



The October Board of Governors meeting was held at the USPC National Office in Lexington, KY, and via Zoom.

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## **Upcoming National Events**

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USPC Equine Symposium & Convention 2022 – January 26-30, 2022 – Norfolk, VA, at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott Hotel.

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## **General Comments**

*Comments from President Ben Duke*

Pony Club had a busy and successful summer, with the Festival, of course, being the highlight. After having been postponed from 2020, the 2021 version was filled with enthusiasm, fun, and exceptional opportunities.

It was fun to be able to attend and participate, and at every turn, the Pony Club spirit was evident. The many volunteers who gave selflessly of their time and expertise made the Festival a reality. Our Pony Club competitors and participants have much to appreciate when one considers the volunteer army that makes such an event possible.

The dedicated, and skilled Pony Club National Office staff also performed beautifully, making sure that there were sufficient supplies and volunteer staff, timing events so that there was no inadvertent conflict of space or equipment needs, lining up the legions of volunteers for competitions and educational programs alike, manning the ever-popular Shop Pony Club store, soliciting countless sponsors and trade show participants, making sure entries were complete and reflected appropriate qualifying requirements, creating educational program schedules that allowed for maximum participation.

The Strategic Planning Committee, under Deb Kirsch's leadership, has been meeting very regularly and has begun crafting a good plan, based on the Task Force recommendations and the still-amazing work of Dr. Garkovich. When complete, it will help guide the organization over several years. Complimenting this work is a very detailed Work Implementation Program being developed by Teresa Woods.

The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Committee, under the capable leadership of Devyn Hinkle, has met regularly and has begun to identify key areas where Pony Club can both expand and augment its program. For decades, Pony Club has offered a great deal to a vast array of members and volunteers, but through the work of this committee, our organization will continue to grow and develop innovative initiatives.

Sue Smith continues to work with the Pony Club International Alliance, and it is most refreshing and rewarding to see the great coordination and sharing of ideas between our sister organizations in Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Hong Kong, South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. Future virtual exchanges are in the works, and as COVID allows, so are in-person exchanges. Each country is dealing with the COVID challenges in its own way, based on infections, governmental policies, and the like. But, on a recent call, each country sounded upbeat, and it sounded as though Pony Club continues to thrive

around the globe.

It's hard to believe, but we are quickly approaching a change in the leadership at USPC. Jennifer Sweet, Teresa Woods, and I have been working together for some time now to ensure a smooth and seamless transition. Jennifer has an incredible passion for Pony Club, and both her vision and her determination to see things through thoughtful lenses will serve our organization well. The three of us will continue to work over the next few months, and I can assure everyone that Pony Club will thrive and grow under Jennifer's tenure.

*Comments from Executive Director Teresa Woods*

Since the May meeting, USPC organized and successfully completed Festival 2021, an event that was four years in the making; was a contributing partner in Equitana USA, an event that was two years in the making; and produced the documentary, "Where it All Begins," the first documentary in the history of USPC. Yes, the past few months have been very busy, but very productive!

I would like to take a moment to thank the National Office Team for their extraordinary efforts in making Festival 2021 possible. Special thanks to Activities and Instruction for overseeing every detail, from the early planning stages to the day of moving out. It is hard to describe the monumental efforts and long hours that go into an event of this magnitude, staff and volunteers carried out their duties with skill, commitment, and boundless energy!

In early October, USPC participated in Equitana USA as an educational partner. The entire USPC educational traveling display (1,000 sq feet of interactive educative stations) was set up on-site at the Kentucky Horse Park. USPC's agreement with Equitana USA allowed USPC members free admittance to the event, of which several members and clubs took advantage. USPC received many compliments on the educational display, had a lot of interaction with members and non-members, answered several questions on how to join a club or center, and had many discussions with other equine organizations about partnerships.

USPC recently partnered with The Equine Network as a part of Horse Week, an entire week of programming focused on the horse which aired October 3 - 9 on Horse Week TV. USPC commissioned a 45-minute documentary, "Where it all Begins" that first aired on October 6. The documentary, filmed on location at the Kentucky Horse Park during this year's Festival Championships, followed the journey of two members as they prepared for and competed during Championships. USPC now has a limited license to share the link on our website and social media platforms, so if you missed the documentary, it will soon be available to watch. The marketing and development potential this documentary affords us is incredible.

Technology continues to be an essential resource for Pony Club, and a vital component to being more staff-driven and accomplishing USPC's strategic goals. Thank you to Alyssa Sands, Systems Administrator for the following highlights of current projects and completions:

- Introduction of the first steps in monitoring adult member and volunteer compliance regarding Policy #0900, Member & Volunteer Safety and Protection.
- New partnership with SafeSport™ and integration with their new training platform via the Absorb learning management system.
- Continued updates to the Centralized Financial Reporting System based on the feedback of needs from Treasurers.

- Transition to Google Groups from the Yahoo! Digests as the digests were discontinued by Yahoo!
- Launch of a brand-new online profile for USPC accountholders.
- Renewed contract with PheedLoop for continued use during the Equine Symposium & Convention and upcoming Championships.
- Purchase of multiple laptops and docking stations to allow staff the continued flexibility to work from home as needed.

### **Report from the Treasurer/Finance Committee**

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The Board approved the 2022 Operating Budget and the Capital Purchase request for a new server in 2022.

### **Report of VP of Instruction**

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The Horse Management (HM) Committee is reviewing the HM requirements for rallies and score sheets per the Task Force Recommendations. The committee has added a year of mentoring for all new Chief Horse Management Judges (CHMJ's) with the Provisional Coordinator making the transition from Provisional to fully approved Chief more fluid. The committee evaluated the current Assistant Horse Management Judges (AHMJ's) training materials and continues to plan videos and a handbook for AHMJ training.

The National Testing Curricula Committee create three new videos and a detailed PowerPoint in subject areas where the topics were minimal.

The National Testing program is now functioning with the administrative task force recommendations in place. The Instruction Department at the National Office is managing all the administrative tasks and in consultation with the Instruction Director and/or the National Testing Committee Chairs has made testing panel assignments.

The National Youth Congress (NYC) committee is working with the Development Department to raise \$10,500.00, which is needed to put on a successful in-person program during the 2022 Equine Symposium & Convention. The program has been condensed into a two-day program (Thursday and Friday).

The Regional Instruction Committee is gathering information from each Regional Instruction Coordinator (RIC) on what has been successful or not in their region on instruction topics and education to members. This information will help guide the RIC training/workshops for the 2022 Equine Symposium & Convention.

Festival Education offered 24 workshops and had 215 mounted participants; 124 unmounted participants; D-camp 44 participants; Dressage 4 Kids 10 participants; and 10 non-members participated in unmounted workshops/clinics.

The Instruction Department has been working on Committee Structure from the Task Force Recommendations.

Proposed changes to Instruction Committees: Instruction Council to remain with a chair(s) from each committee and at-large members to the council. Working groups may be invited as needed to the council.

- Retire the Curricula & Standards Committee as the Standards will be developed by the USPC Standards and Testing Committee D-A.
- USPC Standards and Testing Committee D-A (New Committee)
  - In conjunction with the Instruction Department, this committee will help review and revise the Standards of Proficiency, test sheets, and testing requirements across the USPC educational continuum D-A.
  - In conjunction with the Instruction Department will help to prepare guidelines for testing at both the local and national levels.
- The National Testing Committee will be renamed as Examiners Committee to encompass not just the national examiners but to include others that test at the local level to increase the pool and education of all examiners D through A level for consistency. Since national testing administration, Standards review, and testing requirements will now be overseen by the new USPC Standards and Testing Committee D-A, the new focus of the Examiners Committee is below.
  - To recruit and approve national examiner apprentices and provide mentorship for apprentices
  - Supports the National Office to maintain the roster of current National Examiners and apprentices.
  - In conjunction with the National Office assists in assigning panel of National Examiners to national level tests.
  - Acts as resources for examiners in the field
  - Assists the Regional Instruction Committee with providing resources and training for local level examiners.
  - In conjunction with the Instruction Department will organize yearly training at the USPC Symposium and Convention for the NE's and local level Examiners and/or online as needed throughout the year.
- D through C-2 Curricula Committee  
In conjunction with the Instruction Department will help create and revise educational material to support the Standards of Proficiency, D through C-2 levels.
- National Testing Curricula Committee  
In conjunction with the Instruction Department will help create and revise educational material to support the Standards of Proficiency, H-B through A levels.
- Horse Management Committee
  - To recruit and approve Provisional Chief Horse Management Judges and to provide mentorship
  - Works with the Horse Management Organizers (HMOs) and CHMJ's to help provide HM education at the local level for members and volunteers.
  - In conjunction with the Instruction Department supports the revision of the HM

**Handbook**

- Assists the Instruction Department to maintain the roster of current CHMJ's and Provisionals
- Acts as resources for CHMJ's at rallies
- In conjunction with the Instruction Department will organize yearly training at the USPC Equine Symposium and Convention for the CHMJ's and HMO's and/or online as needed throughout the year.

The following Committees will remain the same. The Instruction Department is working to update its duties and responsibilities.

- Regional Instruction Committee
- Visiting Instruction Committee
- National Youth Congress Committee.

The Board approved the Instruction Committee structure based on the Task Force recommendations.

**Report of VP of Activities**

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Festival Championships had a total of 659 competitors with eight national Championships awarded, and two invitationals (Western Trail and Gymkhana).

Festival 2024 will be at the Kentucky Horse Park July 15-22, 2024, with a closing date (Championships) of June 24.

The newly formed Activities Committees: Competitions, Discipline Education, Discipline Promotion, and Special Opportunities have all at least one meeting and are scheduled to have monthly calls.

**International Exchanges**

- The Canadian Pony Club is hosting a Virtual Quiz competition on December 5.
- The 2021 Foxhunting Exchange has been postponed due to COVID-19 and travel concerns. USPC is now scheduled to host International Foxhunting Exchange, November 18 – 27, 2022. With the additional postponement, two positions on the team need filling. Applications are now open.
- International Mounted Games Exchange – Australia is planning to host the next exchange in 2023, with dates and details to be determined.
- International Tetrathlon Exchange – The 2020 exchange was canceled, and the next exchange is tentatively scheduled for 2023. The three selected USPC team members remain eligible for the 2023 competition.
- International Quiz Exchange – USPC is tentatively scheduled to host Quiz again in 2023.

**Report of VP of Regional Administration**

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The Member Services Department's annual review and processing of club and center year-end reports are underway with the November 15 deadline in place as usual. Improvements to the online system, specific to individual profiles, and management of club sponsors and volunteers through club/center records are in place to increase functionality for leaders. Many of these updates are also necessary to facilitate enforcement of Policy #0900 for adult members, local level examiners and instructors/clinicians

as enforcement begins in 2022.

Membership numbers for 2021 indicate a strong “COVID recovery” aligning with anecdotes that riding and equine access have been popular throughout the pandemic.

Regional Administration is working with Activities to determine options for “hybrid” – simultaneous in-person and online – leadership training sessions during the convention. Additionally, RA is exploring options to include professional/personal development sessions in collaboration with the Activities and Instruction Departments. Such a session would be presented by an outside source, possibly in conjunction with Pony Club representation, to tailor the message to our unique audience. The leadership social event typically held for local and regional leaders will be held onsite this year. Regarding ongoing leadership training, Regional Administration in conjunction with the Regions will develop training outreach in a virtual format as a supplement to preferred in-person training.

Regional Administration / Member Services continues to work with the Compliance Coordinator regarding club, center, and region leader compliance. Please note that starting January 1, 2022, adult members must comply with Policy #0900 and that local examiners, instructors, and clinicians will follow later in 2022.

Regional Administration determined that the Membership Committee should be discontinued. However, current, and future, effective and efficient Regional Administration does need some—not all—of the functions and capabilities that were previously found in earlier Regional Council committees. In addition, the pandemic environment clarified an ongoing need for liaison relationships between Regional Administration and members and local/region leaders that cannot be sustained without formal engagement from a committee with that task. The Membership Committee has drafted a proposal for a “Region Resource Committee” for consideration and review by the Governance Committee.

### **National Youth Board (NYB) Report**

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The following are our 2021 overarching goals:

- Increase USPC member engagement and interest.
- Continue to generate and develop new innovative and modern ideas.
- Connect with the USPC members at large.
- Maximize NYB recognition

The Marketing Committee in collaboration with the USPC National Office has created visually appealing, engaging, and educational Instagram content which allows the NYB to support intercommunication between members and leadership alike. The committee produced and collected writing pieces and photographs to be used on the USPC Blog along with sharing individual member experiences, NYB Committee updates, and educational materials.

The Pin Promise Committee would like to propose the idea to have special edition pins for Championship riders attending their 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 10<sup>th</sup> Championships. They would be designed as Banner Pins and be for sale through Shop Pony Club during Championships. The committee created a blog post on how to collect pins and show them off during Festival and received many photos. Discussions about creating pins for



special occasions e.g., 17th anniversary for a Pony Club, AAA certification, or an A certification, this is a work in progress.

The Regional Youth Board (RYB) Committee continues to update its page on the website with usable documents and information that is clear, concise, and up to date while making it more engaging and appealing to members. The RYB has discussed with the Upper-Level Committee the idea of goodie-bags to members who are taking their National Certifications, the NYB would like to support this idea.

The Service Committee is waiting on confirmation with the Untamed Spirits Therapeutic & Educational Program in Virginia Beach, VA for their 2022 Service Project during the Equine Symposium and Convention. The Festival Service Project which ran through the Championships portion this year was a huge success. Competitors from all disciplines entered the challenge. The committee has been asked to record a podcast, which will likely occur during the Equine Symposium & Convention when committee members are together and will include a recap of the Service Project during the Convention, the Festival Service Project, and general service opportunities throughout the year.

The Film Competition Committee will be in discussion on moving forward with this project as it was successful in the past and hope to offer it at the 2022 Equine Convention & Symposium.

The Upper Level Committee would like to recommend that the National Youth Congress (NYC) requirements be changed to include more members as it is often a steppingstone to the National Youth Board. The NYC program currently requires a national level certification and there is an age requirement of 18-23 years old. The NYB requires a C-1 certification or above and be 18-23 years old.

Equine Scholars Programs Proposal – The purpose of the USPC Equine Scholars Program is to celebrate and recognize USPC members who have excelled in higher education while simultaneously serving their USPC communities. This is open to college-age members and would be based on their G.P.A. and volunteer hours per semester. The Board of Governors had several questions about the proposal which the NYB will take back to the committee for clarifications and then bring it back to the Board of Governors

### **Pony Club International Alliance (PCIA) Report**

The Pony Club (United Kingdom) and USPC were the only two countries to hold in-person championships in 2021.

The New Zealand Pony Club is working on getting rider and coach certifications online; virtual membership cards to register for rallies and keep performance and training records. After winter New Zealand can have 100 people per gathering.

The Canadian Pony Club reported that most branches and regions had a good summer for local events. COVID-19 cases have risen and are variable across provinces. They had national virtual dressage and quiz competitions. They are also hosting the Virtual Quiz Exchange on December 4, 2021.

The Hong Kong Pony Club reported normal activities, camps, rallies, and certificates as they have almost no COVID-19 cases as there is a 21-day quarantine to enter Hong Kong. Memberships have increased to levels of 10 years ago.

The Pony Club's (United Kingdom) membership has 30,000 members. Camps and branch meetings have resumed with some normality, though Centres are still recovering from COVID-19. They held Championships over 10 days and had 2,367 competitors.

The South African Pony Club will have two Championships in two places in the next month. Their financial year ends in September, and they expect to see some return to normalcy with membership after that.

Applications for the PCIA Youth Board are being accepted for USPC members begging the end of November/first of December. Selections of two representatives will be the first week of January with the first meeting of the Youth Board being in February and hosted by Australia.

The Virtual Dressage Exchange was well received with 140 entries from 8 countries. USPC had 17 members that participated.

### **Board Committee Highlights**

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#### **Safety:**

A total of 132 Incident Reports have been submitted as of October 8, 2021.

The Safety Handbook has undergone a thorough review by the committee. The revised handbook will be available in early 2022.

#### **Strategic Planning:**

With the data from Dr. Garkovich's external review and the Task Force recommendations, the Strategic Planning Committee has identified five strategic areas that reflect the approved recommendations, are essential to mission support, and are key to the future state of USPC:

- People
- Education
- Innovation and Brand Development
- Organizational Model
- Sustainability

#### ***USPC Strategic Plan:***

*Our Mission: The United States Pony Clubs, Inc. is an educational organization which builds the foundations of teamwork and sportsmanship through riding, mounted sports, care of horses and ponies, while developing and enhancing leadership, confidence, responsibility, and a sense of community in its youth and adult members.*

**People:** USPC's future, like its history, will build on the quality of the experience for its members and volunteers. The Board of Governors and staff will create consistency in its programs including, but not limited to, instruction, testing, horse management and competition. By simplifying requirements, USPC volunteers will have achievable, clear expectations, and receive strong support and training. The Board of



Governors and staff will take into consideration the experience of the member and volunteer when creating and implementing processes around the Pony Club program.

**Education:** The foundation of USPC is education. USPC will improve its ability to consistently deliver excellence in education, programs and instruction, that align with the Standards of Proficiency and its mission. USPC will provide support and opportunities for all volunteers and staff to deliver a consistent, practical approach to the Pony Club program – focusing on excellence, not perfection, and prioritizing member experiences above all else. Its member- focused approach will improve learning outcomes at the local, regional, and national levels of USPC.

**Innovation and Brand Development:** USPC will plan for future needs of members and volunteers by building on existing strengths and services and being flexible as an organization. The Board of Governors and staff shall ensure that innovative developments align with USPC’s brand identity and organizational values to create a publicly known face of USPC that celebrates its unique identity in the equine industry.

**Organizational Model:** The needs and expectations of its members and volunteers has changed significantly in the last two decades. The Board of Governors and USPC staff will streamline operations in order to eliminate complexities that create little or no current value to USPC and its members and/or volunteers. Accountabilities and processes throughout the organization will be clarified to ensure the organization is staff driven, member centered, and volunteer supported.

**Sustainability:** USPC will strengthen its ability to fulfill and effectively deliver its mission now, and in the future. The Board of Governors and staff will explore ways to rebalance its funding model by reducing the percentage of its budget generated by membership revenue. In order to achieve this, USPC will develop other sources of revenue.

### **Marketing & Communications:**

The official USPC magazine has been renamed “Discover USPC”.

In 2021 three Pony Club Podcasts have been released. In 2022, the plan is to release one Podcast per month.

Each attendee at Festival received a commemorative USPC Festival Event Program.

We are increasing the utilization of the live search of the Annual Directory and are reformatting the webpage where this is displayed to better explain how live searches work. At the end of each year, the full directory will be captured and archived for historical purposes. Archived directories will be made available on request to protect the privacy of our members.

A brand-new Branding Guide with official USPC colors, fonts, and thread color suggestions have been produced.

Annual Report (Donor Yearbook) will be released in the spring and available online under Organizational Documents.

USPC's social media have seen a big increase in use with the new schedule that highlights each department and the NYB at least once a week.

Shop Pony Club will be offering holiday gift bundles along with gifts for instructors, member to member, from a grandparent, etc. Limited editions of the Nancy Lindamood print, and the Booth Malone print are for sale with the proceeds benefiting the Annual Fund.

**Development:**

The 2021 Annual Fund goal is \$248,700, as of October 13 we have raised \$141,972.00

The fall Annual Fund Campaign has officially started with the theme – “Pony Club Inspiration – Inspired by You, Inspired by Pony Club, Inspired to Give”.

Through a generous donation from the family of Bodgie Read, the Bodgie Read Memorial College Scholarship for Dressage and Eventing Riders was recently established. This scholarship will be put in rotation with the current scholarships USPC currently offers.

We are happy to announce the following USPC Scholarship recipients:

The Triple Crown Nutrition Scholarship was awarded to Kara Echternacht, an HB member from Miami Valley Pony Club who is majoring in finance at The Ohio State University. Kara is a second-time scholarship recipient.

The Dorothy Renfro Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Sydney Curtis, an HB member of the Pioneer Pony Club majoring in biotechnology at Utah State University.

The Stanley R. and Martha C. Helbert Scholarship was awarded to Elizabeth Beazer, a C-1 member of Brazos Pony Club who plans to major in journalism and media at the University of Texas at Austin

The Pony Club Jubilee Scholarships were awarded to Anna Ferrin, an H-B member of Loudoun Hunt Pony Club who will be studying civil engineering at Messiah University, and Erin Przybyl, an H-B member from Misty Morning Farm Pony Club Riding Center who plans to major in animal science/biochemistry at Iowa State University.

The Anson W. H. Taylor Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Madeline McDougal, an H-B member of Butte Valley Pony Club. Madeline is a second-time scholarship recipient attending William Jessup University and majoring in biology.

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility (DEIA):**

The committee is working on putting together a virtual introduction workshop to promote themselves and give members an insight into the work the committee is doing. The DEIA committee also will have an email where members can share stories.

**Governance:**

The committee continues to review all policies to simplify and clarify the following – what are policies, what are procedures, and what can be eliminated.

The following policies, procedures, and resolutions have been revised:

- 1400, Festival and its procedure
- 6004, Rally Competitions
- 6006, Championships and its procedure
- 9200, USPC Corporate Symbols and Products
- Resolutions #10, Activities Councils and Committees

The following policies and procedures have been retired:

- Policy 5002, National Instruction Committee Rule Changes, and Policy 6200, National Activities Committee Rule Changes. (These are covered in Policy 1300, Programs Administration Council Policy and its Procedure.
- Policy 5007, Festival Education Program (incorporated into Policy 1400, USPC Festival)
- Policy 6000 Activities Council (Now Resolution#10)
- Policy 6001, Activities Council Committees (Now Resolution #10)
- Policy 6001 Attachments A-M.
- Policy 6003, Resource Contacts and Attachment A (Incorporated in Resolution #10).
- Policy 6005, Team Concept of Competitive Rallies (Incorporated into Policy 6004)
- Policy 6030, Coaching (In Discipline Rulebooks)
- Policy 6700, Competitive Awards (Covered in Policy 6004)/
- Attachments A-E to Policy 9200.
- Policy 9300, USPC Instruction & Activities Materials (Covered in Policy 1300 and its Procedure).

For all updated and revised Policies/Procedures, and Resolutions, please visit the website.

**Report of the Equine Symposium & Convention Committee**

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The 2022 Equine Symposium & Convention will be held at the Norfolk Waterside Marriot, Norfolk, VA, January 26-30.