July / August 2026

TRBMDC Incline

Official Newsletter of the Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Special Points of Interest:

- Note from our President
- Meeting Minutes - 062726
- Farm Dog Photos & Certification Elements
- Ice Cream Social Memories
- Annual Picnic at the Artuso's Farm - 080826
- Happy Birthday to our July and August Birthdays
- Rescue Corner - Reese's New Lease on Life
- A Beautiful Donation to the 2027 BMDCA Specialty
- TRBMDC Brags
- Berners Enjoying the Good Life
- TRBMDC Calendar

TRBMDC Officers and Board of Directors

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Board of Directors
Donna Millburn
Joye Neff
Denise Reardon
Marty Sutton
Julie Young

We are in the middle of summer, and it is a good time to reflect on what we have done as a club in the first half of the year. We have been able to organize, and hold, events each month. The highlights so far have been the Draft Workshop, AKC Farm Dog Demonstration, and Ice-cream Social.

The common thread for the events was that they were all on Saturdays for which rain with a chance of clearing out was predicted. Being as stubborn as our dogs, we took the chance and continued as planned. Except for a few sprinkles at the end of farm dog, and the ice-cream social stubbornness paid off. You never can predict Pittsburgh weather.

We were able to attract large crowds at our events. The only exception being the ice cream social in July. This was no surprise, since the thread of tornados was added to the thread of thunderstorms. For those of you who did not make it, your dog missed out on a tasty, free, pup-cup. At least that is what Enzo and Etta told me. If the human ice-cream was any indication, they were correct.

Let's keep the momentum going in the second half of the year. We have some great events coming up, the TRBMDC Annual Picnic, a Rodeo Demonstration, and the annual Holiday Party. In between, we will have some get together plans. These are exciting times for the club. After welcoming a new member in the beginning of the year, we have received three additional member-ship applications. We hope to be able to vote on their memberships soon. If you see new faces at our events, reach out and make them feel welcome. Maybe offer to be their sponsor, if they want to become members. Finding sponsors is often the hardest part of completing the membership application.

Your Board hopes to see you all soon.

Give your dog a hug.

Best,
Bert Klei
President
TRBMDC

Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club Meeting Minutes

June 27, 2026 Farm Dog Meeting - Beth McGonigal's Farm

The following attendees were at the meeting:

Karen Artuso (Dolce), Julia Airgood (Dessa), Cathy Barth & Jim Meyer, Bert and Linda Klei (Enzo & Etta), Pam Herbert (Maizee), Bruce Lanke and Julie Young (Maddie), Amy Lindenfelder, Kristy and Randy Lewis (Ansley), Gus Mc Bride and Tracy Sweeney (Ursa), Karen Mankevich (Fiiona), Donna Millburn (Dawson), Becki Sarring & Baby Chase, Marty Sutton (Roxey), and Megan and Pat Thomas (Ebbe)

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT: President, Bert Klei

- The April 25, 2026 (North Park Dog Walk) meeting minutes were approved as published.
- The next meetings and get togethers will be July 18th in South Park—Grant Pavilion - 4:00 p.m. and August at 3:00 p.m. for the Annual Summer Picnic at Artuso's Farm.
- There is a Pet Fund within the Berner Garde Foundation, that may be able to help with health expenses for your Berner, if you are unable to afford to medical treatment of surgery. Additional info is available through Berner Garde.
- Today's raffle is to benefit the Club's rescue efforts.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT: Vice President, Karen Artuso - No report.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY / ELECTIONS / MEMBERSHIP: No report.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: Treasurer, Ralph Artuso

Checking Account Balance in the Main Checking Account as of May 31, 2026 is $3,732.70.

Rescue Account Balance in the Rescue Account as of May 31, 2026 is $3,135.70.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

AKC CORRESPONDENCE: KAREN ARTUSO - No report

PASSIVE RESCUE: JULIA AIRGOOD

- Buddy is a 3.6 year old male, who was with Kristy Lewis. Buddy was not getting along with her males and got aggressive. Katherine Skerl from Potomac BMDC helped to find a home for him and so far, the first week has gone well.
- Three Berner breeding females were picked up by the Great Pyrenees Club of Western PA Rescue. One of them, Lucy, has found a home.

REGIONAL CLUB COUNCIL: JOYE NEFF - No report

- Some upgrades have been made to Berner Garde.
- There is an emergence of New World Screwworms in June in southwest Texas and New Mexico. These are the first cases in the US in 60 years. Screwworms are parasitic flies who larvae burrow into the living tissue of warm-blooded animals typically through a wound. Stay tuned for more information.

PERFORMANCE EVENTS: JULIA AIRGOOD - No Report.

TRBMDC WEBSITE: DENISE REARDON - No report, but everything is updated.

Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club Meeting Minutes (cont'd.)

FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM: AMY LINDENFELDER - No report

NEWSLETTER (TRBMDC INCLINE): DONNA MILLBURN

- As always, please forward any photos or articles that you would like shared in the Incline to Donna Millburn.

PUPPY REFERRAL: KAREN ARTUSO One request was received in the past two months.

AWARDS: JULIA AIRGOOD No report

SUNSHINE: GWEN GEIS No report

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Club Insurance - It was decided that the Club will switch to Erie Insurance for our coverage, since it will also cover the Officers and Members from being sued.

NEW BUSINESS:

- We are looking for a Club member, living in Monroeville, to help obtain a pavilion at Monroeville Park West for our upcoming Rodeo Workshop on October 17th. Tracy Sweeney may be able to assist. We will discuss with her and report back.

BRAGS:

- Julia Airgood's Dessa got "Best Puppy" at North Coast's Just-for-Fun Puppy Show in June.
- Julia Airgood's Margo got her PAX title To earn this title … she had to have 20 double Q's on the same day in Masters Jumpers with the weave and standard course. Margo and Julia have been invited to AKC Agility Invitational (as a first round pick) to compete in Orlando, Florida on December 11-13.
- On June 1, Bert and Linda Klei's Etta received her Therapy Dog Certification with Pawsitive Impact Therapy Team (PITT) (formerly Top Dog Therapy Team). PITT is an AKC recognized therapy training organization.
- Donna Millburn's Dawson achieved AKC STAR Puppy

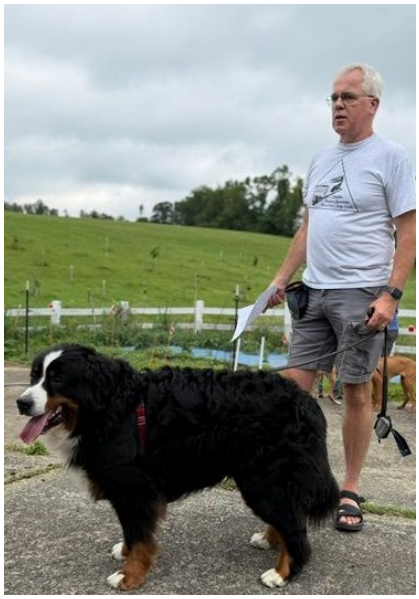
NEXT EVENT / MEETING: Saturday, August 8 (3:00 p.m.), Annual TRBMDC Summer Picnic - Artuso's Farm

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made Donna Millburn and seconded by Julie Young to adjourn the meeting and proceed with the Farm Dog Workshop to be presented by Beth McGonigal.

TRBMDC June Meeting and AKC Farm Dog Workshop
Hosted by Beth McGonigal, Leechburg, PA

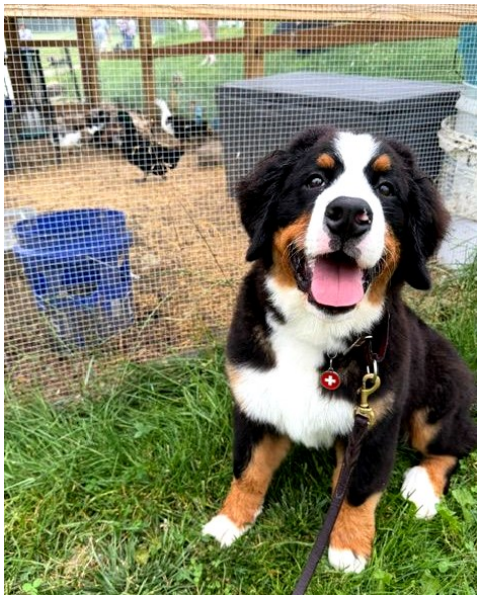
A huge THANKS to Beth McGonigal and her husband for hosting TRBMDC members at their beautiful farm for the AKC Farm Dog Workshop. Beth did a great job providing an overview of the twelve evaluation criteria on the certification test. A copy of the Farm Dog Certification Test Evaluation follows the photos. Beth is certified by AKC as an evaluator for the Farm Dog Test. The overall assessment is meant to show that the dog is consistently responsive to the handler and exhibits self-control while exposed to a farm environment.

Since Bernese Mountain Dogs are considered "Working Dogs" and the breed originated in Switzerland, where they worked with the Swiss farmers, becoming exposed and eventually certified as a Farm Dog is meant to be!



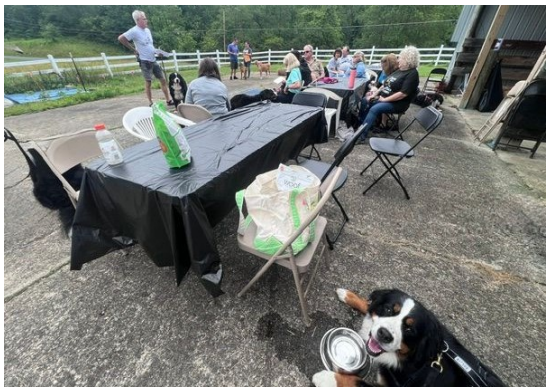
Jumping on the Hay Bales and Adjusting to Farm Equipment

Checking out the Farm Ducks, Equipment, and Pond



Walking on Unusual Farm Surfaces

Headed Back Just in Time for the Rain to Begin!



AKC Farm Dog Certification Test Evaluation

FARM DOG CERTIFIED TEST
12 Elements

The Farm Dog Certified Test consists of 12 situations that a dog might encounter in a typical farm environment. All of the exercises are done on leash.

Test 1: Greet the judge
The handler approaches the judge with the dog at their side on a loose lead. The dog must not jump, or show aggression or excessive shyness.

Test 2: Walk around the farm and a passive stranger
The handler walks the dog on a loose lead at least 200 feet around a variety of objects and near a sitting person.

Test 3: Jump on hay/straw bale
Handler instructs the dog to jump on a bale and stay until released by the judge.

Test 4: Walk past farm animals
Handler walks the dog on a loose lead in view of penned farm animals.

Test 5: Walk over or through unusual surfaces
The handler walks the dog over three unusual surfaces, such as a plastic tarp, a sheet of plywood, and metal grating lying flat on the ground.

Test 6: Supervised separation
The handler places the dog in a crate and walks out of sight for a minimum of 1 minute.

Test 7: Pass through a gate
The dog stays while the handler opens the gate, passes through on the handler's command, and stays while the handler closes the gate.

Test 8: Handler feeds livestock
The dog is tethered while the handler approaches and feeds livestock in an enclosure.

Test 9: Reaction to another dog
The dog remains stationary on a loose lead while another dog is walked by twice, about 10 feet away.

Test 10: Reaction to noise distraction
The dog is exposed to two common farm sounds (such as hammering nails, leaf blowers, tractor engine, etc.) and must not panic.

Test 11: Dog approaches livestock
The handler approaches penned livestock with the dog on a loose lead. The dog may not lunge or be fearful or aggressive to the stock.

Test 12: Physical examination
The handler examines the dog for plant material or debris collected while working on the farm—examining the ears, eyes, mouth, coat, and toes.

Test items 2-11 may be conducted in a different order than listed.

Things to Know:

- *To participate in the AKC Farm Dog Certification, your dog must be minimum of 9 months of age*
- *Your Berner must have one of the following registrations:*
  - *AKC*
  - *Purebred Alternative Listing (PAL)*
  - *AKC Partners Number for purebred not fully registered*
- *Your dog must pass the 12 Elements and will be assessed by two certified AKC examiners*
- *Treats are not permitted to lure your dog during the certification process*
- *All exercises will be performed on a leash*

Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club Ice Cream Social

South Park - Grant Pavilion (July 18, 2026) *(written by Bruce Lanke)*

On July 18, members of the Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Club gathered at Grant Pavilion in South Park for an afternoon that combined three of our favorite things: our Berners, good conversation, and ice cream. The weather cooperated beautifully (despite the dreadful forecast) giving everyone a comfortable afternoon for a walk along the Corrigan Drive walking path to the Creamery before the group settled in at Flora Park Creamery to cool off.

The walk itself was a highlight, with a long line of Berners and their people making their way along Corrigan Drive under a sky that couldn't have cooperated more. Big dogs, small kids, and everyone in between fell into an easy rhythm together, tails wagging the whole way.

Once the walk wrapped up, the group made its way to Flora Park Creamery, where Penn State Creamery flavors were the star of the show. Plenty of cones and cups were passed around for the humans — and, of course, pup cups for the real guests of honor. The dogs waited (mostly) patiently while their people compared notes on flavors like Alumni Swirl and Death by Chocolate.

Inside the creamery, the dogs settled in for some relaxed people-watching (and a little flavor board browsing of their own), while conversation carried on among old friends and new. It was a great chance to catch up, share stories, and enjoy some well-earned downtime after the walk.

A special welcome goes out to the several new Berner lovers who joined us for the first time, including Callie, who fit right in with the group from the start. It's always a treat to see new faces — two and four-legged alike — become part of the club.

Thanks to everyone who came out to make the day such a success. Here's to the next Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Club gathering!

Three Rivers Bernese Mtn. Dog Club

Invites YOU and Your Berners to our TRBMDC Annual Picnic

When: Saturday, August 8 ***(starting at 3:00 p.m.)***

What: Brief Meeting followed by lots of fun at the Summer Picnic

- *There will be a puppy pool for the dogs to cool off, games, draft carts to practice with (no instruction this time), and photos!*
- *Bring a gently used Berner/Dog item … and take a new-to-YOU Berner /Dog item home*
- *Rescue Raffle*

Where: Artuso's Farm

- *Address: 2231 Brinkerton Rd., Greensburg, PA 15601*
  Take PA Turnpike to Greensburg Exit (Route 30) and follow GPS.
- *If your Berner does not play nicely off leash or is in heat, please leave he/she home.*

Refreshments:

- *Fried Chicken and grilled hotdogs will be provided. Please bring a side dish or dessert.*

What else to Bring:

- *A slightly used, unwrapped Berner/Dog item to exchange in the Summer Picnic Exchange*
- *Leash, treats, water, poop bags and lawn chair*

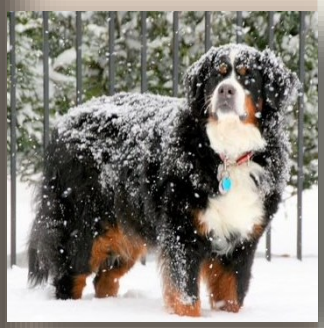
RSVP to Dmillb@comcast.net … no later than August 5th

July - August Birthday Hugs

Happy 11th to Ola Thomas	7/27/2015	(BG#150250)	Veteran
Happy 7th to Nate Neff	7/29/2019	(BG#157436)	Veteran
Happy 6th to Messy Gordon	7/30/2020		
Happy 6th to Shania Sparks	8/2/2020	(BG#188229)	
Happy 4th to Enzo Klei	8/7/2022	(BG#210217)	

"Ola" Thomas - 11th

"Nate" Neff - 7th



"Messy" Gordon - 6th

"Shania" Sparks - 6th

"Enzo" Klei - 4th

Rescue Corner

(written by Julia Airgood)

Reese's New Lease on Life

Lynn and Jeff Rosenthal are at it again, fostering another Berner girl for National Bernese Mountain Dog Rescue Network (NBMDRN). So many unknowns when you first get the information about another dog in need. The true story starts to unfold as you care for them.

Reese was picked up by another NBMDRN volunteer who lives in our area. We have been told he has picked up as many as 30-40 dogs from the Sugarcreek, Ohio area in just a month … a very well-known area for puppy producers.

Reese was completely shaved, overweight, and had very recently had a litter of puppies. Thankfully, she was able to go to the vet in a very timely manner. She was found to have Pyometra, a serious uterine infection, bilateral ear infections, and Lyme disease. She had an urgent spay which showed she had a previous C-section, then allowed to have more litters naturally after that. Her abdominal wall was not in the best shape and needed repair, so much so that the vet was uncomfortable doing her umbilical hernia repair because of how much work the abdominal wall repair took. Basically, her organs were not very well protected by her abdominal muscles.

Reese does have a very sweet temperament. She loves her people and is good with Rookie, the other dog in the home. Reese is still a work in progress for house training, but each day there is a little improvement. She is quick to adapt to living in a home with stairs, mirrors and the like. Reese can be shy at first and does take a little time to warm up to you. But when you sit on the Sofa, she is right by your side. She had a young, teen girl visit and seemed to warm up to children faster than adults.

It's still early in her fostering, but we already know she will make a lovely companion for the right family.

What Talent … and Generosity!!

It's a Journey

Not only is the Berner's name "Journey" (photo given by permission of John and Doreen McCune) … the glass Mosiac was a journey!

Lynn Rosenthal and I started this project in April of 2025 and finished it in May of 2026. From the start, Lynn and I planned to donate Journey to the Health Fund auction to be held at the 2027 Bernese Mountain Dog Specialty at Purina Farms in Missouri. The last glass mosaic donated at the Health Fund Auction raised $6,250 for Cancer research. We have all lost Berners to this dreaded disease. The BMDCA and other organizations like the Bernese Mountain Dog Charitable Foundation help support many research projects, which have come a long way to help fight this battle. Your can find more information about current research projects on the Berner-Garde homepage (https://bernergarde.org) and the above two organizations mentioned.

We are hopeful that "Journey" will raise lots of money at the 2027 BMDCA Specialty Health Auction for continued Cancer research.

Written by Julia Airgood

TRBMDC Brags

Julia Airgood's Dessa got "Best Puppy" at North Coast's Just-for-Fun Puppy Show in June.

Julia Airgood's Margo got her PAX title To earn this title … she had to have 20 double Q's on the same day in Masters Jumpers with the weave and standard course.

Margo and Julia have been invited to AKC Agility Invitational (as a first round pick) to compete in Orlando, Florida on December 11-13.

On June 1, Bert and Linda Klei's Etta received her Therapy Dog Certification with Pawsitive Impact Therapy Team (PITT) (formerly Top Dog Therapy Team). PITT is an AKC recognized therapy training organization.

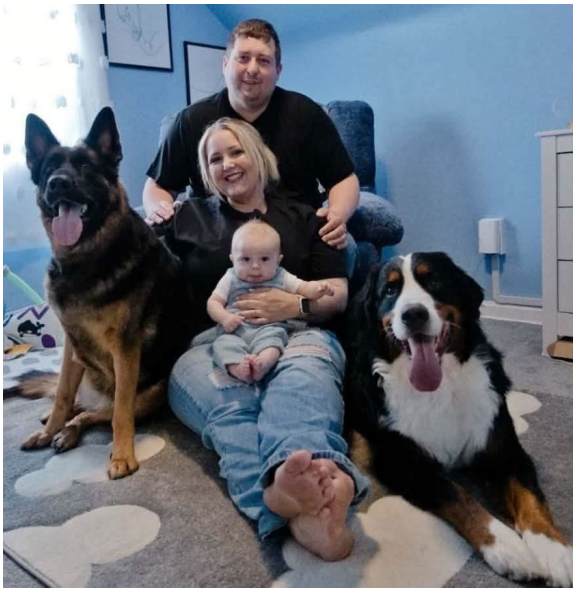
Etta has already been spreading her love at the VA Hospitals in Oakland, McKeesport and Aspinwall, as well as Hampton Fields, Greengate in Greensburg and Hempfield Manor.

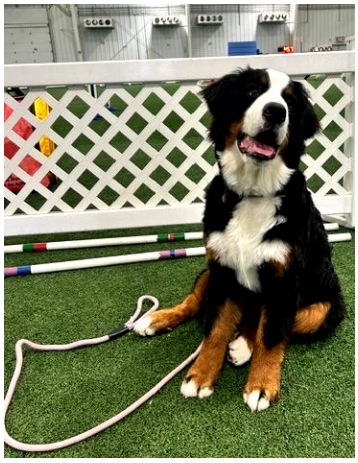
Donna Millburn's "Dawson" and littermate "Rocky" earned their AKC STAR Puppy at Beth McGonigal's North Pittsburgh Animal Behavior.

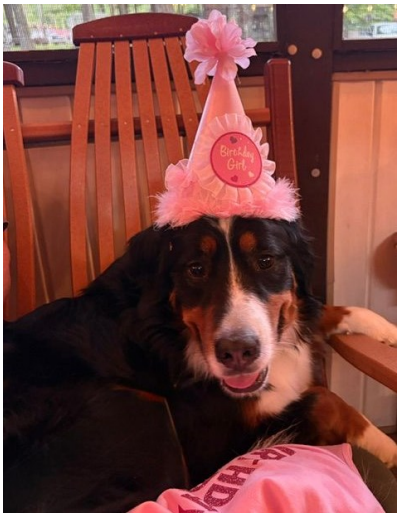
Drafting Memories

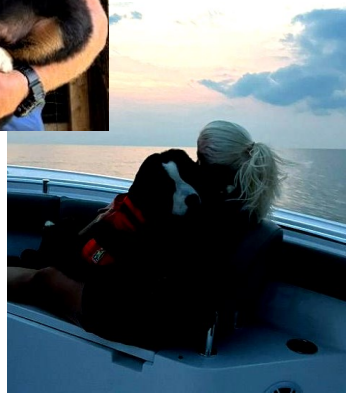
Drafting Memories

Just Enjoying Life with Our Berners

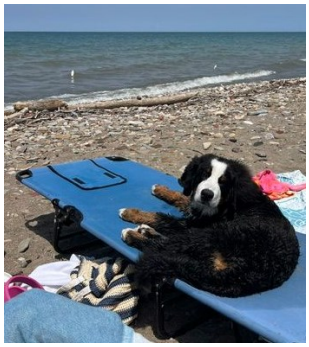


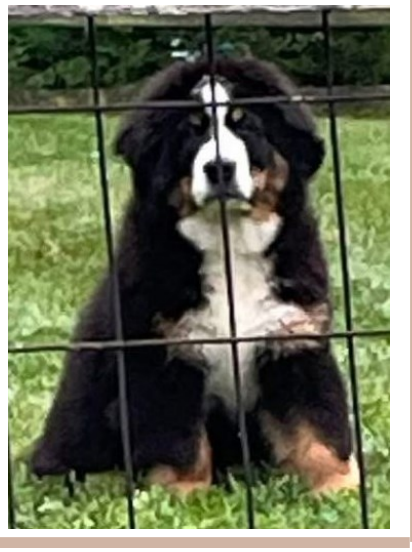






Just Enjoying Life with Our Berners





Just Enjoying Life - It's a 6 Month Birthday Party!

What's better than a 6 Month, Puppy Birthday Party! Five of the seven puppies came and it was a blast. Thought you might enjoy some puppy love!

TRBMDC Calendar

Hope to see you all on Saturday, August 8 at 3:00 p.m. at Artuso's Farm for our Picnic!

Meetings are held every other month.
Programs/activities are held on the alternate months.

TRBMDC 2026 Calendar -

February 21 (Saturday, 2:00 p.m.)	Meeting & Winter Dog Walk
March 14 (Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)	St. Patrick's Day Parade with Berners of Pittsburgh
April 25 (Saturday, 3:00 p.m.)	Meeting and Dog Walk at North Park - Lone Pine Shelter
May 9 (Saturday, 2:00 p.m.)	Draft Workshop at the Artuso's Farm
June 27 (Saturday, 3:00 p.m.)	Meeting and Farm Dog Practice at Beth McGonigal's Farm
July 18 (Saturday, 3:00 p.m.)	Get Together at South Park (Grant Pavilion) & Ice Cream
August 8 (Saturday, 3:00 p.m.)	**Meeting and Annual Summer Picnic at Artuso's Farm**
September 19 (Saturday, 1:00 p.m.)	Get Together - Twin Lakes Park (Pavilion 4)
October 17 (Saturday, 2:00 p.m.)	Meeting and Rodeo Dog Workshop - Monroeville Park
November 21 (Saturday, 2:00 p.m.)	Get Together - TBD
December 6 (Sunday, 12:00 p.m.)	Annual Meeting, 2026 Awards Ceremony, and Holiday Party at Narcici Winery (4578 Gibsonia Road, Pgh., 15044)

The Officers and Board are looking forward to all of the fun meetings and activities!

TRBMDC Web-site (Denise Reardon)
Our Club's website is https://www.threeriversbernesemountaindogclub.org

Facebook (Amy Lindenfelder)
The TRBMDC Facebook name is "Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club". If you would like to post something on Facebook , email your write up with pictures and attachments 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

Thanks to our contributors: Julia Airgood, Karen Artuso, Bert Klei, Linda Klei, Bruce Lanke, Amy Lindenfelder, Donna Millburn, and the TRBMDC Officers and Board of Directors, and our wonderful Club photographers.