The BARC BEACON

Shining the Light of Hope and Freedom

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DEDICATED TO JANE HEGGEN

This special Rescue Edition of The BARC Beacon is lovingly dedicated to Jane Heggen who lost her courageous battle with cancer in March 2008. Jane was a founding member of BARC and lovingly cared for Freckles, BARC's poster boy.

Her Journey's Just Begun

Don't think of her as gone away—
her journey's just begun;
life holds so many facets—
this earth is only one.
Just think of her as resting
from the sorrows and the tears
in a place of warmth and comfort
where there are no days and years.
Think how she must be wishing
that we could know, today,
how nothing but our sadness
can really pass away.
And think of her as living
in the hearts of those she touched...
for nothing loved is ever lost—
and she was loved so much.

ELLEN BRENNEMAN



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BARC OFFICERS:

- **President**: Marilynn Blake (mblake1595@cs.com)
- **Vice President:** Karen Thompson (nebraskabernermom@yahoo.com)
- **Secretary:** Patti Johnson (horsefly1@centurytel.net)
- **Treasurer:** Lulu Couacaud (LULUCOUACAUD@msn.com)

BARC BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- Gary Turner (kcberner@sbcglobal.net)
- Liz Caldwell (lcaldwel@gravevine.net)
- Amy Kessler (kessler@micoks.net)
- Courtney Erickson (cerickson@everestkc.net)

RESCUER'S RAINBOW BRIDGE

Unlike most days at Rainbow Bridge, this day dawned cold and gray, damp as a swamp and as dismal as could be imagined. All the recent arrivals were confused and concerned. They had no idea what to think for they had never experienced a day like this before. But the animals who had spent some time waiting for their beloved people knew exactly what was happening and began to gather at the pathway leading to the Bridge to watch. They knew this was something special.

It wasn't too long before an elderly animal came into view, head hung heavy and low with tail dragging along the ground. The other animals on the pathway...the ones who had been at Rainbow Bridge for a while...knew the story of this sad creature immediately. They had seen it happen far too many times.

Although it was obvious the animal's heart was leaden, and he was totally overcome with emotional pain and hurt, there was no sign of injury or any illness. Unlike the pets waiting at the Bridge, this dog had not been restored to his prime. He was full of neither health nor vigor. He approached slowly and painfully, watching all the pets who were by now watching him. He knew he was out of place here. This was no resting place for him. He felt instinctively that the sooner he could cross over, the happier he would be. But alas, as he came closer to the Bridge, his way was barred by the appearance of an Angel who spoke softly to the old dog and apologized sorrowfully, telling him that he would not be able to pass. Only those animals who were with their special people could pass over the Rainbow Bridge. And he had no special beloved people...not here at the Bridge nor on Earth below.

With no place else to turn, the poor elderly dog looked toward the fields before the Bridge. There, in a separate area nearby, he spotted a group of other sad-eyed animals like himself...elderly and infirm. Unlike the pets waiting for their special people, these animals weren't playing, but simply lying on the green grass, forlornly and miserably staring out at the pathway leading to the Bridge. The recent arrival knew he had no choice but to join them. And so, he took his place among them, just watching the pathway and waiting.

One of the newest arrivals at the Bridge, who was waiting for his special people, could not understand what he had just witnessed and asked one of the pets who had been there for some time to explain it to him.

"That poor dog was a rescue, sent to the pound when his owner grew tired of him. The way you see him now, with graying fur and sad, cloudy eyes, was exactly the way he was when he was put into the kennels. He never, ever made it out and passed on only with the love and comfort that the kennel workers could give him as he left his miserable and unloved existence on Earth for good. Because he had no family or special person to give him love, he has nobody to escort him across the Bridge."

The first animal thought about this for a minute and then asked, "So what will happen now?"

As he was about to receive his answer, the clouds suddenly parted and the all-invasive gloom lifted. Coming toward the Bridge could be seen a single figure...a person who, on Earth, had seemed quite ordinary...a person who, just like the elderly dog, had just left Earth forever. This figure turned toward a group of the sad animals and extended outstretched palms. The sweetest sounds they had ever heard echoed gently above them and all were bathed in a pure and golden light. Instantly, each was young and healthy again, just as they had been in the prime of life.

From within the gathering of pets waiting for their special people, a group of animals emerged and moved toward the pathway. As they came close to the passing figure, each bowed low and each received a tender pat on the head or a scratch behind the ears. Their eyes grew even brighter as the figure softly murmured each name. Then, the newly-restored pets fell into line behind the figure and quietly followed this person to the Bridge, where they all crossed together.

The recent arrival who had been watching, was amazed. "What happened?"

"That was a rescuer," came the answer. "That person spent a lifetime trying to help pets of all kinds. The ones you saw bowing in respect were those who found new homes because of such unselfish work. They will cross when their families arrive. Those you saw restored were ones who never found homes. When a rescuer arrives, they are permitted to perform one, final act of rescue. They are allowed to escort those poor pets that couldn't place on Earth across the Rainbow Bridge. You see, all animals are special to them...just as they are special to all animals."

"I think I like rescuers," said the recent arrival.

"So does God," was the reply.

--Author Unknown--



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Lisa with Bosley

Welcome, friends, to the summer edition of The BARC Beacon newsletter. This is a truly special edition. Only one year ago, we were able to dedicate this newsletter to a truly special woman who was very instrumental in the formation of BARC, Inc. It was then that we were able to tell you not only of Jane Heggen's many and varied accomplishments with and for our beloved breed, but also to make public, for the first time, her battle with cancer. She was a very private person who did not like attention drawn to herself, so this battle had not been made public until after she was presented with the Winston Neff Award at last year's BMDCA's National Specialty for all her work on behalf of our breed.

This June finds us celebrating the life of our beloved friend, Jane, who recently lost her battle with cancer. She has now joined all her beloved companions-gone-by in heaven, where, I am sure, there is a major celebration going on. We felt like it would be fitting to dedicate this special "rescue edition" of the newsletter as a tribute to Jane and her life's legacy. So while we have most of our usual quarterly articles, we also have several special pieces solely dedicated to rescue, as that was Jane's heart. BARC, itself, as well as every incredible BARC family is a tribute to her life and legacy. Each BARC baby with his/her big berner smile and wagging, happy tail is a testament of the value of this woman's life. So we ask you to join us in celebrating the life and legacy of Jane Heggen. While our hearts are broken that she is gone, we will forever be grateful beyond words that she has touched our lives, and the lives of our Berner babies, in such a special way.

Our desire, in sharing this special "rescue edition" of the newsletter is to help us all better understand the trials and the triumphs of rescue. The articles in this issue get very "real" with both the ups and the downs, so be prepared for your heart to soar as you read about successful rescues, and then have the tissues handy for the ones that turned out not so successful. We hope to provide you with an honest picture of what it's like to be a "rescuer", working "in the trenches" on behalf of these gentle and noble creatures. It is our belief that *everyone* involved in the entire process of rescue…from those attending the auctions and/or those establishing relationships with the unsavory characters who run the mills in hopes of getting that all-important call to come get some dogs, to the vets who provide the follow-up care once they are brought out, to those who lovingly and selflessly foster, to the families who ultimately take these special creatures into their lives and homes…is incredibly important and fulfills a vital role in "breaking the chain" of cruelty.

As always, please let us hear from you with any ideas or comments. We LOVE hearing from our readers because it *is* all about YOU!! Also, remember that the best way for BARC families to stay in touch is to join our Yahoo! Group called the BARCINC list. To join, just send an email to barcinc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com . This is a BARC-families-only group, with only a few exceptions who we lovingly call our special "friends of BARC", so it is a safe place to ask questions, share concerns, and celebrate victories like only BARC families can! As you'll read in this newsletter, it is also becoming a major resource for BARC to turn to when they need help with certain aspects of rescue. We'd love to have you be a part of this amazing group of people who are like extended family—BARC family!! Remember, this whole newsletter venture has always been about "family connections".

As always, my heart cannot adequately express the gratitude I feel towards each and every person who has contributed in any way to the success of this edition…or any edition of this newsletter. You guys are just THE BEST!

We, the entire newsletter staff, hope your heart will be touched by this issue, and that you will find yourselves with a greater understanding of all that is involved in rescuing these precious souls. We also hope that you will find the other articles enjoyable and informational as you get to know our "family" a little better and gain insights into other ways to help your own BARC babies flourish.

Hugs from Dallas, TX!
Lisa Hawes, editor, with BARC babies, Bosley (4 1/2) and Bernie (3 1/2)

SHERRY'S WARNING: *Being a tribute to Jane Heggen and an issue focusing on rescue, this was a very difficult and emotional newsletter to work on, and it will be a difficult and emotional one to read. It's not a newsletter you want to be reading at your desk at work... some of the stories are heartwrenching and so are the pictures. Consider yourself warned!*

NEWSLETTER STAFF:

- **Newsletter Editor:** Lisa Hawes (lkhawes@yahoo.com)
- **New Owners' List:** Patti Johnson
- **Assistant Proofing:** Mary Ann Monte
- **Layout & Technical Production:** Rob & Sherry Hartung

CONTRIBUTORS:

- **BARC Board Articles:** Cheryl Thorton
- **Health & Wellness Articles:** Andrea Brin
- **Training Articles:** Pat Tackett
- **Behavioral Issues:** Helen Hollander
- **Miscellaneous Articles:** Lisa Florin

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PROVIDING ZEN FOR YOUR RESCUE



I believe that most rescue dogs are intrinsically more fragile. Even as pups, born out of the mill environment, they lack the benefit of the dam's long term health care and good health and nutritional status. Those born in the mill, sold in a pet shop, and/or given up by a family have lead difficult lives to start with.

I don't think anyone would disagree that these dogs need an extra dose of TLC. The question becomes what can you do to provide for and foster their growth, adjustment, and well being so that they may flourish. Within my areas of expertise-nutrition and holistic health care-there are many avenues to explore for this very purpose. Aromatherapy, calming lavender sprays, the use of phenomes in plug, spray, or collar form all help some dogs tremendously.

The Bach flower essence Rescue Remedy may be given orally or used in spray form. It is excellent for car rides. Aspen is good for fear as is Mimulus. Walnut can be used for change, and keep in mind that holly can support the jealous dog. Sprit Essences make some wonderful combination flower essence products. Should you need to delve further, there are some wonderful products to calm dogs naturally. Easily available in many stores are herbal mixtures of valerian, skullcap and kava. These products have a calming but not sedating effect.

Classical music is calming to everyone. It can act as white noise decreasing fearful sounds. If you are fortunate enough to know someone who does canine massage, acupuncture, or acupressure, these modalities can ease fear, balance the immune system, and decrease stress.

Good nutrition also plays a role in the emotional state of a dog. Your dog should eat the highest quality of food you can afford. If there are dietary and or stomach issues, searching for the offending ingredient(s) is vital. Looking at grain free and single protein alternatives are helpful in some cases. Others require digestive enzymes and probiotics. If the dog has had parasites, using these products helps to support the digestive system.

Having a rescue can be a challenge. Hopefully, some of these tips will make the road more stable and rewarding. Thanks for all the good deeds you do daily.

Andrea is skilled in canine massage and has completed course work in acupressure for dogs. Animal wellness comes naturally to Andrea, who has spent the last six years on a quest to create a holistic health environment for her two Bernese Mountain Dogs, Woofit and Chi. Andrea also works as a nutritionist and wellness consultant. Her journey with her own dogs led her to bring services to the canine community that had previously only been available to their owners. She has chosen to step out of the box, think critically about their care and listen to their needs. She was instrumental in the development of Berner University and presents at the BMDCA National Specialty each year. Currently, Andrea is working with The Rabies Challenge Fund and other wellness projects.



Andrea with Woofit

MARCH'S PHOTO CAPTION CHALLENGE RESULTS



Top 5 captions in order of votes:

Are you *SURE* that you didn't hang that painting upside down?? - Marilynn Blake

Is it just me, or is that picture on the wall a bit crooked?? - Lisa Hawes

Awwww, come on, mom! I KNOW you can't resist THIS face!! - Lisa Hawes

Things that make you go hmmmmm!! - Sherry & Rob Hartung

No...I don't think that outfit makes your butt look big!! — Karen Thompson

RESCUE OPERATION BAGHDAD PUPS



Helen with Dusty

Hi folks, it's me, your friendly editor!

Sorry, I know I'm a disappointment when you're expecting someone like our beloved Helen Hollander with her infinite wisdom and knowledge, but I will have to suffice this go-round.



Dusty

Helen will be returning in the next issue with lots to say in her typically helpful manner, but at the moment she's incredibly busy helping Operation Baghdad Pups (SPCA/International) in their effort to bring back to the United States some of the pups who have been rescued by soldiers while fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other troubled parts of the world. She has already been successful in getting Dusty, her son Evan's rescued Anatolian mix, delivered safely into her hands, and she is now holding him in quarantine for 30 days at her home.

Evan is a medic in the Army and is scheduled to return to the US soon, so it will be a very happy reunion for Helen, Evan and Dusty! Helen is ecstatic to have a part of her son already back with her in the form of this sweet big old pup who doesn't even understand the concept of grass!! I've included a couple of photos of Dusty at Helen's so you can all see what a precious boy he is…and she says he is a trainer's dream!

I know you're as excited for Helen as I am at the imminent return of her son from such a dangerous duty as well as for this extraordinary door of opportunity that has presented itself to her in the form of helping SPCA/International in this effort to get these dogs, who have found their way into the hearts of some of our brave fighting men and women, home to the US to be with them once they return from their tours of duty.

Enjoy the photos, and Helen will be back soon!



Dusty with Harley



Dusty with Paxil

MEMORIAL





Barc's Belle owned by Kathy Webb

Amelia NA Obraze

October 30, 1999 - January 27, 2008

They say memories are golden,
Well maybe that is true.
I never wanted memories,
I only wanted you.

A million times I needed you,
A million times I cried.
If love alone could have saved you,
You never would have died.

In life I loved you dearly,
In death I love you still.
In my heart you hold a place,
No one could ever fill.

If tears could build a stairway,
And heartache make a lane.
I'd walk the path to Heaven,
And bring you back again.

Author Unknown

REMEMBERING JANE HEGGEN



Jane with baby Cowboy

I first met Jane Heggen the way I've met so many people, on the Berner-L. She was sweet, funny, and kind; it radiated from her emails. She had a Berner named Bear, and he had a liver shunt. Jane did a marvelous job of finding the best way to care for him and providing a good quality of life despite the dietary and health challenges that a liver shunt will cause. Bear had found himself the very best of owners. He made it to almost three years of age before his body failed him. The fact that he lived so long was due to Jane's love and determination. Jane then went on to learn as much as she could about liver shunts in order to help other owners with Berners in similar straits.



Jane's Bear

I first met Jane in person when she came here with Joye Neff, and the three of us went to a Leonberger regional specialty. It was cold and rainy, and I doubt that I've ever had as much fun! Jane took the typical spring Pennsylvania weather in stride, and we had a grand time watching the antics of a breed with a great sense of humor and a grand exuberance for life – in some ways very much like Jane, herself. In spite of the weather, we laughed the whole day. That was Jane.

In 2000 when we learned about Berners being auctioned in dog auctions, Jane and her family mobilized, raised $3000, and provided the basis for BARC. Jane was a member of the board until she was no longer physically able to continue. That was Jane, see a problem, get mad, and find a way to solve it. Jane went to many of the auctions, and probably cried more than a few tears for the dogs that BARC lost. She made a home for Freckles who had such severe orthopedic issues that she knew he would not be able to live a normal time frame, and she was right. His pain got too much for him, and he lived only a little over 5 years, always loved by Jane and her furry crew.



Jane's Cowboy & Zeke

Jane called me about 2 years ago to say she had cancer. Why is it that bad things always happen to good people? But she faced it in her usual way, with humor and equanimity. She was lucky to have the support of family and friends, and was able to live as normal a life as possible for much of that two years, or as normal as cancer treatments will allow. Jane made it to March of this year, when she finally lost her battle with cancer. I feel such joy that I knew her, such happiness that she is no longer in any pain, and total certainty that she is now back together again with Bear, Bean, Cowboy, Freckles, and all the other dogs that have always been such a large part of her life. I just wish what any of us always wish when we lose someone so special - that the goodbyes didn't have to come for many years yet. But I learned so very much from Jane, and I hope to be able to become just half as wonderful a person as she was. I'll be happy with that much.

-Pat Long

Pat Long wears many hats: co-owner of the Berner-L, trustee and file-manager for Berner-Garde, BMDCA health committee member, Health Fund Auction "Vanna", Longshots. But, she was most proud to be counted among Jane Heggen's friends. One of many, but one who loved her dearly – and will always love her — no matter where Jane may be.

Compassion has eyes and ears to sense suffering, hands to relieve it, a heart to soothe it, and a voice to cry out against it—forcing the world to listen.

Quoted from www.sunbearsquad.org —a website well worth visiting.

FUNNY FRECKLES

Message from Sherry Hartung—

The following is one of my favourite emails Jane Heggen wrote on Berner-L about Freckles. I laughed when I first read it ,and I laugh now. With this issue dedicated to Jane, it is most fitting to share her story of Freckles, the poster dog for BARC. I hope you enjoy it as much as I still do.

Permission to reprint here was graciously granted by Pat Long, co-owner of Berner-L.

--- Mon Aug 29, 2005 12:46 pm -- Message #30283 In Berner-l@yahoogroups.com, "Jane Heggen" <jane@...> wrote:



Freckles with Jane's boot!

Funny Freckles

When I got home from work Friday the first thing I did was take off my work boots. Freckles promptly took one outside to his shoe collecting spot.

The weekend passed with us going in and out and me asking Freck to bring my boot back inside when he had a chance. He ignored my request.



Muddy Friends—Jane with Freckles

Until this a.m. I am getting ready for work and yell "Freck, I need my boot NOW!" I go downstairs ready to head out to the back yard to retrieve my boot but, as I look around I see both my work boots in front of the couch.

That's my Freckles!
Jane Heggen & the boys of Iowa

Rescue Me
(By Terri Onorato)

Rescue me not only with your hands but with your heart as well. I will respond to you.
Rescue me not out of pity but out of love. I will love you back.
Rescue me not with self-righteousness but with compassion. I will learn what you teach.
Rescue me not because of my past but because of my future. I will relax and enjoy.
Rescue me not simply to save me but to give me a new life. I will appreciate your gift.
Rescue me not only with a firm hand but with tolerance and patience. I will please you.
Rescue me not only because of who I am but who I'm to become. I will grow and mature.
Rescue me not to revere yourself to others but because you want me. I will never let you down.
Rescue me not with a hidden agenda but with a desire to teach me to trust. I will be loyal and true.
Rescue me not to be chained or to fight but to be your companion. I will stand by your side.
Rescue me not to replace one you've lost but to soothe your spirit. I will cherish you.
Rescue me not to be your pet but to be your friend. I will give you unconditional love.
Rescue me with true love in your heart and I will give you these things all the days of my life.

BARC FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

"THE LABATT FAMILY"



Burly, Catharine, Steve, Kansas

Hi, my name is Catharine Labatt. My husband Steve and I have been married for nine years. We live in a small town in Ontario, Canada situated between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. This area is also known as the beautiful Niagara Region.

I am an outside sales rep for a hydraulics and pneumatics company, and Steve is a rose grower. Early in our relationship we often talked about adding a dog to our family after we were married. After a few short months settling into married life I didn't waste any time bringing up the dog idea. I starting coming home with books on dogs, dropping hints here and there and it worked! Our search for a dog was about to begin. Thankfully, we both liked the larger sized dogs which made it easier for us to narrow down the list of breeds. After much research our final list of dogs was the Newfoundland, Weimaraner, and Bernese Mountain Dog. We had never seen a berner in person, only read about them. Our only concern was regarding their health problems and short life span.

With our list of dog breeds we were off to the Toronto dog show to talk with different breeders. The first aisle we walked down were all perfect examples of the different breeds. About half way down the aisle I looked towards the end of it and there I saw the most beautiful group of dogs I had ever seen. It was almost like the lights turned off around us except for this spotlight on these amazing creatures. I nudged my husband and pointed to direct his attention at these beautiful tri-color dogs. We then both looked at each other and without saying a word we immediately went to have a closer inspection.

With their glossy black coats, white and rust markings they were just stunning, but it was their faces that stole my heart. These were the Bernese Mountain Dogs we read about. Within five minutes I was on the floor getting some berner love. After much talking with the breeders and loving on the dogs, we knew this would be the dog for us. We were still concerned regarding the health problems, but thought it was worth taking the chance with these majestic animals.

Our names went on a few waiting lists, then a breeder told us of two male pups that were available. We immediately went to see the mother and the pups, and they were beautiful. Their markings were almost identical except one had almost no white on his front paws. We went back and forth between the two trying to decide who would be ours. I gave the one pup back to the breeder and picked up the second pup. The pup in the breeder's arms gave me a look I will never forget. He cocked his head and his big brown eyes connected with mine, I asked if I could see him again. We exchanged puppies one last time then said "We want the one with the big brown paws! ", who we would later call Burly.

Now we had two very long weeks to wait until we could bring him home. That was 14 sleeps that were on the countdown for my husband to have to listen to. When the day finally arrived to bring him home we fell in love with this little fur ball. He was a handful as a puppy, spent too many times to count at the emergency vet. He had a finer taste for nylons, under garments, shingles— whatever he could get his mouth on. No matter how cautious we were, he had this attitude that if there is a will there is a way, and he soon learned his way was another trip to the vet. Did I mention how handy pet insurance is?



Burly and Kansas

As Burly got a bit older, past his adolescent years, we started to discuss adding another berner to our family. A very good friend of ours Lynn Whiteley (BARC's Frankie's mom) always told us that once you have one berner you will want another. We discussed this for several years, never sure if the timing was right, or how Burly would react since he was king of his domain. He was wonderful with other dogs but could he share us and his home with another? We then started talking about adding a second berner to our family.

It wasn't until we had donated a Michael Steddum print of Burly to BARC for their raffle when I started to communicate with Courtney regarding the dogs. I was inquiring on the possibility of bringing a dog into Canada. Once we heard that it wasn't a problem we started to think more seriously about it. After spending countless hours looking at the dogs up for adoption, we had made our decision that now was the right time. We then sent in our application to adopt and later Amy contacted me to tell us we were approved. Now it was time to pick out one of the dogs that would be a good fit for our family. Amy thought that this little two and a half year old girl named "Paris" would be a good match for us. She felt that a quieter home without children would be the best situation for her. Since we didn't have any children our home would be perfect. The countdown of sleeps was about to begin again.

The day finally arrived when we were able to pick her up at the airport. Just as we were about to leave, I patted Burly on the head and told him to lay down we wouldn't be long. He was always so good when we left to go somewhere, but this day was a bit different. He knew something was up. As I started to close the door his big brown paw reached around the outside of the door to pry it open. He was not going to let us leave without him. So along came Burly for the ride. Little did we know what a huge help he would be later.

Continued on next page



Burly and Kansas

When we arrived at the airport we were informed that her plane had landed but they were unable to release her to us. Her paperwork got lost in the transfer of planes. Three stressful hours later the customs vet released her to us. It was a very long day for her. It was well past midnight and the time had finally come to meet our new family member.

As the customs officer brought her out to me I saw this beautiful frightened little girl staring through the crate at me. She was so frail, more than 20 pounds under weight and scared, really scared. I slowly opened the crate to put her leash on and take her out for a well deserved potty break. She came out of the crate crouched to the ground with her tail tucked way under her belly. She was frozen with fear…. We were stuck…. She would not move….. It was a cold rainy November night and we were stuck in the dark empty airport parking lot with a dog that would not move. No matter what we did we couldn't convince her to come with us. Eventually I asked my husband to go get Burly out of the vehicle which was about 50 yards away. Out jumped Burly and he came running across the parking lot towards us dragging my husband behind. All of a sudden I felt her leash go taut and she started pulling me towards Burly. They both went racing to meet each other. Once they met all of the fear within her had been released. I was suddenly able to walk her around the grassy area of the parking lot. She just needed to follow Burly around. All the way home Burly kept checking her crate to see if she was still in there. They immediately bonded, and she was always one step behind Burly following him around and learning everything from him. Burly had met his Queen and accepted her with open paws. It was such a sweet memorable moment. It was a perfect match.

Later that night we decided to change her name. My husband wasn't very fond of the name "Paris" (reminded him of Paris Hilton). She had already traveled far and wide, first at a mill in Illinois then at a mill in Missouri. Her freedom began in Kansas at Amy's so Kansas it was, a new life with a new name.

The first few days were very emotional for us and for everyone that met her. She was only 56 pounds and terrified of her new world. When we took her to our vet for a check up, our vet immediately sat on the floor with her and her eyes filled with tears. It was just heartbreaking to see what kind of life she must have been living. Her hip and ribs bones were very visible, and her face had very little muscle with a sunken in appearance. She had a smell about her that would have made a skunk jealous. After a few weeks and several baths later we were finally able to get rid of the puppy mill stench with huge thanks to Lynn Whiteley and her grooming skills. Kansas started to gain to a healthy weight, but her face never did fill out. We were concerned with the way she held her mouth open most of the time and had trouble chewing. We had tried to give her bones and she desperately wanted them, but when she put them in her mouth she couldn't hold on to them. They would fall out of her mouth and drop to the floor. We brought her back into the vet and they recommended a dental cleaning and at this time we had asked for x-rays of her skull to see if anything was going on. The x-rays showed that she had Masticatory Muscle Myositis. It is a disease that affects the muscles on the top and side of the head that are used for chewing. They believe it to be caused by an immune mediated disease where the immune system attacks different parts of the body, in this case the chewing muscles. The muscles are then replaced with scar tissue. If caught early enough treatment is available. Unfortunately, in Kansas's case the disease had progressed during her time in the mill, and it was too late to reverse the damage that had already been done. She has seemed to adjust fine and is still able to eat but we cannot give her anything that requires much chewing.



Burly and Kansas

It has been amazing to watch her transition to the dog she is today. She is such a beautiful sweet girl that continues to make us laugh. We are awakened each day to her thumping tail and her appreciation of another day of freedom. She constantly puts a smile on our faces. Sometimes she gets so excited she starts stamping her two front feet like pistons in an engine and then her tail starts to spin like a propeller. I swear I think she might take flight someday. Everyday is a new adventure for Kansas.

I think back to when we were deciding on what breed of dog we wanted, and boy did we pick the right breed. Little did we know that when we decided to add a berner to our family that we would also be adding so many dear friends that share the same passion with their dogs. I can't imagine life without a Bernese Mountain Dog. There is nothing better than coming home to a couple of crazy, butt wigglin', tail spinnin', paw stompin', berner leanin', face kissin' berners. Wouldn't you all agree?

My dog is like my guru.Through her I've learned much about love and loyalty, courage and compassion, joy and despair; and best of all, living in the now.

Quoted from www.sunbearsquad.org —a website well worth visiting.

THE DOWN SIDE OF RESCUE—LOSING A LITTER

It was a memorable rescue rather forgotten, but it never will be...

There was a day when a rescue we were attempting, and thought we were successful with, turned out to be so much worse than being unsuccessful...

Our rescuers were at the auction site like so many times before. They were so happy because they had secured almost all the pups!! They called me and sounded SO excited!! I called the vet and got her prepared for the crew that was a comin' her way!!



A very sick puppy.

All the smiles, excitement, and positive energy soon turned bad and continued to get worse over the next two weeks. It appeared that all the Ryan Rauch dogs that we had just purchased from the auction were positive for distemper, a virus that could so easily be prevented with a $2.50 vaccination. HOW can someone be so cheap and heartless that they deny these puppies even the slightest chance at survival?

After all that I have seen, it is amazing to me that these "people"--and I use that term lightly--can still manage to surprise me by their cruel and inhumane treatment of man's best friend. How could anyone knowingly subject these kind, gentle creatures to the kind of pain and suffering distemper inflicts upon them? And he did this not only in his own puppies, but all the rest of the hundreds, possibly thousands, of dogs that were exposed to them either at the auction, or by the dogs he sold going into kennels where there were more dogs and puppies...not to mention the beloved pets of the soft hearted rescuers that took these dogs home who were all exposed as well!

I found myself standing in a position that only God, himself, should be standing in...the position of having to decide who lives and who dies. What a choice to have to make! The vet called me every morning, telling me how many I needed to come and make a decision on. It got to the point I didn't want to answer the phone anymore...yet every day I answered, and every day I made that awful trip to the vet to decide which ones had struggled enough...which ones had fought as hard and long as they could and now needed to be allowed to go be at peace.



Another very sick puppy.

I can't begin tell you how hard it was to make those choices. I rescue; I want to save them all! But I am also a dog lover, and I could not watch those babies suffer any longer when their eyes were pleading for peace.

Distemper can affect so many different parts of the puppy. It causes an upper respiratory infection, so they have thick snotty noses, a cough, high fevers, eye discharge, etc. It also affects their neurological system causing seizures and ticks, the inability to stand, eat, or control their bodily functions. It attacks their teeth, their eyes, and all internal organs along with wicked diarrhea and vomiting. It creates a thick substance that fills their lungs and chest cavity and causes them to drown in their own bodies.

So every day I pulled myself together and said good bye to another Berner baby that never had a chance to know what unconditional love was. Fortunately, they *were* in a place where they were being taken care of and knew of compassion and warmth.

There is nothing quite like the sight of looking at body bags full of dead puppies lined up in front of the freezer waiting for the truck to come and dispose of them. It is heart breaking, and it is a memory that I will never be able to remove from my mind. What a horrific waste of life and how sad it is that they never had a chance to walk in grass, run and play in a yard, or have a family to love them always.

But they DID have something...or rather some *one*--they had their rescuers. These heroic people willingly subjected themselves to this kind of pain in order to end their suffering, no matter what the cost to their own hearts. There are still so many dogs out there that need us and, no doubt, we will all be there to torture ourselves again, because a rescuer cannot close his or her eyes to a creature in need. The thought of failing them or pretending the problems don't exist is worse than all the pain we could ever subject ourselves to when trying to save them.

-Amy Kessler, founder of BARC, Inc.

(Additional pictures and information about puppymills and the puppies with distemper can be seen on the BARCINC website http://barcinc.net/whatisapuppymill.html — warning, it is graphic and disturbing.)

Even when the work is immense and overwhelming and painful, know that purposeful action is the only true antidote to despair.

Quoted from www.sunbearsquad.org —a website well worth visiting.

RECENT RESCUE—A SUCCESS STORY



Puppies tagged for sale.

While at a recent auction, on the farm of a puppy miller that stated he was going out of business, there were approximately 300 dogs up for auction. Many of them had been bred, and a large number of them were bred as puppies (around 7 months) during their first heat cycle. The puppy millers breed every cycle and don't give the dogs a break as it is lost revenue for them. The dogs, while in decent weight condition, were infested with ticks. When the miller mentioned the ticks on the Berners, he seemed surprised as if they just found them and there were only a few. They didn't have a few, they were infested. The ticks dropped off them before and after their tick treatments once we got them out. Their coats were dull and short. Eleven of the newborn puppies were dead; eight froze to death, and three were smothered by their mother trying to keep them warm. The auctioneer announced this so that the bidders would know the females could still produce large litters even at six years of age. Only three remaining Berner puppies made it out alive. They, too, were covered in ticks. In addition to the puppies dying prior to the auction, another female Berner died prior to our arrival. We only know of the Berners that died immediately before the auction since that was what we were there to rescue.



A mom with her puppy.

It was hard to look at the cages crammed full of puppies and dogs and leave them for the life they had ahead of them. The life ahead was made clear by the auctioneer. Every time a young female dog was brought up, the auctioneer would state the dog would work very hard for the new owner through its lifetime producing puppies. Most of the bidders appeared to be other puppy millers. There may have been other rescue groups there, but it was hard to tell as most of the people knew each other well and jokingly bid against one another. The Amish children carried the smaller dogs in one by one and you could tell they had no attachment to the dogs or puppies nor could you see that they had a pet of their own. Clearly, all animals were livestock to produce an income. The female Berners were brought up and the bidding started low, which frustrated the auctioneer, so he added the male to the group. They knew they would get the highest bid on the females with pups. We had a maximum bid we could place on each dog, as we didn't want to help these auctions become profitable. It put a knot in one's stomach knowing you might have to let one go but also knowing that doing otherwise wouldn't help the breed in the long run because, to the millers, it was all about the money. The winning bid for the first female was ours, the auctioneer asked how many we wanted and we said we'll take them all for that bid, as it fit our guidelines. As we left the farm, we were shaking from the emotions of the day, having been so afraid we wouldn't get them all, and, at six years of age, these females desperately needed a new way of life for the time they had left. The male, a sweet, gentle creature, needed to learn to trust, and the puppies needed to start a life the way puppies deserve to, in a home with a family, warm and taken care of because they are loved.



Another puppy tagged for sale.

If it weren't for a simple email on the BARC Yahoo! Group list by one of its members mentioning that there was an auction coming up in which there were 7 Bernese Mountain Dogs listed, these dogs would have continued their life in a puppy mill. If it hadn't been for the many list members who rose to the occasion and donated money, volunteered their time/efforts, and collected and recorded all the finances and other needed documentation for this rescue, these dogs wouldn't have the new beginnings that they have today. It was a fantastic effort not by one or two people, but by a whole community of Berner lovers. Not only were the dogs at this auction rescued, but in total, twenty dogs were rescued from different parts of the country because of this Berner community that pulled together to help get these sweet Berners out of these horrific situations. Now, all of these traumatized, unsocialized, unkept Berner babies have been lovingly fostered, and most are in their wonderful forever homes being loved and adored as all Berners should be. This is the kind legacy that Jane Heggen as well as other BARC founders and board members have entrusted to us, and we plan to continue this fight.

Linda Palma,

BARC mom to Alfie and Chelsea and other numerous precious pups, and volunteer coordinator of the rescues.

Work your helping hands upon the homeless and downtrodden to know the truth about love.

Quoted from www.sunbearsquad.org —a website well worth visiting.

RECENT BARC ADOPTIONS



2006 Adoptees Not listed in BARC Beacon

Al & Patty Tomaszewski	Cedarburg, WI
Lori & Graeme Devine	Rockwall, TX

2007 Adoptees Not listed in BARC Beacon

Donna Breaux	Novato, CA
Denise McCracken	Chicago, IL
Lisa Cardilli	Sharon Springs, NY
Natalie Woznicki	Erie, PA
Ellen Klein	Darnestown, MD
Gloria Mathews	Lisbon, OH
Debby Fitch	Hancock, MA
Cheri Hutchins	Haines, AK
Karen & Steve Thompson	Elkhorn, NE
Meredith Johansen	Cincinnati, OH
Rhea Kemerley	Chicago, IL

2007 Adoptees Not listed in BARC Beacon

James Shields	Jackson, NJ
Bill & Jensie Miksich	Des Moines, IA
Audrey Donovan	Pittsburgh, PA
Theora Kirchhof	Randolph, VT
Amy Lifton	Bloomington, IN
Quinn Kramer	Elk Mound, WI
Hal A. Clay III	Annapolis, MD
John & Erika Carroll	Cornwall Bridge, CT

2008 Adoptees

Kate Fagan	Lake Mills, WI
Kathy Webb	Bulls Gap, TN
Tracy Goode	Chicago, IL
Denise Freeman	Sherman Oaks, CA
Susan Barrett	Sante Fe, NM
Heather & Mike Murphy	Oconomowoc, WI
Juanita Waite	Independence, MO
Jane & Robert Pavlicek	Wildwood, MO
Lorrie Florin	Houston, TX

BERNER BRAGS

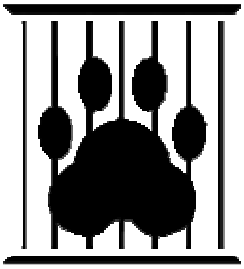


I adopted Jessie in March 2007 as a 5 year old. She was quite shy. Gradually, with lots of treats and encouragement, I convinced her that things weren't so scary. We attended several classes, and now, when we leave home, she races to the car, strolls happily inside, and has a great time. Since then, Jessie passed the CGC, and, in February, earned an AKC rally novice title. Through Jessie, I have made new friends and experienced Berner hugs firsthand. I am proud of the progress she has made and am grateful for the love she has brought to my life.

Patty Wellinger
Jessie (Rescue Me Baby)
Aurora, CO



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A RESCUER BY E.S. EVERITT



I rise at 4 a.m., get coffee, check supplies, and leave by 5. I drive alone, my van full of empty crates. As I drive through the cold dark morning, my only company is the churning of my emotions. Hope that most of the crates will be full of dogs on the way home. Anger than anyone could bring puppies into this world with no plan other than a quick profit. Sorrow that companion animals are viewed as, even legally classified as livestock, rather than the family members they should be. And fear that I will fail them.

I know that I will fail some of them. I cannot save them all. Neither I nor my organization have the money, the manpower, the political clout or enough other resources to remove all of them from harm. But we will keep trying, because we can and because we have to. We can at least save some, give them the gift of love and family and future.

I don't want to go. I have been on a roller coaster all week, distracted and angry and so grateful to all the others who help these innocent creatures. I read again some of writings from one of the Web rescue sites and am almost reduced to tears.

But I don't have time to weep. I pull in to the auction site, park in the pasture and scan the vehicles, perhaps hoping that it's been called off, or that some agency has swooped in and shut down the auction, taking all of the dogs to rescue, to safety. But no such luck. So I go in to get registered, grab a catalog, and go see the dogs.

The stench slaps at me the moment I walk into the building. As dog auctions go, this is supposedly clean and well run, but in two days they are running more than 500 dogs through the selling floor, some of them healthy, some of them not -- the stack cages and the kennels are full. High school age kids rinse kennels with the hose and squeegee waste into the canal that runs along the floor. Puppies tentatively wag their tails as people stop to examine them, but the older dogs mostly just lie there, without hope, without joy, as though they have lost any expectation of being loved.

A few puppies have goop in their eyes, some are too lethargic to notice the crowd of people walking around -- so many people that it is hard to get to all of the dogs I need to see. I hear sellers disparaging show breeders and the AKC and the USDA, and talking about all the paperwork and medical care that cuts into their profits. And I want to scream. I want to get into someone's face and find out why they think they have a right to manipulate these lives for nothing more than a few bucks. I want to tell them about the breeder whose puppies almost all have orthopedic problems, but I know that he has made trades with many of them for "unrelated stock," and I know that they don't want to know. They don't care. And I want to cry. But I don't have time.

I have to pay attention, to figure out who is buying and who is selling and what kind of prices they will be willing to bid up to today. I have a strict budget, a limited number of foster homes, and serious medical concerns for many of these dogs. If the Amish and Mennonites are hell-bent on picking up a lot of new stock, I may not be able to save any. They have more money than I do. I talk to a few people around me, and find that at least two are here to bid on the breed I am there to get. They want to get into the business of breeding that kind of dog. All I can say to them is that it is an awfully expensive proposition -- failed breedings, c-sections, sick mothers, fragile newborns, not to mention the testing that should be done before a dog is ever bred to reduce the risks of heart and blood diseases, orthopedic problems, eye disease and cancers. But they cannot see past the greenbacks to see the suffering of the animals in pain and loneliness, or the anguish of the families that buy a mill puppy that dies within weeks, sometimes days, but always after the family has fallen in love. They have no concept of what it is like to watch a dog who has almost no hip socket, who moves around by virtue of muscle and tendon and strength of will, because she loves her people and she wants to be with them and to play and to be the normal dog she can never be, and my heart breaks when I see her try to keep up with the other dogs. She tries so hard. But I don't have time to cry for her right now.

My eyes sting and my head aches from the stench, and the constant barrage of noise and odor leaves me with no appetite. I go out to my car to decompress and to grab some food, any food, that I have brought along. I cannot taste it, the food cannot overcome the foul air from the auction barn, but I know that without some nourishment I won't make it back to the rescue home base tonight. I call to relay numbers and breeder names, and to find out when help will arrive. It will be up to me to bid for the dogs and I remember too clearly the anguish of leaving empty handed. I have to disconnect emotion from action, and be prepared for too many possibilities.

I see other rescue representatives around the room. We quietly acknowledge each other, but most of us don't speak to each other much during the auction. We don't want to identify others in rescue to the auction staff, and we all know too well what we each endure. The auctioneer knows who most of us are, and makes quite a show of putting rescue together with breeders who need help getting rid of dogs they don't want. One breeder is trying to unload an unintentional crossbred litter, four to five weeks old. They need to be moved right away. The breeder needs to get her female ready for another breeding.

My breed is next, and I have to steel myself to bid low and to stop when our limit is reached. The first girls come out, and although bidding begins in a reasonable range, and I have hope for a good day, bidding soon climbs well beyond what I can spend. The auction staff knows I am with rescue, and they keep looking over at me, expecting me to go higher. I can't. My heart is breaking, but if we continue to pay high prices, we just encourage them to think they have a ready market in us. The only way to bring the prices back down is to bid low or not bid at all. But in doing so, we sacrifice some of the dogs. I will live with that all of my life, and I will always wonder…

Continued on next page

I no longer sit in the bleachers facing the front of the auction ring. If I look at the dogs face to face, I know I won't be able to shake my head no. As it is, I see one male puppy whose head and build and expression are so much like that of my own auction rescue I can't help but wonder whether they are related -- but I cannot save him, the price goes too high. Another piece of my soul leaves the ring with him, as with every dog I cannot help.

The next group doesn't go as high, and I get a couple of the girls. I pay more than I had wanted, but an extra $50 is a small price to pay to keep another female out of the millers' hands. We have enough adoption applications to place almost every dog we can get, and donations to cover the vetting. Their ages in the catalog range from barely eight weeks to over a year, but we have learned over the years that those dates are meaningless. I remember one older girl we got - when we took her in to be spayed and the vet opened, her up her belly was full of cancer. We didn't wake her up from that merciful sleep. She had been sold as a 'proven female,' said to be six years old. The vet estimated 12 years and too many litters. We stopped a few moments to weep for her as she was finally freed from pain.

Several breeders pull some of their puppies from the sale as it becomes apparent they won't command the prices the breeders want. We end up with a third of the dogs of our breed that are sold, but I feel as though I have spent most of the day shaking my head no. I spent more than I was supposed to, although not by much. I'll take the extra from my own pocket if I have to. A breeder comes over to offer me a dog he had pulled when the bidding didn't reach the reserve price, though the high bid had gone to another breeder. I refuse the reserve price, and he offers me the dog at the amount of the final bid. I say yes. As he gets up to notify the desk, he tells me he would rather we get the dog than the other breeder. I want to believe that he means it. But I can't stop to hope, I have more bidding, another dog or two to try to bring home. I get two more.

I go to pay for the dogs, get their paperwork, try to get the auction house vet to provide health certificates, and get the dogs loaded. As I fill out forms, another buyer asks what I plan to do with all those dogs. I tell him that we will find them good homes. He decries my lack of profit motive, but admits they probably ought to be pets. So should the ones he has bought, but he doesn't suggest that will happen.

The vet insists on seeing all of the paperwork before he will look at the dogs, then asks whether we're with rescue. We ask him why that would matter, and he tells us he doesn't want to sign anything for rescue, there was a complaint and he had to appear before the Missouri Veterinary Board and it was all so very unpleasant. We know the vet who lodged that complaint -- she was livid at the condition of the puppies another group brought to her facility the night of an auction, complete with health certificates, but with illnesses that had not just suddenly blossomed in the few hours it took to transport them.

He looks at the paperwork, says they all have all their vaccines and we don't need, nor will we get, anything else. As we leave, we hear someone ask about a positive test result, but the door is closed on us before we can find out what test or which dogs were affected. The last snatch of conversation confirms that it seemed to all be from one kennel. But they won't tell us anything. All of the dogs had been brought through the same holding area into the same auction ring, about two thirds of the dogs were placed on the table and one third on the floor, neither of which are ever cleaned in the seven hours it takes to auction off more than 200 lives. But I can't stop to worry about that now.

We load the dogs for the drive home. There are three vehicles, and we have split the dogs among us. I carry two of the 8-week olds, with their sharp little barks and their plaintive cries for their mother. I also carry a barker and a howler, and it takes a half hour for them to settle down. One relaxes enough to fill the van with fragrance; none of them had any chance to run around or relieve themselves, the auction house loads them directly into our crates and sends us on our way.

I open the back vents and crank up the heater. It is a cold night, and the two little ones are so small that I am grateful they have each other for warmth. The larger puppies should have enough hair and stamina to deal with the chill; if they're not already sick.

After miles and miles of dark roads, we get to the barn. More help is there, and we unload and get pictures, and take a few minutes to watch the puppies play. I hold one of the smallest ones while we find a warmer space for the three littlest ones. He trembles as he molds himself to me. I can't put him down. I stroke his tiny body, and put my cheek to his head, cooing to him and promising him everything will be all right.

I hold him almost 15 minutes and he has almost stopped trembling by the time we put him in with the other two babies. We find a space where we can put a heater, and some carpet. The three of them play and explore for a few minutes and then fall asleep in their exhaustion. A few days later a vet will tell us the smallest of them can't be more than five weeks old.

The personalities of all of the puppies have begun to emerge as they have a chance to interact and take more than two steps without being caught by a tether or stopped by a cage door. They start to carry their heads a bit higher, and their tails no longer droop, and you start to see a little bit of a sparkle in their eyes. They are still terribly frightened, and they fight against going through doors or walking on leash, but they look at us with almost hopeful expressions. Almost.

Two of them come back to my garage, on their way to another state. I can't house them inside because they haven't been thoroughly checked yet and my own animals already have health issues. Yesterday was my own auction rescue girl's birthday, but rather than playing and getting treats, she and my shelter rescue and my cat get hustled off to board at the vet clinic. She doesn't seem to mind, she loves the vet's staff and they love her, and I think she knows why I have to go. Every now and then I have to remind her that I always come back, that she will never be deserted or alone or unloved. As long as I remind her, she's fine. If I go without reminding her too long, she gets anxious and sticks to my side. But I think she approves.

Continued on next page

I get my visitors settled in, and I try to unwind. I pour a drink, I take a bath, I try to feel normal again. But my mind is overwhelmed, I am exhausted, road weary and emotionally spent. I want to go out and hug the puppies, but I also want them to sleep. They have another long day and another long drive to go to get to their foster homes. I am thrilled for them, for what their futures will be, and I wish we had so many to foster that I would have to make space for some. But we don't, and I don't, and I need to sleep before I collapse. I have so much to do tomorrow.

I get up at six and try to get the dogs to play. I bring them food and water and encourage them to come out of their crates. One is happy to come out and examine the world, and mark as much of it as he can. He inhales his food and looks to be on his way to emptying the gallon bucket of water I brought out. The other boy won't budge. Not food, not water, not sunshine or grass or snow can tempt him. He looks at me with fear and doubt and such anguish that I want to explain to him that he's safe now, he's heading to a good life with wonderful people and playmates and he will be well cared for. But he doesn't trust me, and there is nothing I can do in the hour before he will leave that will change his mind.

Their transport arrives and my friend hauls the frightened one – all thirty pounds of him - out of his crate. The puppy resists, then tentatively sniffs at the food, at the driveway, and at the grass. I walk out into the yard and call to him, and he runs over to me. He moves away a few steps and relieves himself for what must be the first time in at least 12 hours. And then he runs back to me and reaches up to say hi, to check me out and to stretch. His front paws almost reach my chest, he looks into my face with surprise and inquisitiveness and what looks like hope. And I scratch his neck and his ears and his belly and tell him it will be okay, he really does have a future. And tears come to my eyes.

But there is no time.

We load the puppies for the drive west, and make sure they have enough food and water. They look at me and hang their heads -- have I betrayed them, too? No, I tell them, one more day, and they will be in foster homes where they will be loved and taught and nourished, body and soul. I don't know whether they believe me. The van doors close and I wave goodbye to them. I know they will be wonderful, happy dogs, and I know they won't remember me. I don't want them to, because I don't want them to remember anything of their lives before they reach their foster homes. I am only a way station. We will find them forever homes, but it will be the fosters who truly bring them back into the light.

I can't worry about that right now, I must clean the crates and the car and the garage and the yard, and start the laundry with the clothes from yesterday, and wish my son a happy birthday, and run the errands that should have been done yesterday.

I pick up my dogs from the vet's, the staff is disappointed that I'm not bringing puppies to them, but they have loved having my girls staying with them. We get home and the dogs race out of the car and run around the yard like they were still puppies themselves. They find the scent of the other dogs and try to figure out where I have hidden these strangers. I get the cat inside and settled, and go back out to watch my girls. I feel like the luckiest person on earth to have found them. I know that each of those who adopts one of the thirteen we brought back yesterday will feel just as blessed, and I know those 13 lucky dogs will know much love and joy. My girls run and chase each other and look back to where I stand, then start chasing each other again.

I can stop, and take a breath. And for just a moment, weep.

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We will not know peace until all of the unprotected and unloved are encircled by strong, caring arms.

Quoted from www.sunbearsquad.org —a website well worth visiting.

Our Last BARC Beacon

Sadly, this is the last issue of the BARC Beacon Rob and I will be working on. We took it on really as a temporary measure to help Lisa Hawes, the editor, get it up and running... 6 issues later! Unfortunately, with all our other commitments in life, we are just finding it increasingly difficult to find the time to continue on with it.

Stepping away has been a very difficult decision as we have enjoyed making all Lisa's thoughts and ideas come to life and dance in the newsletter. We've poured our heart and soul, and our love and gratitude of our BARC babies, Joye and Harley, into each issue, and hopefully, we have made a difference. Working on this issue as a tribute to Jane Heggen took me, especially, on a very emotional journey. We can only hope that we did Jane proud in this, our last issue.

We look forward to seeing new blood and new ideas to take the BARC Beacon further.

Sherry & Rob Hartung
with Joye & Harley (who are glad Mommy & Daddy will now have more time for them!)
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

Baggage

By Evelyn Colbath 1995

Now that I'm home, bathed, settled and fed,
All nicely tucked in my warm new bed.
I'd like to open my baggage lest I forget
There is so much to carry - So much to regret.

Hmm . . . Yes there it is, right on the top.
Let's unpack Loneliness, Heartache and Loss;
And there by my leash hides Fear and Shame.
As I look on these things I tried so hard to leave –

I still have to unpack my baggage called Pain.

I loved them, the others, the ones who left me,
But I wasn't good enough - for they didn't want me.
Will you add to my baggage?

Will you help me unpack?

Or will you just look at my things -
And take me right back?

Do you have the time to help me unpack?
To put away my baggage, to never repack?
I pray that you do - I'm so tired you see,
But I do come with baggage –

Will YOU still want ME?

THE LAST BARC — JUNE PHOTO CAPTION CHALLENGE



A new Photo Caption Challenge for June! Picture is randomly chosen out of the BARC Photobucket.

Get your creative juices flowing and come up with a witty caption.

Email your photo caption to Lisa Hawes, Newsletter Editor (address on page 3) by August 15th, 2008.

The top 5 captions as chosen by the Newsletter Staff will be published in the next issue, along with a new challenge.

Enjoy!! Have fun!!