. In addressing longevity concerns in the breed, the SVV enacted a set of guidelines in 2004 that would hopefully improve life expectancy of Bernese in Germany. These included: Optimal use of available breeding dogs taking into consideration the age of their ancestors and siblings, comprehensive monitoring of their offspring, and increasing the responsibility of stud dog and bitch owners by asking them for open and honest information with respect to the longevity of the dogs in their breeding programs and the offspring. The details of this program are very strict in defining what dogs may be considered for use in a planned breeding including how many times a dog may be used at stud, how many litters a brood bitch can produce, a required list of date of birth/date of death and cause of death of ancestors for three or four generations, and more. ►

**2007 BMDCA National Specialty
Louisville, Kentucky
By Julie Latterell**

The 2007 BMDCA National Specialty is now a memory, but the thrill of spending a week with the most lovely and talented Berners from across the country hasn't yet dimmed for many of us!

Specialty week began on Monday with one full day of Berner University classes. Berner-U opened its doors to students at the 2005 National Specialty in Gettysburg Pennsylvania. Requirements for "admission and matriculation" include a keen desire to learn more about all aspects of our wonderful breed. Please see <http://www.berneru.org/> for a detailed description of the 2007 course offerings. Topics covered included:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| ➤ BERNESE RESEARCH at the National Institutes of Health | ➤ AKC BMD STANDARD |
| ➤ SIEGER EVALUATIONS | ➤ RESCUE ROUNDTABLE |
| ➤ NUTRITION 101 | ➤ MENTORING NEW BREEDERS |
| ➤ PEDIGREE RESEARCH AND | ➤ CGC/TDI |
| ➤ ANALYSIS—Resources and Record Keeping | ➤ CANINE HEALTH FOUNDATION |
| ➤ PRACTICAL PUPPY MANNERS | ➤ MALIGNANT HISTIOCYTOSIS |
| ➤ BASIC MASSAGE TECHNIQUES | ➤ FREESTYLE 101 |
| ➤ UNDERSTANDING MOVEMENT | ➤ THERPET & ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY |
| ➤ CANINE BODY LANGUAGE | ➤ TRAINING FOR THE AKC TRACKING TITLE |
| ➤ HOLISTIC HEALING ALTERNATIVES | |

Berner-U registrants also gained free admission to the keynote speaker on Monday evening which was given by Dr. Jerrold Bell. His presentation titled "Practical Genetic Overview of the Bernese Mountain Dog: Pedigree Analysis and Genetic Disorders" was a perfect ending to a day filled with education about all that is Berner-related. It included the latest updates on health research within the breed.

Tuesday of Specialty week saw the beginning of performance events, including herding tests, agility trials and the first of two draft tests. It was tough going for all dogs, as the weather in Louisville began heating up and especially tough for those dogs who were competing outdoors in the herding, and drafting and agility venues.

Wednesday saw the second draft test, obedience trials, the conclusion of Puppy Sweepstakes and Veteran Sweepstakes. Thursday and Friday saw the judging of the regular classes all leading up to the Best of Breed competition on Saturday. The Best of Breed competition included 358 dogs and bitches all vying for the BISS title. This years BISS winner was CH Adesa I'm Stepping Out and Best of Opposite Sex went to CH Alpenspirit's Dark Angel

See http://www.bmdca.org/specialty/specialty_admin/specialty_results_front.php for a pictorial history of National Specialty Winners from 1976 – 2006.

The Specialty Committee also provided plenty of opportunities throughout the week to socialize including the annual Health Fund Auction held at the famous Kentucky Derby Museum. The Health Fund Auction raised a record-breaking \$36,000 for Berner health-related causes!!! There were also Welcome Dinners, Judges Dinners and informal socializing by the pool of the host hotel.

We hope many of you can attend the upcoming 2008 BMDCA National Specialty in Warwick, Rhode Island, April 21 to 26, 2008. Visit <http://www.bmdca.org/specialty/2008/index.php> for details about this once a year event!●

The audience question and answer period proved to be rather controversial, and in my opinion inappropriate to the venue, as several German participants chose to criticize Ms. Fechler and the SSV program. Understandably controversial, the intent of the symposium was to discuss what is being done to improve longevity and I was impressed with Ms. Fechler's presentation.

Analysis of the genetic causes of Malignant Histiocytosis in Bernese Mountain Dogs, presented by Dr. Catherine Andre, Laboratoire de Genetique et Developpement. Dr. Andre discussed her continuing research on MH in France and a couple of things impressed me. I was impressed with the scientific community's sharing of their research data. Dr. Andre, Dr. Ostrander, Dr. Breed, and many others share information. The researchers have two different yet complimentary genetic methods and two sets of dogs, US and European BMD populations, but they are providing encouraging results in genetic analysis of MH. While scientific research can be financially competitive, Dr. Andre impressed upon us that they understand the need for sharing their research that it will benefit both dogs and humans afflicted with MH.

Molecular Cytogenetics of MH in Bernese Mountain Dogs at North Carolina State University – a brief update, by Dr. Matthew Breen. Dr. Breen was unable to attend the symposium and his paper was presented by Dr. Catherine Andre. As Dr. Breen's research continues, the importance of data collection is paramount. Dr. Andre discussed the importance of encouraging BMD fanciers worldwide to support these research studies. We need to impress upon BMD owners the importance of openly sharing data about our dogs, necropsy determination of cause of death of our dogs, providing tissue samples and providing money to support the research. Dr. Andre discussed the Breen approach to the study of MH compared to the French approach.

Investigation into the genetic background of malignant histiocytic tumors in Bernese Mountain Dogs, presented by Dr. G. R. Rutteman, DVM. Utrecht University Clinic of Companion Animals, the Netherlands. Dr. Rutteman stated: "In the 1980's it was discovered that Bernese Mountain Dogs were sometimes affected with a wide spread malignant histiocytic cancer, called malignant histiocytosis (MH) and a familial predisposition was shown. Shortly thereafter, collection of data regarding the disease began in the Netherlands and in other countries. Some animals, it was found, developed a localized form with high metastatic propensity that as often referred to as histiocytic sarcoma (HS). A few years ago an international consortium was established to collaborate in the scientific investigation of the genetic background of MH/HS. Our research involves analysis of the genome of affected animals and healthy veteran controls, through the use of high density genetic markers. NL is currently participating in a breed-wide association study, which does not depend upon family background." From this study, Dr. Rutteman concluded that for an effective genetic study, proper identification of the tumor type by a laboratory analysis, with central revision, and constant follow up regarding the health status of the dog is essential. Dr. Ruttemann also emphasized how the Ostrander study at the NIH along with Dr. Andre and Dr. Breen's research are helping each other.

The symposium ended on an encouraging note. Antonio Indrizzi, SIBB, Italy presented the Alberto Vittone Award. Two large financial contributions were awarded. One was to Dr. Andre and I am sorry to say I have forgotten the recipient of the other.

The message from the researchers bears repeating. To increase longevity in our Bernese Mountain Dogs we must continue to financially support research. We must also encourage all BMD owners to be open, honest, and to share data for these research projects.

I was very proud to represent the BMDCA at this symposium. I was very impressed to hear so many of the speakers applaud the efforts of Lori Jodar and the Berner Garde Foundation. It is evident to me that the BG Foundation has an influential relationship with the Bernese Mountain Dog researchers in the scientific community and Bernese Mountain Dog Clubs world wide, along with their respect. It is amazing how many people from other countries knew what my Angel pin stood for. It was an honor and a pleasure to attend this symposium.●

Bernese Mt. Dogs Create Code of Conduct for Their Human Owners

-Catherine Muenich (Chester)

A new code of conduct has already been approved by canine members of the BMDCGTC at a secret late night meeting held on October 3, 2007. Records show there was a huge turnout of dogs. It was explained that BMD dog club officers got the idea to get the code of conduct passed in this manner during the wee hours of the morning by some representatives and lobbyists from the United States Congress.

One dog said that the meeting was held outdoors, and there was much joyful howling under the moonlight after the new code was unanimously voted into acceptance. Another member reported that the club's dogs have been developing the code of conduct for years.

"It's pretty much been in the works since television became a common fixture in the average American household", one BMD agreed. "Yes, that was kind of the straw that broke the Bernese Mountain Dogs' back", chimed in another.

The new code of conduct was sent by speedy delivery to the BMDCGTC editor so that it could be made public. Many BMDs expressed their desire to get the new code distributed, so it could be put into practice ASAP.

According to the document, there are 10 rules that all Bernese Mt. Dog owners should follow.

One under-appreciated Bernese proclaimed, "You might think of it as the 10 commandments. After all, humans are always commanding us around!"

Command Compensation

Speaking of commands, the first rule is to always give a treat **and** plenty of praise **every** time a BMD properly responds to a call.

Greetings

BMDs should be able to greet and sniff all new acquaintances (both dog and human) encroaching upon their perceived territory. BMDs should be able to investigate these situations to their own satisfaction without being tugged away or interrupted. (Ummm...It's for security reasons).

Grooming

More scratching needs to be incorporated into a BMD's grooming regimen. This is simply because it feels sooOO good. The routine should go as follows: Brush, scratch, scratch, scratch...Brush, scratch, scratch, scratch etc...

Grass is Over-rated

When BMDs remove grass while digging in the yard, it's for practical and functional reasons. In some cases, the depth and pattern pawed into the dirt borders on creative expression. Most dogs feel hurt and offended when their owners attempt to patch over dirt holes. Humans really need to begin to think of these dugouts as works of art.

Thermostat Control

The internal temperature of the house should be set to no higher than 55 F. Please try to think of BMDs' comfort zone. If humans feel chilled, they can always gather up bunches of loose BMD hair and knit a sweater out of it to wear.



Walks

From now on, BMDs will be the ones in the owner/dog relationship to decide when a walk is over, and it's time to head for home. The same goes for visits to the local off-leash park.

Toys and Treats

A steady stream of toys and treats is required to keep a BMD's mind stimulated. If necessary, owners can use their AKC affiliated credit card embossed with their dog's name to purchase. Lots of bones, ropes, and squeaky toys are recommended.

Furniture

BMDs should have unrestricted access to all pieces of furniture in the house. In general, this is a fundamental right dogs have been working toward and hinting at for decades. Finally, it's getting written into a doggie code of conduct.

Attention

BMDs store up emotional and physical energy while their owners are at work. Therefore, it should be no surprise that BMDs need their owner's undivided attention for at least one hour after arriving home.

Television

Lastly, please consider keeping the television off more. BMDs already know they make "a better door than a window." They just want to be petted or wish to play instead of witnessing their owners transformed into TV watching zombies.

One thing BMD owners **can** do is to leave the satellite radio on tuned to the pet care talk station. That way BMDs can listen and learn more ideas to put in the next code of conduct they make!●

If You Missed the Photo Seminar...

See if you can find the key-words in this puzzle that will lead to better photographs of your dog! If you came to the BMDCGTC sponsored photo-seminar on September 20th this should be a snap!!!!

A	M	I	F	F	P	U	Y	N	H	V	X
S	L	O	C	A	T	I	O	N	W	S	C
X	J	O	A	N	X	R	W	Z	C	B	H
B	X	I	G	G	P	H	U	A	Q	F	P
P	I	F	A	L	Y	B	Q	J	N	L	I
R	T	W	K	E	Y	H	C	A	H	V	P
V	N	M	Z	V	P	J	Q	M	K	E	B
C	O	K	A	P	T	L	G	A	A	T	L
K	I	A	W	S	L	M	N	D	H	P	I
L	S	P	Y	S	D	A	I	G	I	K	G
Y	S	N	P	I	N	F	N	P	M	D	H
W	E	H	G	Q	H	D	I	N	O	A	T
A	R	T	M	D	L	S	A	U	I	E	I
Z	P	Q	M	G	Y	I	R	M	H	N	N
G	X	C	J	Z	A	Y	T	C	S	O	G
B	E	V	A	A	Z	W	V	X	W	B	A

- Planning
- Ange
- Location
- Lighting
- Expression
- Training

Photo by Anne Wolff Nichols ▶

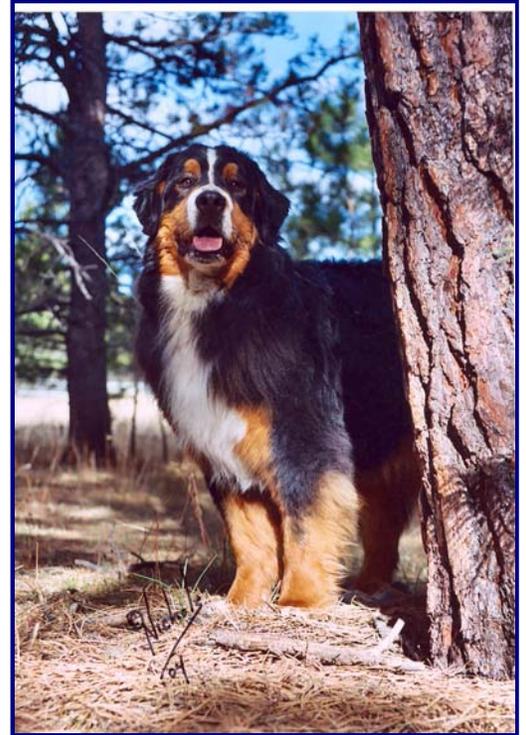


Photo Seminar Words



Club Meeting Notice

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2007

**RANDY AND PEGGY BEBEAU'S HOUSE
352 MCKINLEY STREET NW
ANOKA, MN**

What: Presentation on bloat by Micky Trent, DVM

Date: Saturday, November 3, 2007

Time: Social hour to start at 3:30 pm
Meeting at 4:30 pm
Presentation at 5:00 pm

Note: There are no member applicants to be voted upon at the meeting. ●



Photo submitted by Julie Latterell

Berner Grooming 101

By Julie Latterell

On Saturday, July 21st BMDCGTC Club members were offered an opportunity to get **FREE** grooming tips from long-time Berner owner and founder of DogSavvy, (www.BecomeDogSavvy.com), Anne Wolff Nichols.

Bassett Creek Park, which was also the site of our June Draft Test, provided a great venue for the event. Clean up of the many piles of Berner fur (see below) was provided by mother nature herself.



And people ask if they shed???

The nice south wind kept groomers and Berners alike comfortable, while helping out event organizers with “clean up” duties. We learned that one of the essential tools for Berner grooming is a good dog-dryer. A special thanks to Randy and Peggy Bebeau for driving their Berner-mobile/RV and allowing us to hook up dryers to demonstrate how essential this tool really is!!!!



Basic Grooming Tips

1. **Blow dry dog out with dog dryer**
--this helps get rid of dust and dirt in the coat **prior** to bathing--- or can be used as a form of coat-maintenance in between bathings and truly does help to keep the dust down in your house!
2. **Use dematting tool if necessary**
3. **Use pin brush on long hair** (tail, pantaloons, front-leg fringes and chest hair)
4. **Use undercoat rake to brush back and body of dog**
5. **Use long-tooth comb as a final grooming step before bathing or wetting down dog**
6. **Bathe or wet down dog** with spray bottle – simply doing steps 1-5 above and wetting your dog down with a spray bottle can be used as nice way to tidy up a dog that doesn't actually need a full-blown bath.
7. **Blow dry dog**
8. **Tidy ears and feet** ►

NOTE: Steps #1-5 help ensure you are getting all the loose, dead coat out before all that hair ends up in the grooming tub. It's much easier to wash a dog when as much dead hair is removed prior to bathing/wetting down.

Essential Berner Grooming Tools

- ✓ Dog dryer
- ✓ Long-toothed comb (1 ½ inch tooth length)
- ✓ Undercoat rake
- ✓ Good stiff-bristled pin brush
- ✓ Straight edge scissors for feet/ear trimming
- ✓ Spray Bottle and essential oils - lavender, citronella, eucalyptus, tea tree oil are natural flea repellents
- ✓ Shampoo and Conditioner – a good conditioner is a must!●



BEFORE: Skye, owned by Dan Kyle Vaaler, prior to grooming.



AFTER: Skye, shown after grooming – LOVELY!

Braggs from Nationals from our regional club members included:

Am/Can CH Chaska van 't Stokerybos, owned by Shannon Cihlar, made the first cut in the Best of Breed Bitches

Am/Can CH J & N's Phoenix Rising, owned by John and Nancy Mayer, placed first in Veterans Sweeps 11+ Years Dogs.

Am/Can CH Abbey Road's Kiley v Northfork TDI, co-owned by Karen Johnson, bred by Deborah Wilkins, placed second in Veterans Sweeps 7-9 Years Bitches, and third in Veteran Bitches 7-9 Years

Wynsome's High Velocity, owned by Shannon Cihlar, made the cut in the 9-12 month Puppy Dog Sweeps on and placed second in 6-9 Month Futurity Dogs.

Sidori's Claret, owned and bred by Sharon Kranz, placed third in 15-18 months Junior Puppy Bitch Sweepstakes.

UCH Bostwick's Two Ps In A Pod CGC TDI, owned by Adam and Amy Conn, placed fourth in 15-18 months Junior Puppy Dog Sweepstakes.

CH UCD UCH Southwind TME Purple Majesty Am/Can CD RE CGC TDI, owned by Adam and Amy Conn, passed both legs of the Herding Capability Test for sheep. He earned the title HCT-s.

CH Abbey Rd's Day Tripper, owned and bred by John and Debby Wilkins made the cut in Best of Breed Dogs competition

CH Abbey Road I'll Follow the Sun, owned and bred by John and Debby Wilkins made the cut in Best of Breed Bitches competition

A photo of **CH UCD UCH Southwind TME Purple Majesty Am/Can CD RE HCT-s CGC TDI**, taken by Adam Conn, tied for fourth in the Photo Contest category "Berners and Friends."●

2008 Dues Schedule

Please enclose a check made payable to BMDCGTC for your annual club dues.

_____	Full individual membership with voting rights (one adult)	\$15.00
_____	Full family membership with voting rights	\$20.00
_____	Associate membership with no voting rights (Please see below to see if you qualify)	\$10.00
_____	Newsletter only	\$ 7.50
_____	Contribution to club (<i>Please indicate where you would like your donation to go and the amount if more than one.</i>)	
_____	Breeder Referral	_____ Rescue
_____	General Fund	_____ Lucy Fund
_____	Trophy Fund	

_____ Total Enclosed

_____ I would like to continue to receive my newsletter by mail.

_____ I would like to receive my newsletter via email.

My email address is (**PLEASE PRINT**) _____

**Please mail your check by
January 1, 2008 to:
Nancy Arndt
BMDCGTC Treasurer
8815 Quince St. NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433**

An *Associate Member* resides outside the Club's major geographical counties in Minnesota* and Western Wisconsin**.

Major regional counties in the State of Minnesota include: Anoka, Benton, Blue Earth, Brown, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Dodge, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, Le Sueur, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Nicollet, Olmstead, Pine, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Sibley, Stearns, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, Washington, Wright.

** Counties in the State of Wisconsin include: Buffalo, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix.

Club Officers

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Micky Trent, DVM
Darwin Missling
Lisa Fosdick
Peggy Bebeau

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.twincitiesbmd.org

Our President Says Goodbye

Dear members,

As 2007 nears the end I would just like to say that it has been a pleasure to be your president. I am very proud of the things this club has accomplished in the last two years, and it couldn't have happened without the help of you, our dedicated members. I hope the next president feels as fortunate as I do to guide a great group of Berner lovers! Thank you,

Shannon Cihlar



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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