



**The MESSENGER** an Official Publication of BVKA

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**April 2026**



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## NEXT MEETING DATE \*\* CHANGE IN VENUE CONTINUES \*\*

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Please join us at our next meeting on **Thursday, June 11, 2026 at the Burlington Library, 820 E Washington, Burlington.** We will meet at the library at 6 p.m. for social hour followed by the business meeting at 7 p.m. The May meeting is cancelled because we all will be up in Lynden with the Mt. Baker club that day setting up for the Northwest Cluster Dog Show May 15-18.

Our first meeting at the library this month worked out so well that we're looking forward to meeting there again in June. A huge thank you and high-five to Diana for her hard work reserving the room, ordering and picking up lunches, providing coffee, tea, water and cookies, and for just being her amazing and helpful self. It was so nice not being interrupted by wait staff during our meeting and equally wonderful being able to hear what was being said. The way the tables were set allowed each of us to easily converse with one another which was another plus. This library meeting space just might turn into a "thing!" If you weren't able to make the April meeting, hopefully you can give June a try. We're sure you'll also be pleasantly surprised!

## UPCOMING BVKA EVENTS MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

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- SPRING AGILITY TRIALS: April 17-19 at Fun Fur Paws, Mount Vernon
- OBEDIENCE/RALLY FUN DAY: April 26 at Country Classic Kennels, Arlington
- NORTHWEST CLUSTER DOG SHOW: May 15-18 at the Lynden Fairgrounds  
(May 15-16 Mt. Baker All Breed Cluster Days/**May 17-18 BVKA All Breed Cluster Days**)  
(NO BVKA GENERAL MEETING: May 14th (Due to All Breed Cluster Days))
- BARK IN THE PARK - *CANCELLED*
- FALL AGILITY TRIALS: September 11-13, Fun Fur Paws, Mount Vernon  
(NO BVKA GENERAL MEETING: September 10th (Due to Fall Agility Trials))

## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### DO YOU NEED LOGO WEAR?

With the Northwest Cluster Dog Show days upon us come May, do you need any BVKA logo wear? If you could use tee-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, or any of the above or more, please contact Jean as soon as possible at [jean@jeangroesbeck.com](mailto:jean@jeangroesbeck.com).



## WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!!

The Bell Vernon Kennel Association warmly welcomes to the family Courtney Shawver.

April 9 was Courtney's second meeting and she was a great help at the BVKA Tracking Test. Courtney partners with her wonderful Border Collies, Pixel and Charm, to compete in UKI Agility, truffle hunting (she has a Championship dog), and other dog sports including barn hunt. She also has multiple Championships in UKI and regularly competes in UKI national events.

In addition to competing, Courtney serves as Secretary and/or Club Manager for all Zanee Agility UKI trials hosted at Run Wild. She also has served as Trial Chair for multiple AKC ISC shows at Run Wild.



Courtney loves to support the AKC ISC program (International Sweepstakes Class) and attends AKC agility tryouts for Team USA (including this year's AKC World Team Tryouts that will be later this month!). Her dog Charm was selected as an alternate for this year's Team USA for the European Open in France.

WELCOME COURTNEY!

In previous issues of The Messenger, over the past few months, we enthusiastically welcomed several other new members to our family; however, those issues were missing the all important photographs so we could put the name with a face. Now we see you Shirley, JoAnn, Heather and Rose, and wholeheartedly welcome you again!



# MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

## Secretary Diana Sandoval



I live in the Bow, Alger, Bellingham corridor, an area that gives us firsthand knowledge of what a weather conversion zone is. I've always been an outdoorsy girl, which led me to find a career that allowed me to work outside. A career that led to my wonderful husband, and living in various locations: Texas, Arizona, South Carolina, Canada, and finally Washington State. Ramon and I fell in love with this area and knew this was where we wanted to retire.

We've always had dogs throughout our life and have enjoyed hiking with them, playing fetch, and appreciated their companionship.

It wasn't until we retired that we started getting involved in dog sports which led us to join BVKA. Sophie, my doodle, makes me laugh every day and is my "Novice" girl. Novice in agility, novice in Fast CAT, and we're looking for our next adventure (novice title).

Then my husband said, "I want a bloodhound!" And that decision changed our direction. After we got our first bloodhound, Bailey, it was amazing to see her tracking instinct even as a puppy. Her nose is incredible and watching Ramon train in Man Trailing inspired me to do the same.

Monitoring West Coast Bloodhound Rescue we found Whiskey River, our male bloodhound, who had a rough start in life but is now living his best life and working on getting certified in AKC Tracking. Knowing I wanted more of a trailing dog, one of the rescue members told me about a



bloodhound puppy who had been orphaned and abandoned. A puppy who showed her foster mom that she had an excellent nose and needed a job. Which was one of the many signs that this puppy and I were destined to become a team. Tia, our youngest bloodhound, is working on her AKC tracking titles as well as her Bloodhound trailing titles. We're also training in Man Trailing and Tia continues to amaze me with her grit and determination. She and I have worked numerous trails and have walked many miles together in all sorts of weather and environments. I wouldn't have it any other way.

I am in awe of the combined knowledge our club members possess about dogs and dog sports and their willingness to teach others. I have learned so much in just the few years I've been a member. I'm happy to be the club's secretary

## BRAGS AND WAGS!

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Tony Stark has finally done a THING!!! He earned his Novice Rally title at the WSOTC trial last month, with scores of 98 and 98!! Maybe we've found his special purpose!



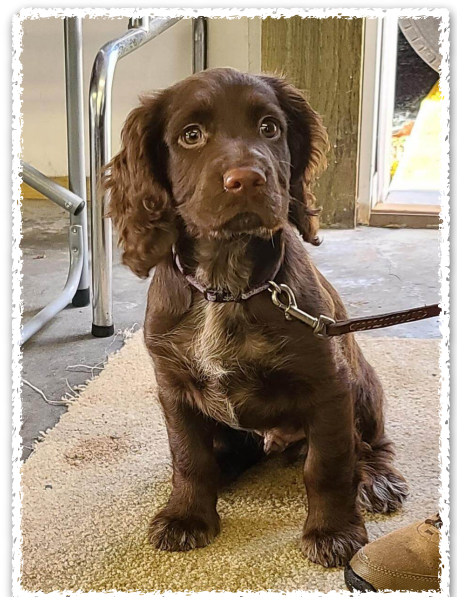
Congratulations Denise  
and Tony!

## BRAGS AND WAGS!

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At the WSOTC trial Earl and his English Cocker, Robby, finished their CD with a score of 197 which was just 1/2 point out of HIT.

Congratulations Earl and  
Robby!



# BRAGS AND WAGS!



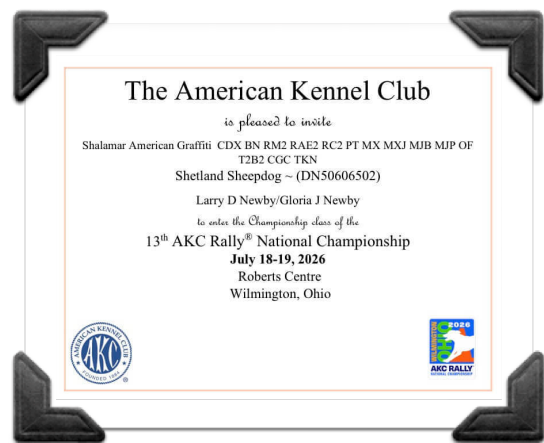
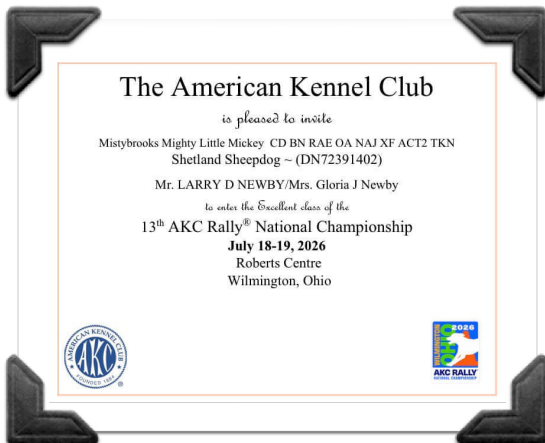
Kobe got his first perfect Rally score at WSOTC, 100 in Choice. He won the Choice class both days, legs 7 and 8. Hoping to finish up his Choice title at Lynden, Oh, and on Sunday, his score was 99. He is a good boy in Rally.

Congratulations Rita and Kobe!

# BRAGS AND WAGS!

Steve and Mickey have both qualified for the AKC Rally® National Championship! Steve qualified for the Championship class, while Mickey qualified for the Excellent class, and we are planning to go! The event will take place in July at the Roberts Centre in Wilmington, Ohio.

Congratulations Larry, Steve, and Mickey!



## BRAGS AND WAGS!

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Well, Trey and I finally got our Open Jumpers title after years of trying through mishaps, injuries, and busy lives. Mom even made the mistake of assuming we were in Excellent after only 1 Q because the span was so long between Qs that she assumed it was #3! Now that Trey is 8 years old, he is getting more serious. He had a Q just 2 trials ago. Last Saturday at Run Wild in Auburn, Trey received a perfect score and a first place ribbon! True to his character, Trey became a goofball again on Sunday after moving up to Excellent. Keeping mom on her toes. But he was allowed his victory lap at the embarrassment of mom. Go Trey! Now he gets to play again in Excellent Standard as well, without conflict.



Congratulations Germaine and Trey!

# BRAGS AND WAGS!

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Karma got an invitation to Rally Nationals in Ohio. We won't be going but it was nice to get an invite.



At the WSOTC show on Saturday, Karma got her first leg of Open Obedience and a second place out of 19 dogs. I'm so proud of her!!!

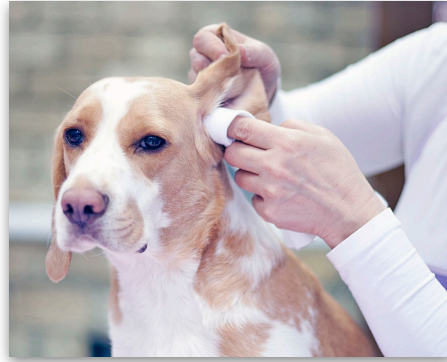


Congratulations Pat and Karma!

# THE TAIL END

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## How to Clean Dog Ears at Home Cleaning Your Dog's Ears is Easy with the Right Supplies (Courtesy of Whole Dog Journal and Kate Basedow, LVT)



Not every dog needs regular ear cleaning. Some dogs have naturally clean ears and no problems, so there's little reason to clean them. Other dogs, however, like a drop-eared dog who loves water, are prone to gunky ears and otitis externa (inflammation of the ear canal). Of course, even prick-eared dogs can get bacterial, yeast, or ear mites that might require periodic cleaning.

Before you decide to go it on your own and clean your dog's ear, consider whether the dog has an ear infection or not. If he's shaking his head like crazy, you see discharge or notice a strange smell in the ear, and he's scratching his ears, chances are he is battling an ear infection. This usually needs a diagnosis to determine the cause of the infection and the right medication to cure it.

When you take your dog to the veterinarian's office, the staff will likely do the first ear cleaning, however, cleaning the ears will become part of your dog's treatment plan and regular preventive care. Don't worry. It's not hard to do and most dogs don't mind (too much).

### What Do You Need to Clean a Dog's Ears?

You don't need much to clean your dog's ears:

- A dog-safe ear-cleansing solution
- Cotton balls
- Optional: some gauze and/or cotton-tipped applicators
- Optional: premade dog ear wipes

The ear-cleansing solution is the most important item. Pet ear cleaners contain a drying agent so that your dog's ears will dry quickly once you are done with cleaning. We like Virbac Epi-Otic Advanced Ear Cleanser. It's effective and easy to use. For wipes, our choice is the Zymox Advanced Enzymatic Ear Wipes.

If you're looking for natural ear-cleaning solutions, equal parts of water and white or apple-cider vinegar will help, but we don't think it's the best choice for long-term care. Unlike an ear-cleaning solution, this mixture does not dry as quickly. Persistent moisture in your dog's ears can encourage more infections because bacteria thrive in a warm, moist environment.

Cotton balls and gauze are perfect for wiping out ears. Cotton-tipped applicators can be used to remove gunk from the nooks and crannies of the ear but only use these in areas where you can see. Reaching too deep could accidentally rupture your dog's ear drum.

## How to Clean a Dog Ears

1. Apply ear-cleansing solution to a cotton ball.
2. Place the soaked cotton ball in your dog's ear and squish it around. Most dogs tolerate this better than squirting the cleanser directly into the ear.
3. Gently wipe the ear with cotton or gauze, using a new piece each time until it comes back clean. Note: If your dog's ear starts to bleed, stop cleaning. The tissue is too sensitive.
4. Use a cotton-tipped applicator to carefully remove debris from nooks and crannies of the ear that you can see easily.
5. Repeat with the other ear.

If your dog was diagnosed with an ear infection, follow your veterinarian's instructions for how often to clean the ears. In many cases, cleaning will be a couple times a week while treating an infection, and then weekly or every other week for long-term care, but this protocol can vary.

