

Dane Line

REIMAGINED | DECEMBER
2025

HAPPY HOLLIDAYS

Wishing everyone a year full
of health, happiness and wins!



Presented by the Great Dane Club of New England

President - Sue Davis Shaw

Vice President - Marcia Roddy

Recording Secretary - Kim Thurler

Corresponding Secretary - Tiffany Cross

Treasurer - Carol Urlick

Directors - Suzanne Kelley, Normand Vadenais & Dianne Powers



Note from Sue



Hello everyone,

First of all, I want to thank everyone for your incredible work ethic, both during the National and for our Specialties. Due to your efforts and donations, both were very successful. Despite some serious challenges, everyone worked together and made it all happen.

I'm excited to see all your brags in this issue. Special Congratulations go out to Jayme Lemaire, Carol Urick and Bob Layne on their lovely Adele, MBISS GCH Lemaire's One and Only, winning Best of Breed at the National! It was a wonderful, emotional moment for all of us and the win of a lifetime!

We need to think about judges for next year. Please think about it and get your suggestions to someone on the judges committee: Sue Shaw, Laurie Maulucci, Pat Ciampa, Judi Arsenault, Bob Layne, Carol Urick. Keep in mind that judges for our designated specialties (the ones held within the all-breed shows) need to be able to judge two groups to be considered. We will also need a sweeps judge.

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and a New Year filled with peace, hope and good health.

Best wishes,

Sue Davis Shaw
President

Getting to Know You

Dawn Williamson

I'm delighted to introduce myself and share a bit about how I found my way to this wonderful club and, of course, to Great Danes.

My connection to purebred dogs began in childhood, when family vacations meant road trips to dog shows. Many happy hours spent ringside—and at home with our beloved white Bull Terrier, Johnathan—sparked a lifelong love of dogs and the dog show world.

After many years focused on raising my family and building my career, I found my way back to that early passion. It was longtime club member Paul Bowman—whose memory and impact are still strongly felt—who reintroduced me to the beauty and nobility of purebred dogs, and especially to Great Danes.



I fell head over heels for Paul's Great Dane, Natalie (Ch. Devine Unity Unforgettable Sophisticated Lady), and knew I wanted one of her puppies. When Cole (Bowman's Unforgettable Sentimental Reason) joined our family, he completely stole our hearts. I'm continually struck by his sweetness and sensitivity—not to mention how much calmer he is than a Bull Terrier!

This year marks 40 years since I began working as a nurse. I hold a Doctorate in Nursing Practice from Regis College, a Master's in Adult Mental Health Nursing from Northeastern University, and a BSN

from the University of Massachusetts. I am a Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Adult Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing and an Advanced Practice Addictions Nurse.

I currently work in the Emergency Department at Massachusetts General Hospital, caring for individuals and families facing addiction and mental health crises. In addition to direct patient care, I educate clinical staff, train fellows, and help develop treatment protocols. I also serve as an Adjunct Clinical Instructor for the MGH Institute of Health Professions. Teaching has given me the opportunity to work in settings as varied as hospitals in



Tanzania, clinics in the Netherlands, and, each year, with the Lakota Nation in Pine Ridge, South Dakota.

Outside of work, my greatest joys are my dog and my family. I live in Marblehead, MA with my partner, Gregg, and I have three grown children and one grandson. My grandson just started his freshman year of college, and this fall has been happily spent on the sidelines of his football games. When I do carve out a little time for myself, I enjoy oil painting and horseback riding, which offer a creative and peaceful counterbalance to my busy professional life.

I am truly grateful to be part of the Great Dane Club of New England and to share this journey with others who love and value this remarkable breed. I look forward to getting to know more of you, learning from your experience, and contributing in any way I can to the club and the well-being of our Danes.

Please feel free to say hello, reach out, or share your wisdom—I am always grateful to learn from fellow Dane enthusiasts.



Brain teaser – Number One

Submitted by Betty Lewis

You reap what you sow because of me. Remove the first three letters and I

become an object you can wear.

What am I?



All photos are of
Bowman's Unforgettable Sentimental Reason



Great Dane Club of America

This year's national was a huge success due to the hard work of the East Division Chairman Laurie Maulucci and show chair Jeffrey Ball as well as division club members including many GDCNE members who volunteered many hours to ensure the success of the national.

I received the following message from Camille Durocher: Please extend my thanks to your club members for giving so much of themselves so that the rest of us could continue on.

From Division Chair down, your club members stepped up in so many key roles.

It's very much appreciated.

The 2026 South National will be held at the Meadow View Conference, Resort and Conference Center in Kingsport, Tennessee, October 19 – 24. The website is gdcanationalspecialty.org. There will be NO facebook page due to the cloning of this year's facebook page and the resulting third party selling of merchandise with our logo, costing our division a lot of lost sales. Hotel reservation info is not yet available.

Conformation Judges are:

Best of Breed – Jim Remaklus

Dogs – Thomas Davis

Bitches – Jennifer Bell

Futurity Judges

BJ Barnhart

Doug Toomey

Final voting results for 2027 has not yet been announced.



GDCA Charitable Trust

We are very excited to announce that we have a new Trustee, our own Carol Urick. Carol fills a void left by Rita Suddarth, who we lost earlier this year.

The Trust continues to fund research on Osteosarcoma and Post Op Bleeding. At the National, we subsidized 90 echocardiogram tests for OFA. We also are now subsidizing \$50 of the cost to holter your Dane, as well as subsidizing echos done other than at the national. You can checkout our new website: gdcacharitabletrust.org for more information.

The Trust has instituted a new hardship grant program for those who are having trouble making ends meet and feeding their Danes during the current difficult economic times due to the government shutdown and payments that may have been delayed or eliminated. The application is on the website as well.

Brain Teaser - Number Two

Submitted by Betty Lewis

Turn me on my side and I am everything. Cut me in half and I am nothing. What am I?



Submitted by Maitau Great Danes





The Results Are In!!!

The following individuals were elected to judge the 2027 GDCA National Specialty, hosted by West Division!

Conformation

Best of Breed—Tiffany Cross

Dogs—Mary Lee Williams

Bitches—Robert E. Layne

Futurity

Darryl Pitts

Colleen Assell-Carra

2026 South Division—Performance/Companion Judges

Agility

Ben Gibbs

Obedience/Rally

Aimee Kincaid

Kenneth Kincaid

Election ballots received: 332

Total ballots received include: 20 club ballots and 3 illegal ballots

Total number of votes for Conformation judges: 863

Total number of votes for Futurity judges: 603

Total number of votes for Obedience/Rally: 252

Total number of votes for Agility: 121



Whose leaves these are I think I know
My dog into the yard did go
And now we see leaves indoors here
The busiest season of the year
He gives his hairy fur a shake
Then sniffs for crumbs of toast or cake
The only other sound's the sweep
Of dustpan, broom, and carpet rake
The yard is lovely, dark, and deep
But I have promises to keep
And lots to clean before I sleep
And lots to clean before I sleep

-Kim Thurler with apologies to Robert Frost

Bragg

Ch. Maitau N Cosmic Eye'm A Hooligan

Finnegan



Finnegan

**Awarded Bet Veteran and an Award of Merit at the GDC of America's
National Specialty in October 2025**

Bred , Owned and Loved by Tiffany, Helen & Pat, co -owned by Michele Kuzmich

co -bred by Tami Bradford

Handled by Josh Saunders and Tiffany Cross

BRAGS

The entire membership of the Great Dane Club of New England is thrilled to extend our heartfelt congratulations to our very own Tiffany Cross and Robert Layne for being selected to judge the 2027 National.

We are delighted to share that Tiffany has been selected to judge the Breed and Bob has been chosen to judge Bitches —a prestigious honor in our sport and a testament to their dedication, knowledge, and integrity.

Tiffany and Bob have long been respected members of our community, each contributing in meaningful ways to the growth and excellence of our club and the breed we all cherish. Their selection reflects not only their deep experience, but also the trust and admiration they have earned from exhibitors and fellow fanciers across the country.

Please join us in celebrating this remarkable accomplishment with them.

The GDCNE has been fortunate to have our members judge the National in the past with Judy Harrington doing Breed most recently, along with other notables such as Dale Tarbox, Pat Ciampa and Louis Bond.

We could not be more proud!

Brags **Primrose Million Dollar Baby**
aka "Charlie"



**Charlie was Best Puppy Bitch in Futurity
at the Great Dane Club of America National Specialty.
Thank you to judge Nicole Conneen-Holmes for awarding her this great honor.**

Bred and owned by Normand Vadenais

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026 WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION ...

Adele

MBISS GCH Lemaire's One and Only

2025 GREAT DANE CLUB OF AMERICA NATIONAL SPECIALTY BEST IN SHOW WINNER

MANY THANKS TO BREEDER JUDGE **MS. FAY ROGSTAD**



Breeders / Owners: Jayme Lemaire, Carol McKenna Urick & Robert E. Layne

Beautifully Presented to the Fancy by: John & Jessie Gerszewski

MBISS GCHS Old Mission's Lemaire's Know When to Hold 'Em AOM X GCH Divine Acres Lemaire's Kiki Do U Love Me

Pink

MULTIPLE BEST IN SPECIALTY
GCHS LEMAIRE'S SETTING THE WORLD ON FIRE, AOM

Pink was awarded an **AOM** at the **2025 National** by
Breeder Judge Fay Rogstad.
This is Pink's second National AOM!

We are so proud of her.



Bred, Owned & Loved By: Jayme Lemaire, Carol Urick & Robert E. Layne

Presented by: John & Jessie Gerszewski

MBISS GCHS Old Mission's Lemaire's Know When to Hold 'Em AOM X GCH Divine Acres Lemaire's Kiki Do U Love Me

Bragg

Introducing

CH Trila N Journey Davidane's Ultimate Cool Kid

Finished on September 14th at 15 months with 3 majors



We are very proud of our sweet youngster and her accomplishments.

Barbie was bred by Trisha LaBruzzo and Kim McClure.

Davidane—Sue Davis Shaw

Davidane.com

Brags

AND

**Her first weekend in the Specials ring,
Barbie won a 5-point Specialty Select!**



Barbie is working in Rally while she grows up.

Davisdane

Sue Davis Shaw

Davisdane.com

Brags

Pacific Blues Arizona

Ari



Ari had a standout weekend at the Thanksgiving Cluster in W. Springfield in November. Under Judge Robert E. Hutton, Arizona was awarded Winners Bitch and Best of Winners for a 4 Point Major!

We are so proud of this young bitch.

Thanks to all the exhibitors and spectators who offered kind words throughout the weekend.

Ch. Stardust v Pacific Blues Hear My Train a Comin, RN, CA, CGC, TKN, VHMA, VHMP x
Pacific Bues Rose Faith Conquers All, CGC, TKN, VHMA

Bred by Shinae Perry and Christopher Perry - Owned by Meghan Hamilton and Shinae Perry

Owner Handled by Meghan

Brags

Sterling's Black Teasel V. Mgckngdm RI *Teasel*



Teasel added one new title to her name after earning her rally intermediate title. She added another point towards her championship as well. She is 16 months old now.

Bred and Owned by Sterling Moffat

Braggs

Sterling's Bluebonnet V Krw CDX RE MX MXJ XF

Bonnet



Bonnet has picked up some new titles!!

In obedience.....CDX (companion dog excellent)

In rally.....RE (rally excellent)

In agility.....XF (excellent fast), MX (master standard) MXJ (master jumpers) and 5 QQ (double Q's) as well as some qualifying legs and points towards her Time to Beat title.

Bred and Owned by Sterling Moffat

Brags

Enchanted Mountains Broken Winged Bird

"Auren"



"Auren" took BPUP BOB & Group 1 Friday, and BOB & Group 2 at the Thanksgiving Cluster in November in W. Springfield, MA

Breeder/Owner: Mickella Raven

BRAG

Happy 11th Birthday
STALLONE and ROMA



Stallone - CH Cosmic JV's The Italian Stallion @ NoBonz
Roma - MBISS GCHB Cosmic NoBonz JV Stealing The Starlight, GDCA AOM

Proudly Bred by Tami & Wally Bradford (Cosmic), Karen Pacino (NoBonz) and Vicki Kimbell (JV)



BRAG

BEST VETERAN IN SPECIALTY SHOW AND BEST OF OPPOSITE SEX



Ad by CosmicCreations

MBISS BVISS GCHB Cosmic NoBonz I'll Leave You Starry Eye'd, GDCA AOM, ROM

MBIS MBISS BIF GCHP MJM's Talk of The Town, ROM, GDCA AOM X MBISS GCHB Cosmic NoBonz JV Stealing The Starlight, GDCA AOM

Owned by Tami & Wally Bradford, Karen Pacino and Allison Gallant
Proudly Bred by Tami & Wally Bradford (Cosmic) and Karen Pacino (NoBonz)

ON THE NAUGHTY LIST.

No Regrets



merry christmas
Davidane

Submitted by Sue Davis Shaw



Submitted by Maitau Great Danes

Activities to do with Animals Inside

Betty Lewis

With cold weather approaching New England, I've decided to turn our attention to activities to do with our animals inside.

It's true that really active animals are not going to keep their physical condition in shape with these activities, but mental stimulation is a kind of exercise, and it's fun at the same time.

At the end of this article, I'm going to provide you with a lot of links to different animals showing off what they can do. It's fun to watch all these different pets enjoying interacting with their humans, and you'll get some ideas to use with your own pets.

Games Animals Play

This topic began for me when I spent some time with my Whippet, Autumn, in a motel room. We had too much time to fill before leaving for the event, so, I got out three Styrofoam cups from the motel's bathroom, and treats from my pocket. I decided to "teach" Autumn the old shell game. Well! She learned this game so fast that I barely had time to blink! I had to make her wait while I moved the cups around, but she was immediately toppling the cup to get the treat. Too easy....

Next, I closed her in the bathroom while I hid treats around the room. It didn't take her long to catch on to the hide & seek game, either. Below, you'll find even more challenging games.

Here are some suggestions from the internet:

<https://www.oodlelife.com/35-games-to-play-with-dogs-inside/>

<http://www.mnn.com/family/pets/stories/7-rainy-day-games-to-play-with-your-dog>

Be sure to adapt the game you decide to play to the age, & physical condition of both the pet and the environment.



There are lots of interactive toys for both dogs and cats, but I only bought one once. Bliss & Autumn learned the game so fast that all I was doing was feeding them! In addition, I really want my dogs to interact with *me*, not an inanimate object.

Many years ago, that led me to the sport of Canine Freestyle, or dancing with your dog. This sport is now a titling event with 4 American organizations, and a favorite at the famous Crufts dog show in England. However, it can be engaged in on a multitude of levels from just teaching your pet the basic moves, to creating dances for your own enjoyment, to doing demonstrations at nursing homes or other venues, or competing for titles.

There are a lot of freestyle coaches online. The one I took courses from, and eventually titled with is Judy Gamet of Dogs Can Dance. <https://www.dogscandance.com/>. She is a professional dance instructor, and her first dogs were Rottweilers.

Here are two canine freestyle performances at varying ends of the proficiency spectrum, and an award winning equine performance. Equine Freestyle is where the first ideas for Canine Freestyle originated.

Blaze & unnamed owner <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttjgDdO08Xg>

Carolyn Scott & Rookie <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n936e073z58>

Robert Dover & Juvel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsUlodoG044> - with commentary.

Here is a dog trainer I like teaching some tricks for dogs.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhfOk05nM_4

Here are some animals doing agility and other training.

Cats: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FyqQope-SQs>

Rats: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/pwGPI7zNoMM>

<http://www.theagilerat.com/?id=36>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPrqg0h-Df4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLaiUZWRO0c>

Ferrets: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tB6CkJ1yvlS>

Fish: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5avbzUGow4

Rabbits: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM9YWm6T_hc

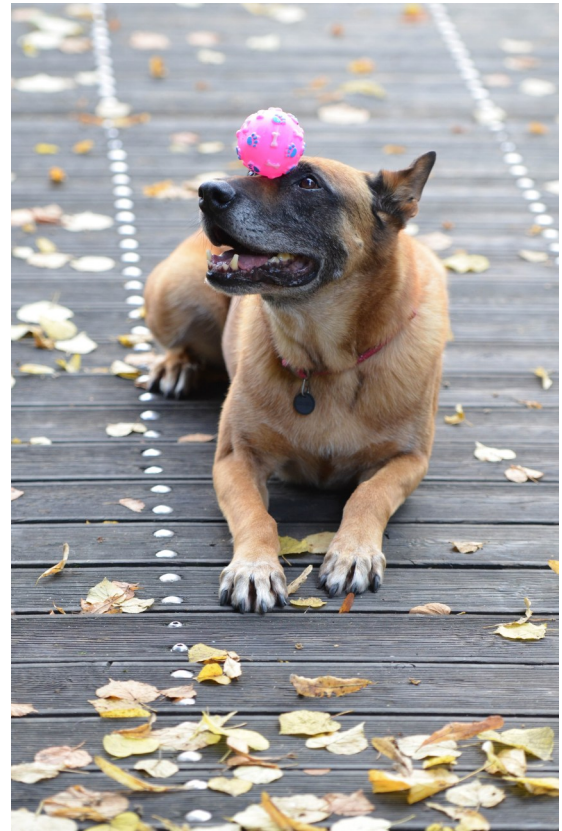
Hamsters: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHTVwxLuNCK>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrFnnP91Hss>

Cats: <http://www.wimp.com/usefultricks/>

Enjoy doing more with your animals, and Happy Holidays to all.

Betty



Brain Teaser Number Three

Submitted by Betty Lewis

Without it, I am dead. If I am not it,
then I am behind. What am I?



Opinions or statements expressed in *DaneLine Reimagined* are not reflective of the Great Dane Club of New England.

Neither the Editor, the Great Dane Club of New England, the Great Dane Club of New England's Board of Directors nor any of their respective

affiliates guarantee the accuracy or completeness of any information contained herein

*The next Deadline for Dane Line
Reimagined is*

March 11, 2026



Sunshine

Our members have had some very challenging times this quarter and our hearts are broken at the losses that they have suffered.

Our hearts go out to Carol Urick and Jayme Lemaire on their loss of Carol's son and Jayme's twin brother, Shawn, and to Pat Ciampa on the loss of her husband, Joe.

Rachel Wilson has endured a heartbreaking loss of her Mira, Creed and Riddick in a short period of time.

We wish Peter Roddy and Norm Vadenais well as they both continue to recover from surgery.



Recipes

Submitted by Sue Shaw

Sweet Potato Dog Treats

1 Ingredient Dog Treats

Cut a sweet potato into 1/2 cm slices with a mandolin or knife

Bake at 250°F for 2 hours turning halfway

Store in the fridge for up to 3 weeks or the freezer for 3 months

Easy Homemade Dog Treat for less than \$2 - Carrot Chips for Dogs Recipe

Ingredients:

- 4 carrots
- 1 stalk of curly parsley (English parsley)
- 1 tablespoon of coconut oil or olive oil

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven at 325°F (163°C)
2. Wash and slice the carrots thinly, around 1/8 inch thick. It's easiest if you have a mandolin slicer, otherwise a steady hand with a sharp kitchen knife will work just as well
3. Wash and chop one stalk of curly parsley
4. Grab a mixing bowl and mix in the sliced carrots, chopped parsley and 1 tablespoon of healthy oil (coconut oil or olive oil)
5. Line a baking tray with a baking paper and lay the carrots flat in 1 layer
6. Bake for 30 minutes, flipping them halfway through
7. After that, let it cool, which should allow the carrot chips to become crispier
8. Finally, serve to your happy dog!
9. Store them in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5-7 days

Christmas Dog Treats

Submitted by Sue Shaw

Serves 24

These homemade Christmas Dog Treats are an easy way to pamper your pet during the holidays. Made with 5 simple, healthy, wholesome ingredients, these cookies taste delicious and are the perfect puppy present.

Prep Time 20 minutes mins

Cook Time 20 minutes mins

Total Time 40 minutes mins

Ingredients

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened applesauce

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup creamy peanut butter

1 large egg

Red all-natural food coloring
optional

Green all-natural food coloring
optional

$2\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour

$\frac{2}{3}$ cups rolled oats

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit and line a large sheet pan with parchment paper.
- Mix the applesauce, creamy peanut butter, and egg together in a medium sized bowl using a hand mixer or stand mixer.



- Divide the mixture as evenly as possible into three medium sized mixing bowls (a little more than $\frac{1}{3}$ cup per bowl).
- Add all-natural red food coloring to one bowl, and all-natural green food coloring to another bowl, optional. Leave the last bowl uncolored.
- Mix the food coloring into each wet mixture until completely combined. Keep in mind that the color will dilute when the flour mixture is added, so add a little more food coloring than you think it will need.
- In a large bowl, combine the all-purpose flour and rolled oats and stir until well mixed.
- Divide the flour mixture into three (1 cup each) and add to each of the three bowls.
- Use a hand or stand mixer to stir the flour into each wet mixture until just combined.
- The mixture should create a slightly dry but malleable dough. If it is too dry, add more applesauce, $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoon at a time. If it is too wet, add more flour, 1 teaspoon at a time. Mix these add-ins with your hands if possible in order to avoid overmixing the flour.
- Roll the three different colored doughs (or single colored dough) onto a lightly floured surface using a rolling pin until the dough is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in thickness.
- Use Christmas shaped cookie cutters to cut out cookie shapes—rerolling the dough until all the dough is used. Place the cookies on the sheet pan.
- Bake in the oven for 13-18 minutes or until they turn golden brown. You can vary the bake times depending on preference. For a softer treat, cook for less time.
- Let cool completely before serving as treats to your precious canines.



NOTE: You should always check with your vet to make sure the ingredients are good for your dogs diet. I also recommend giving your dog a small sample to try first to make sure they don't have a negative reaction or any allergies.

Storage: You can leave these treats on the countertop for up to one day, but after that, keep them in the refrigerator in an airtight container or plastic bag. They will last for 1-2 weeks if properly packaged.

To Freeze: To freeze these cookies, place them in a freezer-safe airtight container for 3-4 months.

Tips:

Some peanut butter brands include xylitol to cut the sugar in their product. **DO NOT USE** any peanut butter containing xylitol because it is toxic for dogs. Check the ingredients prior to baking.

If you don't want to make different colored cookies, you do not have to worry about dividing your dough.

It's much easier to incorporate the food coloring into the wet ingredients as opposed to the dry ingredients. However, you can also add it into the recipe when both the wet and dry ingredients have been incorporated.

You will need to bake two batches of cookies in order to use up all your dough for this recipe. You can either use two large sheet pans (11×13) or one large sheet pan but used twice. Make sure to cook your batches separately to avoid uneven cooking.

If you don't have any parchment paper, use cooking spray. It will work fine for these cookies since they don't tend to stick to the sheet pan.

Because these cookies are on the drier side in order to make more biscuit-like treats for the doggies, they might dry out too much if you add too much flour to your surface. If your dough gets too dry, add little teaspoons of extra applesauce and knead it into the dough before you roll it out.

Nutrition Info: Calories: 98kcal | Carbohydrates: 14g | Protein: 3g | Fat: 3g | Saturated Fat: 1g | Polyunsaturated Fat: 1g | Monounsaturated Fat: 1g | Trans Fat: 1g | Cholesterol: 7mg | Sodium: 28mg | Potassium: 67mg | Fiber: 1g | Sugar: 1g | Vitamin A: 12IU | Vitamin C: 1mg | Calcium: 7mg | Iron: 1mg

DUES:

It is that time of the year again when dues are payable to the Great Dane Club of New England.

In case you have forgotten, the dues are \$15.00 for individual membership, \$25.00 for family, and \$10.00 for associate membership.

Please forward your dues to me (Carol Urick) at 74 Briarwood Drive, Manchester, CT 06040. Remember to make your checks payable to GDCNE and not me! If you pay by PayPal, remember that PP charges us when we use them. So, if you send \$15.00, we only receive \$14.21 and so on and so forth. I know we offer PayPal as a convenience for folks, so just letting you know in case you want to send along an extra dollar to offset the fee. This is not mandatory, of course. You can also pay on the GDCNE website.

Thanks to the few folks who have already paid their dues!



Brain Teaser - Number One

Answer: Harvest

Brain Teaser – Number Two

Answer: The number 8. (Lying on its side, it is the infinity symbol ∞ , representing something limitless or endless. Cut in half, horizontally through the middle, it's a zero, i.e., nothing.)

Brain Teaser—Number Three

Answer: Ahead!

Great Dane Club of New England Specialty Weekend November 2025

We had a wonderful turnout for our specialty weekend. Thanks to all who entered the shows, supported the trophy fund and the raffle with items and ticket purchases.



Here are the links to the results:

Friday Designated - <https://m.infodog.com/results/results.htm?evno=2025033705&bno=35100&sdt=11/01/25&edt=12/01/25>

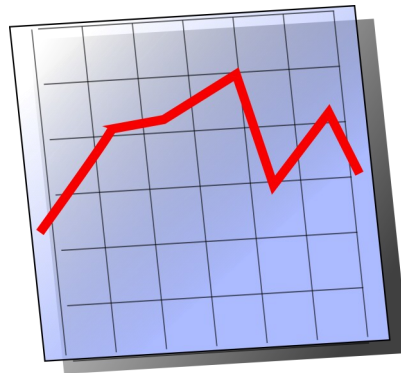
Friday Concurrent - <https://m.infodog.com/results/results.htm?evno=2025133401&bno=35100&sdt=11/01/25&edt=12/01/25>

Saturday Designated - <https://m.infodog.com/results/results.htm?evno=2025033003&bno=35100&sdt=11/01/25&edt=12/01/25>

Saturday Concurrent - <https://m.infodog.com/results/results.htm?evno=2025133404&bno=35100&sdt=11/01/25&edt=12/01/25>

Chart of Event Entries from AKC

Submitted by Sue Shaw



Doug Ljungren, AKC EVP Sports & Events reported the following 2025 July Entries by Sport

- Conformation down – (4.8%)
- Agility down – (1.7%)
- Scent Work up 13.0%
- Fast CAT® – up 0.4%
- Rally – up 1.9%
- Field Trials down – (2.4%)
- Obedience down – (2.4%)
- Hunting Tests down – (2.7%)
- Fetch down – (31.9%)
- Herding down – (9.4%)
- Lure Coursing – down (9.2%)
- AKC Temperament Test – up 6.7%
- Farm Dog Certified – up- 4.0%
- Earthdog down – (25.7%)
- Tracking down – (0.3%)
- Total Entries – all AKC Events – down (2.0%)
- Total Events up 1.0%



Gabapentin For Dogs: Know The Risks

[Dr Josie Beug DVM](#)

Submitted by Sue Shaw

Last Updated: May 7, 2024



Whenever I notice veterinarians widely prescribing a new drug, I like to look at the history of that pharmaceutical. And gabapentin for dogs is no exception.

History can tell us a lot ... so can the money trail. I also look up the scientific research behind the commonly prescribed drug and other medications. I read those double-blind placebo-controlled studies. The ones that Big Pharma and conventional vets use to bully the alternative medicine community. Here's what to know before giving dogs gabapentin.

Is Gabapentin Safe For Dogs?

About 7 or 8 years ago I began hearing about a lot of **dogs with arthritis, neuropathic pain and chronic pain**. And these dogs with obvious signs of pain were taking gabapentin and [tramadol](#) instead of anti-inflammatories or a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID).

Many of the owners were calling me. Their dogs weren't reacting well to the medications ... and they were still in considerable pain. And an 80 lb Lab who can't get up and walk is a problem. It can lead to life and death decisions.

Here are some of the things dog owners noted.

- Diarrhea, black tarry stools and vomiting
- Change in behavior, aggressiveness
- Low energy, drooling, sedation and mental distress
- Rolling eye movement
- Ataxia, clumsiness, loss of balance, unsteady gait, loss of coordination
- Loss of appetite
- Gastrointestinal distress
- Increased anxiety or agitation (from a medication prescribed to treat both!)
- Fluid retention in limbs and extremities

And even more serious are allergic reactions that include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling of the lips, tongue or face
- Hives

So what was this new drug for dogs called gabapentin? And why was it suddenly flooding the veterinary market for chronic conditions like chronic pain management?

History Of Gabapentin

Gabapentin was first developed in 1975 as a medication to treat seizures. In 1993, the FDA approved it to treat epilepsy for humans. And then in 2002, the FDA approved it to treat postherpetic neuralgia (shingles). Gabapentin is best known under Pfizer's brand name, Neurontin. And it became one of Pfizer's best-selling drugs in human medicine. But within a few years, Pfizer (then Warner-Lambert) was in litigation.

That's because they had violated federal racketeering law by improperly promoting the drug. They were illegally marketing gabapentin ... for at least a dozen off-label uses that the FDA hadn't approved. And off-label prescriptions accounting for a whopping 90% of Neurontin sales.

[Pfizer settled the off-label case in 2004.](#) They paid criminal charges and civil liabilities totaling \$430 million. It was one of the largest pharmaceutical settlements in history. And then, in 2009, pregabalin, a gabapentin derivative called Lyrica ... was part of a massive \$2.3 billion dollar settlement against Pfizer. Not only was the drug used off-label ... it was causing many concerns in the medical field. It induced pancreatic cancer in rats. In humans, there were reports of:

- Dizziness
- Ataxia
- Fatigue
- Tremors
- Myoclonus (involuntary muscle jerking)
- Suicidal thoughts
- Addiction

Withdrawal syndrome (confusion, agitation, upset stomach, delirium)

[Check out the huge list of oral gabapentin side effects on the Mayo Clinic's website.](#) And yet gabapentin is a human medication that got the nod from veterinarians.

Dangerous Gabapentin Side Effects In Dogs

Most dogs are prescribed gabapentin to manage chronic pain associated with arthritis and cancer as well as neural and post-operative pain. It's often prescribed alongside NSAIDs or opiates. It's thought to amplify their effect on pain management despite potential side effects.

But here's why it's not such a good medication to be giving your dog.

2008 was one of the earliest references I could find to Gabapentin in veterinary medicine. There was a short article on Veterinary Information Network (VIN), revised in 2017. That's right. Despite the 2004 and 2009 settlements against Pfizer ... in 2008 the drug showed up in the veterinary community being prescribed for pain, anxiety in dogs and seizures.

This is what the recent *Plumb's Veterinary Drugs* had to say:

- Caution in renal failure or insufficiency
- Extra-label use in seizures in dogs; "evidence to support use is relatively weak"
- Extra-label use as an adjunctive analgesic: "Evidence to support use strengthens in recent years ... may be effective in some dogs, for chronic pain in dogs with a neuropathic component"

Note the cautious language: "may be," "some dogs," "extra-label." There's not much confidence in its effectiveness. Other veterinary articles ... not research studies ... stated some interesting tidbits:

Gabapentin can cause deficiencies in calcium as it works on the calcium channels ... not on the neurotransmitter GABA (it was designed to mimic the chemical structure of gamma-aminobutyric acid). It can also cause deficiencies in vitamin D,

vitamin B1, and folate. Ironically, all these nutrients help with nerve repair.

Cautions With Gabapentin For Chronic Pain Dogs

There are several reasons to be very wary of giving gabapentin to your dog.

- Use of gabapentin for dogs is not FDA-approved ... but vets still frequently prescribe it to treat pain ... including pain from intervertebral disc disease, as well as other conditions like anxiety, idiopathic epilepsy and seizures in dogs.
- The kidneys and liver are needed for the metabolism of gabapentin so it should be avoided by dogs with liver disease or kidney disease.
- Pregnant or nursing dogs, or dogs taking antacids, hydrocodone or morphine should not take it to avoid drug interactions.

Most dogs develop tolerance over time when trying to get chronic pain relief ... so they need a higher gabapentin dosage. The risk of side effects increases along with the dose of gabapentin, of course. This increases risk for a dogs overdose, plus higher doses increase side effects ... and the cycle continues.

Veterinary Medicine Research About Gabapentin For Dogs

There have been zero controlled research studies on gabapentin to treat pain. And case reports show mixed results.

I found no double-blind placebo-controlled research studies on gabapentin for dogs. That means there's no information to support its use in treating chronic pain. If you find one please forward it to me!

A 2018 review found that gabapentin was of no benefit in sciatica or lower back pain in humans.

Another study in 2009 found gabapentin influences a receptor that helps create new synapses in the brain. Gabapentin can block a specific receptor that's responsible for making new neuronal connections.

Connections that help grow, develop and repair the brain. This means that gabapentin can actually inhibit new neural connections from forming.

What Does Gabapentin Do For Dogs?

The dogs I see on gabapentin come to me already taking it. And I find other options to replace gabapentin quickly. Why? Because of what I've observed about the side effects of gabapentin in my practice ...

Physical Adverse Effects

I've seen canine patients become lethargic or develop vomiting, diarrhea and tremors. These adverse effects all went away when we stopped the drug.

Two elderly patients developed signs of cognitive disorder. They experienced head pressing, got stuck in corners, and would stare into space. Both of them recovered after stopping the drug.

Behavior Changes

Rita Hogan, a canine herbalist, shared her experiences with me about gabapentin for dogs. She reported dogs becoming more aggressive and exhibiting signs of dementia and memory loss. Rita also saw a family member develop signs of senility, memory loss, and confusion with this drug.

Lack Of Efficacy In Gabapentin Pain Management

I haven't seen a case where gabapentin really made a difference in pain management. So why exactly is the veterinary community prescribing this drug, which ...

- Has caused deleterious side effects in humans
- Was part of the largest pharmaceutical fraud settlements in history
- Has no FDA approval for the conditions it's used to treat
- Hasn't been effective in any double-blind placebo-controlled trials
- May actually prevent the nervous system from repairing itself

But there are other things you can give your dog to bring him pain relief without changing his personality or creating a constant state of listlessness.

What Are Safe Pain Medication Alternatives To Gabapentin For Dogs?

When I get dogs off of gabapentin, I use many different natural options and herbal therapies to manage pain. They're much safer and more effective alternatives to gabapentin ... a drug that has NO scientific evidence or FDA approval to back it up.

Some of the best options to manage pain in dogs are:

Turmeric

- Acupuncture
- Electroacupuncture (specifically for nerve pain)
- Chinese herbal therapies

Western herbs

Homeopathic remedies

1 Ever since I finished vet school there's been extraordinary pressure on holistic practitioners. There's a demand to provide "double-blind, placebo-controlled studies" to prove that alternative options work. Yet Big Pharma can release drugs prescribed for off-label use without any studies. Not even safety studies! And for drugs that have severe, sometimes life-threatening side effects.

2 And, as we saw with gabapentin ... when they can't use them on the human market, they unload them on veterinarians. This veterinarian isn't taking the bait!

References

Piscitelli CM, Dunayer EK, Aumann M. [Xylitol toxicity in dogs](#). *Compendium: Continuing Education for Veterinarians*. 2010 Feb;32(2):E1-4.

Iddir M, Brito A, Dingeo G, Fernandez Del Campo SS, Samouda H, La Frano MR, Bohn T. [Strengthening the immune system and reducing inflammation and oxidative stress through diet and nutrition: considerations during the covid-19 crisis](#). *Nutrients*. 2020 May 27;12(6):1562.

Carter DA, Blair SE, Cokcetin NN, Bouzo D, Brooks P, Schothauer R, Harry EJ. [Therapeutic manuka honey: No longer so alternative](#). *Frontiers Microbiology*. 2016 Apr 20;7:569.

Almasaudi SB, Abbas AT, Al-Hindi RR, El-Shitany NA, Abdel-Dayem UA, Ali SS, Saleh RM, Al Jaouni SK, Kamal MA, Harakeh SM. [Manuka honey exerts antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities that promote healing of acetic acid-induced gastric ulcer in rats](#). *Evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*. 2017;2017:5413917.

Nishihira J, Sato M, Tanaka A, Okamatsu M, Azuma T, Tsutsumi N, Yoneyama S. [Maitake mushrooms \(Grifola frondosa\) enhances antibody production in response to influenza vaccination in healthy adult volunteers concurrent with alleviation of common cold symptoms](#). *Functional Foods in Health & Disease*. 2017;7(7).

Vetvicka V, Vetvickova J. [Immune-enhancing effects of Maitake \(Grifola frondosa\) and Shiitake \(Lentinula edodes\) extracts](#). *Annals of Translational Medicine*. 2014 Feb;2(2):14.

Nantz MP, Rowe CA, Muller CE, Creasy RA, Stanilka JM, Percival SS. [Supplementation with aged garlic extract improves both NK and \$\gamma\delta\$ -T cell function and reduces the severity of cold and flu symptoms: a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled nutrition intervention](#). *Clinical Nutrition*. 2012 Jun;31(3):337-44.

Josling P. [Preventing the common cold with a garlic supplement: a double-blind, placebo-controlled survey](#). *Advances in Therapy*. 2001 Jul-Aug;18(4):189-93.

Arreola R, Quintero-Fabián S, López-Roa RI, Flores-Gutiérrez EO, Reyes-Grajeda JP, Carrera-Quintanar L, Ortuño-Sahagún D. [Immunomodulation and anti-inflammatory effects of garlic compounds](#). *Journal of Immunology Research*. 2015;2015:401630.

Nantz MP, Rowe CA, Muller CE, Creasy RA, Stanilka JM, Percival SS. [Supplementation with aged garlic extract improves both NK and \$\gamma\delta\$ -T cell function and reduces the severity of cold and flu symptoms: a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled nutrition intervention](#). *Clinical Nutrition*. 2012 Jun;31(3):337-44.

Song K, Milner JA. [The influence of heating on the anticancer properties of garlic](#). *The Journal of Nutrition*. 2001 Mar;131(3s):1054S-7S.



Reprinted Dogs Naturally Magazine



Submitted by Maitau Great Danes



Submitted by Maitau Great Danes