

Fall 2020

The Berner Blatt

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Nashoba Valley

THE CLUB FOR NEW ENGLAND BERNERS & THEIR FAMILIES

ANNUAL
B.E.R.N.E.R. INC.
ISSUE
pages 4-8



This issue is BernerBlatt's annual Rescue Issue, dedicated to BMDCNV's rescue arm, Berner, Inc. The lovely Berner Inc. Ambassador Boomer is enjoying a day in the sunshine with his stick. Owned & loved by Barry Berthaume.

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BMDCNV *Calendar of Events*

~ 2021 ~

April 18:

BMDCNV Annual Meeting

Location TBD

Speaker for the meeting is renowned **Dr. Stephanie Borns-Weil, DVM, DACVB**, a Clinical Instructor and Animal Behaviorist at Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine.

More information to come!

FMI: www.bmdcnv.org/events.html

Welcome! **New Members**

*Ava Bollig
Woodstock, CT*

*Janell & Anthony Forget
Charlton, MA*

*Gina Zalewski
Cohasset, MA*

*Anne Carroll & Steve Long
Natick, MA*

*Michelle & Glenn Hayes
Jericho, VT*

*Patricia & Michael Bolton
Stow, MA*

*Eden Vinyarszky & William
Hogue, Jr
Keene, NH*

*Nancy Miller
Powhatan, VA*

*Beth Kelley
Amesbury, MA*

*Melissa Leibermann
Temple, NH*

*Michaela Levin
Boston, MA*

*Barry Berthaume
Hampden, MA*

*Marc Milowsky
Hartland, VT*

Returning Members

*Heather & Ken Litman
Westborough, MA*

*Kathleen Polanowicz
Dennis, MA*

*Bruce Kelling
Lancaster, MA*

2021 BMDCNV MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Renewal notices will be in the mail and you will receive only one notice. If you receive a renewal notice, you need to pay your renewal membership dues if you wish to remain a member of the BMDCNV.

If you do not receive a renewal notice, it means that you fall into one of 3 categories:

- 1) You joined the Club at full membership price after September 2020,
- 2) You are a BMDCNV Rescue Home that is currently eligible for complimentary membership, or
- 3) You are a Founding member of the Club.

If you misplace your renewal form, you will be able to download a copy from the club's web site. Membership dues are due and payable by January 1, 2021.

Unfortunately, if dues remain unpaid as of April 1, 2021, your membership will lapse and your subscription to the Berner Blatt and access to the BMDCNV Members Yahoo and Facebook Groups will also be cancelled. Your membership in the BMDCNV not only helps support the operation of the club and the many fun activities and events it sponsors, it also supports the club's mission of education and breed stewardship. Membership also connects you to the largest Berner organization of its kind allowing you to share in the camaraderie and community that is so unique to those who share the love for our wonderful Berners. When you get your renewal notice in the mail, be sure to put renewal at the top of your to do list!

Linda Botti, BMDCNV Member Chair

Renew online at:

<https://mimidev.wixsite.com/bmdcnv/renew>

The **BMDCNV** *board of directors*

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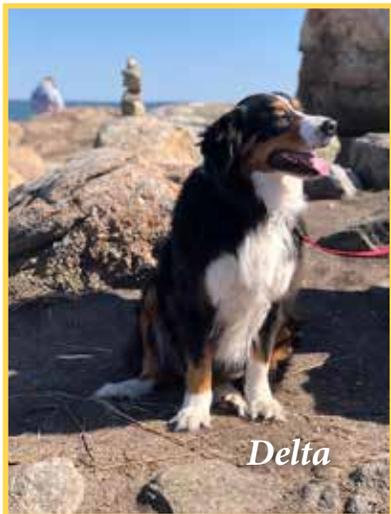
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Anya Wittenborg • director_wittenborg@bmdcnv.org

Catching Up With Our Adopted Berners

DELTA was adopted 2 years ago by Cathy Goralski. Delta had been a stray and ended up in a shelter. Cathy reports that “she is doing well. She is a love.” Her family designated a birthday for Delta and Cathy’s daughter made “a dog-friendly cupcake for her” and also one for her canine companion, Fenway. Delta came from the streets to a home, sweet Berner home!



MAYA turned 8 years old this year. She was almost 2 years old when Penny Petrone adopted her. Penny sent Maya’s birthday photo with this message: “She got a new bunny—her all-time favorite stuffed toy. She loved the last one so much there wasn’t much left of it that was still safe to play with!”



from the President...

As the year comes to a close I want to thank all of our membership and their beautiful Berners for helping each other get through this extraordinarily difficult year with COVID19. Your photos and communications on the Club’s Facebook page and willingness to step up to support one another is truly amazing and goes to prove that a little love goes a long way!

Unfortunately we were unable to hold all of our regular events this year, and thus had little information to share and put to print in 2020 which was the reason we did not have as many Blatt’s to send out to the membership. With news of vaccines on the horizon and the continued due diligence of our members taking appropriate precautions to keep themselves and others safe, we are hopeful that we will be able to resume some of our activities in 2021.

With 2021 being Nashoba’s 40th Anniversary year, it would be wonderful if we are able to hold a celebration where we will be able to gather in some form and reminisce about our club’s history, our founders, our past and present Board and Committee Chairs and Volunteers, and to all of our members who help to keep us strong by participating in our events or simply being present and enjoying the events.

NALA is 8 years old now. She was adopted at 4 years old by Shirley Derrico. She is doing well for a senior Berner. Shirley says: “She is doing OK. Getting up there. I notice her mouth area is darker, must be age ... she is doing well.” Nala remains a happy, playful girl. She likes being outside, playing in the snow, and napping. As Shirley’s photos show, Nala enjoys the Berner good life!

Thank you all for being a part of our great club and group of wonderful people sharing the love of Berners, we couldn’t do it without you! We wish all of you, your families, and your beautiful Berners and other furry or feathered friends Happy Holidays, Happy New Year, and Best Wishes for a Happy, Healthy 2021!

Jean Michael
President

WE WANT TO SEE YOUR ADOPTED BERNERS ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM

We always like to hear brags and stories and to see photos of our adopted Berners. Our **BERNER INC.** friends want to see them, too! Send your photos and brags to: *Linda DeCelles at phdog6@gmail.com*. Our Facebook and Instagram admins will post them. If you’re not in **BERNER Inc.**’s Facebook Friends Group yet, find **BERNER Inc.** on Facebook and make a member request (it’s a closed group). *Show off your adopted Berners!*

OUR RESCUES: June 2019-September 2020

Note: Ages given are those at the time of their rescue.

AUDREY ROSE 1.5 years old, originally purchased from a pet shop, came to **BERNER, Inc.** from a shelter. She had been impounded by Animal Control due to the neglect and the eviction of her owner. The Animal Control Officer took a special interest in Audrey and contacted **BERNER, Inc.** Audrey stayed briefly with **BERNER, Inc.** volunteer **Chris Ragozzino**, until **Anya Wittenborg** picked her up and took her home to foster. Audrey was quite a handful when she arrived and **BERNER, Inc.** struggled to find the right match for this smart, energetic and agile girl. After some months of working on basic manners and recalls (and more recalls!) with Audrey, Anya deemed her a “failed foster” and she found her permanent home in Maine. Audrey is super sweet but no couch potato! She’s a high energy, enthusiastic girl who has just recently earned the privilege of off-lead romps in the woods (with a GPS tracker for extra security). She loves, loves, loves to swim and may try dock diving next year with her best friend Grant (a Lab) who’s a dock-diving fiend! **Audrey Rose** was adopted by **Anya Wittenborg**.



BELLA, 4 years old, lived on a farm with many animal companions and as a “helper” to her loving human. Changes in family life necessitated that her owner sell her farm and relocate to a tropical climate. Bella’s owner wanted her to stay in the New England climate that was best for her, so she made the heartbreaking decision to rehome her. Bella went to a **BERNER, Inc.** foster home. Her farm dog coat is in serious need of a makeover, which her foster mother is working on gradually, since Bella is not used to grooming. Bella is also waiting to be spayed. Meanwhile, she’s very happy and enjoying life with her foster people and **Izzie**, a Berner girl they adopted from **BERNER, Inc.** **Bella** is being fostered by **Ellie and Tom Kittler**.



BOOMER, 9 months old, was the victim of a divorce and a rehoming that didn’t work out. He came into **BERNER Inc.’s** foster program at 8 months with an abnormal gait and a diagnosis

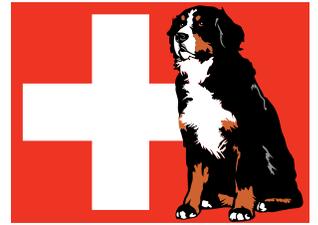


of hip dysplasia. [See the story in this issue, “A Day in the Life of Boomer” for more about his hips and his life.] We found someone who was willing to foster-to-adopt Boomer while we waited for Boomer’s orthopedic re-evaluation to come months later. Boomer got the love, care, attention and training that he hadn’t experienced in his previous homes. He began to grow into a typical lively, loving Berner companion and bonded completely with his foster. After we got the good news that Boomer did not have hip dysplasia, it was no surprise that his foster wanted to adopt him (although he had decided on that the first day he met Boomer!) **Boomer** was adopted by **Barry Berthaume**.

CHANCE, 17 months old. Chance was the victim of a divorce. Chance went to live with one of the ex-spouses’ friends. She soon realized that working and raising kids on her own did not provide enough time to have a dog. Chance was friendly and playful but clearly had not been trained. Confused by the upheavals in his life, Chance needed a stable home with consistent training. **Anya Wittenborg** picked up Chance and transported him to his “foster-to-adopt” home. The couple who took him in immediately bonded with him. But Chance needed to learn boundaries and soon they called a trainer to work with him. He is doing well and is eager to learn. He loves walking with neighbor dogs. His adopter says he is a love! **Chance** was adopted by his foster, **Karen Hartz**.



BERNER INC



EDUCATION & RESCUE
WE ARE THE RESCUE ARM OF THE NASHOBA CLUB
bernerinc.org

FALKRON, 19 months

old. Falkron lived in a home where his older owners became ill and unable to care for him. He lived alone in their house while they were hospitalized, visited daily by family members until it was certain that his owners would not be coming home again. While living with his infirm owners, Falkron received no training and developed bad behaviors like jumping up and mouthing. He craved attention but lacked communication skills. He loved to play but had few boundaries. He went into a foster home with an experienced BERNER Inc. adopter. She has been teaching Falkron manners and self-control. With the guidance of a veterinary behavior specialist, she will work with specific boundary behaviors and some other issues like noise-sensitivity. Falkron has a canine companion, Hero, and he's very happy in his new home. **Falkron** was adopted by his foster parent, **Michelle Berry**.



SHEP, 19 months old.



Shep spent the first 9 months of his life in a dark, filthy barn crowded with other dogs at an Amish puppy mill. He's small for a male Berner and has the energy, focus and the "zoom" moves of a Border collie. His adopters sent his DNA for analysis to Embark. The results came back: 100% BMD. However, all of his closest genetic matches come from western Pennsylvania, presumably Amish puppy mills. Because he was confined and not properly socialized, Shep can be wary of strangers and is nervous when

he's away from home. But he is improving his social skills with training, and his essentially happy Berner nature is helping him to come out of his shell. He loves to play with other dogs and will join a playgroup soon. **Shep** was fostered and adopted by **Linda DeCelles** and **Gib Otten**.

SILAS, 19 months old.

Rehoming Silas was a cooperative effort between **Baypath Humane Society, Hopkinton MA** and **BERNER, Inc.** Silas had been adopted from a rescue in the South and moved up North with his adoptive family. It became clear that Silas needed more attention and training than his busy family of working parents, small children and 2 other dogs could give him. They asked Baypath if they could



find a home for Silas while he remained with them. Baypath then called **BERNER Inc.** and asked if we could recommend an experienced Berner home for Silas. A **BERNER, Inc.** adopter had lost his Berner to cancer. His family was ready for another rescue, and Silas was just right for them. Silas is bonding happily with his main human, lounging with him after days of hiking. **Silas** was adopted by **Bruce Kelling**.

SOPHIE, 1.5 years old.

Sophie lived in a home where the family had no time for her. She was an impulse purchase made by their teenager from a backyard breeder. Sophie was given up in part because she was not house-trained. After she came into **BERNER Inc.'s** foster program, Sophie was taken for a long overdue vet visit. After a visit to a specialist, Sophie was diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease. Sophie's fosters



worked diligently with veterinarians to devise the proper diet and treatment for Sophie's permanent CKD. Sophie craved attention and longed for human and canine company. She has bonded with her Berner companion, Boston. Sophie is getting care and love from the **BERNER Inc.** adopters of **Jacoby**. Sophie became close with Jacoby, who passed away last year at 12 years old. **Sophie** was adopted by her fosters, **Mark and Cindy Giannelli**.

STAR, 4 years old.

Star was surrendered to the Monadnock Humane Society when her owners had to leave their home due to a chronic illness. Star had been isolated in her home with one of her owners, whose mental state was deteriorating. Once a happy, socialized puppy, Star became an under-socialized, fearful adult. She was also obese and her coat was dry and dull. After socialization visits to MHS by **BERNER Inc.** volunteers **Steve Grega**, his Berner **Cleo**, **Linda DeCelles** and **Gib Otten**, Star was ready to be adopted to someone who would understand her fears and re-introduce her to normal life. She found the ideal home with a **BERNER Inc.** adopter who had experience rehabilitating **Jack**, a fearful Berner, who passed away after many years of a full and happy life. Star now lives a complete, active life with her loving human companion and Tucker, Star's feline "brother." Always with a smile on her pretty Berner face, Star is learning to trust people again. **STAR** was adopted by **Hilary Taylor**.



a day in the life of **BOOMER**

A Pictorial Essay by his companion, Barry Berthaume



While with his first owners, Boomer was diagnosed with hip dysplasia by an orthopedic veterinarian, who said he would probably require hip replacement surgery. BERNER Inc. arranged a consult with an orthopedic surgeon familiar with BMDs who advised that we wait until Boomer was 18 months old before coming to that conclusion. We followed the prescribed regimen of dietary supplements and weekly subcutaneous injections. At Boomer's 18-month exam, the surgeon determined that Boomer did not have hip dysplasia and that no correction was required. Boomer's gait is a little "bouncy," but it does not affect his fetching! Here he is in one of his favorite spots, happy and a bit tired after a "therapeutic romp."

I renamed "Murphy" to "Boomer," signifying the beginning of a new life in his forever home, hoping a name change might help dissociate disturbing emotional memories. He won our hearts from the get-go, and BERNER, Inc. provided unwavering support for us, expertly addressing medical, training, and feeding concerns that arose. His first plush toy was "Duckie," now about thirty years old (having first belonged to one of our children). Boomer has never ripped one of his plush toys, despite frequent play.



Boomer exhibited sterling house manners and a gentle, affectionate disposition from the start. However, this 10-month-old pup had been in four homes previous to ours (two "forever" and two foster); at times he became anxious and hyper-vigilant, prone to startling at "imaginary nothings." Giving him a sense of place would be my priority. Here he is, on his "beddy-bed," with a favored bone, starting to feel "at home."



Boomer is an excellent companion and matches his energy level to the human with whom he is interacting and their current activities. Here we sit after a family hike in the woods. While he certainly enjoys the company of others, Boomer seems most content when I give him undivided, individual attention. We spent about a half hour together this day, him leaning into me and watching the stream, taking in the ambient sounds, sights, and scents.



In the two years since Boomer became part of our family, three grandbabies have come along. From first meeting, Boomer has been attentive and protective of his new charges, occasionally giving a little sniff and nuzzle, and alerting us when he thinks they are in need of attention. He is fully integrated into the family and is not left behind whenever we visit; when family and friends come to our place, he is our greetings ambassador.



While providing Boomer with a sense of place and permanence was my initial priority, my BERNER, Inc. contact one day patiently suggested, “It’s time to train.” So we began. In very little time Boomer demonstrated excellent recall skills, will naturally heel off-lead when walking about the property, and will “sit-stay” until called, even when I am out of sight and at a distance (which greatly facilitates games of Hide and Seek).



Boomer is loving and playful yet maintains his gentle demeanor. Here he is playing fetch and keep-away with my son and grandson. Boomer is gentle and patient with toddlers, enduring their awkward gait, balance issues, clumsy attempts at petting, and showing good will with a wagging tail. He knows each family member by name and will go to each when called.



Most days begin and end with a half-hour together, just the two of us, on the back porch, one of our favorite spots. During these times together, we’ve taken to reviewing the “news.” I’ll give him a preview or recap of what to expect in his day, and he’ll wag his tail with recognition of names and words like “visit” or “company.” Again, my hope is to provide him with a sense of predictability in his life, given his chaotic first ten months. And even if he doesn’t understand a word, he likes hearing my voice and placing his head on my lap while I deliver the day’s report.

Rescue Notebook

HONORING OUR FOSTERS

BERNER INC could not do our rescue work without our foster homes. Foster parents provide a safe haven for Berners who have been given up by their owners or released to rescue by shelters. These dogs are often confused and scared by the deep disruptions in their lives. Fosters take them into their homes and give them the care and attention they need. Because of the fosters' dedication to these needy Berners, the dogs get ready to move on to their new, permanent homes. *Thank you, fosters, for all you do for rescued Berners!*

BERNER INC is always looking for foster homes. If you'd like to help a rescued Berner get ready for adoption, please contact: Linda DeCelles, Rescue Chair, phdog6@gmail.com.

BIG BERNER THANK YOUS OUR FOSTERS AND TRANSPORT VOLUNTEERS

JUNE 2019-SEPTEMBER 2020

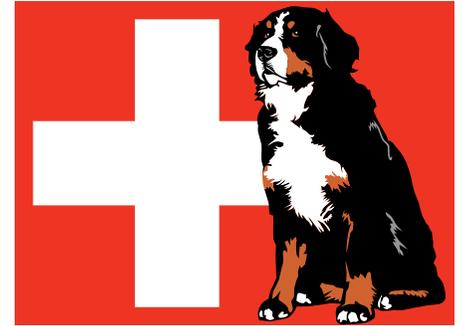
Michelle Berry, Barry Berthaume, Tom McKinney, Mark and Cindy Giannelli, Linda DeCelles, Gib Otten, Amy Matthieu, Ellie and Tom Kittler, Anya Wittenborg, Martha Lojzim.



We couldn't rescue Berners without the gifts of your time, skills and generosity!

OUR ONLINE GENIES
Mimi Englander: *Webmaster and online administrator*
Allison Harding: *Instagram*
Ellie Kittler: *Facebook*

BERNER INC



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THANKS to veterinary clinics who gave us discounts on services for our fosters: **Muddy Creek Animal Care, Rowley MA and Foster Hospital for Small Animals, Tufts Veterinary Clinic, N. Grafton MA.**

OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE to all of the generous individuals who made monetary donations to **BERNER Inc.**



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DIRECTOR - Anya Wittenborg
DIRECTOR - Linda DeCelles
DIRECTOR - Sue Nowak

Birthdays, Congratulations and Brags...



NEW VETERAN!

GCHS MARBEN'S A TRUE SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN "George" celebrated his 7th birthday on 9/27!!!!

— Owned and loved by Kym Dekker-Collins and Tiggie Gerli; Danbury, CT



SELECT DOG!

CH RIVERWOOD'S NIGHT WIND was chosen as Select Dog by a breeder judge at the BMD Club of Watchung's Regional Specialty. It is his second major toward his grand championship.

— Laurel Wood, Deep River, CT



NEW CHAMPION!

Introducing CH RIVERWOOD'S THE FENNEL COUNTDOWN TKN! Fennel & Sam finished his championship all owner handled at the BMD Club of Watchung's Regional Specialty with a 5 point major. I could not be more proud of them!

— Tina Sirico, Old Saybrook, CT



DOUBLE DIGITS!

Baker Bailey was 10 years young in August. He came to us 8 years ago rescued from a neglectful situation. He is so loved by Lynne, Chris and Alex Bailey



BIRTHDAY BOY!

GLENMEGAN'S MCKINLEY ON TOP OF THE WORLD turned 7 on 8/11/20. Happy Birthday to our big silly boy. Thank you for making us laugh every day!

— Carl and Liz Bohlin; Sagamore Beach, MA



WINSTON IS TWO!

Happy second Birthday to our Winston (MYSTIC'S NO KNOCKS SOX WINSTON)

— Pam and Charles Swearingen; Belmont, MA



Farm Dog Photo Contest

We put out a call in the last Blatt for photos of our dogs honoring their legacy as farm dogs, and our members did not disappoint. Below are the entries in the contest, which was sponsored by Four Mile River Farm in Old Lyme, Connecticut. The winners of the contest as voted on by the BMDCNV board are Buffy Bell in first place, Erin Spanos in second place, and Celeste O'Malley in third. Buffy, Rain & Moriah will receive a \$100 gift credit to Four Mile River Farm. Thank you to everyone who participated! You can visit Four Mile River Farm on the internet at fourmileriverfarm.com



(Buffy Bell; Reading, VT)

Moriah & Brook resting on their farm, with the tractor in the background.

Winners:



(Erin Spanos; Preston, CT)

Bunsen saying hi to his friends Frick and Frack!



(Celeste O'Malley, Brattleboro, VT)

Cleopatra & Raphael take a break during a farm haul to check on the horses.

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These dedicated chairpeople provide essential services to you, our membership. Please feel free to contact them with your questions, concerns, suggestions, requests for help or offers of help. Our mission is to provide the best for Berners and their families.

Farm Dog Photo Contest

Other Entries:



(Celeste O'Malley; Brattleboro, VT)



(Celeste O'Malley; Brattleboro, VT)



(Kathryn Cannon; Essex, CT)



(Barbie Wilczek; Littleton, VT)



(Kathryn Cannon; Essex, CT)



(Erin Spanos; Preston, CT)



(Kathryn Cannon; Essex, CT)



(Adam Conn; Maynard, MA)



(Adam Conn; Maynard, MA)



(Adam Conn; Maynard, MA)



WEAR YOUR MASK
WASH YOUR PAWS
SOCIALLY DISTANCE

(Keep 2 Berners between you and others not in your household)

STAY SAFE

BMDCNV

**69 Willow Grove Road
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Contact
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