

# BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOGS “Berners”

Joye Masquelier Neff and Breeze

Asbury Villas

August 8, 2011

Maine's Xephyr Alpinebear “Breeze” is a seventeen month old female Berner.

There is nothing cuter than a Baby Berner!!



Our former Berner, Nicky with his seven brothers and one sister at 7½ weeks  
Born on December 25, 2002

Bernese Mountain Dogs are general purpose farm dogs which originated in the farm areas of Switzerland and were named for the Canton of Bern. Their large, hardy frames and their calm natured, people oriented temperaments made them ideal companions and watchdogs for the farms. They were used to pull carts of milk to the village and to then return with cheese, and to accompany cows for short distances to the pastures. They love to be with their family and do not do well as a kennel dog or an outside dog. With their long, heavy coat, they love the winter season. In fact, it's hard to get Breeze to come in on a snowy day! See enjoys lying down and letting the snow pile up on her.



Sally Masquelier looking at Joye's Berner Display

Berners are very versatile dogs and enjoy competing in conformation, obedience, agility, tracking, herding and drafting (carting.) Berners also make wonderful therapy dogs – visiting people in senior care facilities and hospitals.

Berners are double coated dogs and shed considerably. However, their coats are easy to maintain with daily brushing and occasional baths. Breeze had a bath last night!

With a large breed dog, obedience training is essential. It is recommended that puppies attend a Puppy Kindergarten class at four to six months of age, and then continue obedience training for the next year or more. All training should only utilize positive reward methods. A 100 pound dog with no obedience training is not something you would want to be around! Male Berners are usually 25 to 27.5 inches at the withers (shoulders) and weigh 85 to 115 pounds, while females are 23 to 26 inches and weigh 70 to 95 pounds. Breeze is 25½ inches at the withers and weighs 83 pounds. Berners grow quickly from a small puppy to their adult height in their first year. They develop a full chest and gain weight over the next one to two years. Here are photos of Breeze over her first seventeen months.



Breeze at 9 weeks

Breeze at 8 months

Breeze at 16 months

Berners, like every other breed, have health problems. The average life of a Berner is a little over 7 years, although I've known Berners to live to 14 years of age. Health issues impacting the breed include cancer, hip and elbow dysplasia, bloat, sub-aortic stenosis, progressive retinal dysplasia and autoimmune diseases. I have worked to raise money for Bernese Mountain Dogs to support health and rescue in our breed. Since 1998, I have raised over \$786,000 for scientific research studies, rescue Berners, and education. We want the life span of Berners to increase and the disease genes to be found so we can breed the hereditary diseases out of our lines. Research that is being done on Berners will lead to scientific breakthroughs not only in Berners, but for people, as well. There are forms of cancer in Berners that are similar to cancers in children and the strides made with Berners will help children as well.

Berners are working dogs and love to have a job to do. My Berners have always pulled their carts, and loved pulling my three granddaughters, who are always thrilled to go for a ride behind the Berners. Breeze will learn to pull the cart when she is two years old.

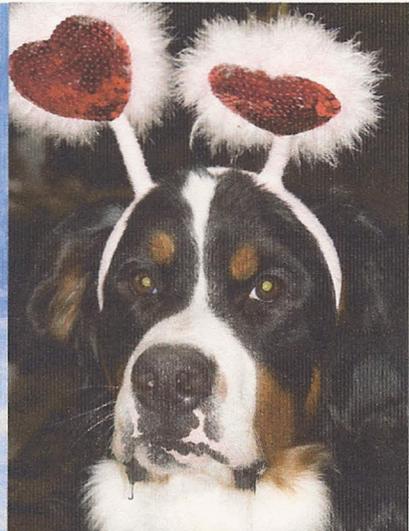


Nicky pulling Ella



Nicky pulling Gracie and Bella

Our local club, the Three Rivers' Bernese Mountain Dog Club, participates in numerous parades during the year. We go to Sugarcreek, Ohio to the annual Swiss Parade in September, the Mt. Lebanon Halloween Parade and the City of Pittsburgh Holiday Parade on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.



Berners are a wonderful breed and we hope you've enjoyed our presentation.