



March / April 2023

TRBMDC Incline

Official Newsletter of the Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Special Points of Interest:

- A Note from our President
- Canine Genetics Testing Program - 4/23/23
- A Tribute in Loving Memory of Ken Cechman
- 2/12/23 Meeting Minutes
- Hartwood Dog Walk Photos
- Sunday, April 23 Presentation by Dr. Bert Klei on "Canine Genetic Tests"
- AKC Farm Dog Certification
- Stella Found the Perfect Forever Home
- T-Shirt Sale and Raffle to Support Berner Rescue
- Happy Birthday to Nellie and Heidi Jo
- Easy Cheesy Pup Bites
- Spring Flings

TRBMDC Officers and Board of Directors

Karen Artuso, President

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1825 Park Circle Drive
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Board of Directors:

Joyce Frey
Cathy Barth
John Millburn
Denise Reardon
Mary Sparks

We had a beautiful day in February for our dog walk at Hartwood Acres. We had a nice group of members and visitors join us to do our winter dog walk. Our meeting was brief and off we went to the various places in the park to enjoy a walk. The dog park was a bit muddy due to the warmer weather. A few cars may have had muddy paws on the way home, I know mine did. We also had a few puppies there ... which is always fun. Can't wait to watch them progress.

The Board has met and planned some fun activities for this next year. We will have a dog activity at Monroeville Park in June; and we will all get a chance to see the TRBMDC Memorial bench. A summer picnic is planned for August. And, you won't want to miss the K-9 Idol event at Northmoreland Park in October. We will round out the year with our Christmas Bonfire. Keep watch, there may be some activities in the off months. We will keep you posted via email, our TRBMDC website, Facebook, as well as, Instagram.

We have a great program next Sunday presented by Dr. Bert Klei on "What Do Canine Genetic Tests Really Tell Us?" Please join us Sunday, April 23 at 1:30 at Ringer's Pet Dog Training in Natrona Heights. (The address is 3041 Freeport Road, Natrona Heights, PA 15065.)

As always we are looking forward to seeing all of our members, as well as, our other Berner friends.

Karen Artuso

What Do Canine Genetic Tests Really Tell Us?

Come to the Educational Program presented by Dr. Bert Klei
At Ringers Pet Dog Training on Sunday, April 23 (1:30 p.m.)

Over the last several years more genetic tests have become available for our dogs. What do they test? How do we use them? Are they for breeders only? Can non-breeders learn something from them?

In this lecture, I will take a look at the different tests that are currently available to dog owners. I plan to give you some of the genetic background on the test and how to interpret the results. Tests that we will take a look at are the familiar ones for von Willebrand factor and the tests for degenerative myelopathy and histiocytic sarcoma. We will also spend some time on what we can learn from the Embark and Best Breed tests. Finally, if time permits, we will take a look at two new genetic tests designed for early cancer detection (Nu.Q and Onco.K9). As always, I look forward to interacting with you and answering any genetics questions you might have.

Bert Klei



A Tribute in Loving Memory of Ken Cechman (10/28/48 - 3/20/23)

It is heart-breaking for me to share the passing of Ken Cechman, a good friend to many of us and long-time member of the Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club (TRBMDC).

Ken passed on Monday, March 20 of natural causes at his home. He and his Berner, Leizel, were home together at the time. Kenny was 76 years old. He courageously fought numerous health issues over the years. He is now at peace and is with Bev and their many dogs in heaven, which is a comforting thought.

We will all miss Ken's kind demeanor and his dry sense of humor, which all of us who knew him loved. Ken lost the love of his life in July, 2021 ... but bravely carried on.

Personally, John and I have lost another very close friend. We have wonderful memories of both Ken and Bev. We visited Ken and Bev's house to meet their Berners to see if we liked the breed. Several hours later ... we finally left. John said, "I love the breed, but who in the hell would have three Berners!" And so it began - three years later, we had three Berners of our own. We have wonderful memories of our trip to Switzerland for the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Switzerland's 100th Anniversary with Bev and Ken, Mary Dawson and Gwen. And there have been many more memories during the last 30 years that we shared and will cherish forever. I am sure that many of you also have favorite memories of Ken to treasure.

We will miss you, Kenny ... till we meet again ... you will forever be in our hearts; and we will cherish our memories.

Written by Donna and John Millburn



Ken and Leizel at the TRBMDC Summer Picnic in August, 2022







Remembering the Good Times with TRBMDC Friends



Until we meet again ... You are forever in our hearts, Kenny



Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club Meeting Minutes

Location: Hartwood Acres

Date: Sunday, February 12, 2023

The following members and visitors were in attendance: Julia Airgood (Remi & Margo), Karen Artuso (Poco), Cathy Barth & Jim Meyer (Bosco), Rick & Carolyn Cannon (Lucy), Paul and Ethan Bowman (Heidi Jo), Craig & Whitney Hoffman, Bert, Linda & Hanna Klei (Nelly & Grizo), Carly McElheny (Horton & Poppy), Amy Lindenfelder, Gus McBride & Tracy Sweeney (Ursa), John & Donna Millburn (Lexi & Rayne), and Gabe & Emily Perl (Molly & Maddie).

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT: President, Karen Artuso

Karen welcomed everyone to the Winter Dog Walk at Hartwood Acres. Lots of visitors and their Berners were in attendance. Karen announced that in honor of Valentine's Day, we were holding a free raffle for all in attendance. The prize was a beautiful Berner colored woven basket with doggie treats, a red Nylabone and a Berner Valentine's Day heart with chocolate. Karen mentioned that following the meeting, everyone should help themselves to cookies and hot chocolate. Then, a group photo of all attendees and their dogs would be taken followed by the Dog Walk.

Karen announced that Dr. Bert Klei will be making an educational presentation at the April meeting on Genetic Testing for Cancer. Bert provided some additional insight into the topic. The presentation will be held at Ringers Pet Dog Training in Natrona Heights. Stay tuned for detailed information in *The Incline* and via email.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT: Vice President, Donna Millburn – No report

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: Treasurer, Amy Lindenfelder

Checking Account Balance \$ 3956.55

Rescue Account Balance \$ 630.59

Members were reminded that 2023 dues are past due and must be paid promptly. Members with unpaid dues were sent a reminder via the US postal service.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY/ELECTIONS: Acting Secretary, Donna Millburn

Members and visitors were reminded to sign the attendance sheet. Visitors were asked to provide their email address to be included up our newsletter "The Incline" mailing list. Donna provided a quick overview of the layout of the park for those who had never been to Hartwood Acres before.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

AKC CORRESPONDENCE: Secretary - No report

AWARDS: Karen Artuso – No report

FACEBOOK: Emily Nebiolo - No report

HEALTH: Emily Nebiolo - No report

INSTAGRAM: Amy Lindenfelder - No report

MEMBERSHIP: Amy Lindenfelder - No report

NEWSLETTER (TRBMDC INCLINE): Donna Millburn - Looking for your photos and/or articles for *The Incline*. Email images to Dmillb@comcast.net.

PUPPY REFERRAL: Karen Artuso / Joyce Frey - No report

REGIONAL CLUB COUNCIL: Joye Neff - No report

RESCUE: Julia Airgood - Heart of Michigan continues to need volunteers for fosters and transportation of Rescued Berners.

SUNSHINE: Gwen Geis – No report

TRBMDC WEBSITE: Denise Reardon - No report

OLD BUSINESS: The engraved bench slats for the TRBMDC Memorial Bench will be installed soon.

NEW BUSINESS: An AKC Farm Dog Certification Test will be held on March 11 & 12 in Latrobe, PA.

BRAGS: The Klei's - Happy Birthday to Nellie, who will be 10 yrs. old on March 17.

Julia Airgood - Margo qualified 6 runs out of 7 during her debut agility on February 11.

Cathy Barth made a motion to adjourn the meeting; and it was seconded by John Millburn.

Respectfully Submitted, Donna Millburn, Acting Secretary



Memories from the Hartwood Acres Meeting and Dog Walk





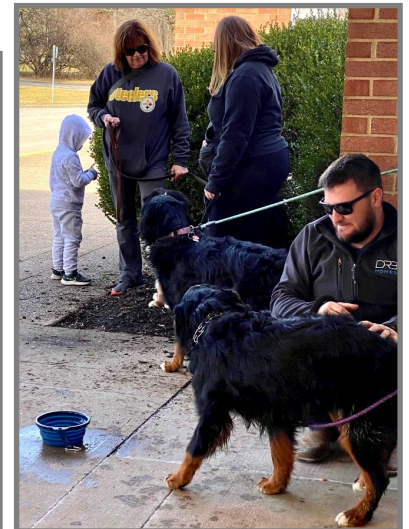
Hanging Out with New and Old TRBMDC Friends





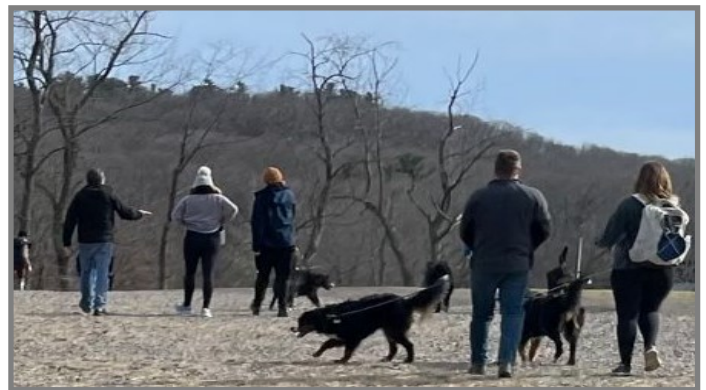
Our Youngest and Oldest Berner at the Dog Walk

*Rayne (12 weeks) and Bosco (12 years)
Puppies and Veterans Make Me Smile!*





A Romp in the Hartwood Dog Park



Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club Presents What Do Canine Genetic Tests Really Tell Us?

by Dr. Bert Klei, PHD

UPMC Research Scientist, Computational Genetics and
TRBMDC Member



Who: All TRBMDC Members, Berner Friends, and Other Breed Owners Interested in Canine Genetics
Berners (on leashes) are welcome to attend

When: Sunday, April 23

1:30 p.m. “What Do Canine Genetic Tests Really Tell Us”

2:30 p.m. Pizza Compliments of TRBMDC

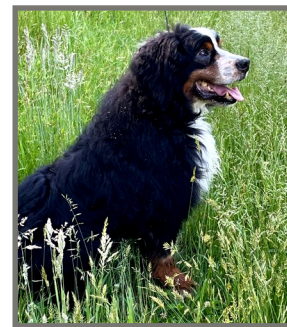
3:00 p.m. TRBMDC April Meeting

3:30 p.m. Socialize or Dog Walk at Harrison Hills

Where: Ringers Pet Dog Training
3041 Freeport Road
Natrona Heights, PA 15065

Topics to be Discussed:

- What do Genetic Tests really test?
- How do we use them?
- Are they for breeders only?
- Can non-breeders learn something from them?



Dr. Klei has been a presenter at the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA) National Specialty, as part of the educational courses at Berner University



Please R.S.V.P. to Donna Millburn at Dmillb@comcast.net

Following the program and meeting, attendees may want to take a dog walk at Harrison Hills Park (see next page)



Following the April 23 Meeting ... Take a Dog Walk at Harrison Hills Park



5200 Freepport Road, Natrona Heights, PA 15065

Following the April 23rd meeting, TRBMDC members, Berners and dog friends are welcome to Harrison Hills Park (located less than a mile from Ringers Pet Dog Training) for an informal dog walk. Close to the Rachel Carson pavilion, there is an informational sign with designated trails or just hike on your own. Harrison Hills is a beautiful, shady park. You and your dogs are sure to love it. The park covers 500 acres and has a picturesque pond, overlook area, Environmental Learning Center, multiple playgrounds, lots of accessible groves and many trails.

Hope lots of you can make the presentation, April meeting, and informal dog walk on April 23rd!





AKC Farm Dog Certification *written by Karen Artuso*

Poco and I had an adventure in March with Julia Airgood and her Berner, Margo, at the B and D Creekside Activity Center in Latrobe, PA. We went to the Farm Dog Trial with many other dogs, all smaller than Poco. For some reason Poco seemed to feel it was her job to “greet” each dog that arrived after us with much barking of orders. I guess she was telling them the rules, but it was her first time at the event, so what she wanted to share I just don’t know?

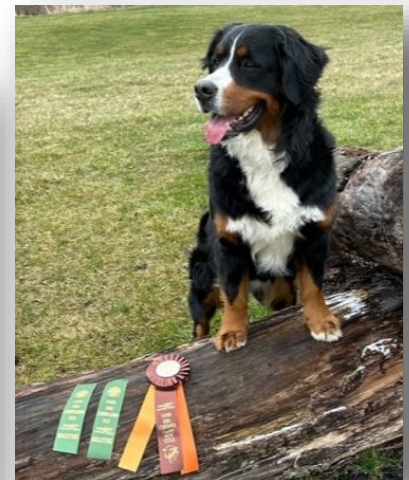
In advance, Poco and I had been practicing going in and out of a crate, jumping on a bail of straw and walking over odd surfaces at home. I hoped she was ready to spend time on a “farm” for a day and show she was an old hack. Fortunately, Julia went first with Margo to show us how the course went. They sailed through it; and Margo passed the first trial. Poco had to walk up to a gate and sit in a stay as I opened the gate and walked through. I then gave her the OK to go through the gate. The judge guided us through the course telling me what Poco needed to do. She had to walk past several “farm” tools, rake, shovel, and a ladder. They did not have the leaf blower turned on for her to walk past, which was fine with me! A person was standing there tapping two pieces of wood together, which didn’t bother her a bit. She had to walk over a piece of plywood, a grate lying flat on the ground and a plastic tarp. No problem there. We had to walk past another dog; and she did great. Then on to meet the chickens ... don’t worry they were protected in a crate. Poco said hello to the chickens politely, and sat while I “fed” the chickens. She hopped up on the bail of hay and sat down for the required time. Then the challenge! I was instructed to put her in a crate and walk away for 2 minutes. She is good about me leaving her, but you should have seen the crate they wanted me to put her in. Ridiculous!! I finally got her in and no problem with my leaving. We passed the first trial. Bravo Poco!!

In order to certify, the dogs have to go through the course with two different judges. If they pass both trials, they get their title. I was in a panic. I got Poco in that crate once, but there was no way a smart Berner was going to do that twice. The second judge was so nice when we came to that part of the trial. She saw our dilemma. She suggested holding Poco, while I went out of sight for the two minutes. That was awesome! I could barely contain myself! She did it! She passed the second trial and won her title. I’m so glad Julia encouraged us to give it a try. It is a nice test for basic obedience with some fun twists, as long as the crate is big enough for your dog!

The Club hopes to work on some of the requirements at one of our gatherings and perhaps some of you would like to try getting an AKC Farm Dog Certification on your Berner?



Poco



Margo



More Info on the AKC Farm Dog Certification Test



(The following information was taken from the AKC Performance Events section on www.akc.org.)

This test is open to all breed breeds. Your dog must be at least nine months of age and have an AKC number, recorded in the FSS Program, dogs with PAL numbers, or dogs enrolled in the AKC Canine Partners Program. Females in season may not enter.

This test involves your dog performing a series of 12 exercises that are typical for a farm environment such as being in close proximity to livestock (who are always penned to avoid any altercations). **There is no herding involved in this test.** Instead the goal is to assess his/her aptitude as a Working Farm Dog by exhibiting self control, confidence and trust with the owner or handler.

1) **Greet the Judge - Initial Dog Appraisal**

Tests the ability of the dog to demonstrate patience and self-control while meeting a friendly stranger. The dog shall not pass if the dog jumps on the Judge, shows aggressiveness, excessive shyness, or is restrained by a tight lead.

2) **Perform a Walking Pattern around Farm Equipment and Passive Stranger**

Tests the ability of a dog to demonstrate self-control, responsiveness to the handler, and the ability to adapt to an unfamiliar environment. The dog shall not pass if it is repeatedly on a tight lead, refuses to follow the handler, or shows fear or aggression to the passive stranger or unfamiliar objects.

3) **Jump on Hay/Straw Bale**

Tests the ability of the dog to exhibit obedience to the handler, traverse varying terrain on farms, and athletic ability to be positioned as needed. The dog shall not pass if the dog fails after two attempts, to jump on the bale independently, with no assistance from the handler or if the dogs does not stay on the bale for a minimum of 10 seconds.

4) **Walk by Farm Animals**

Tests the ability of the dog to demonstrate self-control, responsiveness to handler and ability not to disturb livestock. The dog shall not pass if the dog is repeatedly on a tight leash, refuses to follow the handler, or shows fear or aggression towards the livestock.

5) **Walk Over or Through Unusual Surfaces**

Tests the dog's ability to walk on different surfaces and their willingness to accompany the handler on a loose lead to any places necessary to perform chores on a farm. The dog shall not pass if the dog refuses to calmly walk over a new surface after two attempts, is excessively fearful, requires a tight lead or demonstrates avoidance.

6) **Supervised Separation**

Tests the ability of the dog to be temporarily confined while maintaining good manners while out of sight of handler. The dog shall not pass if the dog appears frantic or anxious or exhibits excessive barking.

7) **Pass Through a Gate**

Tests ability of the dog to demonstrate self-control and basic obedience to not interfere with necessary tasks of the handler. The dog shall not pass if the dog does not hold a stay after two attempts, will not pass through the gate when instructed, or interferes with the handler operating the gate,

8) **Handler Feeds Livestock**

Tests ability of the dog to be tied and remain calm while the handler performs the task of interacting with livestock. This establishes a foundation for the dog to be trusted around livestock. The dog shall not pass if the dog is frantic or anxious while tied, barks repeatedly, pulls excessively on lead or demonstrates aggression toward the livestock.

(article continued on page 14)



AKC Farm Dog Certification Test (Cont'd.)



9) Reaction to Another Dog

Tests the ability of the dog to exhibit self-control and acceptance of other, non-threatening, dogs working on the farm property. The dog shall not pass if the dog incessantly barks, pulls on lead or tries to make contact with the other dog, demonstrates fearfulness or aggression toward the other dog.

10) Reaction to Noise Distraction

Tests the ability of the dog to demonstrate normal sensitivity to typical noises of everyday life on a farm. The dog shall not pass if the dog appears excessively fearful or demonstrates strong avoidance.

11) Dog Approaches Livestock

Testing demonstrates that the dog can exhibit self-control when asked to approach, and possibly move livestock, while on lead. Also demonstrates the ability to be called away from livestock when instructed by the handler. The dog shall not pass if the dog appears excessively fearful or aggressive towards the livestock, is excessively pulling on lead, demonstrates strong avoidance or refuses to obediently leave the livestock or the outer enclosure when instructed.

12) Physical Examination

Ability of the dog to exhibit patience, obedience, and trust in the handler while being touched and examined. The dog shall not pass if the dog fails to accept any part of the examination, exhibits annoyance, fear, or aggression towards the handler or will not stay in place during the exam.

If becoming certified as a Certified Farm Dog sounds like fun, start practicing. Obedience and self-control are essential qualities for a Working Farm Dog. But most of all, make training a fun and positive experience for both you and your dog. For more detailed instructions, refer to the www.akc.org website (in the "Sports & Events" tab under "Performance Sports" and "Herding and Farm Dog")



Berner Sennenhundes (shown above) are Working Dogs on the farms in Switzerland



Stella Found the Perfect Forever Home!

Remember Stella ... The Rescue Berner, who tugged on all of our heart strings just a month or so ago? Well ... we are thrilled to report that our very own TRBMDC member, Heidi Pedicone, and her family have welcomed her with open arms; and she is living the good life! We all can't wait to meet her soon!

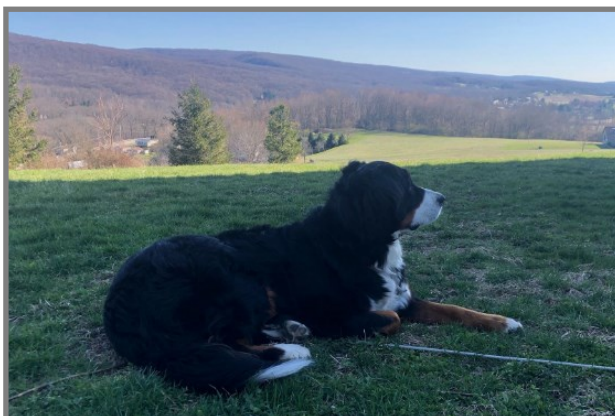
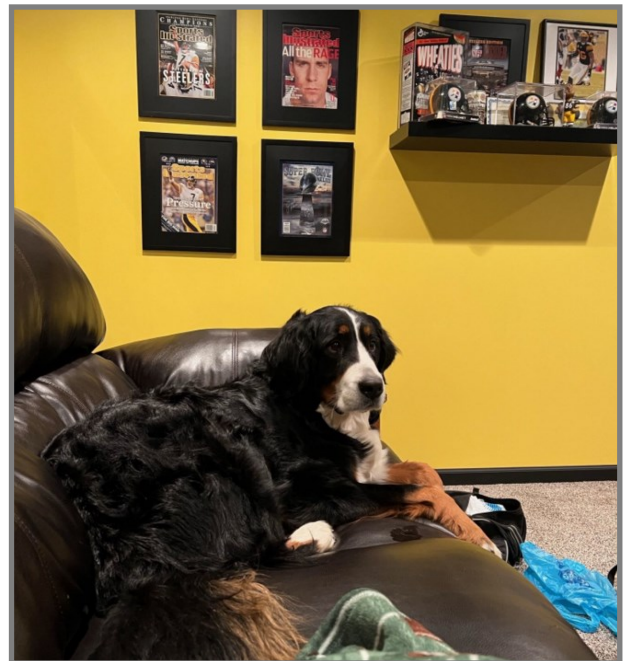
As reported by Heidi,:

“Here’s an update on our girl, Stella, plus some pictures. Our entire family loves Stella!! She’s so sweet and she’s really bonded with everyone of us. I think my husband, Max, is her favorite and they watch sports together every night. She’s definitely a Pittsburgh sports fan! She loves going to the park for long walks. She seems to just love all of the attention she gets.

The only bad thing is she’s really struggling with her Lymes disease. We found out she was positive just a few days after we got her. One round of doxycycline hasn’t eased her symptoms yet. We are all so eager to get her feeling great. I’m so grateful to the TRBMDC for bringing Stella to us!



Heidi Pedicone





T-Shirt Sale to Support Berner Rescue Organizations

TRBMDC will be holding a T-shirt fundraiser in support of Berner Rescue organizations (Heart of Michigan, BARC, BMDCA, etc.) Julia Airgood is leading the effort and will have two styles of T-Shirts available in a variety of colors and sizes.

The following designs will be available:



The cost of the T-shirts will be \$30 each. \$10 of each shirt will go directly to one of the Berner Rescue organizations that our Club supports. The shirts will be available starting at the April 23 meeting, so please consider supporting this great cause. If you would like to purchase and reserve one of these shirts and are unable to attend the April meeting, please contact Julia Airgood at wairgood@verizon.net or 412-477-2636.

Although TRBMDC is a passive rescue club, our members certainly open their hearts and wallets when we are supporting Berner Rescue and for that, we thank you!

Rescue Raffle to Support “Heart of Michigan’s BMD Rescue”

At the April 23rd meeting, there will be a raffle basket to support “Heart of Michigan’s BMD Rescue Program”. They are in dire need to funds based on the increased number of rescues that they have been handling lately. Also, they are in constant need of people willing to foster and/or transport Berners. So if you are able to assist in any of the above, please contact Julia Airgood.

Basket Raffle Tickets will be sold at the April meeting at the cost of:

1 for \$2.00

3 for \$5.00

an arm length for \$10



Happy Birthday to Nellie and Heidi Jo

Happy 10th Birthday
to Nellie Klei (3/17/13)



Happy 2nd Birthday
to Heidi Jo Bowman (3/9/21)



*(If you are not sure if TRBMDC has your Berner's Birthday on file,
email your Berner's name and DOB to Dmillb@comcast.net.)*

Easy Cheesy Pup Bites

Ingredients:

2 cups	All-purpose Flour
1-1/4 cup	Shredded Cheddar Cheese
1/4 tsp.	Oregano Powder
1/2 cup	Vegetable Oil
4-5 Tbsp.	Water

Recipe:

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees
- Combine all ingredients except water
- Whisk in food processor until consistency of cornmeal
- Then, add water until mixture forms a ball
- Roll into 1/2" thickness and cut into shapes or use fun cookie cutters
- Bake on ungreased cookie sheets about 10 minutes (depending on size of shape)
- Cool and store in a refrigerator



Spring Flings





TRBMDC 2023 Calendar

*See you on Sunday,
April 23. Program
starts promptly at
1:30 p.m.*

TRBMDC 2023 Calendar:

Sunday, February 12 (1:00 p.m.)

Meeting & Winter Dog Walk at Hartwood Acres
(Meet at Central Elementary School Parking Lot)



Sunday, April 23 (1:30 p.m.)

**Meeting & Educational Talk on Canine Genetic Testing
by Dr. Bert Klei
(Ringers Pet Dog Training, Natrona Heights, PA)**

Sunday, June 11 (1:00 p.m.)

Meeting, Memorial Tribute & Dog Activity
(Monroeville Park West - date to be confirmed)

Sunday, August 13 (1:00 p.m.)

Meeting & Summer Picnic
(Location - TBD)

Saturday, October 7 (1:00 p.m.)

Meeting & TRBMDC K-9 Idol
(Northmoreland Park - Pavilion 7)

Saturday, December 2 (1:00 p.m.)

Annual Meeting, 2023 Awards Celebration & Holiday Party
(Location - TBD)

(Other fun activities are in the planning for the off months - Stay tuned!)

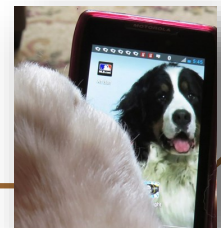
TRBMDC's Social Media

Facebook (Emily Nebiolo)

The TRBMDC Facebook name is "Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club". If you would like to post something on Facebook (a club announcement, Berner picture or achievement), email your write up with pictures and attachments to threeriversbernesemtn@gmail.com. In the Subject line, please type "For Facebook Post"; and it will be reviewed prior for posting. We are looking forward to increasing activity on the site, so please be sure to send your input and photos to "threeriversbernesemtn@gmail.com".

Instagram (Amy Lindenfelder)

The Club's Instagram name is "TRBMDC". Since it is the Club's site, please send pictures and/or videos in a text message to Amy Lindenfelder at 617-462-3655. Amy is the Administrator of the TRBMDC Instagram site and is anxiously awaiting your adorable Berner photos and/or videos to share with our followers.



Thanks to our contributors: Julia Airgood, Karen Artuso, Heidi Pedicone, Donna Millburn and our wonderful TRBMDC photographers.