



2009 FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

WENDY BENNETT

Wendy has had Bernese for about 20 years. She is active in conformation, obedience, and draft on both sides of the border. Am/Can CH Backcountry's Hildegard, CGN gave her the pleasure of a National Specialty BOB in 2008 in Rhode Island. Wendy's bred and shown a number of group placing, multi BIS, multi BISS Berners, HIT Berners and Berners that love to draft. When they are sound in mind and body they can do it all! In breeding Bernese she strives for health, temperament, longevity, and of course type and conformation. Wendy doesn't believe that you can do what she does with her dogs when you have a lot of dogs, so she has 5 girls currently that live with her. She co-owns a few others that live in homes with owners who share her views. Wendy is active in the BMDCC, being a director for a number of years, was Chair for the 2005 Canadian National Specialty as well as Assistant Editor for the newsletter.

Wendy's Berner girls who live with her include MBIS Am/Can CH Darla vom Granzweg, Am/Can CD, Can DD, Am NDD, CGN "Darla", MBISS, MBIS Am/Can CH Backcountry's Hildegard CGN, CH Backcountry's Femme Fatale, CD, Am NDD "Brigitte" and BISS CH Backcountry Ivana, CD, DDX, Am NDD, CGN, TT, and a youngster Backcountry Katje.

VILMA BRIGGS

Vilma has been active in dog training since the early 1980's, starting in 4H. She competes regularly AKC obedience trials at the highest levels, as well as agility and rally trials, and pet behavior problem solving (behavior modification, using positive reinforcement). Vilma has been active in rescue with many groups including BARC, her local Ohio shelters, the regional Berner clubs, and the private all breed rescue group founded by Vilma and her husband, Thirtym Rescue. The rescue was named in honor of her first "special needs" rescue Berner, Charm, a pet store puppy surrendered to rescue, who went from being on the edge of euthanasia to winning High In Trial at the BMDCA national specialty in a year (Thirtym's A Charm, UD, RE, NA, NAJ, NDD). This rescue group takes in just a few "special needs" dogs at a time to give them intense personal attention/training/evaluation. Thirtym Rescue tries to guide owners to help keep their own dogs, and will take rescue dogs who really have no where else to go, such as those with a history of aggressive or extremely shy behavior, and those from high kill rural pounds or puppy mills.

FRANDEL BROWN

Fran has owned, bred, shown and judged Berners most of her life. Her first Berner was a Sanctuary Woods boy, Ch Delsas Andante v Lancer. She was only able to get him because he was very shy, as many were in those days. In 40 years of having the privilege of knowing their gentle souls and their great desire to connect to their people, she's seen an improvement in Berner character and temperament. Fran has not ever, nor will ever, be an advocate of owning many as she feels the breed is needy and deserves every bit of attention they get.

She has bred or owned about 20 Champions and judged our National Specialty in Gettysburg in 2005 with an entry of 1042! Over that past several years, Fran has also judged many Supported entries and Regional Specialties. Her further service is through Judges' Education as a ringside mentor. In addition to Bernese, Fran has owned Top Winning and Best In Show Sealyham Terriers since 1980. Licensed for eight Terriers and fifteen Working Breeds, she has an excellent eye for a dog that she will share with us during the Sieger evaluations.

CLAIRE COPPOLA

Claire Coppola has been studying essential oil therapies for animals since 2004 in conjunction with her keen interest in a natural, non-synthetic, life-style, and deep belief in the healing power of plants. Her knowledge is constantly evolving, including completing in 2006/2007 The Guild of Essential Oil Therapy for Animals diploma course, in Oxfordshire, England.

Claire, who resides in New Jersey, shows and breeds Bernese Mountain Dogs and Tibetan Terriers. Her dogs have achieved BMDCA Versatility twice and Working Dog once, and earned titles and ribbons in both the US and Canada. She was Assistant Show chair for the BMDCA 2005 National Specialty and Herding Chair for the 2008 National Specialty, and is the moderator of herdingbern timers@yahoo.com.

KATHY DEYO

Kathy has been blessed with Bernese since 1986 and has bred five generations of Bernese under the Hapi Mtn kennel name. She joined the BMDCA in 1987, served on the BMDCA board in 2001-2002 and again in 2007-2008, and became the BMDCA National Rescue & Rehome Coordinator in 2001 after helping with several Bernese rescue situations in her area. She currently shows in conformation, teaches obedience, showmanship and agility classes, works with 4-H kids, and just enjoys her dogs.

LISA EBNET

Lisa breeds Bernese Mountain Dogs under the Von Der Ebnet kennel name and has a particular interest in the study of early spay/neuter. She shows successfully in the conformation ring, mentors provisional judges ringside for Judges Education and is an approved AKC judge of Berners.

MARY ALICE ESCHWEILER

Mary Alice has owned Bernese Mountain Dogs since 1959, trained and showed her first AKC Berner to a title as well as the first Berner to get a Utility Dog title. She has bred eight litters, trained, shown, and enjoyed conformation, tracking, obedience and drafting. She served as Board Member and President of BMDCA, on many Specialty Committees, Records Chairman, Judges' Education Chair and member Draft Working Committee and Regional Club Council. Currently approved as an AKC judge of Bernese, Junior Showmanship and BMDCA draft tests, Mary Alice appears in the recent educational DVD Breed Panel & Discussion filmed in Seattle, Washington.

ROBERT T. FRANKLIN DVM

Dr. Franklin graduated in 1979 from Washington State University, and went on to study at the Animal Medical Center, New York City's largest facility for animal care, research and education. He did his residency at University of Missouri from 1982 until 1984. He was appointed an assistant Professor and taught at both Western College of Veterinary Medicine and the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. Franklin moved to Portland in 1988 and since then has had a referral practice working at the Oregon Veterinary Specialty Hospital. His special interests are in oncology and endocrinology.

PATRICIA HASTINGS

Pat Hastings has been involved in the dog world since 1959. Her career has progressed from owner-handler to breeder, professional handler, educator and AKC judge for the Working, Herding and Non-Sporting Groups, eleven Terrier Breeds, Junior Handling and Best In Show. Her credentials range from 4-H leadership to show chair of the 1995 Doberman Pinscher National Specialty, from DPCA Judges Education to participation on a number of panels and committees concerning canine structure and health issues. She has authored many articles that have appeared in a variety of publications, including the Doberman Review, Dog News, NAIA News and the AKC Gazette.

When Pat retired from professional handling in 1990, she was already presenting her popular seminar, Tricks of the Trade, to dog fanciers in the United States and Canada. The seminar was so well received that, with the assistance of Erin Ann Rouse, Pat wrote and published her book, "Tricks of the Trade: From Best Intentions to Best In Show" (2000), based on her seminar. This book was revised and re-released in 2005.

Over years of research, Pat and her husband, the late E.R. "Bob" Hastings, developed the structural evaluation process detailed in the highly acclaimed Puppy Puzzle video and new DVD (1998, 2007). Pat has been doing a presentation, based on the Hastings' evaluation process, at National Specialties throughout the United States for seventeen years. "Another Piece of the Puzzle: Puppy Development" was published in 2004. Besides teaching others this structural evaluation process, Pat also evaluates an average of 350 litters per year across all groups, including many of the rare breeds.

Pat was active in the Yakima Valley KC (Washington State), the Mt. Hood Doberman Pinscher Club (Oregon) and the Doberman Pinscher Club of America holding numerous offices, including show chair for both all breed and specialty clubs. The Hastings received the DPCA Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001.

CAROL HELFER DVM

Carol owns Canine Peak Performance Sports Medicine and Physical Rehabilitation Center in Portland, Oregon. She graduated from Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1981 and is past president of both the Portland Veterinary Medical Association and the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association.

She became interested in sports medicine and physical rehabilitation as a result of her participation in competitive agility with her own dogs: Dayna, a 6 year old German shepherd and Spam a 2 year old Staffordshire Bull Terrier. She continues to compete and also performs with the family entertainments group, the Superdogs.

VAL HORNEY

Valerie has been owned by Bernese since 1990. She has had eight dogs over that time period and currently lives with two boys, Teller (9), and Marshall (5). She is currently the president of the BMDCA and a BMDCA Draft Judge. Val has been on numerous committees and has been in various positions on the board of the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of the Rockies including two previous presidencies. She enjoys an all around dog that has good breed type for conformation and soundness of mind and body for working activities such as draft, agility, obedience, and long walks in the park. She has been lucky enough to have three boys that were sound in temperament and body and nice enough to have been used in breeding programs, Val feels strongly that owning a stud dog is a huge responsibility, therefore, the title "Stud dogs, not just a pretty face".

DEBRA JONES

Debby has owned and been owned by Bernese since 1996. She is active in conformation, obedience and draft, and has put titles both in front and in back of the name on seven of the Bernese she has owned to date, with the newest addition number eight in training.

She owns and handles her own dogs and bred a litter that allowed her to finish one of her girls out of the bred by class and compete at the Eukanuba Championship in Long Beach. Debby is active in her local BMD club in Oregon as well as a member of the Seattle and Alaska clubs. She served two years on the BMDCA's board of directors and looks forward to participating in other activities and programs that will allow her to give back to the breed all that it has given her.

CHERYL LOPATE DVM

Dr. Lopate received a Bachelor of Science from Colorado State University in 1984 and a Masters Degree in Reproductive Physiology from The Ohio State University in 1987. She graduated from The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1991.

She completed a residency in comparative theriogenology at Purdue University in 1995 and is board certified in that specialty. She then taught clinical reproduction there. Since re-entering private practice in 1999, she has been practicing predominantly companion animal and equine reproduction. She opened a reproductive referral practice in 2003. Dr. Lopate has two dogs, a Corgi and an Australian Shepherd. She enjoys hiking, scuba diving, biking and herding sheep.

ELAINE GUNN LAWRENCE

Elaine Lawrence has owned Bernese Mt Dogs since 1977. She is a member of the Breeder Education Committee and writes on occasion for breed publications. Because pedigree research and genetics are her special interest, she has earned a place in the Berner breeding community through her ability to help us all understand and appreciate the value of the information a pedigree offers. She shares her life with four Berners: Nuala, Ika, Truffles and Tucker.

ANN MILLIGAN

Ann acquired her first Berner in 1983. She has bred 23 litters since then under the Bonmead kennel name. One half of the puppies Ann produced are titled and 36 are champions. She is an AKC provisional judge as is her husband, Mark.

CARROL C. PLATZ, JR

Professor Carrol C. Platz, Jr. founded the International Canine Semen Bank (ICSB). And developed the techniques used in the ICSB's program. Through his 35 years of research at the University of Oregon Medical School, Baylor College of Medicine, Texas A&M University and continuing in the ICSB laboratory, he has produced thousands of puppies using fresh frozen canine semen. ICSB and associates were first in producing litters registered by the AKC, The American Field Dog Association and the National Greyhound Association, and assisted in developing the guidelines used by these organizations for registering litters produced from frozen semen. He has produced litters from frozen semen that had been stored for 34 years prior to thawing and insemination at ICSB. We welcome his perspective on the use of frozen and chilled semen in the breeding of Bernese.

MARJORIE REHO

Marjorie has owned Bernese Mountain Dogs and been active in the BMDCA since 1978. Under the kennel name of "Dallybeck", she has bred 24 litters, and has produced some of the top dogs in the United States and Canada. At National Specialties, her own dogs, Dallybeck-produced dogs, and offspring of Dallybeck dogs, have won such prestigious awards as High In Trial, Best of Opposite Sex, Winners Dog, Best of Winners, Award of Merit, first in Stud Dog, first in Brood Bitch, both Best and Best of Opposite in Veteran Sweeps with son and dam, and many class placements in obedience disciplines, and conformation, regular and non-regular, puppy through veteran classes; some of these awards won several times over. Many dogs from her breeding have been Versatility Award Winners over the years. She has produced the BMDCA Top Producer, Conformation Dog.

Margie's active interests in the breed focus on the total dog: structure, soundness, type, temperament, working ability and longevity. She became the first recipient of a Dog World Award for Bernese in obedience, and also placed a Tracking Degree on her bitch. In conformation, she has judged Puppy and Veteran Sweepstakes classes in Canada, and at the BMDCA National Specialty in Colorado.

DAN SERNICOLA

While Dan has only been in Berners for a short time, he's passionate about them all. He is a Berner-Garde trustee, their Ways and Means chair, as well as the Public Relations chair. If you haven't seen his Berner-Garde Christmas Catalogue, you missed a tempting treat - be sure to look for the next one later this year. His research into the history of Berners has led to some fascinating finds, not the least of which is his collection of antique cards, photographs, and ephemera. Dan has immersed himself in the literature and history of the breed hoping to learn how the history can affect the future of the breed.

MARLENE SMITH-SCHALKWIJK DVM

Dr. Smith was raised by her family dogs and has never been dogless. She became a vet to help her best friends and has studied Traditional Chinese Medicine, homeopathy, acupuncture and chiropractic. She educates and mentors other vets on holistic concerns such as cautions of vaccination & introduction to raw feeding. Marlene currently owns Shalom, a male Berner.

RON SMITH

Ron was born in Cobourg, Ontario and graduated as a Mechanical Engineer and spent 32 years with General Motors, leaving as Superintendent of Maintenance and Engineering. He met his first Bernese in 1973 by accident while looking to purchase a Landseer Newfoundland. Ron raised 26 litters of Berners over a 25 year period and was always interested in pedigree research. When a fellow engineering friend saw what he was doing, he offered to write something more elaborate and eventually they created the DOS version of BMDPed. Several breeders saw this version and wanted a copy and his little hobby got out of hand from there. In 2006, his friend Dave Long again offered to write the software for a Windows version, which you are seeing today.

SHARON CHESNUTT SMITH

Sharon entered the Berner community in 1994 when Champion Arthos October V Berndash came into her heart and home. He became a three time, All-Breed Best in Show winner, with 54 group placements, #1 BMD breed & group in 1989 as well as becoming a BMDCA Top Producer of 32 Champions. Sharon maintains a successful breeding kennel using the October prefix. She can be proud of breeding forty plus Bernese champions including a BIS dog, the 2002 National Specialty winner, eleven BMDCA Top Producers and ten years running of "October" dogs in the top ten nationally.

An approved AKC judge of both Bernese and Golden Retrievers, Sharon judged the Great Britain Bernese Mountain Dog Club National Specialty in 2000 and the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America National Specialty in 2003. She was the BMDCA AKC delegate for nine years and the founding president of The Helderberg Bernese Mountain Dog Club of New York. In 1994 she wrote the book "The New Bernese Mountain Dog" published by Howell Book House, a division of Macmillan, providing a valuable resource to the Berner fancy.

NANCY STEWART

Nancy has lived with Bernese since 1985. She served as President of the BMDCA from 1994-1999. She was a founding member of the Grand Canyon State BMDC and is a Trustee with Berner Garde. Nancy participates in conformation, draft, obedience, and is currently an approved AKC Judge for Bernese Mountain Dogs. Her passion, however, is the health of the breed and she feels that nutrition is a major key to sound growth, disease control, and longevity.

DEBBIE TOWNDROW

Debbie has been practicing as a full time certified massage therapist, specializing in canines, since 1998. She is a former veterinary technician with a degree in Applied Science from Bel Rea Institute of Animal Technology. Her practice mission is simple: through therapeutic massage and education, to enhance the quality of life for both humans and animals. Her goal is for the client to see the improvements and experience the benefits of therapeutic massage. Debbie is a member of the International Association of Animal Massage and Bodywork as well as the Associated Bodyworkers and Massage Professionals. She is a long time member of BMDCA and BMDCR and has owned Berners for 14 years. You have most likely seen her massage booth at our National Specialties over the past 10 years.

PATRICIA V. TROTTER

Patricia V. Trotter is a longtime breeder of Norwegian Elkhounds and respected AKC Breeder of the Year under the kennel prefix Vin-Melca. She is approved to judge more than 20 breeds as well as Junior Showmanship. Patricia is the author of Born to Win Breed to Succeed and writes frequently for the AKC Gazette offering thoughtful advice to both breeders and judges.

DEBBY WILKINS

Debby has been raising, training, and showing Bernese Mountain Dogs since 1988. Throughout that time, she has come across many breed mentors who have aided her in the accumulation of knowledge regarding the ethics of breeding Bernese in the ever changing dog fancy. Because of her passion for the breed, she is an advocate for responsible pet ownership as well as responsible breeding practices.

Information on this site is intended to aid Berner University students in the selection of their classes. Please contact Faculty directly for any other use.