The BARC
BEACON
Shining the Light of Hope and Freedom

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THE PEOPLE BEHIND BARC

"MARIETTA EHRICH"



Marietta & Bob Ehrich and Family

My husband Bob and I live near Peoria, IL, in the middle of the state. We have been married for 26 years and have a grown daughter named Michelle, who is our dog-sitter when we are out of town. Bob works at a local community college in the computer lab overseeing the student workers and assisting students with computer problems. He is also a professional musician and plays the French horn in local concert bands around our area. I am a computer programmer turned project manager for Caterpillar, Inc. Most of my free time is spent with our 3 dogs and various foster dogs that come and go. We are fosters for Bernese Auction Rescue Coalition (BARC) and the Great Pyrenese Rescue of Central Illinois. We also volunteer with Illinois Doberman Rescue Plus (IDR+) and have had two foster Dobermans in the past. We also assist with pulling Dobes from the local shelters and helping transport them to the rescue and performing home visits for potential adopters in Central Illinois. All three of us in the family have been involved with horses and used to ride at least weekly, but we don't seem to find the time much anymore. Michelle and I volunteered for several years with Central Illinois Riding Therapy and enjoyed helping handicapped riders experience the joy of horses. We've owned several horses, from a Thoroughbred to a Clydesdale, but they are all gone except a 25 year old buckskin Quarter Horse/Percheron gelding that is enjoying retirement at our friend's barn.

When Michelle was around 5 years old, we got our first dog; a 6 week old Heinz 57 mix puppy from the local shelter that we named Fluffy. She was the perfect, well trained only dog, and I honestly think that she thought she was a person not a dog. Then one day, I decided that she needed a younger playmate to help keep her active in her old age. Fluffy's new friend was a 9-month-old shepherd/border collie mix named Loki. He was exceptionally sweet; he absolutely craved attention. Fluffy wasn't too happy in the beginning but they grew to be great friends over the next few years. And Loki did his job – Fluffy lived to be 14 years old and kept up with him until the very end.

One day, while roaming around a horse fair, we had a chance meeting with our first Berner, and I fell in love instantly. After reading more about the breed, I was determined to get one...so determined that I went online and found puppies listed just a couple of hours' drive from us. I cringe now as I admit this, but I honestly didn't know much about purebred dogs. When the puppies were ready we drove to the breeders and picked out the perfect puppy (ha)! In all truth, every time we set a puppy down, she (the litter was all girls) would run around with the others, and they all looked so much alike that I wasn't sure which one was which. This girl became our Maya, and she is definitely the product of a back yard breeder. She is allergic to everything, eats anything that isn't nailed down (and some things that are), and tends to be pretty

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"BARC has become a very important part of our lives, and I love fostering."

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Marietta's Bridget

neurotic overall. But we had fallen in love with the Berner personality. Shortly after getting Maya, I joined the Berner-L yahoo group, and through reading the postings there, I learned all of the reasons not to buy a puppy off of the internet or from a pet store. Last year, I found one of Maya's sisters who had been adopted from a rescue after her original owners purchased her from a pet store in Texas. So, now I know how bad her breeders really were! When I decided that I wanted another Berner I went back to the internet to find a quality breeder. But instead, I stumbled across the BARC website! Since I had always adopted rescues previously, this seemed like the perfect answer – I could adopt a rescue Berner. I turned in my application and was notified that we were accepted.

It was June 2006 and, at the time, there were a bunch of puppies listed on the BARC site, but I was drawn to the adults. Their sad eyes and even sadder stories pulled at my heart. Amy helped guide us to the perfect dog; a 3-year-old female named Bridget who had spent probably all of her life in what must have been a horrible puppy mill.

She was in a wonderful foster home in Pennsylvania, and we arranged to drive to Ohio to meet foster Mom Kim and pick her up. I believe that I fell in love the minute I saw her! She wasn't very pretty but as we sat in the grass behind a fast food restaurant, she let me pet her a little bit and then casually laid her paw on my leg when I quit.

It was the first of many times that I found myself near tears just thinking about the life this poor girl had lived. Even after 3 months in a foster home – having been shaved because of mats and filth, and several baths – she still stank. I seriously doubt that she had ever been outside or even out of a small cage. She was terrified anywhere except in a crate, but especially when she was outside in the open. Her feet and head were proportionally too big for her thin, poorly muscled body. Her hips creaked if you touched her. To compensate for her weak backend, she put all of her weight on her front, so her elbows stuck out at an angle like a bulldog. Within a short time of getting her home, we discovered that she had kidney damage and were told that it would definitely shorten her life. I started home cooking her special diet and immediately started her on supplements in hopes of extending that time as much as possible. Then Bridget started changing. It was a slow process, but each day she became more trusting. She remained slightly shy, but loved everyone and soaked up as much attention as she could get. She loved to go – anywhere! She cuddled with me on the couch every evening and often slept with her head in my lap. We fought a long battle with the kidney disease, but when her body gave out in November of 2008, it happened very quickly. We made that last vet visit and stayed with her until she had peacefully left this world.



Marietta's Bridget



Marietta's Denver

Our second BARC dog arrived in the spring of 2008 and was our first foster failure. I had always wanted a big male, and when Denver stepped off of the truck, I knew immediately that I wanted to keep him. This batch of dogs had come straight from the puppy mill, and needed to be vetted and neutered, but they had been given attention by their owners and were not shy like most are. Even as an intact 4 year old, Denver was about as sweet and mellow as they come. He is a goof and can be as stubborn as a rock, but we love him dearly just as we have all of our dogs. I thank my lucky stars every day that I ran across BARC on the Internet! The work that they do frees these dogs from a life of misery and gets them into loving homes. BARC has become a very important part of our lives, and I love fostering – especially the shy dogs, because it is so satisfying to see them come out of their shells and start to enjoy life. People always ask how I can give them up, but as long as I know they are going on to a wonderful home, it makes room for the next dog that needs us.

—Marietta Ehrich
BARC Board of Directors

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Lisa with Bosley & Bernie

Hello, everyone, and welcome to another summer issue of The BARC Beacon! We trust this issue finds you and yours having a happy, healthy summer with all that the season entails.

I believe you'll enjoy this issue as we have lots of great summertime articles and ideas to share, including an irresistibly cool summer treat recipe in "Bosley's Culinary Corner"! You'll see part 2 of Andrea's terrific series on itching & allergies, and Helen Hollander, our favorite animal behaviorist, has some great ideas for keeping your pups happy and cool throughout the heat of summer. We're also including an article on easy training activities you can do anytime – anywhere with your furkids. This fun article comes from our very own BARC mom and trainer, Pat Tackett. These tips are easy indoor activities to keep your Berner babies' minds active and sharp when it's too hot to "play" outside. To top off our summertime theme and to make you smile, we have some great photos to share of BARC babies and their siblings enjoying water in a myriad of ways!

As always, we have the regular articles you've come to count on and enjoy as well as a very special "Memorial" to share. We also have an article on BARC Buddies by Board of Directors member, Patty Tomaszewski, and one very special BARC girl's story of her road to becoming a therapy dog written by her adoring mom, Patty Wellinger. Each article has been lovingly written by BARC family members or special friends who we have come to treasure for their commitment to BARC. We hope that everyone will find something special in this issue that touches your heart or makes a difference in the lives of you and your BARC baby(s).

Please remember to take time to participate in our "The Last BARC" photo caption contest! You don't win any prizes, but it is such fun!! I always get a kick out of seeing what everyone comes up with! Each issue finds more and more people participating in the caption contest—I've even heard from folks who just happened across the newsletter in their online searches and write me to see if they may participate!! We're drawing quite an international crowd of participants these days!!

And no "Editor's Comments" section would be complete without a heartfelt THANK YOU to all who have helped make this issue a success. As always, I hope that you guys know how much I appreciate you and value each of you with your unique talents and abilities! It is this incredible team of dedicated workers that makes this publication something that draws so many in to enjoy each quarter! As Cheryl Thornton says, "BARC Rocks!!"

Lisa Hawes

Editor
Mom to BARC's Bosley and Bernie
In Dallas, TX

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NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
Deadline for submissions for the September issue of the BARC Beacon is Sunday, August 8, 2009.
All submissions to be sent to the Editor, Lisa Hawes by email at lkhawes@yahoo.com.

BARC BUSINESS UPDATE

	2008	2009
Dogs Rescued	59	6
Adoptions Completed	52	9
Re-homes Completed	2	0
Donations/Adoption Fees	$67,373	$12,059
Expenses	$49,308	$8,769

If you have any questions or concerns, please email Karen Thompson at karenthompson@barcinc.net.

RECENT ADOPTIONS

Liz Caldwell	Lawrence, KS
Marie-Josee Quillemette & Patrick Fortin	Dubuque, IA
Lori & Gary Simidian	Franklin Square, NY
Lisa & Mike Szudarski	Wheaton, IL



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INTRODUCING BARC BUDDIES!



Initially, in 2006, BARC started to compile a list of people who would be willing to be a "BARC Buddy". These volunteers would be willing to help answer any questions and lend support to those new BARC families who would like the assistance of a "Buddy".

Due to various reasons, this idea sort of got "shelved" for a while, but now we're reviving it. We're planning to make the BARC Buddies program fit some very real needs for those who are making a new BARC baby a part of their family. I'm sure many of you - like me - remember those challenges like they were yesterday. I felt as though I had Amy on speed dial, and it was reassuring to have the support of someone who understood. The issues were so diverse...and I worried that I was doing the wrong things, or that I wasn't handling things as well or as quickly as I should be. Was there something else out there that I should know about or that I should be doing? Phew!! There weren't many fast solutions either, and so most of us have learned the hard lessons and rewards of patience that our dogs have taught us. And now, with nearly 900 BARC babies having been placed, there is no way that Amy, herself, can possibly be available to answer all of the questions/concerns, so we, as the BARC community, need to step up and help out.

Now, instead of every new BARC family having to "reinvent the wheel", so to speak, we feel like these learning experiences that so many of us have been through might save some of our new families many anxious moments and sleepless nights. So if you'd be interested in participating as a BARC Buddy, please send an e-mail to me at momtoma@aol.com , and I'll make sure to add your name to the list. You'll be contacted whenever a new family requests a "Buddy" to lend practical as well as moral support. It won't require much time – just a few emails now and then or an occasional phone call – and a willingness to share your knowledge and resources.

Also, if you're a newer BARC family and would like to be assigned a BARC Buddy, please send me an email to momtoma@aol.com. I will get back in contact with you as quickly as possible with the information on who your new "Buddy" will be. I really think it will be a nice resource for new families who are facing special challenges from their very special dogs. Trust me, with all the individuals in our "family", there will be someone who has walked the same road you are now walking in helping your BARC baby achieve success and the happy life they've always deserved.

So, if you're interested, let me know! I'll be anxiously awaiting hearing from you! You'll be hearing more about this soon as we get it up and running!

Patty Tomaszewski

BARC Board of Directors

NEW BARC DIRECTORY

We're working hard to complete a new issue of the BARC Directory, a listing of all names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of existing BARC families. The expected delivery date will be sometime mid-summer. The last one was issued in 2006, so we've added quite a few more adoptees since that time. There are a lot of families in our little community! So please act now and let us know if any of your information has changed since adopting your BARC baby. We'd like this issue to be as correct as possible. Simply email me, Patty Tomaszewski, at momtoma@aol.com, and we'll make sure your information gets updated. Also, if for whatever reason, you'd rather not be included in the directory, let us know that too. We certainly respect anyone's desire to keep their information private.

When you contact us, if you'd be so kind as to give us your name, address, email address, and phone number so that all our information is updated, we'd sure appreciate it. We will also be able to use the updated email addresses to ensure accurate delivery of the newsletter as well. Thank you.

BARC FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

"THE MONTE FAMILY"



Mary Ann & Louis Monte meet Demi in Ohio.

When Louis and I married in 1984 we were both independent consultants, so the first few years of our marriage were spent meeting in airports and taking advantage of long weekends. Louis was a bank operations consultant for many years until the wave of bank acquisitions changed the banking world and rendered his business obsolete. I was a records management consultant who entered the field at the perfect time – big businesses were just beginning to realize they needed to do something about their records and information. My business did well and, in time, had national and international clients. In the early 90s, we were approached by the owners of the largest records storage company in New Orleans and asked if we would like to manage their business. With my client load, it was impossible for me, but it was perfect for Louis. He managed the company for years until it was bought out by a larger national records storage firm which was then bought out by an even larger national firm in 2000. He decided that was the perfect time for him to retire, and in 2001, I let all my contracts expire and retired also.

In 1992 we got our first dog. She was a Golden Retriever who didn't grow up until she turned five. Within two months of getting her as a puppy, we realized she had to have a companion, so we began researching purebred dogs. The Bernese Mountain Dog fit all our criteria, and when Cassie was six months old, she was joined by Gina. Gina was the best introduction to Berners we could have had. Her personality and appearance captivated everyone who met her. When Cassie and Gina were eight, Gina was diagnosed with kidney disease, and we were told we might lose her soon. We knew Cassie would not be happy without a canine companion so we got Pepper, as a puppy, from Gina's breeder. In no time Cassie was herding Pepper around and Gina was mothering her little brother. At that point I learned about raw feeding and started all three dogs on a raw diet. Gina's kidney disease disappeared, and she and Cassie lived to be 11 and ½ before we lost them both within six months. Pepper was devastated at the loss of his two life-long companions, so we began the search for another dog. I found BARC on the internet, and we decided to try a rescue. We adopted Gretchen in Jan 2006. Looking at her was like looking at Gina except Gretchen was so small. We named her Demi for Demitasse, a tiny cup of coffee. Once he realized she was here to stay, Pepper accepted her and let Demi boss him around until his death in 2008.

Now we share our lives with three BARC dogs. Demi just turned five and has been with us for three years. We drove to Uniontown, OH and picked her up from her foster mom, Jeannie Bussey, on 1/15/06. She is a gem; a love of a dog. All you have to do is look at her and her tail begins wagging. If you approach her she flips to her back for a belly rub. She is calm and sweet and looks upon the antics of her brothers with an expression like, "Oh well, boys will be boys, sigh!" She is a small girl, about 68 lbs with the standard blocky build but short little legs. Her attitude towards obedience is, "If I feel like it, I will; if not, I just don't hear you," but she is so well behaved that people think she is perfectly trained--lucky us!

Sam has just turned four and has also been with us for three years. Louis drove to St. Louis, MO, to pick him up from his transporter, John Kinzey, on 5/20/06. He is just the opposite of Demi. He is small, 50 lbs at tops, thin build, almost feminine in appearance. He is very high strung, startles easily, very shy with strangers and not sure about other dogs, especially small ones.



Sam Monte on alert

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He has a neurological condition that makes him unpredictable. We have learned to watch him for signs of extraordinary alertness and immediately put a leash on him which, for some reason, calms him down. When Sam is feeling good, he is a delight to be with. He craves affection and loves to be brushed or touched in any way. He so wants to please that he breaks my heart, and in spite of all his challenges, he is ours until the end.



Sig & Demi Monte

Sig is perhaps 2 1/2 and has been with us for a year. Once again, Louis did the pickup. He drove to Dallas and got Sig from his foster mom, Lisa Florin, on 3/1/08 and was fortunate to be able to also meet Lisa and Rick Hawes as well. Sig is bigger than Demi and Sam and still very much a frolicking, joyful puppy. Everything makes Sig happy. He hasn't yet grown into his feet or his long legs (at this age perhaps he won't), and his antics have us laughing out loud. He is affectionate, loving, and smart. He is our only vocal dog and doesn't hesitate to woof or woo, cry or whine to communicate. When I talk directly to him he woofs and woos back to me. He seems to understand that something is wrong with Sam and is learning to signal us when Sam is about to have an episode of aggression.

Since 1994 we have lived on Bayou Liberty, just north of Lake Pontchartrain, which is north of New Orleans. We love living on the water in spite of the flooding thanks to hurricanes and high astronomical tides combined with easterly winds. It is peaceful and quiet, and the dogs get to spend nearly all their time with us as we work outside and within the house. We have a large fenced dog yard as we cannot let the dogs run free thanks to the local alligators and other bayou wildlife. Demi and Sam get their fill of pine cones and pieces of pine bark on our leashed walks around the property while Sig enjoys watching the blue herons and the egrets.

In 2008, I had an opportunity to work with the BARC Board when Marilynn Blake was president. I volunteered to help BARC handle the paperwork and eventually became responsible for all BARC records generated after March 2008. Louis offered to help in any way he could, and I took him up on that offer frequently. Marilynn, Karen Thompson, Patti Johnson, and I designed an Excel Workbook which contained complete information about the dogs, the foster parents, and adoptions. That workbook seemed to be constantly up on my screen for the next six months. It was a wonderful experience for me as I had the opportunity to communicate on a daily basis with BARC's amazing foster parents and the loving people who adopted BARC's rescued dogs. After Amy Kessler came back to the Board, my duties were taken over by Courtney Erickson and Karen Thompson, so now my duties are somewhat more limited. I am still privileged to act as an assistant proofreader for Lisa Hawes on the BARC Beacon and I enjoy getting a preview of the Beacon when she needs help.

Our Berners have brought so much love and joy into our lives that it is impossible for us to imagine being without one. We thank BARC for allowing us to have our three very special dogs, and we thank all the wonderful people who support BARC and other Bernese rescue groups throughout the country. We feel like we have thousands of friends all over the country and the world.

Editor's Note:

Mary Ann is so modest that she has neglected to mention how very much I, personally, rely upon her to get me the information from Karen & Courtney for the Recent Adoptions column in the newsletter. It is also Mary Ann who keeps the BARCINC group's list and our newsletter email list organized. This includes being a moderator for our BARCINC Yahoo! group list so that she can track those who subscribe and unsubscribe from the group's list, and ensure they're on the proper list for newsletter mail-outs each quarter! Now, while these may not be terribly time-consuming jobs, they are hugely important ones! I'd be lost without Mary Ann's incredible assistance! These are all tedious jobs, yet Mary Ann does them faithfully quarter after quarter for me. Her help in these areas is invaluable!!

BOSLEY'S CULINARY CORNER



FROSTY PAWS

INGREDIENTS

16 oz. plain yogurt

1 large banana, mashed

½ cup peanut butter

DIRECTIONS

- Mix all ingredients well.
- Spoon into disposable Dixie cups.
- Place in freezer until frozen.
- Your dogs will LOVE these during the hot summer months!

**If you have a recipe that you'd like to share for yummy homemade dog treats, please send it to lkhawes@yahoo.com to be considered for inclusion in an upcoming issue of the newsletter.



MORE ITCHY ALLERGIES: *STAPH*



Andrea with Woofit

I have received several requests to expand upon my 'itching' column from the last issue. For many there is some confusion between staph infections and staph allergies. When dogs itch, they bite at their coat and scratch. Often, they irritate the area and cause a secondary infection. This infection is indeed staph. The reason that it has occurred is that the body is overreacting.

Staph is a commonly used abbreviation for Staphylococcus, a group of bacteria commonly found on the skin. Dermatitis is a term that means that the skin is inflamed. Staph is a normal resident of the skin of animals and humans. It is considered an opportunist. As long as the skin is healthy, staph is dormant. But once the skin is irritated (dermatitis) by another cause such as allergies, staph can invade the area and multiply rapidly, causing a staph infection.

Scratching is the most common cause, but licking and chewing can be problematic as well. Any disorder that causes itching can create a situation which allows staph to become a problem. Many of the things listed in the last issue can cause itching such as seasonal allergies, food allergies, flea bites, etc., but once it becomes a staph infection, you have a more serious issue to contend with. This is why it is so important to do the research and find out WHY your dog is itching in the first place, so that problem can be treated! Treating the cause of the itch should eliminate the staph infections. If you don't treat the cause, the staph will continue to reoccur.

Staph bacterium is usually sensitive to several antibiotics. Flower essences, homeopathies, chlorhexidine, and some topical herbs are helpful in treating staph as well. The most essential part of treatment, though, is stopping the itching and scratching! If that doesn't happen, the staph infection will continue to reoccur. Some dogs have been on antibiotics for staph infections so many times that they become resistant to that drug. This should not be happening! You must treat the cause!

Now, some dogs are actually allergic or overly sensitive to the staph bacterium itself, so they are considered to have a staph allergy. This is often determined by allergy testing. These animals must be protected against it in a more vigilant manner year round. Medicated shampoos such as those mentioned in the last issue are often very helpful for these dogs as is boosting the immune system.

Once staph irritations/infections occur, they must be left alone by the dog in order to heal. This may mean using a T-shirt, comfy cone, inflatable e-collar, bite-not collar, or other protective device until the infection is cleared up.



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, Chi and Karma. 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.

DOG DAYS OF SUMMER



Helen & Paxil

Summer is just around the corner. For most, we welcome the clear days kissed by sunshine and warm breezes. But, if your dogs are like mine, they secretly do "snow dances" and chant "we want snow, we want snow!".

Although the warm weather and sunshine brings promise of budding flowers and days at the beach, it also summons boredom for our fur kids. Outside activities become limited due to hot weather and the chance of heat exhaustion. Pet owners often ask, "What do we do now to entertain our kids and keep them happy ?"

Here are some suggestions to keep Fido mentally and physically fit and happy during the summer months, not to mention keeping you sane!

Don't give up your daily walks! They will be one of your main sources of exercise during the warmer months. However, dog walks and romps must be limited to early mornings or late afternoons before and after the full sun. Remember, black attracts heat. Even a short walk can cause a dog to over heat, so be prepared. Bring water and a portable dish, and offer your dog a cool drink along the way. Watch for signs of heat exhaustion: widening of the tongue, heavy panting, thick saliva, red gums, and/or your dog wanting to hide in the shade. Cooling blankets are great to put on your dog as you head out on a hot day. They will help to keep your dog's temperature regulated.

For those of you are lucky enough to live near a lake or beach, long walks along the shore is not only cooling and refreshing, but walking in the sand does wonders for your dog's feet, ligaments, and general muscle tone. I love taking my fur kids to the beach early in the morning before the full sun is overhead and, more importantly, before other dogs are running loose on the beach. The dogs enjoy chasing the sea gulls and the little sand pipers that run along the shoreline-- Doggy Heaven. All three enjoy going in the ocean, but only Harley is notorious for diving under the waves! (Sometimes I worry he is not going to surface!) I always have the three on long leads for safety purposes.

Swimming is fabulous for those who enjoy being in the water. If you have a pool, try teaching your dog to go in. I always suggest a life vest made especially for dogs. Many dogs fear the pool and one of the reasons is because they have a poor "depth" perception. Entering the pool by the steps can be made easier by placing a dark towel on the pool steps. This often helps a dog negotiate the steps more easily. Some dogs will lie on a raft and enjoy being slipped into the pool that way.

If you have a sprinkler, some dogs LOVE running through the sprinkler. Set up one in your garden and turn on the water. Keep the pressure low so you don't startle your dog. Try filling a kiddy pool for your dog. Some love plopping in the pool to cool off.

For those of you whose dogs enjoy agility or rally-o...look for an air-conditioned training facility in your area. It is too hot to work your dogs outside in the hot sun.

Many people feel shaving their dog down will keep them cooler in the summer months. **Be careful**. For the most part, a dog's coat acts as insulation. But it ***is*** important that you remove the undercoat. Shaving down alone is not the answer. If you want to clip your dog's hair, try shaving the hair on the belly...that will help to cool them. If you choose to clip your dog's hair for grooming purposes, PLEASE...leave at least 1 inch or more of fur on them and remove the undercoat with weekly brushing. Please keep in mind, Dogs CAN and will get sunburned if their skin is exposed.

If you have never done any water activities, perhaps now is the time to try. Some dogs love dock diving. If you have a boat, grab your preservers and one for the dog as well and



Continued on next page

go for a boat ride.

Picnics in the park or at the beach can be fun as well. Again, be sure and bring plenty of water for Fido, umbrellas for shade, portable mini fans and even a cooling mat for your dog to lie on.

Summer does not mean you have to stop exercising your dog's brain while you are inside. Teaching new tricks or brushing up on his obedience never goes to waste. Work on those things you have been pushing to the back burner for a "rainy day". Your dog will love having the one on one time with you. Play hide and seek. Teach your dog to "target". Work on "watch me's". Try to be inventive, but by all means, be interactive!

And last but not least, break up doggie boredom by taking rides around town in an air-conditioned car. The cool car and the change of scenery and just being with you do wonders for your dog.

So now you have a few ideas of what you can do with your dog during the hot months. However, there are many things to be extra cautious about as well. I recently read an article about meeting the "safety needs" of your dog during the spring and summer. Although we are familiar with most, it is an excellent reminder to us all.

FLEAS & TICKS: Begin your preventative treatments that you discontinued during the winter months. Check with your veterinarian first. Do required blood tests before administering any preventative medication.

LAWN CARE PRODUCTS: Fertilizers are toxic to pets. Keep them in a safe place far from your dogs. If you apply fertilizer or other products to your lawn, be sure to find out WHEN IT IS SAFE for your animals to go on the grass.

FLOWERS: Certain flowers can be toxic and cause kidney failure and death. Read up on your choice of flowers carefully.

SPRING CLEANING: Many products are toxic to our dogs and to us. Please read the labels carefully!

Happy, Healthy Summer to All!

HELEN HOLLANDER, CPDT—Helen graduated from Hofstra University with a degree in Psychology and later worked in the field of Special Education. Canine Behavior and training has always been Helen's hobby. Upon her children's graduation from High School, Helen switched professions to that of working with dogs on a professional level and furthering her education in Canine Behavior.

Helen is a Certified Pet Dog Trainer and member of the Certification Council of Pet Dog Trainers, a Professional member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT), a Certified Behavior Counselor through the Animal Behavior Center of New York. In addition, Helen serves as a Board member of the Nassau/Suffolk Owners Handlers Association and is a member of the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America. In 2006, she became an AKC certified Evaluator for the CGC. Helen is a proactive advocate of dog-friendly, reward based training and is the owner of THE EDUCATED PUP, LLC, a private training and behavior counseling practice, located on Long Island, NY. In addition, Helen moderates an E-List that offers help for those people who own Shy/Aggressive Bernese Mt. Dogs. Email BerneseAggressiveandShy-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to join.

Helen presently shares her life with her well trained and understanding husband and two Bernese Mt. Dogs and one Iraqi rescue pup, Dusty. When not counseling other people's pets, you can find Helen ringside handling one of her Bernese in conformation.

MARCH'S PHOTO CAPTION CHALLENGE RESULTS



Top 5 captions in order of votes

1. Ha ha ha...oh, stop it, ha ha ha! Stop it, don't make me laugh anymore...I mean it, if I laugh any more, I am going to wet my pants!...Ha ha ha! - Susan Barrett (Chloe's Mom)
2. *WE HAVE A TIE:*

   Look Ma, no cavities! - Kim Clark (Jenna's Mom)

   CHEEEEEEEEEEEESE!! - Laura Levine (Lucy's Mom)
4. Good One! - Pat Long
5. You'll laugh at anything for a biscuit!" -Alan Armstrong (from Scotland!)

BARC DOGS KNOW HOW TO STAY COOL!



Isabelle McNeal needs a cool drink.



Bruno Hughes says, "Now, this is FUN!!"



Bruno Hughes says, "Way cool! It's getting deeper."



Riley Ross thinks he's too handsome to get more than his feet wet!



Jake Simidian says, "Last one in is a rotten bone!"



Emma Weber says, "Hey waves, you can't get me!"



Porter Paige is playing hide-n-seek! Can you find him?



Heidi Rose & Leisel Maxim are the Dunkin' Doggies!



Bernie Hawes enjoying a soothing mud pack!



Bailey Ross says, "Hot? Who's hot? Not me!!"



Oscar Weigand perfecting his stroke.



Santee Decker knows how to cool off in a tropical heat!



Otto Pariser is riding' the waves!



Halley Parkey wonders if she's found a starfish!

INDOOR SUMMER FUN

What can you do to keep you and your dog from being bored during the summer months when it is WAY too hot to venture outside?? It is called CLICKER TRAINING! Often called "the lazy man's armchair method" of training because you can do it pretty much anywhere while you're doing anything - including sitting around in your favorite chair watching a movie or reading a book. Clicker training requires you to curb your desire to chatter to your dog. You can lure with yummy treats and tidbits, but typically you do not even put a verbal cue to anything until the dog is 90% successful, so that means 9 out of 10 tries are successful! This requires your dog to use its brain... but I'm getting ahead of myself!



The tips I'm sharing with you have come mostly from what I have learned at seminars and Deborah Jones' book *Clicker Fun*. You can also find various websites that will give you some guidance on using the clicker for trick training. The main site I steer folks to is Karen Pryor's: http://www.clickertraining.com/basics.

The first thing you have to do is introduce your dog to a clicker. Many places now carry these. A clicker is a little box-like device which makes a unique sound, but you can even use a ballpoint pen. Grab a handful of yummy, soft treats cut up small, and basically begin clicking and feeding those treats until your dog realizes when they hear the '*click*' it means a 'treat' is going to come.

One of the very first activities many of us that have attended clicker seminars are told about is the game "*101 Things to do with a Box*". This is a fun activity to introduce your dog to clicker fun! Basically, set an empty box out in the middle of your floor, and watch what happens. Click for *any* interaction, and see how smart your dog is as he/she turns you quickly into a Pez dispenser of treats! The game can progress as far as your own imagination will allow and as far as the number of ways your dog can figure out how to interact with that box! Check out this link where Laurie Telfair, a lady I know here in the Dallas area who owns GSDs, discusses her young pup's first interaction with 'the box': http://www.shirleychong.com/keepers/archives/boxfun.txt

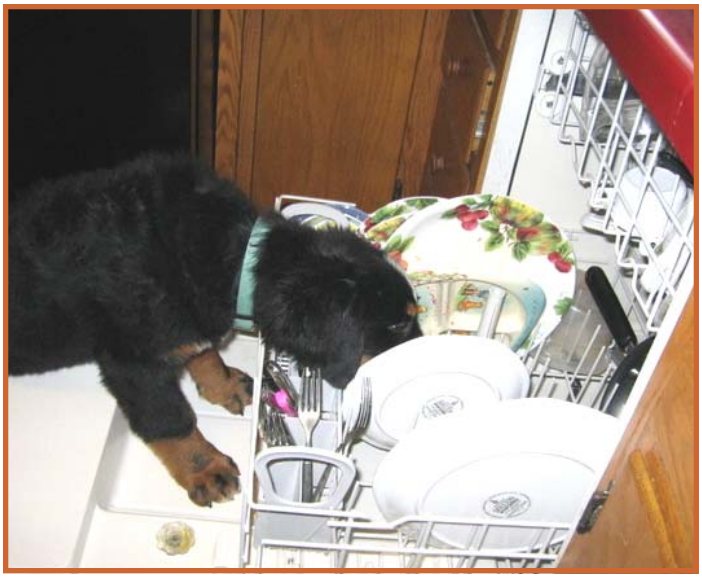
I like to start with an activity called '*targeting*'. You can use a touch stick, the palm of your hand, or even a finger. Once you get your dog bumping (touching with its nose) the '*target*', you can progress to many other things to help teach your dog to *Bow*, *Crawl*, *Show me Your Belly*, *Roll Over*, *Spin*, *Reverse* (opposite direction of first spin), *Head Down*, *Jump*, or *Touch This.* You can apply the concept of *'targeting'* to any number of possible objects - toy pianos, stuffed toys that make sounds, or balls they can push. Check this link to help you get started:

http://www.shirleychong.com/keepers/archives/tricks2.txt

Last, but not least, another great website to check out is: http://www.wagntrain.com/Games.htm

— Pat Tackett

THE LAST BARC — JUNE PHOTO CAPTION CHALLENGE



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

So all you creative, witty people out there, here's your chance to have some fun.

Email your photo caption to Lisa Hawes, Newsletter Editor (lkhawes@yahoo.com) by August 8, 2009.

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!!

THE JOURNEY TO THERAPY DOG AND BEYOND



Patty Wellinger & Jessie

The gray haired man lay stiffly in an ICU bed, staring at the ceiling while he slowly recovered from the effects of a stroke. As we entered the room, a hand hung limply over the side of his bed. Jessie (my 7.5 year old BARC girl) and I slowly approached the bed after asking if he wanted a visit. With just an encouraging word from me, Jessie inched forward and gently put her head under his hand so that he could fondle her ears. She stood, wagging her tail, for several minutes as he slowly rubbed and told her that she was a good girl. The sight of his smile brought tears to my eyes as we left the room.

So how did we get to this point? Jessie & I are a new therapy dog team for Denver Pet Partners (DPP) http://www.denverpetpartners.org/ . DPP is an affiliate of the Delta Society http://www.deltasociety.org and is run as a program of the American Humane Association http://www.americanhumane.org. There are almost 200 therapy teams (mostly dogs, but also some miniature horses and even a few cats!) in the Denver metro area. Jessie & I have been making visits to a local hospital for several months, but other DPP teams visit nursing homes, chemotherapy/dialysis centers, schools, libraries, and a juvenile detention facility. They also enjoy doing special events such as Shots for Tots.

Jessie came into my life in March of 2007 after fostering with Courtney for several months. I had wanted a dog since childhood, but always managed to find myself moving frequently or living in no pets or cats-only housing. About ten years ago, I saw my first Bernese Mountain Dog at a local show and fell in love. Waiting for the moment when I could have a Berner, I read books & websites (what can I say… I'm a librarian!), attended shows, and met some local owners. In the fall of 2006, one of my cats died at age 14, opening up a space in my "2 pets only" town home for a dog of my own.

My plans were delayed for several months after a routine exam uncovered a lump in my throat that doctors found suspicious. Subsequent tests and scheduling issues meant that it was almost 4 months later before I finally had surgery and discovered that the tumor was benign, not cancer after all. To distract myself during those long and scary months, I focused on plans for my new dog. I bought treats and supplies, re-read my books, and made plans. I liked the idea of giving a Bernese Mountain Dog a second chance at a loving home, so I put in an application through BARC and my area club, the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of the Rockies. I even woke up from my surgery to croak out to my mother, "Ok, I had the #@# surgery, now where's my dog?"

A short time later, I was headed to Kansas to meet up with Amy and bring Jessie to her new home. For the first few months she was quite shy. She was mellow at home, but everything outside was new and scary. Sometimes we could only use the back door or take a walk in a particular direction because something had frightened her, and she refused to go the other way. If we saw other people or dogs those first few weeks, she would either freeze or refuse to walk in that direction or would race back to the safety of the house.

After a few weeks of bonding, she began to trust me and we started a basic obedience class. In that first class it would take me 20-30 minutes (and a lot of hotdogs and encouragement) to convince Jessie that it was safe to even go in the building. We did a little loose leash walking and sits, but mostly just worked on building up her confidence and social skills.

It was frustrating, but we kept working, and I took her to a lot of different places to get her used to new environments. We took the class again a few months later and ended up as the best team there! Now, when we leave home, she races to the car, strolls happily into class, and has a great time. While some things are still a little scary for her, she is a much more self-confident, happy dog.

Jessie has a kind, loving manner, and there is nothing that she likes better than to make me happy … even if it means trying out all kinds of strange new activities. In the past two years we have:

- passed a herding instinct test (ducks squawk nicely, sheep are boring);
- gone drafting (but not since she was diagnosed with arthritis);
- gotten a Canine Good Citizen certificate (CGC);

Continued on next page

- earned an AKC rally Novice title (although that off-leash Advanced work means sooo many opportunities to run out of the ring looking for cookies);
- and earned 3 legs towards a novice obedience title (unfortunately one is AKC and 2 are UKC, so no actual title yet).

Her favorite activity is snuggling on the couch or spooning on the floor, soaking up love and sometimes tears. Berner hugs and soft brown eyes brought me a lot of comfort and healing in that first difficult year of her adoption that included recovery from surgery and the deaths of my mother and grandmother.

A few months ago when I was talking about my frustrations in trying to improve Jessie's heeling performance, a friend reminded me that although Jessie will never be a National Obedience Champion, she is the right dog at the right time for me. She has a healing heart, which is much more important than any score or ribbon.

My mother was crazy about dogs, and it would have meant a lot to her to have been able to see or touch a dog while she was in the hospital. Unfortunately, her small Indiana town didn't have a pet therapy program. Thinking about how much Jessie has overcome and what a difference she has made in my life, I knew that I wanted to share her love with others who needed it as well.

I signed up for a DPP workshop in September 2008. The workshops are so popular that I had to wait until February to take the 15 hour class. After training, we were required to pass an evaluation, based in part on the CGC test and in part on our behavior during likely visit scenarios. Examples include: loud people; awkward petting; multiple people trying to pet her at the same time; leave toys / food alone on the floor; people in wheelchairs & crutches, getting bumped, etc. Both the dog & handler are tested, and it is possible for the handler to make the dog fail. Once we passed, we had to pick a place to visit from the list of DPP options and begin training. There are currently 10 Berners working as DPP therapy dogs.

I thought that a hospital setting would be a good choice and luckily there was one close by that needed additional teams. While we were waiting for our official Delta Society registration, I went through the hospital's orientation and got us both hospital ID photos that we wear onsite. I went on two visits (without Jessie) with a mentor to see how she and her dog acted on hospital rounds. Then Jessie and I went on two visits with our mentor along to make sure that we did things correctly. After that we were turned loose to make weekly visits on our own.

We have visited all areas of the hospital including ICU, ER, surgery & oncology floors, and waiting rooms. A typical visit lasts an hour, and we may see 30-40 people. It can be tiring for both Jessie and me, but it feels good to spend a little time once a week helping others… and she enjoys the attention. Each hospital trip begins and ends with treats, water & play time.





The patients and their families love to see us and often think that we are being paid to visit them. I like to say that our job is to break up their day a little and bring a smile to their faces. The DPP motto is "Changing Lives – One Person at a Time" and so many people are delighted to see us that I feel we have made a small improvement in their day.

The hospital staff keeps treats at the nurse's station, and they are always ready for a little doggie time, especially in the evenings and on weekends. They all know Jessie's name, and as they give her hugs and pats and tell me about their dogs, I don't even mind that no one seems to remember my name. There I'm just Jessie's mom, and that's exactly as it should be.

I usually have to explain that Jessie is a Bernese Mountain Dog and tell people a little about where the breed comes from and their original jobs. I have had people guess that she is an Aussie, a St. Bernard, and sometimes a Burmese (I'm never sure if that is a cat or a python!). One of my first visits, however, was with a man from Europe who told me he knew all about Berners from living in Switzerland. He even owns an Appenzeller, which is one of the other Swiss Mountain Dog breeds. Jessie is so well behaved that a lot of people want to know if I have been training her since she was a puppy. This gives me a chance to explain about rescue dogs the wonderful work of BARC.

Through Jessie, I have made new friends and joined the fantastic, somewhat crazy world of dog training. I am so proud of all of the progress she has made and am grateful for the love and healing that she has given me. Thank you BARC for rescuing this sweet, loving girl and allowing me to share her healing heart with others!

What's Your Name?

BARC's Lola, Hiker & Spencer

Hiker was originally Cy Young at his foster home. We let my daughter name him and she said "Hiker." To this day, we, including my daughter, wonder why she chose Hiker. He does love to hike so it's good. He's called Hike and Hiker-biker. I think his perfect name is Eeyore--it's used as a nickname because Hiker walks with his head down, swinging it back and forth and gets these huge booey eyes that say "woe is me" what happened to the days of being the only dog?

Spencer was named by his foster family. We again let our daughter decide what to name him. After getting to know Spencer a bit, I wanted to name him Wilbur after the pig in Charlotte's Web because he has this funny habit of sniffing the ground and snorting. I call him my truffles sniffing pig. We kept the name Spencer, and it really fits him. He's affectionately called simple Spencer or special Spencer because he's both. He's a very simple dog who just wants love, food, and a safe place.



Lola was the original BARC name. My daughter again was fine keeping that name. Somehow, Lola fits Lola in that she is elegant (when she wants to be) and it's a 4 letter word. We sing the old Kinks song "Lola" to her and she'll tilt her head while we sing off key!

Annette Jan (UT)

BARC's Jesse & BARC's Annie



I have kept the BARC names for the call names for both of my girls. I did have fun choosing their registered names though.

Jesse is my shadow, she has to be with me all the time if I am home. When she came home, I opened her crate after her flight and she flew into my arms and has never left. If we are at the dog park, she keeps coming back and checking in with me by sitting on my feet. So she became BARCs Moonshadow Jessebelle.

Annie was much older when she came home, she was already 4. But from the first time I met her I knew she belonged in our home and in our hearts, so her registered name became BARC's Lil' Orphan Annie.



Oh, I forgot to add my girls' silly names! Jesse is Jessabellarella or Jessaboo or Madam Stinkytush. Annie is Anniefannie, Anniefoo or Miss Wigglebutt. Both will answer to Miss Moo - don't ask me where that one came from, but it works. They will also answer to Cookie Monster.

Amy Nielsen

In memory of Annie

Does your BARC baby have a special name? If so, email your story to our Editor, Lisa Hawes (lkhawes@yahoo.com)

IN MEMORIAM … BARC'S ANNIE 2002—2008



Amy Neilsen's Annie is a Red Sox fan

BARC's Lil' Orphan Annie (Berner-Garde #43193) earned her name after living in 4 different homes after being rescued from a puppy mill. My husband and I had decided that we were only going to take in Berners over 4 years old. We had also decided that it was time for more fur in our house, so I contacted Amy. She said they needed a new home for an older girl who had been shuffled around a bit. I jumped at the chance to give her a forever home. So off I went to North Carolina.

She was a mess, 20 pounds over weight, in desperate need of a bath and barely able to walk from her severe hip dysplasia. I took her into the SPCA shelter I worked at and gave her a bath in the walk in doggie shower room. My vet did x-rays of her hips, and we discovered the extent of her dysplasia in both hips. We made a plan to get the weight off and get her ready for the surgery that would give her relief for her pain.

Meanwhile, Annie was adjusting to our family – BARC's Jesse, our fox terrier, Bailey, the old crotchety cat, Ruth, and my stepson, Heath. With her hips, she couldn't make it upstairs, so she enthroned herself in the middle of the hallway from the living room to the kitchen and there held court. Everyone had to go over or around her to pass from one part of the house to the other, thus ensuring that she was aware of everything going on in the house. She would talk all day long giving her opinions with a hearty AAARROOOOO. When my husband was deployed, she slept at the end of my bed, and when my daughter was born while he was still away, she took on the job of primary protector of the baby.

As her weight dropped, Annie was able to be more active and would bunny hop around the back yard with Bailey and Jesse. It was a joy to see her "run" and play as she got more comfortable. Then she slipped and ruptured her ACL, but we knew that she was close enough to her goal weight to do the hip and now knee surgery. Her scar ran from below her knee to above her hip. She earned the nickname "Frankenpup". She made it through the surgery well and started on her recovery. Little did we know that she had a time bomb ticking within her.

Annie was able to walk almost pain free. I say almost because we had begun to discuss when she would be strong enough to support the other hip being fixed. Then she started to cough. I took her to the Dr and he confirmed my worst fears, several large tumors. It was Histio. I knew the decision I had to make would make her more comfortable. With my new daughter in my arms and wishing it was one week later when my husband would be home from war, I asked her Doctor to send her on her way to meet Sherman. Annie was 6 1/2 years old and spent her last year and a half with us. She knew love, respect, and joy. She was the chief protector of my baby girl. She kept us all informed of the goings on in the neighborhood while my husband was deployed to Iraq. She was a regal stately girl who finally knew the love a forever home could give.

Amy Neilsen



Annie and Baby Morwenna Neilsen

The lifespan of a dog is like the twinkle of a star in the universe. The influence of a canine companion on one's soul is forever.

- Unknown

MY FOSTER DOG IS BEAUTIFUL

My foster dog stinks to high heaven. His eyes are blank and hard. He won't let me pet him and growls when I reach for him. He has ragged scars and crusty sores on his skin. His nails are long, and his teeth which he showed me are stained. I sigh. I drove two hours for this. I carefully maneuver him so that I can stuff him in the crate. Then I heft the crate and put it in the car. I am going home with my new foster dog.

At home I leave him in the crate till all the other dogs are in the yard. I get him out of the crate and ask him if he wants 'outside.' As I lead him to the door he hikes his leg on the wall and shows me his stained teeth again. When we come in he goes to the crate because that's the only safe place he sees. I offer him food, but he won't eat it if I look at him, so I turn my back. When I come back the food is gone. I ask again about 'outside'. When we come back, I pat him before I let him in the crate; he jerks away and runs into the crate to show me his teeth.



The next day I decide I can't stand the stink any longer. I lead him into the bath with cheese in my hand. His fear of me is not quite overcome by his wish for the cheese. And well he should fear me, for I will give him a bath. After an attempt or two to bail out, he is defeated and stands there. I have bathed four legged bath squirters for more dog years than he has been alive. His only defense was a show of his stained teeth that did not hold up to a face full of water. As I wash him it is almost as if I wash not only the stink and dirt away but also some of his hardness. His eyes look full of sadness now. And he looks completely pitiful as only a soap-covered dog can. I tell him that he will feel better when he is cleaned.

After the soap, the towels are not too bad, so he lets me rub him dry. I take him outside. He runs for joy - the joy of not being in the tub and the joy of being clean. I, the bath giver, am allowed to share the joy. He comes to me and lets me pet him.

One week later I have a vet bill. His skin is healing. He likes for me to pet him. I think I know what color he will be when his hair grows in. I have found out he is terrified of other dogs. So I carefully introduce him to my mildest four legged brat. It doesn't go well.

Two weeks later, there is a new vet bill for an infection that was missed on the first visit. He plays with the other dogs.

Three weeks later he asks to be petted. He also chewed up part of the rug.

Eight weeks later his coat shines; he has gained weight. He shows his clean teeth when his tongue lolls out after he plays chase in the yard with the gang. His eyes are soft and filled with life. He loves hugs and likes to show off his tricks, if you have the cheese.

Someone called today and asked about him, they saw the picture I took the first week. They asked about his personality, his history, his breed. They asked if he was pretty. I asked them lots of questions. I checked up on them. I prayed. I said yes.

When they saw him the first time, they said he was the most beautiful dog they had ever seen. Six months later, I got a call from his new family. He is wonderful, smart, well-behaved, and very loving. How could someone not want him?

I told them I didn't know.

He is beautiful. THEY ALL ARE!!

by Martha O'Connor

"We give dogs time we can spare, space we can spare and love we can spare. And in return, dogs give us their all." - M. Facklam