



BMDCA Info Series

The BMDCA, Regional BMD Clubs, Resources and More

2009 #11

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America ► The BMDCA is recognized as the official national breed club by the American Kennel Club. The BMDCA was formed in 1968 to bring together BMD owners and breeders from across the country. From its original 33 members, the Club grew slowly, reaching 100 members by 1971. Today the BMDCA is well established and growing steadily with over 1,400 members. In addition, the BMDCA has recognized more than 20 regional Bernese Mountain Dog clubs across the U.S.

The BMDCA membership is very diverse. There are many long-time stewards of the breed as well as newcomers interested in learning and getting involved. Some of these devoted pet owners are breeders, others are active in competition (conformation and performance events) or community services such as therapy dog work. The focal point that unites this diverse group is their *love for the breed*. All too often “pet” owners view dog clubs as only serving “show people,” and nothing could be further from the truth. Like other national breed clubs, the BMDCA exists to protect and advance the well-being and interests of the breed. To fulfill this mandate, the Club focuses extensively on education for all who are interested in Bernese Mountain Dogs. The BMDCA and the regional clubs offer many valuable, easily accessible resources.

Website: By browsing the BMDCA website it quickly becomes apparent that the Club supports its membership as well as the general public. The website hosts a wealth of information on a wide variety of topics – breed information, health issues, breeder referral, rescue, Club activities, news, events and more. Moreover, it contains links to other sites that may be of interest to the general public.

Activities: The BMDCA sponsors an annual National Specialty Dog Show that is held in a different location every year, moving around the country for easy access by many people. Additionally, the BMDCA offers its own draft (carting) titles, as well as Versatility and Working Dog Awards for members, thereby encouraging owners to develop the natural and historical working abilities of their dogs.

The Alpenhorn: This official bi-monthly publication of the BMDCA is “must reading” for anyone seriously interested in the breed, for it contains a broad collection of articles on diverse topics of interest to the pet owner as well as those who engage in competitions and breeding. BMDCA annual dues include a subscription. Non-members may subscribe for a fee. Out-of-country subscriptions are available. For more information go to the BMDCA website, click on “The BMDCA” navigation button, and then go to “BMDCA Publications.”

Health: The BMDCA Health Committee is very active and guides the Club’s participation in important medical research that seeks to improve the health of the breed.

Legislation: The BMDCA is exploring ways to influence positively laws and regulations that protect the breed from those who seek to exploit it.

International Contacts: The Club has international liaisons with BMD clubs in other countries for the purpose of exchanging information and safeguarding the breed on a worldwide basis.

Berner-Garde Foundation ► Berner-Garde is a non-profit foundation dedicated to accumulating and disseminating health information in BMDs and working with researchers to determine how genetic faults can be minimized or eliminated in the breed. All BMD owners are encouraged to report health information to this open database and are welcome to utilize its vast databank. To learn more, please visit its website at www.bernergarde.org. This can be a valuable resource for both breeders and puppy buyers alike.

Regional BMD Clubs ► One of the functions of the BMDCA is to encourage the organization of independent local BMD clubs. These clubs offer a wide variety of programs and services on a grass-roots level across the country. These include educational seminars and workshops on topics such as health, genetics, training methods, holistic care, breeding, showing, grooming, canine behavior and more. Most regional BMD clubs host several events a year where members and visitors participate in fun matches, AKC-sanctioned events and BMDCA Draft Tests. They also host social get-togethers for Berners and their people. Enjoying a day of dog-related activities is a rewarding benefit to participating a regional BMD club. Regional BMD events also present excellent opportunities for learning more about the breed, making new friends and networking with responsible breeders. There’s probably a regional club near you!

BMD Rescue and Re-homing ► The BMDCA and regional clubs have created a network to intervene on behalf of Berners needing help. Most of their efforts focus on rescue and re-homing. The goal in both situations is to place the dog in a suitable new home where it is loved and well cared for.

BMD Breeder Referral ► The BMDCA and most of the regional clubs have active breeder referral programs, which is so important in our Internet era when this tool has become so popular for researching breeds and locating puppies. Never before has the saying “Buyer Beware” become so critical. Both responsible breeders and those exploiting the breed for profit are

For more information, please visit our website at www.bmd.org or www.bmdca.org.

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using the Internet to connect with buyers. The public must learn how to separate the good from the bad. Responsible breeders will provide multi-generation health information and pedigrees, take the time to answer your questions, ask you questions about why you selected the breed, invite you to their kennels, and more. Don't be fooled by photographs of pretty puppies and slick ads. Contact the BMDCA or regional BMD clubs for breeder referral assistance.

Regional BMD Club Websites ►

Limited information about and links to the regional BMD clubs can be found on the BMDCA website.

The Helderberg Bernese Mountain Dog Club of New York serving NY, VT, MA

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Nashoba Valley serving CT, MA, VT, NH, RI, ME

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Watchung serving NJ, PA, NY

Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving WV, NY, OH, PA

Northcoast Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Ohio serving Northern OH, PA, NY

Potomac Valley Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving MD, DC, VA, WV, Southern PA

Mason Dixon Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving PA, MD

Chattahoochee Valley Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving TN, NC, SC, GA, AL, AR, MS, FL, LA

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Southeastern Wisconsin serving WI, IL, Northern IN

Heartland Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving KS, NE, OK, MO, IA, AR

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of the Rockies serving CO, WY, UT, NM, ID

Grand Canyon State Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving AZ, NM

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Greater Seattle serving WA, OR

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Alaska serving AK

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Northern California serving Northern CA

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Southern California serving Southern CA

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Northeastern Illinois serving IL

The Inland Northwest Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving WA, ID, MT, and Northeast OR

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Oregon serving OR, WA

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of the Greater Twin Cities serving MN, SD, ND

Lone Star Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving TX

Sierra West Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving Northern CA with a focus of Oakland, San Mateo, San Jose, and East Bay Area counties

Kentuckiana Bernese Mountain Dog Club Inc. serving KY, IN, Southern OH, TN

Northern Arizona Bernese Mountain Dog Club serving Northern AZ

Other Important Websites ►

- http://www.bestbeau.ca/BMD_Health_Info_Links.html – Robin Camken's site of BMD health info links.

- <http://www.bmdinfo.org/> – **BMDINFO.ORG**, provides breed information and educational resources for Bernese Mountain Dog puppy buyers, owners and breeders.
- <http://berner.org> – **The Bernese Mt. Dog Home Page** and the Berner-L, a source of information about the breed, finding breeders, and the Internet mailing list, the Berner-L.

Reading Resources ► These are just a few of the many books available in each category. We encourage you to seek out other titles as your interests lead you.

About Berners

The Bernese Mountain Dog (Cochrane)

The Bernese Mountain Dog (Crawford)

Bernese Mountain Dog (Ostermiller)

The Beautiful Bernese Mountain Dog (Russ & Rogers)

The Complete Bernese Mountain Dog (Simonds)

The New Bernese Mountain Dog (Smith)

The Bernese Mountain Dog Today (Willis & Davenport)

A Berner Baedeker (BMDC of Watchung)

About Raising and Training Puppies

Taking Care of Puppy Business (Pivar & Nelson)

How to Teach a New Dog Old Tricks (Dunbar)

How to Raise a Puppy You Can Live With (Rutherford and Neil)

Dog Showing

Born to Win (Craig Trotter)

Dog Eat Dog: A Very Human Book About Dogs and Dog Shows (Stern and Stern)

Junior Showmanship from Hand to Lead (Miller)

Show Me! A Dog Showing Primer (Coile)

The Winning Edge (Alston)

New Secrets of Successful Show Dog Handling (Migliorini & Green)

Dog Breeding

Canine Reproduction (Holst)

Successful Breeding and Health Management (Root Kustritz)

Genetics: An Introduction for Dog Breeders (Isabell)

The Whelping and Rearing of Puppies (Lee)

Control of Canine Genetic Diseases (Padgett D.V.M.)

Care/Nutrition

Dr. Pitcairn's Complete Guide to Natural Health for Dogs and Cats (Pitcairn & Pitcairn)

Pet First Aid (Mammato DVM)

Taking Care of Your Dog (Gerstenfeld)

Holistic Guide to a Healthy Dog (Volhard & Brown)

Give Your Dog a Bone (Billinghurst)

The Pet Lover's Guide to Canine Arthritic and Joint Problems (Schultz, Beale, Hulse)

Obedience Training/Behavior

Canine Good Citizen (J. Volhard, W. Volhard)

Training Your Dog – The Step-by-Step Manual (Volhard & Fisher)

Best Foot Forward, Successful Obedience Handling (Handler)

Good Owners Great Dogs (Kilcommons, Wilson)

Positive Results (Pivar & Nelson)

Surviving Your Dog's Adolescence (Benjamin)

What All Good Dogs Should Know: The Sensible Way to Train (Volhard & Bartlett)

The Body Language and Emotion of Dogs (Milani DVM)

Dog Training in Ten Minutes (Benjamin)

Peak Performance (Zink DVM PhD)