



THE MAGS AZINE

Mid-Atlantic Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club Newsletter

September 2017

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MAGS is Growing and with Growth comes Change

Welcome New Club Members

Since January the club has welcomed 19 new members (11 new families)—that brings the club's total membership to over 100 members and around 60 families! See the 'Welcome New Members' section for a list of our new members.

MAGS Logo Redesign

The Mid-Atlantic Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club logo is being updated to include the state of Delaware. The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America recognizes Delaware as part of the mid-Atlantic region and currently only Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York are represented on our logo. A new logo design is underway and will be revealed on or around October 1st.

MAGS Website Refresh

The MAGS website is getting a facelift, and will include a lot of great new features, like a MAGS Store with online payment of merchandise; membership application with online payment; an event calendar; as well as, a member login feature where members can create / update their profile, upload photos and documents, and sign up to serve on Club Committees. The new website will be launched on or around October 1st. A big thanks to Katie Markley for all her hard work with taking our club's website to the next level!

2017 - 2019 Club Officers & Board Members

The following (*new) club officers and board members were recently elected during the annual club meeting / picnic on August 12th. Congratulations to all!

Officers	
*President	Janie Hecker
*Vice President	Denise Mitterando
*Secretary	Andrea Haubrick
Treasurer	Katie Markley

Board Members	
Sharon Gardner	Carol Neuman
Carol Gehret	Joe Neuman
Jim Hauptly	*Diane Schmidt
Wayne Hecker	

Swissy Army Call to Action!



Volunteers are needed for the Club Committees. The Officers & Board Members are in the process of re-viewing the committees to identify any additional committees needed. More to come regarding opportunities to show your support and get involved!

Meet our New President



Hi. I am Janie Hecker and am married to Wayne "Santa" Hecker. We are residents of Lower Saucon Township, a suburb of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. We have two grown and married daughters; Jody, who lives in Spring, Texas and Melissa, who lives in Newport News, Virginia. We have had many cats over the years but only owned two dogs prior to our first Swissie. I will admit that I was a cat person who was converted into to a dog person by the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog. We currently have four cats (two belong to my daughter) and two Swissies. Our first Swissie is Toby (GCHS Kismet Captain Avery's Toby). Toby is five years old. In addition to his conformation title (Grand Champion Silver), he has a (CGC) Canine Good Citizen and (NWPD, WPD) Novice Working Pack Dog and Working Pack Dog titles. He recently completed a Therapy dog Preparation course and hopefully will be registered with Therapy Dogs International in September. Since he is semi-retired from the ring, he will concentrate on working initially as a therapy dog in nursing homes with hope to go to airports, to be read to by children and bring support to people in grief. Our second Swissie, Klara (GCH Kismet's Blazing Fire on the Mountain Lady Klara) is two and a half years old. She is co-owned by me and my husband and Carol and Joe Neuman. The Neumans bred both of our Swissies. Klara has earned her Grand Champion title and continues to be active in the conformation ring. I spent 27 years as a teacher and 13 years as a school administrator. In retirement, our lives revolve around our Swissies. We travel to dog shows, walk with our dogs, and I participate in handling, obedience and rally training. I am also a member of the Lehigh Valley Kennel Club and the Allentown Dog Training Club.

President's Message

Greetings MAGS members,

I want to thank you for the honor of being elected President of the Mid Atlantic Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club. I also want to congratulate the other officers and board members elected to lead our club. Our Vice-President is Denise Mitterando, Secretary will be Andrea Haubrick, and our treasurer is Katie Markley. Our board members are Sharon Gardner, Carol Gehret, Jim Hauptly, Wayne Hecker, Carol Neuman, Joe Neuman, and Diane Schmidt. We all recognize that we have many new members in the club and our goal is to serve your needs as a Swissie owner and provide activities for your Swissie(s). This does not mean that each of you do not have a role in this club. No, indeed, you each have a vital role. What is that role? Get involved! We need your help to provide a variety of activities for all of our Swissies. Some of us have our dogs in the conformation ring. But dogs also need to be given the opportunity to work at obedience, rally, agility, drafting, weight pulling, pack hiking, nose work, marching in parades and many other activities that both Swissies and their owners enjoy. We are also looking at providing educational workshops for owners. While our by-laws specify being a club member for 3 years to fill an elected position, it only takes one day of membership to attend an activity or jump on a committee. Please let me or any member of our leadership team (officers and board) know if you have a special talent or interest that could assist our club. I will be putting out a survey so each owner/family can share their interests, wants, and expectations as club members. If you have suggestions regarding anything we are doing or ideas for what we should be doing, feel free to reach out to me. My home phone number (yes, we still have a land line) is 610-997-0914, my cell number is 484-239-5109 and my email address is jhecker@ptd.net. Above all....let's have fun!!!

With love for Swissies,

Janie Hecker



Welcome New Members!



The following members have joined the club since January.

Leslie Gillette, Merrimack, NH

Jay Pallis, Merrimack, NH

Mike Tarabomelli, Haddonfield, NJ

Stephanie Yellin, Haddonfield, NJ

Brendan Carr, State College, PA

Michael & Kathleen Diehl, Green Lane, PA

Katie & Eric Tesoriero, Nazareth, PA

Tonia Adams, Schnecksville, PA

Lynne Boyle, Dingmans Ferry, PA

Jenny Roller, Dingmans Ferry, PA

Loretta & Greg Golding, South Hampton, PA

Steven Berman, Philadelphia, PA

Diane Newbury, Philadelphia, PA

Amy & Kyle Locus, West Grove, PA

Michelle Charters, Firefly Swissies, Chesapeake, VA

Jamie, Chris & daughter, Jordynn, Newville, PA

MEET OUR MEMBERS

**Andrea
&
Bob
Haubrick**



The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog is the best kept secret of the dog world ...

and we hope it stays that way! We adopted our first Swissy from a local rescue. Unfortunately, Nova came to us with health problems so we only had her for a year, but it was a great year. Thanks to her we've been crazy about these big, goofy clowns ever since.

We have 3 Swissys ...

Gem-n-I, 8, Gertie, 3, and our newest addition, Lonzi, who was whelped in November 2016. He is from a litter of 3 and has 2 sisters. His Mom is Gertie who was bred with the Hecker's amazing Toby! It was quite an experience that we couldn't have done without the help of Janie and Wayne Hecker, Carol Gehret and Chris Gisewhite—thanks to you all for the part you played!



Lonzi (in the middle) with his Sisters

Bob and I drove a tractor trailer ...

for 25 years up until I retired in 2014. Both of the girls traveled with us so they have seen the entire country. We hauled munitions for the military, and to enter the bases the truck had to be inspected. I would take the girls to the designated areas, and they would have to sit quietly while Bob got us signed in. They had to learn to deal with a lot of distractions and people. We got a lot of questions about them, and they could turn the most rigid Military Police into putty in their paws.



MEET OUR MEMBERS

Andrea and Bob Haubrick (*Part II*)

They are home with me now ...

and I love having them help me with work around the house. Gem hauls garden clippings to the dump or firewood in from the pasture in her wagon. And Gertie, who is in the early stages of learning to wear a harness, runs along. Of course, they are always ready to go for a walk and the winter weather really energizes them. And don't mention playing ball unless you mean it because they will not rest until you do!



They go along us ...

trail riding and camping. We really try to involve them in as much as possible, and very rarely do we go anywhere without them.

The thing we love the most about them is ...

they just make us laugh. They have such unique mannerisms and personalities that continue to bring us a lot of joy!



Chestnut Ridge Horseman's Club in Bedford, PA

We hope to attend an event soon so we can meet all of you and your wonderful Swissys!

Andrea Haubrick



MEET OUR MEMBERS

Sarah Winklevoss



Ursa Finished her Rally Novice Title in 2014 at Swissy Nationals

If fifteen years ago someone had told me I would own a Swissy ...

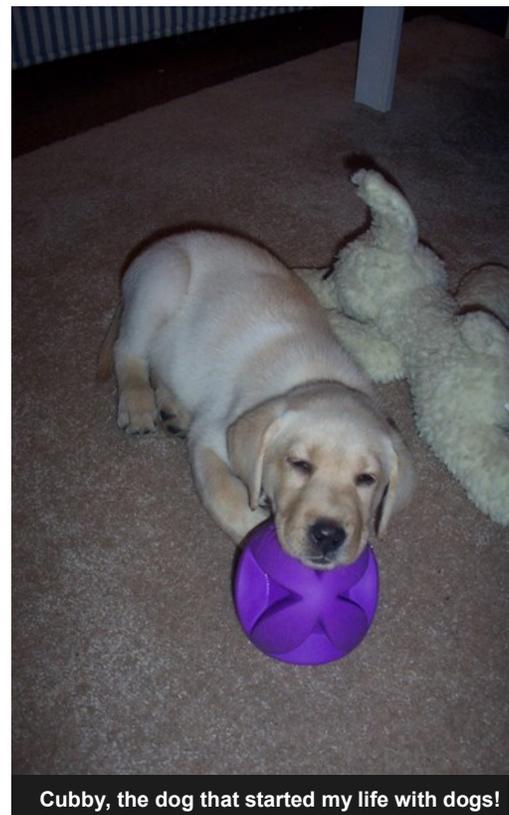
I would have thought they were talking about some sort of knife. While today I spend my time surrounded by dogs of all kinds, I grew up in a pet-free home. Well, other than my brother's short stint as the proud owner of a painter turtle. The turtle suffered an early demise during a family camping trip when it was left outside the camper and became a tasty meal for a raccoon.

I grew up in the Philly area ...

and went to college in Washington, DC where I stayed until 2001. In May 2001, I was working as a consultant for a software company, and was relocated to Chicago to take over as Regional Manager for the Professional Services division. It was just when the dot com bubble burst, and I was responsible for selling projects to clients to keep my consultants employed. It involved lots of travel, lots of long hours so I worked too much, and was now living in a city where I knew no one. I knew I needed to do something other than work and get out of the house more so I decided to get a dog. It made perfect sense, I mean I lived alone, I had a job that involved a significant amount of hours, as well as, travel so yes, why not get a dog?

On a bitterly cold January night in 2002...

I drove up to the middle of nowhere Wisconsin to pick up my new yellow lab puppy 'Cubby'. And that started my journey to a life pretty much revolving around dogs.



Cubby, the dog that started my life with dogs!

MEET OUR MEMBERS

Sarah Winklevoss (*Part II*)

As I said, my job involved a significant amount of travel so ...

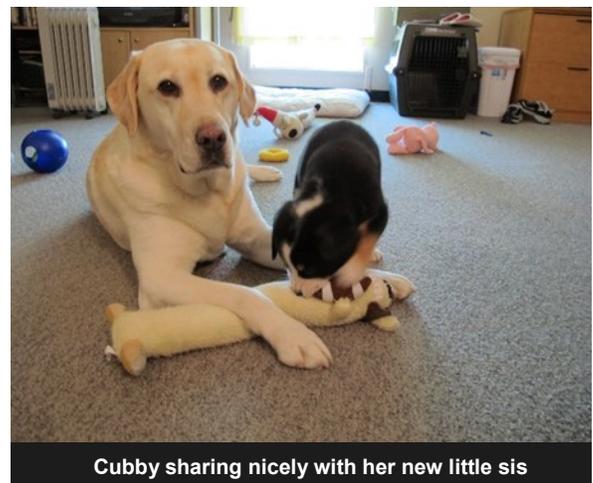
I lined up a dog daycare for Cubby even before I committed to taking her home. It was a great place, she thoroughly enjoyed her time there, but after a couple years the owner sold it to a big boarding chain and it changed. A friend and I joked about opening our own daycare and I thought, well, I definitely know what clients want in a daycare, and I know how to run a business. I just needed to know more about dogs. So in May of 2004, I sold my place in Chicago, loaded Cubby into the SUV and made our way back to Philly. Chicago already had a glut of daycares, but I knew Philly was underserved. I started looking for locations and also started volunteering at a daycare to get experience. It was that daycare that I saw THE MOST BEAUTIFUL DOG ... yep a Swissy! And I knew that would be my next dog.

After a couple years of volunteering and looking for a location ...

I opened up Cubby's Canine Castle in November 2006. Starting a business keeps you quite busy so I knew I wasn't going to be getting a puppy anytime soon. I was so excited in June 2009 when I got a daycare application for a SWISSY! I was busy with getting a new business up and running so having a new puppy of my own was out of the question. I figured I would live vicariously and love a client's Swissy—it was perfect! Ummm, not so much. Apparently, his parents hadn't read the part of the Swissy manual that stresses YOU MUST TRAIN YOUR DOG!! He was so bad, it was sort of a mutual decision with me and the client that he longer attend my daycare. He was unruly, and at times, aggressive. Luckily Murphy 'Berg came along and restored my faith in the behavior of Swissys and I said okay, yep, I'm going to get one someday.

Finally, in January 2011 I added ...

Shadetree's Ursa Minor to the family. On what was one of the coldest days of the year, I trekked down to Maryland, Cubby in tow, to meet Cathy Cooper at a dog show to bring Ursa home. Yep, potty training again in the freezing cold. I vowed next time I get a puppy, it will be in the Spring or at least not in dead of winter. Especially a Swissy because I swear she peed more than Cubby ever did as a puppy!



Cubby sharing nicely with her new little sis

Luckily, Ursa understood her place in the pack—Cubby allowed on the couch—Ursa not

MEET OUR MEMBERS

Sarah Winklevoss (*Part III*)

Out in the Cubby's Canine Castle play yard, puppy Ursa trying hard to keep up with her big sister in the snow while we play our most favorite game ever ... snowball fetch!



Cubby and Usra enjoying their time in the daycare play yard. Ursa eventually became bigger than her 'big sister', but she was always the baby :)



MEET OUR MEMBERS

Sarah Winklevoss (*Part IV*)

Getting Ursa started my sojourn ...

into dog sports. I had always done a lot of training with Cubby, but I didn't even know competition obedience existed until the trainer I had working for me at the time said 'Let's get titles on our dogs'. She said, let's go do this Novice class in September, and then we can enter this show at Oaks in November. Okay, anyone involved in competition obedience right is rolling on the floor laughing at the idea of doing ONE 8 week competition class and then doing a trial. I, however, at the time had no idea and was just following her lead. So, of course, when we entered the show it was an epic fail. Mostly Ursa just stood there and stared at me and at everything around us. The judge actually asked us to leave the ring. I didn't even know that was a possible outcome. But even with the epic fail, my interest in dog sports was born and I soon joined Suburban Dog Training Club, and for the past five years I have been working with some incredible trainers. Ursa and I compete in Obedience and Rally. We finished her Rally Novice title, and have multiple legs towards her Beginner Novice, Novice and Preferred Novice titles.



Ursa taking first place in Preferred Novice at Lower Camden last Spring



Swissy Nationals 2014—Ursa finished her Really Novice

MEET OUR MEMBERS

Sarah Winklevoss (*Part V*)



With our friends Judy (Great Pyrenees owner) & Mary (Bernese person) who helped us with all things drafting!

Since I was doing so much obedience training with Ursa ...

Cubby got jealous so I started taking her to the training club too. She loved it! At age 11, yep, we started entering some trials and finished her Beginner Novice and Rally Novice titles in November 2013, including a first place and score of 100 in the Rally trial at Oaks! I was so proud! We got two legs of her Rally Advanced title in March 2014 before I lost her to cancer in April that year. She had been diagnosed with Hemangiosarcoma in November of 2013 so I knew 'it' was coming, but was obviously devastated with losing my first dog—especially the one that started my life with dogs and led to a total career and lifestyle change. Luckily Ursa was there to grieve with me and keep me company. Ursa adapted well to being the sole dog in the household, but we'll eventually add another pup, maybe in a year or so.

Cubby picking up her ribbon for 4th place in Rally Novice at the Wilmington Kennel Club. She was always so lively & bouncy; this judge thought she was 2 when she

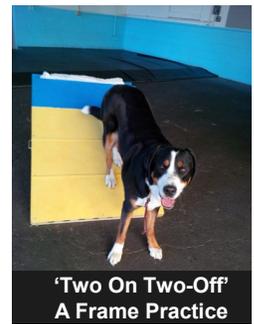


MEET OUR MEMBERS

Sarah Winklevoss (*Part VI*)

Aside from obedience and rally ...

our biggest struggle in all of our training has always been Ursa's confidence—she gets nervous and shuts down. Agility has been really helpful for boosting her confidence. We've always done agility for fun, but recently we did a couple of UKI agility trials. Ursa loves the jumps and tunnels and such; we have yet to master the teeter-totter. :(



My introduction to carting was actually at a ...

MAGS events back in 2013. I went to a cart training event which set Ursa and I on our path to carting. Luckily for me a few other member of our dog training club are carting enthusiasts. Our first practice did not go so well—I had the cart, harness, and got Ursa all hooked up and was so excited to start our first freight haul. I COULD NOT get her to move. Not totally surprising because when she gets nervous she freezes up. My friends and their dogs became smaller and smaller dots on the horizon as I attempted to get Ursa to take even one step. It's not like it was heavy—it was her plastic training cart! After lots of cheese she eventually took a few steps. Funny enough, after she got used to carting it became one of her favorite activities; second only to agility.



As you can see we upgraded from the ...

original PVC training cart that I made—yes, I made a little wooden cart. And yes, I would get slightly offended when I was asked multiple times if my husband made it. I own my home and run a doggie daycare that hosts an average of 65 dogs a day. The place takes a beating. So I've become pretty handy over the years. The cart I am pretty proud of, as I'm sure is evident, but I also do things like fix fences, and make shelves, agility equipment such as mini-A-Frames, wobble boards, tire jumps, channel weave poles, etc.

Aside from all things dog in my life, I like to keep up on world events. I am an avid NPR listener and website reader, and I also spend a lot of time reading the Washington Post and BBC news websites. I was an international affairs major in college and I studied abroad for a year in the French Alps so I've always had an interest in the world events. I've been lucky enough to travel, although not so much since I became a business owner. But through either business or pleasure, I've been to quite a few US states—I'm missing 12, but hope to visit the rest some day. I've traveled internationally as well—



France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland (I didn't see any Swissys while I was there!), Germany, England, Scotland, Canada, Mexico, Aruba, Virgin Islands (British & US), Dominican Republic and randomly, China. I actually went back to Switzerland in 2001 and spent three months working in Zurich, but still never saw any Swissys. :(

MEET OUR MEMBERS

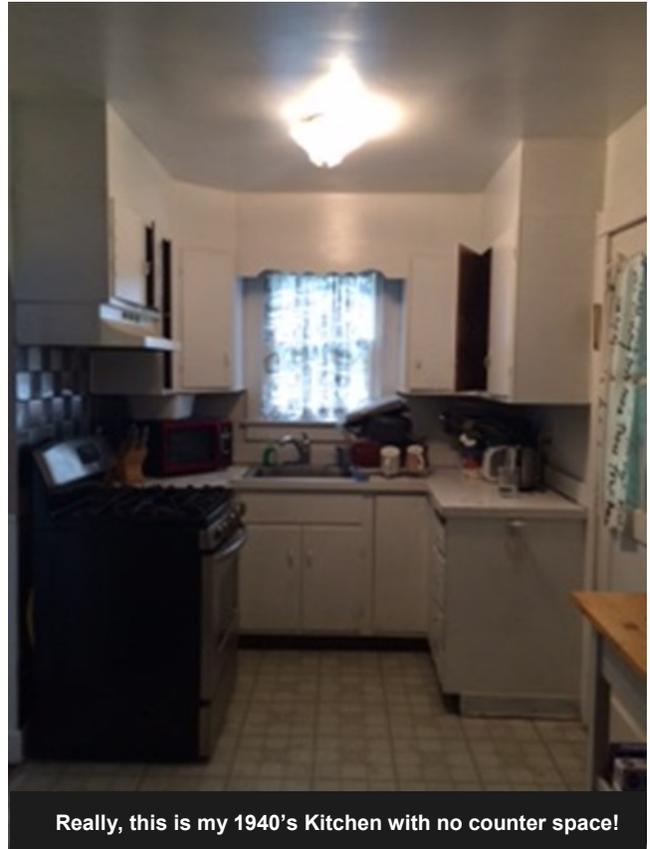
Sarah Winklevoss (*Part VII*)

I also like food, both cooking and eating it!

I moved into a house built in 1940 four years ago and sadly the kitchen was original. Its put a damper on my cooking since there is no counter space, but I'm extremely excited that I'm finally kicking off a kitchen and bathroom renovation project! I knew moving in I would update it—it just took four years to get going on it. And it will be twice as big, and have a dishwasher! As I said, I like to cook; cleaning up is an entirely different matter.

So that's me in a nutshell—corporate IT consultant turned doggie daycare owner, Swissy owner, and handy homeowner.

Sarah Winklevoss



Really, this is my 1940's Kitchen with no counter space!

Mark Your Calendar



Swissy Fun Day

October 22, 2017
Rain or Shine!

1:00 pm

Dog Days Daycare
Center
281 Roycefield Rd.
Hillsborough, NJ
08844

Early Registration
(by Sept. 15th)
Members \$25/dog
Non-Mbrs. \$35/dog

Registration
(after Sept. 15th)
Members \$30/dog
Non-Mbrs. \$40/dog



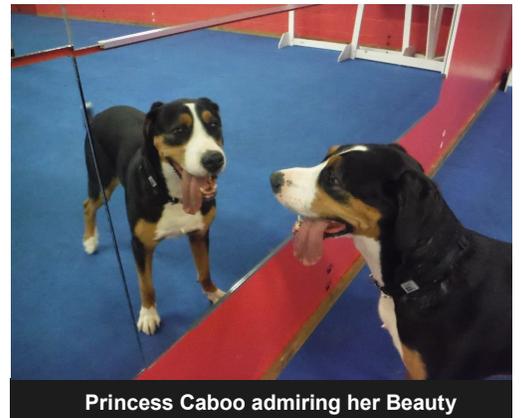
The Spring Swissy Fun Day was so much fun ... we're doing it again!

This year's event will include indoor / outdoor access, off leash socialization, games for dogs and their people, and a Fall theme, mini photo shoot of you and your dog(s) all included in one low price! Register by September 15th to take advantage of the early bird price.

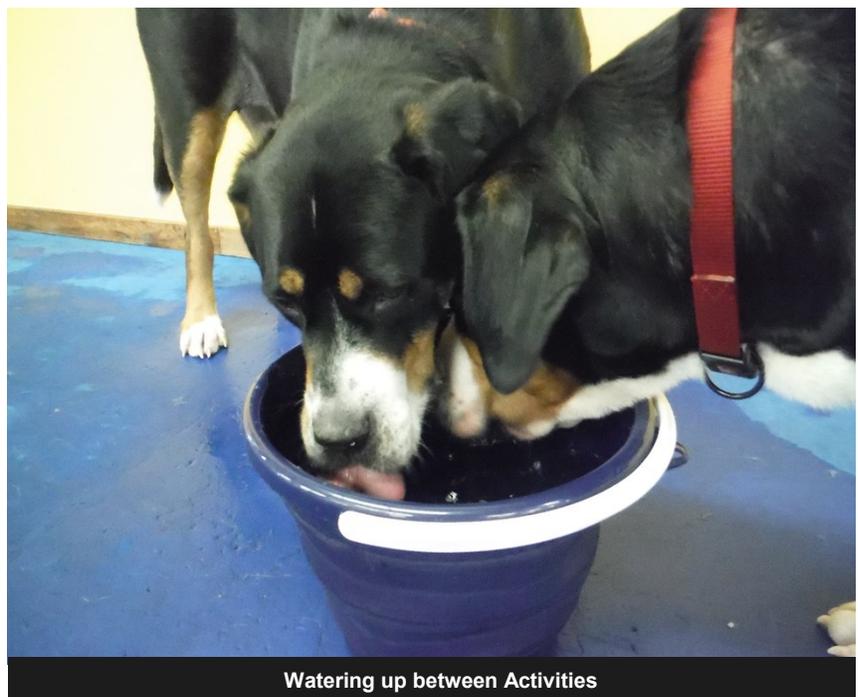
Forward your registration with check to: Denise Mitterando, 1035 Tysley Place, Raritan, NJ 08869. Contact Denise at fotodoc@optonline.net with any questions.



Loretta Golding's Cookies 'Artistic and Tasty'



Princess Caboo admiring her Beauty



Watering up between Activities

Mark Your Calendar



5th Annual Turkey Trot Pack Hikes



Ready to burn off all that turkey and pumpkin pie?

Come join us for our MAGS 5th Annual Turkey Trot Pack Hike. Earn a leg(s) towards a title! Earning a Pack Dog leg towards a title requires the dog/handler team to complete a ten mile hike, 8 mile back to back hikes or a 5 mile (each way) primitive overnight camping trip. The dog carries a sturdy back pack loaded with a 20 or 30 percent of its body weight. Pack weight can only be reduced through the hike by normal consumption of water and snacks carried.

The fee is \$20 per dog and both events start at 8:30 AM.

Hike 1

Friday, Nov. 24, 2017

Trexler Game Preserve
5150 Game Preserve Rd
Schnecksville, PA 18078

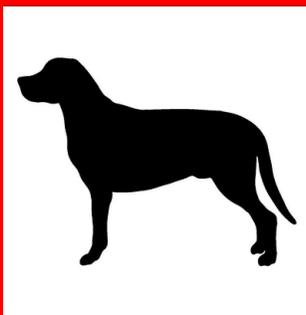
Hike 2

Saturday, Nov. 25, 2017

Frenchtown, NJ
Delaware & Raritan Canal
Delaware River Scenic
Byway

Forms will be sent out prior to hike in November. For more information about pack hiking visit the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America website <http://www.gsmdca.org/activities/back-packing/>

Mark Your Calendar



3rd Annual Specialty Show

December 16, 2017

Agri-Plex

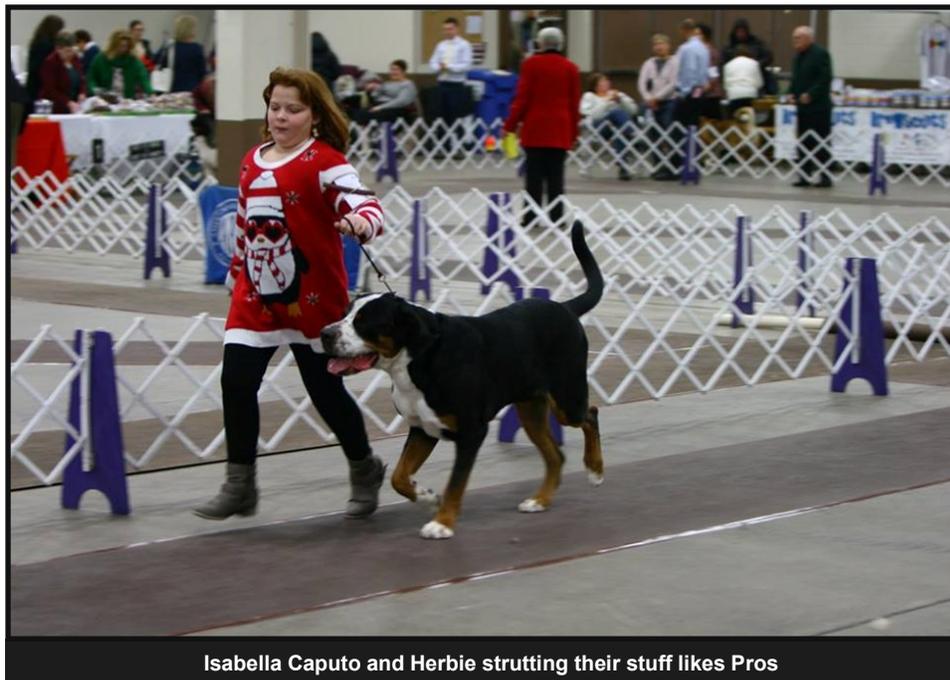
Allentown
Fairgrounds

Allentown, PA

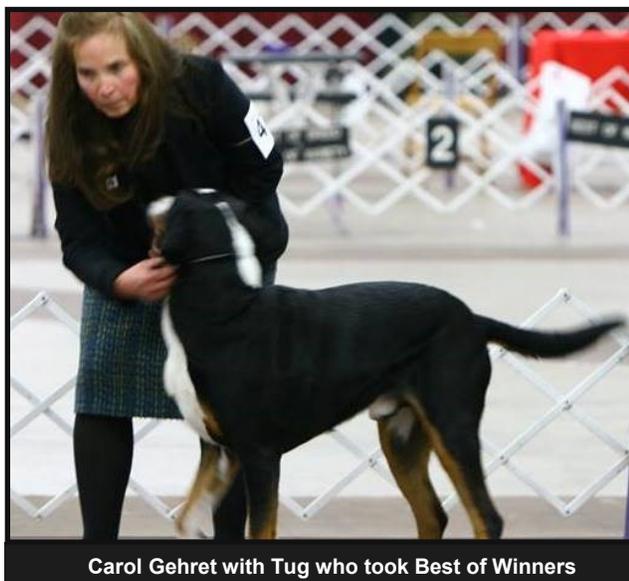
See next page
for this year's
trophy sponsors

The 2nd Annual Specialty Show was held last December ...

and beyond the AKC conformation competition the event included an awesome raffle—thank you Denise Mitterando for coordinating—and opportunity to socialize with fellow club members after the show. This event is sure to be fun for all whether you're an entry or a spectator!



Isabella Caputo and Herbie strutting their stuff likes Pros



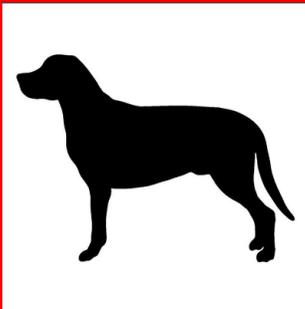
Carol Gehret with Tug who took Best of Winners



Wayne Hecker (alias Santa)

The judging panel for this year's event is:
Kimberly Meredith-Cavanna (Specialty) and Arthur Favors (Sweepstakes).

3rd Annual Specialty Show



Trophy Sponsor- ship

*Thanks
to
everyone
who
sponsored
a
trophy!*

Class	\$\$	Sponsor
Sweepstakes		
6-9 Month Puppy Dog	15	Michael Gilcher
9-12 Month Puppy Dog	15	Michael Gilcher
12-15 Month Puppy Dog	15	Bob Mezzerotte & Sara Trenholm
15-18 Month Puppy Dog	15	Katie & Randy Markley
6-9 Month Puppy Bitch	15	Tonia Adams
9-12 Month Puppy Bitch	15	Sheppard Family
12-15 Month Puppy Bitch	15	Dan & Stephanie Dooley
15-18 Month Puppy Bitch	15	Katie & Randy Markley
Best Puppy	25	Jim & Mary Jo Rasmussen, Double Q Swissys
Best of Opposite Puppy	25	Tonia Adams
7-9 Year Veteran Dog	15	Sharon Gardner
9+ Year Veteran Dog	15	Tonia Adams
7-9 Year Veteran Bitch	15	Sharon Gardner
9+ Year Veteran Bitch	15	Donna Rollins
Best Veteran	25	Sharon Gardner
Best of Opposite Veteran	25	Joe & Carol Neuman

Specialty Show	\$\$	Sponsor
Best of Breed	35	Laurie Carmody
Best of Winners	30	Gina Aurichio
Best of Opposite	35	Joe & Carol Neuman
Select Dog	30	Carol Gehret
Select Bitch	30	Jana Furst
Award of Merit	25	Joe & Carol Neuman
Award of Merit	25	Dan & Stephanie Dooley
Winners Dog	25	Bob & Andrea Haubrick
Reserve Winners Dog	20	Doreen Holly
Winners Bitch	25	Bob & Andrea Haubrick
Reserve Winners Bitch	20	Jana Furst
6-9 Month Puppy Dog	15	Jaime & Randy Taylor
9-12 Month Puppy Dog	15	Gene & Laurie Grace
12-18 Month Puppy Dog	15	Katie Schomp & Tugger
Bred by Dog	15	Joe & Carol Neuman
Am Bred Dog	15	Diane Schmidt & Nina Comanto
Open Dog	15	Gene & Laurie Grace
6-9 Month Puppy Bitch	15	Jaime & Randy Taylor
9-12 Month Puppy Bitch	15	Bob Mezzerotte & Sarah Trenholm
12-18 Month Puppy Bitch	15	Diane Schmidt & Nina Comanto
Bred by Bitch	15	Diane Schmidt & Nina Comanto
Am Bred Bitch	15	Chris Gisewhite
Open Bitch	15	Chris Gisewhite
Veteran Dog	25	Jim Hauptly IMO SeaVaRidge's Hammer of Thor
Veteran Bitch	25	Jim Hauptly IMO SeaVaRidge's Part the Night Mist

Mark Your Calendar



Canine Learning Experi- ence

February 3rd & 4th,
2018

Agri-Plex

Allentown
Fairgrounds

Allentown, PA



**Join your fellow club members in
educating people and bragging
about our wonderful breed!**

Help will be needed to construct / break down the booth, as well as, greet visitors.
Contact Carol Gehret (cabro53@windstream.net) or Jim Hauptly
(swisscateers@gmail.com) for more information.





ANNUAL PICNIC



The Annual Club Picnic and Meeting was held on August 12th at Katie & Randy Markley's home in Elizabethtown, PA. Swissys and their families enjoyed an afternoon of socializing, swimming and good eats. Thank you Katie & Randy for hosting!



Kathy & Mike Diehl's Zander Getting a Swim-Swim Lesson from Katie Markley





ANNUAL PICNIC



Oliver hanging out with his son Mack

Happy Birthday Randy!

ANNUAL MEETING



Mid Atlantic Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club
Annual Meeting - Saturday, August 12, 2017
Randy and Katie Markley's Home
120 Ridgeview Road North, Elizabethtown, PA 17022

Call to Order – [Doreen Holly resigned as President and Vice President Chris Gisewhite was absent] Temporary President Joseph Neuman called the meeting to order.

Attendance– A Sign-In sheet was circulated

President's Report – President Neuman asked for a motion to approve the by-laws as recommended by the Board. All members received the by-laws via email and the approved change was clarified. Katie Markley moved approval of the by-laws as recommended by the Board. Jana Furst Seconded.

Approved

Secretary's Report- Janie Hecker asked all attendees to sign the Attendance Sheet.

Treasurer's Report – Katie Markley stated that the club currently has \$5972.88 in our account. Five members have not renewed their dues.

Reports of Committees - Each Board member will oversee a committee. They will act as a mentor to the Chairman. It was clarified that you only have to be in the club "one day" to become a member of a committee.

Election of Officers and Board (2017-2019). The nominating committee consisted of Joe Neuman, Jana Furst, and Todd Gerner. Jana Furst presented the Candidates for Officers and Board Positions:

Officers - President - Janie Hecker, Vice-President - Denise Mitterando, Secretary - Andrea Haubrick, Treasurer- Katie Markley

Board members - Sharon Gardner, Carol Gehret, Todd Gerner, James Hauptly, Wayne Hecker, Carol Neuman, Joe Neuman

President Neuman opened the floor to any additional nominations. Diane Schmidt agreed to be nominated for a Board position'; Denise Mitterando seconded the nomination

Diane Schmidt's name was added to the ballot therefore the membership would have to vote. Ballots were distributed and collected. The secretary was charged with counting the votes.

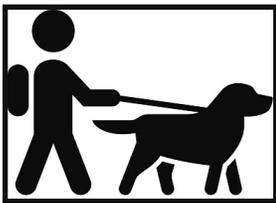
While votes were being tallied Joe asked for any input for the good and betterment of the club encouraging open communication.

- A Swissie Fun Day on October 22nd was proposed.
- A new website is being worked on.
- Jana Furst has volunteered to work on Ways & Means.
- She was instructed to email her interest to the club Secretary.

Secretary Hecker returned to the meeting. Secretary Hecker announced the names of the elected 2017-2019 board members. They were: Carol Gehret, Diane Schmidt, Wayne Hecker, Joseph Neuman, Sharon Gardner, James Hauptly, and Carol Neuman.

President Hecker made a brief statement about serving the members of the club and their Swissies. She invited everyone to become active and involved in the club committees. The goal is to get as many members involved in club activities as possible.

Tony Collins made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jana Furst seconded. Meeting adjourned.



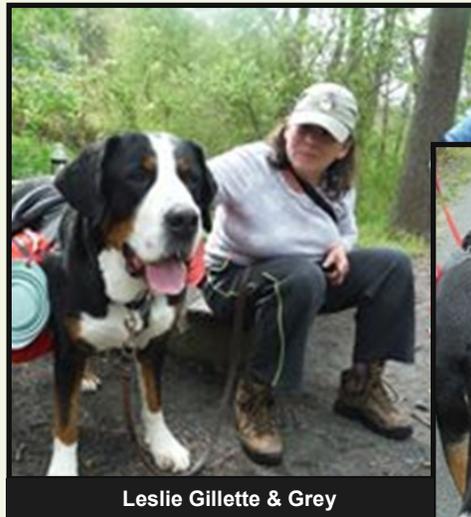
PACK HIKES



Club members participated in a couple of pack hikes this year as they work towards earning their titles.



Denise Mitterando & Caboo



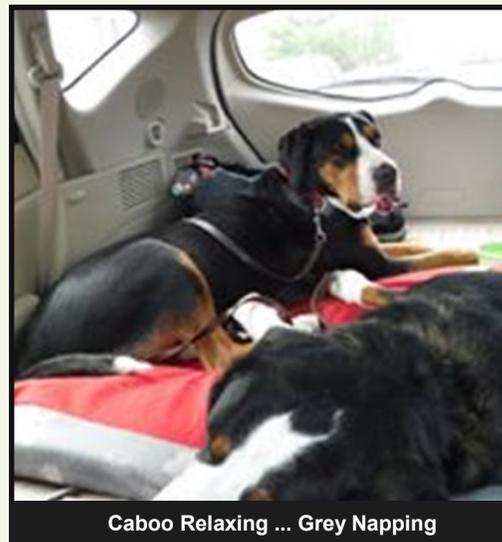
Leslie Gillette & Grey



Did I hear you right? 10 Miles?



Braving the Cold Weather last March



Caboo Relaxing ... Grey Napping

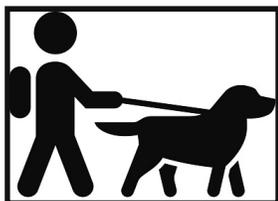
Congrats on Earning a Leg / Title!

Michelle Charters & Sky, Annie Gardner & Maggie,
Janie Hecker & Toby, Denise Mitterando & Caboo
earned a Leg.

Sharon Gardner & Teddy earned a Title.



GSMDCA National Specialty Hike - 10 Miles in the Pouring Rain!



PACK HIKES



2016 MAGS Turkey Trot

10 miles, mid 40's, and some rain ... that's how 4 Swissys earned a leg or title!

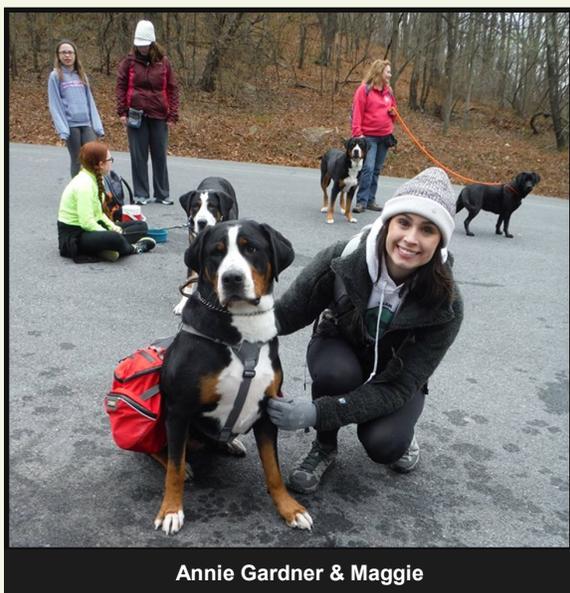


Danyelle Sweeney with Dewey & Gracie

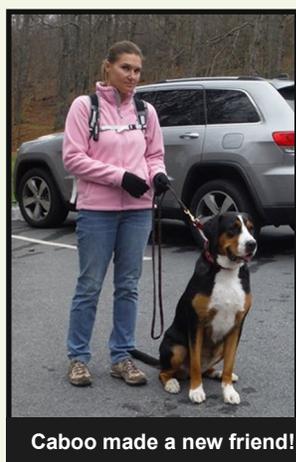
Katie Schomp & Tugger



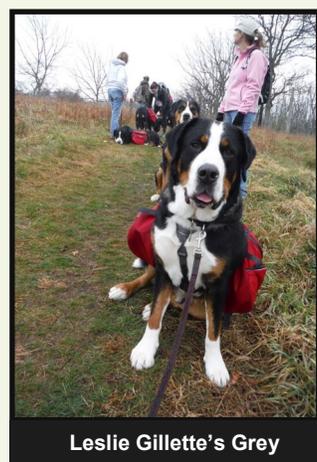
Sharon Gardner & Teddy



Annie Gardner & Maggie



Caboo made a new friend!



Leslie Gillette's Grey

Congrats on Earning a Leg / Title!
Sharon & Annie Gardner with Teddy & Maggie,
Denise Mitterando with Leslie Gillette's Grey, &
Katie Schomp with Tugger



Caboo 'Fun-Hiking' with Grey



CHRISTMAS PARADE

Twenty-nine "Reindogs" & their people kicked off the holiday season last December by wishing everyone a Merry SwissMas in Coatesville, PA. The club took first prize in the Best Appearing Float – Non-Profit category and received a cash award of \$500!



Isabella, Jackie, Gabriella & Herbie Caputo



The Rosander Family with Snickers



CHRISTMAS PARADE



The Hecker Family with Klara and Toby



Let's get this Parade Started!



Rainey Reindog



Caboo dragging her Tree



MAGS BRAGS



Truffle & Caboo Pulling their Weight & Then Some!

Truffle & Caboo showed some Swissy newbies what weight pulling is all about at a Green Dog Weight Pull earlier this year.

Denise
Mitterando's
Caboo
pulled an
impressive
1,840 lbs.
You go girl!



Karen &
Rich
Gross'
Truffle
stopped at
2,260 lbs.
so that the
really
green dogs
could give
it a try!

MAGS BRAGS



Caboo Pulls 3,600 pounds!

Denise Mitterando and Caboo traveled to Ohio in April for the Crooked River Swissy Club Easter Weight Pull where Caboo reached new heights pulling her highest weight to-date. She received her WWD, WWDX, WWDS weight pull titles and earned some ACE points in the process!



Caboo Earns Advanced Therapy Dog Title!



Performed Over 100 Visits in May

Caboo Earns Second Pack Hike Title!



Trexler Game Reserve Spring Hike

MAGS BRAGS



Rollingh's Pilgrim's Salute to Alpha Lonzie Earns his First Point!

Andrea and Bob Haubrick's 8 month old Lonzi took 'Winners' at the Bald Eagle Kennel Club of Williamsport show in Bloomsburg, PA on August 1st earning his first point towards his AKC Conformation Champion title.



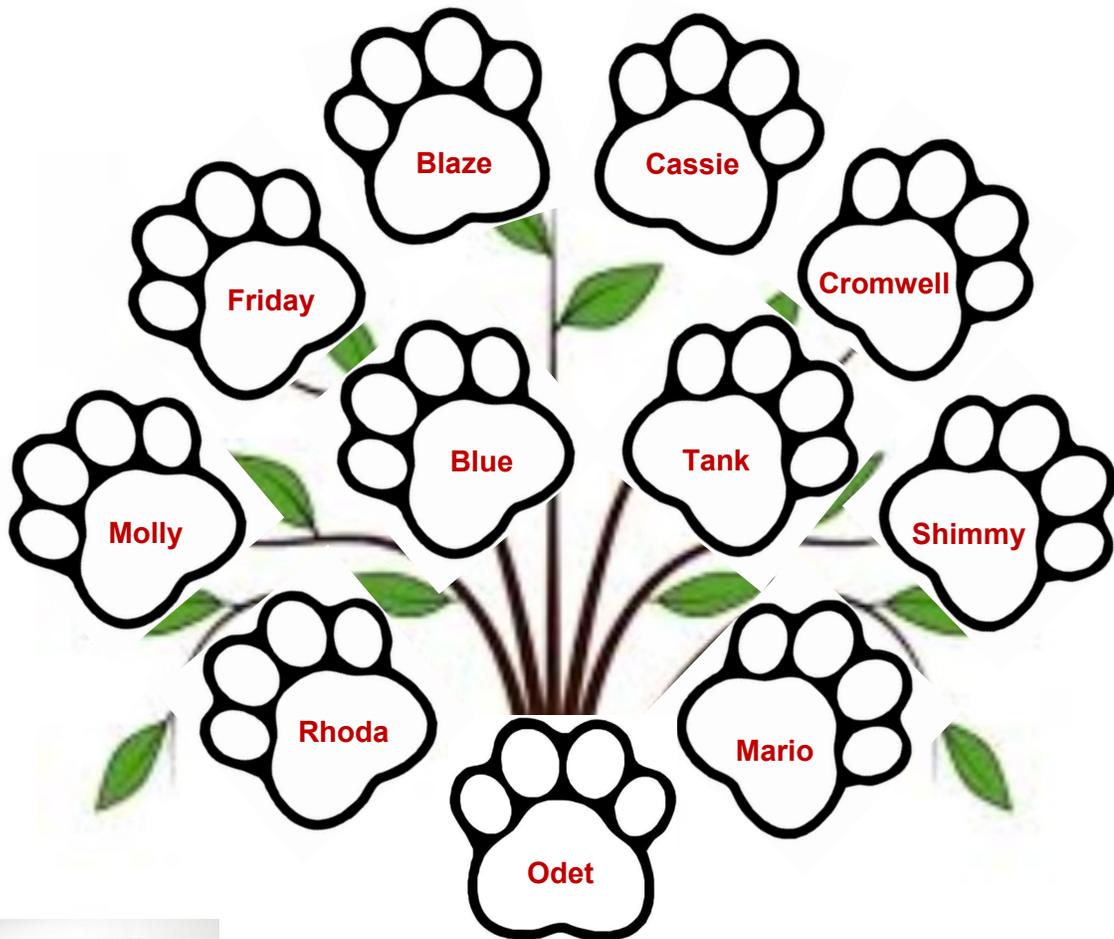
MAGS BRAGS



Platinum GCH CH Painted Mountain Oliver Twist Earns His Register of Merit Title!

Katie & Randy Markley's Oliver received his Register of Merit (R.O.M.) title which is awarded by the GSMDCA to dogs who have sired ten or more AKC Champions. They are thrilled to have their Oliver join the ranks of the many great dogs who have earned this award. Earlier this year, Oliver's son Blaze, owned by Gina & Frank Auruchio, gave him the 10th Champion he needed. He has since added another Champion to his list.

See next page for a list of Oliver's Champions



Oliver's Champion Tree

MAGS BRAGS



Oliver's 11 Champions & Counting!

Registered Name	Call Name	Dam
GCH CH Kismet's Winner Takes It All	Cassie	GCH CH Cabro 7 SD Kismet's Aria
CH Kismet's Suddanly I've Got The Power	Cromwell	GCH CH Cabro 7 SD Kismet's Aria
GCH CH Suma-Shadetree Good Girl Friday	Friday	CH Suma Shadetree from Russia with Love
CH Suma-Shadetree Little Boy Blue	Blue	CH Suma Shadetree from Russia with Love
CH Kismet Happily Ever After @ Prestige	Tank	GCHS CH Land's End Penzance of Kismet
GCH CH Kismet's Once Upon a Time, RN, CGC	Odet	GCHS CH Land's End Penzance of Kismet
GCH CH Shadetree's Moliver Twist	Molly	CH Land's End That Girl at Shadetree
CH Shadetree A Touch of Classy at Suma	Rhoda	CH Land's End That Girl at Shadetree
CH Shadetree's Mario Twist	Mario	CH Land's End That Girl at Shadetree
CH Shadetree's Blaze Your Own Trail at Bluemoon Farm	Blaze	CH Land's End That Girl at Shadetree
CH Seneca's Woollongong Shimmy	Shimmy	CH Seneca's Melody of a Mockingjay



MAGS BRAGS



SwissKiss Ichabod of Sleepy Hollow gets his First Points!

Laurie and Gene Grace's Bodie took 'Winners' at the Bald Eagle Kennel Club of Williamsport show and 'Best of Winners' at the Lackawanna Kennel Club show in Bloomsburg, PA earning his first 2 points towards his AKC Conformation Champion title. He followed that up with 'Best of Winners' at the Mid Susquehanna Valley Kennel Club show in Middleburg, PA.

This 'show'
thing is
hard work!

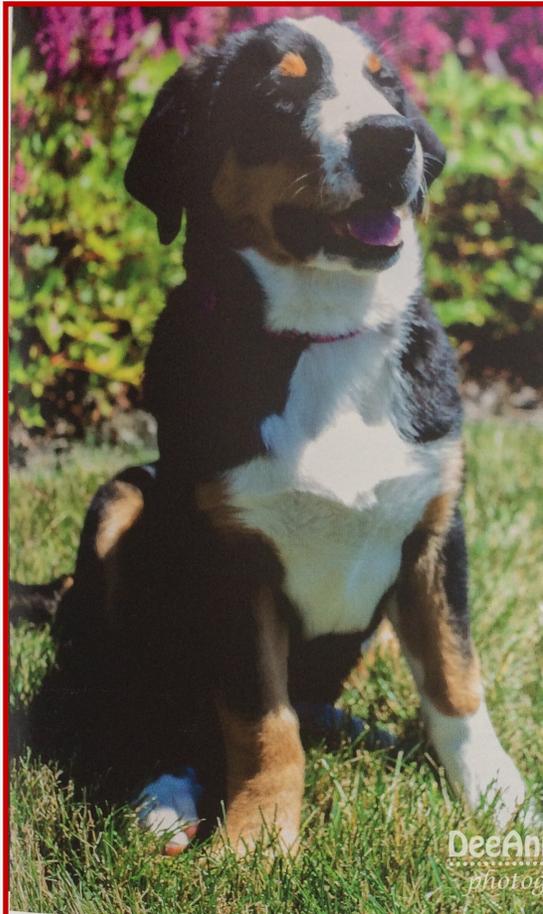


MAGS BRAGS



Hattie In Print!

Katie and Randy Markley were thrilled to see that one of their grandpuppies made the news in Northville, Michigan. It's so much fun to watch grandpuppies grow up!



precious pets

meet Hattie!

Hattie (DeeAnn Feick)

Hello, Northville Hills Residents and friends, my name is Hattie! My family is Mom and Dad, Shawn and Ann Ryan; sister, Piper, 11 and brother, Elliott, 9 and then there's Gus the C-A-T!! I love my people family very much but the jury is still out on how I feel about Gus, it sure is fun to tease him, though!! I am a Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, a similar breed to a Bernese Mountain Dog but my hair is shorter and I'll be a little bigger!

I was born in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, on April Fool's Day so that makes me just 13 weeks old. My breeder hand delivered me to Northville, all the way from Pennsylvania. You might be wondering about my name; Hattie - its short for Hat Trick, my whole family loves hockey and my mom even plays hockey and I'm the third Greater Swiss Mountain Dog in the Ryan family.

My family loves me very much, I know because they love my puppy snuggles and I have tons of toys; 6 Kongs to be exact and lots of stuffed toys. My brother says I'm a bit of a Drama Queen, but I'm not too sure why. Maybe it has something to do with that cat, Gus. My breed is a working dog so I am very content to just hang out with my family, I like to go for a walk every day, but don't need to play constantly.

If you Google the Animal Planet breed of Greater Swiss Mountain Dog you will see a picture of my Grandsire, He is a Champion Show Dog. I have big paws to fill as my family would like to take me to dog shows too!! I think if they judged on cuteness, I would win paws down!

That's about all from me today, I hope when I'm out walking with my family, we will bump into you! I'm super friendly and am looking forward to meeting more of our neighbors!!



What's Your pet's story? To share it with us email
Danny.Deddeh@2pub.com

MAGS BRAGS



New Silver Grand Champion! GCHS Kismet Captain Avery's Toby

At the Mountain Laurel Cluster on July 28, 2017, Toby was chosen Best of Breed at the Lackawanna Kennel Club Show by Dr. Steve Keating. This was a 5 point major which allowed him to reach the 200 point mark and make him a Silver Grand Champion.



MAGS BRAGS



New Grand Champion!

GCH Kismet's Blazing Fire On The Mountain Lady Klara

At the Mountain Laurel Cluster on July 29, 2017, Sharol Candace Way chose Klara, born on February 19, 2015, as Select Bitch for one point. That was the point she needed to become a Grand Champion.



MAGS BRAGS



CH Cherished the Century's Best CGCA RN NWPD WWDS

Jaime and Randy Taylor's 'Sentry' earned his Advanced Canine Good Citizen (CGCA) in April. He also did great at the National Specialty in May competing in drafting, rally, and obedience for the first time, as well as hiking, weight pulling, and showing in conformation. Sentry also earned his AKC Beginner Novice title on July 1st, and on July 22nd went Best of Breed at the Centre Hall show for a 5 point major toward his Grand Champion title—just one more point to go!



MAGS BRAGS



Ridgebridge Rosella Crimson CGC RN

Jaime and Randy Taylor's Eleanor 'Ellie' is trying to keep up with her big brother. She earned her Canine Good Citizen in April. She also did well at this year's National Specialty earning 4th in Futurity and Sweepstakes, 3rd in Sweepstakes at the Independent show, and qualified in Rally—it was Jaime's first time in the rally ring EVER! Ellie also earned her Rally Novice title on July 2nd.



MAGS BRAGS



'Big Bang Theory' Puppies!

Sharon Gardner's Maggie and Kim Wollard's Zuko welcomed into the world five beautiful girls and four boys on June 29th. They went to their new Swissy families at the end of August.



MAGS BRAGS



'The Happy Days Gang' Puppies!

Carol Gehret's proudly presents 'The Happy Days Gang' litter—one girl and four boys—born on July 10, 2017 from a breeding of CH Cabro's two nice n easy Joy's Top Hat in tails Lacey and GCHB Kismet Captain Avery's Toby CGC, NWPD, WPD. Lacey is owned by Carol Gehret breeder of this litter, and co-owned by Jim Hauptly. Some pictures for your puppy pleasure!



CH Cabro's two nice n easy Joy's Top Hat in tails Lacey



GCHB Kismet Captain Avery's Toby CGC, NWPD, WPD

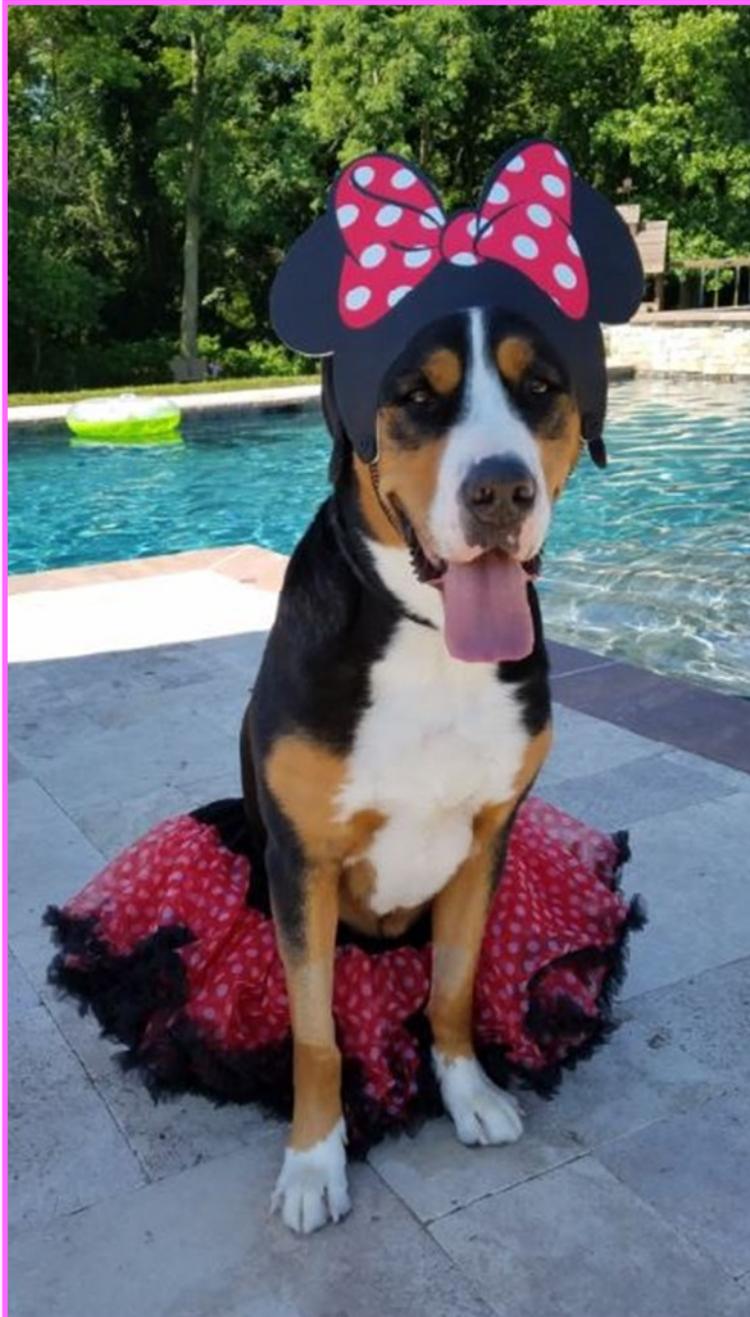


HAPPY BAROODAY



Caboo Turns 5!

Caboo celebrated her July 9th birthday with parties, boat rides, Barks in the Parks, as well as, everyday walks!



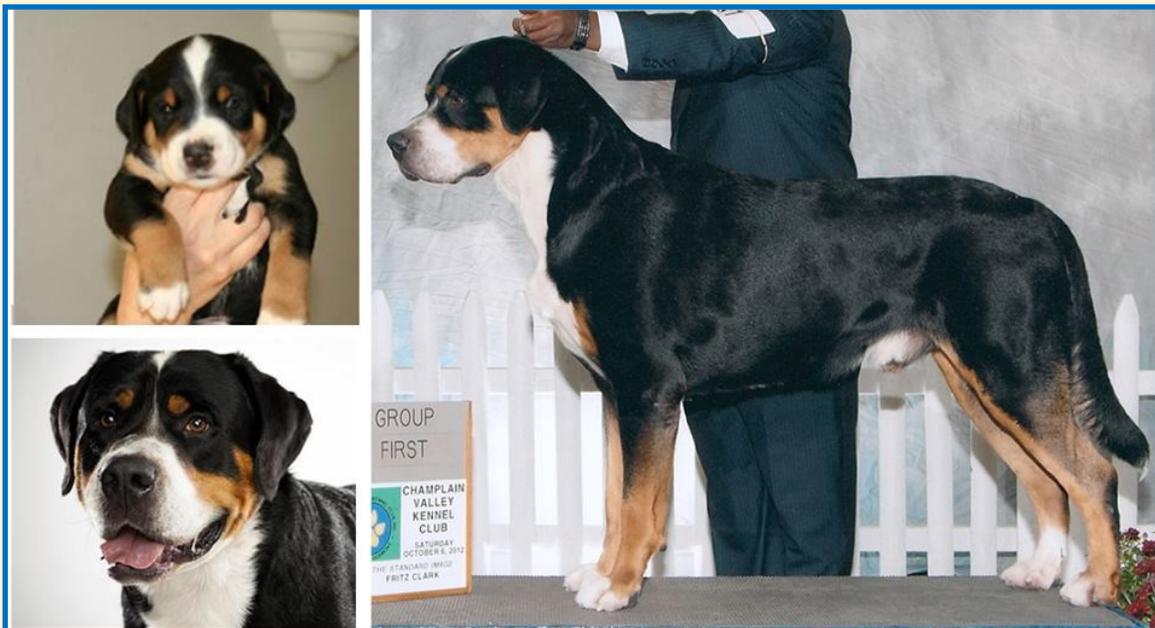


HAPPY BAROODAY



Oliver is 9 & Do'n Fine!

Katie & Randy Markley's boy celebrated his 9th birthday on July 11 with a private pool party and picnic. Oliver prefers to have the whole pool and steak to himself!





HAPPY BAROODAY



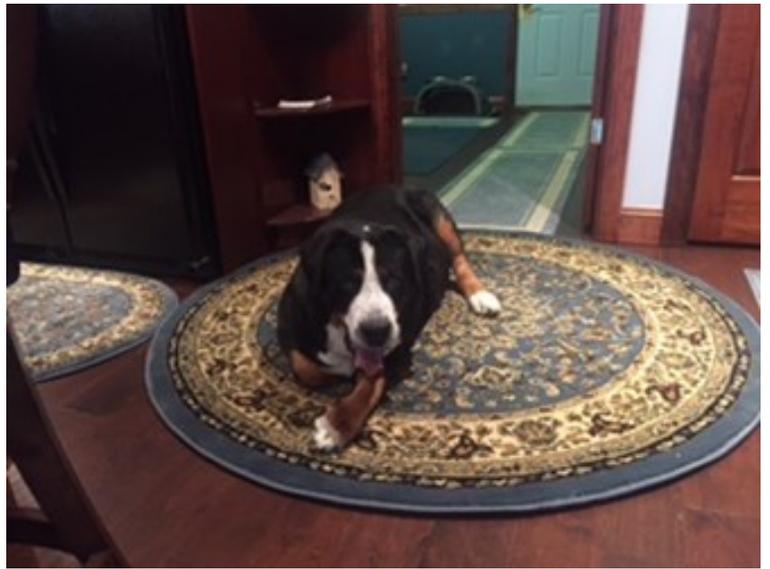
Mack Turns 1!

Michelle & Jon Sheppard's boy celebrated his 1st birthday on Sept. 2nd & is starting a new birthday hat fashion trend!





Ch SeaVaRidge's Hammer of Thor (12/14/07—06/07/17)



Hello everyone, my name is Ch SeaVaRidge's Hammer of Thor—

just Thor to my friends, and that's just about everyone I have ever met. I would like to share my life's story with you, or at least the parts I'm willing to admit to. You see, I'm no longer here. I crossed the Rainbow Bridge on June 7, 2017, but I'm still in my human's head so I will let him do him do the work for me. I learned that trick early in my life—we might get into that later, but no promises.

I was born on a mountain top ...

Okay, it was up on the ridge in Lewistown, PA., on December 14, 2007. My Mom, Ruby, was so good to me and my many siblings. She kept us fed, warm and happy. One day when I only six weeks old we got a visit from a couple of humans I had never met. I found out later that their names were Jim and Eileen. That sounded strange to my ears, and that Jim person—I wasn't too sure about him—but Eileen was just nice to be around. They watched us play and we checked them out. You can't be too careful with strangers, you know. They had the nerve to pick me up and pass me back and forth. I didn't know what they were grinning about, but it was okay. They had a lot to talk about with my humans, Robbie and Christie. They finally left—back to some lunch and a nap for me.



The next two weeks went by so fast.

We were getting bigger and more curious about our world. We got to adventure outside for short periods—wow, a whole new place to explore! Then in the door they came with big smiles on their faces. They were carrying a collar, and put it on me—some nerve—and led me outside and told me to go hurry. I didn't know what that meant so I just walked around in the grass and figured I might as well pee while I was here. What were they so happy about? They told me good puppy—I knew that! Well the next thing I knew they picked me up and carried me to this big car thing. I never saw anything like it before, and I admit I was a little scared. They shoved me into a small crate that I barely fit into and shut the door behind me. Wait a minute, what's going on here?, where are my brothers and sisters and my Mom? Now the big car thing started to move, and I couldn't see anything except the two of them. This is awful—I didn't know what was happening so I cried myself to sleep.



Ch SeaVaRidge's Hammer of Thor

(Part II)

The big car thing stopped, the door opened ...

and the crate with me still inside was pulled from it. I was taken out of the crate and sat on some grass that I never smelled before and was told to go hurry. What do they want? Well, I did the same thing I did at home. I walked around the grass to smell everything and peed; it was a long ride. They told me I was a good puppy again and yelled "good job Thor". I looked around and wondered who was this Thor. And so it began.



I had a great puppyhood!

I met my first nonhuman friend my first day. She was two weeks older than me, but I was bigger. Her name was Lily and she was as white as snow with eyes as blue as ice. I found out later that she was a cat. We quickly became friends and even shared my crate for naps together. Before long I came to learn that these two humans were going to be my new Mom and Dad, and they really loved and cared for me.



Time moved on and I grew and grew!

I went to puppy classes, into stores, had great walks, and met all kinds of people. Everyone wanted to know what I was mixed with. What? I am not mixed with anything; I am just me. My Dad explained that I am a Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, a very ancient working dog breed. Wait a minute, who said anything about working? We will see about that—I had my pride.



One day around the time I was six months old ...

Dad got me all washed up and said we were going to a show. I wondered what I was going to see—was I in for a shock! What a huge place this was and so many dogs of all kinds. I even had a shiny new chain collar and a nice lead to walk in with. I wasn't sure I was going to like this. We stood outside of this thing called a 'ring' for a long time, and as I watched other dogs run around inside and have a strange human put their hands all over them—how embarrassing. Dad and I practiced what they were doing in there and I started to realize this was why. Now we were going into that ring with a few other dogs like me. I did what Dad told me as best I could—I was nervous. The judge came over to me and wanted to see my bite. I am not supposed to bite, dummy. Dad pulled my lips up and the judge said thank you, and put his hands all over me like I had not seen before. I can handle this. Wait a minute, what are your hands doing back there? That was interesting. We didn't get ribbon that day, but that was only the beginning of our show career together.

Ch SeaVaRidge's Hammer of Thor

(Part III)

Over the next few years ...

we got more of those ribbons and something called 'major points'. I had my picture taken with the judges and Dad and a few others along the way until one day we got enough points to earn my championship title. Wow, we did it ... what a great a day ... everyone was happy!



I wasn't an only child all of my life.

Sorry I left this part out, but I will correct that now. Around the time I was nine months old Mom and Dad brought home my first sister, Gracie. She was about five months old so she was ready to play. Gracie was Large Marge's little sister, and I do mean little. She was great company when Dad and Mom were at work, and as soon as she was old enough we went to shows together. Gracie was the smallest in her litter, and was sweet as candy. I loved Gracie. When she was about fourteen months old she got very sick. Dad had to take her to the doctor many times, even one that was a long way from home. One day Dad brought her home from the doctor and was very sad. She was still sick, but I licked her and laid with her. The next day Dad took her to the doctor and she never came home again. I never knew where she went until I crossed the bridge, and there she was, wagging her tail, waiting for me along with another sister, Misty—I'll talk about her soon.



Gracie

When I was two Mom and Dad brought home ...

my next sister, Angel, from our friends, Joe and Carol Neuman. Angel was just eight weeks old—boy, she was a pain. All she wanted to do was play and bite me. Angel was around for only a few years—more on that later.



Dad & Angel

A few months after Angel joined the family ...

Dad and Mom brought home another surprise, a new sister named Misty. I was just getting Angel in line—what were they thinking! Now there were three of us and Dad called us his 'Swisscateurs'. He said we reminded him of the Three Musketeers—'one for all and all for one'. He even changed his email name to match. We were awesome together. We went to shows together and drove Dad nuts trying to handle the three of us by himself. We were so good at messing with him that he had to ask friends to help out.



Misty



The Swisscateurs



Misty, Me & Angel



04/24/2010

Ch SeaVaRidge's Hammer of Thor

(Part IV)

When Misty was a little over two years old ...

she got sick after a show, and Dad had to take her to the emergency doctor to find out she needed surgery. She had a tumor and a large hematoma. The surgeon removed the tumor overnight, but could not remove the hematoma because she would not have survived. The surgery was a success and the hematoma reabsorbed—we were happy! She could not go to shows anymore after the surgery, but she was still the big teaser that she always was.



One night less than a year later ...

Misty started to shake in her crate so bad that Dad woke up and ran to see what was wrong. Another trip to the emergency doctor; she did not come home for a couple of days. When Misty came home she had new medicine to stop the shaking; Dad called it Epilepsy. The medicine worked for a short time and then more medicine, but the shaking would not stop. Poor Angel didn't know what was happening and thought Misty was trying to bite her, so she bit her back when Dad wasn't home. Dad and Mom had to ask Joe and Carol to find a new home for Angel so Misty would be safe when she shook. I missed Angel until my time came to cross the bridge. Misty kept on shaking for months. It got worse and worse no matter what Dad and Mom did. One day the shaking would not stop so Dad took her to the doctor again. I never saw Misty after that until I saw her with Gracie on the other side of the bridge. She wasn't quite three when she left us four years ago. I was happy to see my sisters—SeaVaRidge's Keep the Faith Gracie (07/15/09—09/25/09); SeaVaRidge's Part the Night Mist (01/12/10—07/25/13)—but sad to leave Mom and Dad.

Okay more about me.

Don't get the wrong idea, I had a great life. All the shows—when I got my champion title I wasn't even three years old. My breeder, Robbie Roberts, always said I had a beautiful head. I hope she didn't mean a big head because I never had an attitude.



I went to so many places and did so many things with my people and other friends.



Ch SeaVaRidge's Hammer of Thor

(Part V)

I was the neighborhood watcher.

I watched everything and everybody from my yard. I could see people coming from a long way, and my dog friends in the neighborhood always gave me a good warning if I was napping. I loved to bark at anyone on the road. If they knew me, they knew I was just saying hello. If they didn't know me, they were not going to cause us any trouble. I loved everyone, but wouldn't tolerate any foolish behavior on two or four legs. Mom always said I was her alarm and her protector—she was right.



Dad called me his buddy—I loved that!

He would take me for walks, rides in the golf cart, and let me lay in the front yard when he was working on it. I kept watch for him so he could do his work. When they came from work or shopping I always met them at the fence gate. I was so happy they were home that I couldn't stop wagging my tail until we got inside.



Boy, did I eat well!

Dad made me yummy food with green beans and carrots that he made special just for me. I got a slice of cheese everyday with a little peanut butter inside. When Mom made something I could eat, like scrambled eggs, chicken or beef, I got mine too. If she got a little too full, I got a bit more.

I was in a Christmas parade last December.

I got tired towards the end and had to ride on a big truck to the end of the parade route. People came to see me on the truck whenever it stopped. I got to meet young ones who thought I was something special—I knew that!



Ch SeaVaRidge's Hammer of Thor

(Part VI)

I had a few health issues along the way ...

but Mom and Dad always made sure I got the best care. I never got to have any kids of my own because when I was two I had my eyes checked and some doctor I never met before told Dad that I was going to get cataracts early and would pass them on. I was nine plus years old when I crossed the bridge and my eyes were as clear as the day I came home—that's why they call it 'practicing' medicine—they don't always get it right. I developed prostate issues a couple of years back so Dad had me neutered to stop it. I never missed 'them' after that and I would still lift my leg on trees and bushes—but never in my house. I had a bad day in May when Dad got me up one morning to pee. I stumbled in the yard—it worried me, and Dad and Mom. It was on a Saturday and our regular doctor did not work so off to the emergency doctor—they checked me out and said I looked fine. I felt fine and wasn't stumbling or anything so we came home; I was glad. We had a few good weeks after that then came the night of Sunday, June 4th this year. I was not doing well and was wandering around downstairs. Dad was in the bathroom and Mom was sleeping when she heard me whining. She got Dad right away and they came to find me collapsed in a doorway. I could not get to my feet so they got a sheet and made a sling under my belly, and somehow got me up and out to the yard. I couldn't handle it and laid in the grass. Dad called a friend and in a few minutes they got me in the Yukon and I was on my way to the emergency doctor.

Dad drove and Mom stayed in the back with me to comfort me.

Boy, was I ever glad for her company. The staff helped get me on a table with wheels and rushed me into the building. After the doctor checked me out he told Dad that my belly was full of blood and I had masses on my spleen—I needed surgery. Dad and Mom came to see me before surgery; I was so happy they were there; I was wagging my tail on the table. They told me to be brave and that they loved me. I knew that, but it was good to hear. That was Monday morning.

I had my surgery that morning not that I knew what was going on.

When I woke up later that day Mom and Dad were waiting to talk to me. I was happy to see them, but didn't feel much like company. The doctor said everything went well and I should recover. I just didn't feel right and didn't want to eat. Even Dad couldn't get me to eat some chicken. The next day I felt better, but still wouldn't eat even when Mom and Dad came to see me. On Wednesday morning Dad called to check on me and they told him I had a good night and should check back later. Later that day Dad was at work and they called him to say I was not doing well and should come in as soon as he could. He got there twenty minutes later. I had taken a bad turn and the staff were working on me—it wasn't good. I was conscious, but wasn't responding to Dad. He called Mom at work and she got there really fast. I couldn't lift my head or let them know I knew they were there—they kept talking to me. As they talked with the doctor I was getting worse, and the doctor said there was nothing they could do to stop it. Mom and Dad walked away for a short time and came back with tears running down their faces. I could barley breathe by now. Dad put his face to my ear, and said it was time and it was okay for me to leave them. That was the last words I heard before a gentle feeling came over me and I relaxed and fell into a dream. When I woke I was standing before the Rainbow Bridge looking across to see Gracie and Misty waiting for me to cross.

I still watch over Mom and Dad with Gracie and Misty from over here ...

and tell them I'm okay and they shouldn't cry for me because I have my sisters—but they still don't always listen to me. We will always love each other, and someday we will be together again. Until then please be happy—we are here.

Love, Thor

LIFE ON THE FARM

Gina Aurichio

A few years back while researching various breeds I recall reading that the GSMD was once referred to as the “poor man’s horse”.

Soon after becoming a first-time Swissy owner, and meeting other owners it occurred to me that so many GSMD owners were or are involved with horses. Is this a coincidence or are some equestrians, horsemen and horsewomen intrigued and fascinated by a breed with natural abilities to work the farm?

When my husband and I moved to North Carolina

We also brought along an 11 year old Quarter Horse, Main Attraction, or as we call him “Reno”. While living in New Jersey for nearly 20 years we had owned several small, private horse farms. Knowing the level of dedication to managing a horse property including regular upkeep, weekends spent fixing fences or dragging fields—we decided to look at horse boarding facilities for our next move to North Carolina. Through the magic of the Internet and networking we came upon a small community 12 miles south of Charlotte. The community was developed with ‘equestrian living’ in mind, and while there were 20+ horses boarded here some time ago, the magnificent barn is now home to four horses, one large pony and a miniature pony. It is also a dog-friendly barn, and has a foot trail / bridle path around the community and adjacent woods and farm land!



LIFE ON THE FARM

Gina Aurichio (*Part II*)

Since moving south and settling into our new environment Blaze has become more involving in my daily farm duties.

It's unbelievable that he knows exactly when I plan to invite him along and rushes to the back door. He sits (because he knows we always ask him to sit before opening any door), and then I invite him into the garage and put his pack on. While we're not pack hiking, any time the pack goes on he knows he's about to 'work'. Stored in his pack are bottles of water, hair ties for me, peppermints for the horses, and of course, baggies for his 'business'.

It is only a short walk to the community barn, but it's Blaze's favorite walk.

He keeps his sights on the barn door. Nothing can distract him from getting there—he literally marches to the barn—engaging his hindquarters with every step. Once inside the barn Blaze demonstrates what it means to be a Greater Swiss Mountain Dog! Most of the time I remove his leash and he stays alongside me whether we are cleaning stalls, filling water buckets or bringing horses in from the pasture. He listens for my commands (except when one of the barn kitties is nearby). When it's time to bring in the miniature pony (who is the most difficult and challenging of equines on the property—very stubborn, very unpredictable—Blaze keeps the little guy in line driving him from the field to his stall. Remarkably Blaze is very respectful of the horses and has the perfect temperament. He's confident, alert to what is happening around him while keeping an eye on me, and never bossy or aggressive.

Blaze makes regular stops at the water bowl, but it's not long before he's back at my side ready to work, or supervise me working.

Recently one of the boarders purchased a small cart for her miniature horse and we discussed how it may be time to teach Blaze!

Regularly we see other boarders at the barn who bring along their trusted canines including Labs, a Vizsla, a Boxer, a rescue cattle-dog and others.

The boarders enjoy the fact that Blaze is the only male (intact no less) and is surrounded by the girls. They run and play together and eventually Blaze sits by the door signaling his shift has ended!

We've decided to get Blaze involved in a beginner rally or agility class—the verdict is still out on which he will enjoy or is better suited for. What I know for certain is that he enjoys working!

Here's to all my of fellow Swissy friends ... get out there and experiment and find out what your Swissy enjoys doing and you will have a happy GSMD!

Gina & Blaze Aurichio