



The October Board of Governors meeting was held virtually via Zoom October 24-25, 2020.

## **Upcoming National Events**

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2021 Virtual Equine Symposium & Convention hosted by USPC will be held January 27-30.

Festival 2021 July 19 - 26, Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington, KY.

## **General Comments**

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*Comments from President Ben Duke*

In January President Duke stated in his report to the Board of Governors, “It is very clear to me that 2020 will be a busy, fun, and, at times, challenging year for Pony Club. But that’s what we’re all about: creating the best possible experience for the largest audience possible.”

Never in his wildest imagination did he think that it would be quite so challenging, but, as stated above, Pony Club has what it takes to meet virtually any sort of challenge.

Wow! What a year it has been! COVID-19, canceling of all Pony Club in-person activities, canceled Festival, re-imagined meetings, lessons, and competitions, civil unrest, fires, hurricanes, erratic economy.

Through it all, our leaders, staff, and members remained “Pony Club Strong,” developing online alternatives to many activities, developing guidelines for safe gatherings, testings, and competitions, and providing incredible encouragement to our eager and loyal members...at all levels.

The National Office Staff worked diligently and nimbly to manage costs and administrative tasks. The Development Department along with the Development Committee found innovative ways to engage and encourage our donors. Handbooks continued to be revised, reworked, and approved. Planning for an unprecedented virtual Annual Meeting and Convention is in the works. Staff and volunteers alike all have become proficient with Zoom or Microsoft Teams...who had even heard of these terms ten months ago?

Through all the interesting and, at times, challenging months, the Task Forces forged ahead evaluating, interpreting, and analyzing the findings from Dr. Garkovich.

- Organizational/Operations Task Force – Reviewed the complexity of Pony Club.
- Education/Testing Task Force – Explored the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities
- Membership Adults/Youth Task Force –Reviewed the integration of adults and youth. Youth and child safety are very important.

Each of the Task Forces met at least once a month and now has produced a succinct and thorough report with some amazing recommendations.

It is a remarkable report with many thoughtful and ambitious recommendations. It now is up to us on the Board to carefully consider the recommendations and observations. All I can say is that I now am more optimistic than ever about the future of Pony Club. Thanks to every one of the many volunteers who so unselfishly worked to produce such a forward-thinking set of recommendations...all during the most unusual of years!

My hat is tipped to every member of the Pony Club family. We don't yet know what 2021 has in store for us, but I am once again confident that Pony Club will rise to whatever occasion presents itself. What an organization!!! What a blessed family. Thank you all.

*Comments from Executive Director Teresa Woods*

USPC's ability to be nimble and adaptable has never been tested as much as it has in 2020. Like many organizations, we had to make some difficult decisions and quickly carry out contingencies while overcoming great challenges, often doing so with information that changed daily.

If there is a silver lining to any crisis, it is that it necessitates ingenuity, creativity, and resourcefulness, as well as forcing a break from the paths of dependencies. The phrase, "Because we have always done it this way" loses what little, if any, credence it had; simply it is no longer a viable choice. In many ways, our ability to meet the challenges of this year, without sacrificing or diverting from our mission, demonstrate our strength and agility as an organization, and where we need to take USPC in the years ahead.

USPC revised and created multiple areas of membership and volunteer support while maintaining, as much as possible, the membership experience in 2020.

- Drastically changed rally and testing protocol to mitigate any risk and ensure the safety of our members and volunteers.
- Implemented a member loyalty discount and "bonus" months for prorated membership.
- Strengthened online educational products and opportunities to accommodate learning and engagement. (Lunch and Learn Series, Virtual Festival 2020, National Testing feedback project, etc.)
- The extended eligibility period for USPC Festival 2021.
- Relaunched the Pony Club Blog.
- Created a virtual distance D-1 certification opportunity.

Additional actions were taken by the Board and National Office over the last few months:

- Postponement of Festival 2020, offering a virtual Festival option with 374 members participating.
- As you know, after careful consideration, the Board decided to postpone the 2021 in-person convention, approving a 100% virtual Equine Symposium & Convention in 2021, and moving the 2023 meeting to St. Louis, MO.
- In March, by order of the state, staff began working remotely from home. Although not set up for remote work, we were able to quickly transition and use our available technology to remain accessible and present for our members and volunteers. Working within a limited IT budget, USPC pursued and secured a grant from the Lexington Fayette County Government to purchase five laptops, and VPN capabilities.

- In May, we secured a PPP loan, which has helped us continue full operations and the support of members and volunteers.
- In the fall, a new fundraising platform was launched that allows USPC the flexibility in campaign management and initiatives, donor recognition, reoccurring gifts, and peer to peer fundraising.
- Staffing Updates:
  - Welcome, Samantha Smith, Director of Marketing and Communications.
  - Mary-Courtney Gaddini the current Office Administrator/Charitable Compliance Coordinator has been promoted to the Marketing and Communications / Instruction Services Coordinator position.
  - Alyssa Sands, who had returned to USPC in January moved into the Systems Administrator/Content Data Manager position in July.

As we move forward and “re-imagine” what the recovery will look like, and how it will shape the world of USPC, perhaps, one of the most important considerations to come before the Board this year are the recommendations of the three Task Forces. Each task force met regularly throughout the year, spending a lot of time conducting research, interviewing stakeholders, collecting and analyzing data, and discussing key areas identified by survey participants. The work of the Task Forces has been extraordinary and inspiring. I thank everyone for the work that has been done this year, as well as the dedication, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness with which each member approached this important project.

As always, thank you for your leadership, loyal support, and commitment to USPC.

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

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The Board approved the 2021 Operating Budget.

Charitable Compliance Update – Total compliance is at 96.3% with almost every Pony Club/ Region renewed or registered.

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

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Due to not many rallies and few national testings, the instruction council committees have focused on working/updating webpages. Each committee has contributed and continues to do so.

The D&C Committee has had positive responses to the virtual D-1 certification. Colorado State University gave USPC permission to use their photos of poisonous plants which have been incorporated into a PowerPoint

The National Testing Curricula Committee has been working tirelessly to complete rubrics (quantified skill levels) checklists and supplemental documents for the Horse Management Track of certifications. Forty-four documents have been created and posted.

Due to COVID-19, the National Testing Committee has altered how a national test is conducted. The Rallying During COVID -19 document served as the base, then the co-chairs altered to fit testing situations. The committee continues virtually to aid members through the video feedback program (submitted were many Horse Management topics and 3-5 riding videos).

Visiting Instruction – Due to COVID-19, this program was canceled for 2020. They are looking forward to 2021 and are trying to gain new instructors to join this program.

The Horse Management Committee worked closely with the Activities Department to revise the Horse Management details of the Rallies Organizer's Guide. Parts 2 & 3 of the Horse Management Rulebook have been updated which is helpful for both judging and selection of staff for regional rallies.

The National Youth Congress Committee is working on a virtual presentation that will run concurrently with the Virtual Equine Symposium & Convention.

## **Report of VP of Activities**

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The Board of Governors approved the Competitor Disqualification Scoring (see below).

### **Competitor Disqualification Scoring**

If a competitor's behavior warrants potential disqualification, the rally's ground jury can access a Yellow Warning Card. This Yellow Warning Card serves as an educational tool to inform the member that their behavior is not acceptable and must not continue. Along with the Yellow Card, the rally ground jury may access penalty points that would adversely affect the competitor's final score. The approved formulas calculate the maximum number of penalty points that can be accessed by the ground jury. Penalty points accessed will not exceed a 50% impact on the associated phase score if related to a single phase, or a 50% impact on the overall score.

#### **Maximum Penalty Details**

- Discipline ground jury determines assessment and actual penalty.
- The formulas only determine the maximum penalty. The discipline ground jury decides if and how many penalties are accessed.
- Because the ideal Horse Management score is 0, the formulas do not take into consideration a competitor's Horse Management score.
- Penalty can be accessed to a single test/phase/round or to the entire competitor score

#### **Dressage**

- *Single Test Infraction* - Maximum 50 penalties deducted from final test score.
- *Competition Infraction* - The maximum penalties deducted from the final test total score will be 50 points multiplied by the number of tests in the competition.

#### **Eventing**

- *Dressage Test Infraction* – Maximum of 50 penalties added to the final score.
- *Cross Country Infraction* - Maximum of 148 penalties added to the XC score.
- *Show Jumping Infraction* - Maximum of 51 penalties added to the SJ score.
- *Entire Competition Infraction* - Maximum of 249 penalties added to the final score

#### **Games**

- *Single Game Infraction* - The maximum number of penalties deducted is calculated by taking the number of teams in the game and adding 1, then dividing the total by 2.

- *Entire Competition Infraction* - The maximum number of penalties deducted is calculated by taking the number of teams in the game and adding 1, then dividing the total by 2. Next, multiply the number just calculated by the number of games played during the competition.

### **Gymkhana**

- *Single Race Infraction* - The maximum number of penalties deducted is calculated by taking the number of teams in the game and adding 2, then dividing the total by 2.
- *Entire Competition Infraction* - The maximum number of penalties deducted is calculated by taking the number of teams in the race and adding 2, then dividing the total by 2. Next, multiply the number just calculated by the number of races included in the competition.

### **Polocrosse**

- *Single Chukka Infraction* - Maximum of 2 penalties deducted from the final chukka score.
- *Entire Competition Infraction* – The maximum number of penalties deducted is calculated by multiply 2 by the number of chukkas in the competition.

### **Quiz**

- *Barn Infraction* - The maximum number of penalties deducted from the score is calculated by multiplying 10 points by the number of stalls in the round, then multiplied by the number of rounds. Then divided by 2.
- *Classroom Infraction* – The maximum number of penalties deducted from the score is calculated by multiplying 15 points by the number of rounds. Then divided by 2.
- *Mega-Room Infraction* – The maximum number of penalties deducted from the score is calculated by multiply the number of items per table by the number of tables. Then dividing by 2.
- *Stations Infraction* – The maximum number of penalties deducted from the score is calculated by multiplying 20 by the number of tables. Then dividing by 2.
- *Written Test Infraction* – The maximum number of penalties deducted from the score is calculated by multiplying the number of questions by 2. Then divide by 2.
- *Entire Competition Infraction* – The maximum number of penalties deducted from total final score is the sum of the maximum penalty points from all included phases for the competition.

### **Show Jumping**

- *Single Round Infraction* – Maximum of 80 penalties added to the final round score.
- *Entire Competition Infraction* – The maximum number of penalties is calculated by multiplying 80 by the number of rounds in the competition.

### **Tetrathlon**

- *Single Phase Infraction (Ride, Run, Swim, Shoot)* – Maximum of 550 penalties deducted from the phase score.
- *Entire Competition Infraction* – Maximum of 2200 penalties deducted from the final score.

**Western Dressage**

- Single Test Infraction - Maximum 50 penalties deducted from final test score.
- Competition Infraction - The maximum penalties deducted from the final test total score will be 50 points multiplied by the number of tests in the competition.

Rally Organizer's Guide – The new Rally Organizer's Guide was made available in August for all disciplines. Section I is universal to all disciplines and Section 2 – 9 are the discipline specific sections. The final document includes checklists and template score sheets. In addition, the Rally Resources & Materials page of the website received major updates, with additional documents yet to come. Newly created items for the page include Rally Safety and Crisis Incident Management Plan, USPC Equine and Biosecurity Guidelines, and brand-new excel scoring sheets for each discipline.

Discipline Rulebooks – Section I of all the rulebooks are receiving significant revisions after the policy changes from spring 2020. Additionally, the new disqualification scoring, Yellow Cards, and the unified coaches' forms are being updated for 2021.

Rallying During COVID-19 – Early in the summer after USPC activities resumed, leaders began contacting the Activities Department about guidance for hosting rallies. The Activities Department with the assistance of Instruction, Teresa Woods, and the USPC lawyers created "USPC Requirements and Recommendations for Rallying During COVID". This document closely follows USEF COVID competition requirements and was shared with the USPC National Testing Committee

With the postponement of Festival Championships 2020, we took the opportunity to make tweaks and adjustments to the Championships registration system which was significantly revamped in 2019. We look forward to using the updated system for Festival Championships 2021.

The eligibility for Championships has been extended from June 1, 2019, through June 28, 2021. Activities will host a webinar covering Championships, how to earn eligibility, how to enter, and what to expect.

Festival 2021 will be held at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, KY, July 19 – 26.

**Report of VP of Regional Administration**

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Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and concerns, Regional Administration did not provide any Leadership Training Outreach experiences since January 2020. As we look ahead now to the 2021 Virtual Equine Symposium & Convention and beyond, we are developing a program to provide a worthy virtual training experience in a format that can potentially be accessible to the greatest number of leaders. In addition, to live, collaborative discussion sessions, static training modules for fundamental topics will be created, providing accessibility to leaders throughout the year as it becomes most relevant for their duties and concerns as they arise.

Over the summer there were several Club/Center Membership Discount Options were made available to members who joined USPC prior to or during the suspension of Pony Club activities, a \$25.00 Loyalty Discount will be applied when the renew their membership for 2021.



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**National Youth Board Report**

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The 2020 National Youth Board (NYB) has a unique generation of new ideas, that are fully encompassing while targeting the specific needs of the United States Pony Clubs. The NYB this year is especially supportive, engaged, and committed to delivering exceptional results for all the United States Pony Clubs. The following are our 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 is working to diversifying content posted on the NYB Facebook page and USPC Instagram by posting member spotlights, pin photos, pony of the month highlights, alumni successes, and NYB committee promotional engagement. The number of followers and likes have increased on our Facebook page. USPC Instagram increased engagement significantly (300+ likes per picture!) through collaboration with the Communications Subcommittee of the Board of Governors Marketing & Communications committee, with new content created by the NYB Marketing Committee and posted weekly.

The Pin Promise Committee continues to receive monthly pin photos from members with plans to use them to generate future marketing content and Pony Club promotion. The committee is working to gather a database of pin photos from Pony Club members nationwide to contribute to marketing content and member spotlight posts

The Regional Youth Board Committee has been updating 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 committee has received numerous inquiries from regions and clubs relating to forming/building Regional Youth Boards.

The Service Committee is working on a virtual format that will have an individualized approach since the 2021 Equine Symposium & Convention will be in a virtual format. NYB members will complete a service project at an organization/location of their choice before or during the virtual 2021 Equine Symposium & Convention Individual stories and pictures will be used as promotion on social media during the virtual Symposium & Convention.

The Film Competition Committee is working on promoting for the second year of the USPC Film Competition. The NYB is challenging all members to show them what makes YOU #ponyclubproud in one minute or less in the 2021 USPC Film Competition. Members can teach something relevant to their next certification or make a fun barn skit.

The Upper Level Committee worked on promoting and making the NYB application live this year to give members more time to think about and complete the application. The committee set up a specific Facebook/Group page for USPC related to Upper Level opportunities, tips, information, and an inclusive environment where information can be exchanged, gained, and learned. All content/posts are planned through a content calendar and are approved and monitored by a Board of Governor Member, National Youth Board Chair, and the Upper Level Committee Chair.

The Equine Scholars Program Committee introduced the idea of the Equine Scholars Program with the mission being “to celebrate and recognize Pony Club members who have excelled in higher education while simultaneously serving their Pony Club communities.” There will be three levels of recognition (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) with varying certification levels, minimum GPA requirements, and USPC involvement/service. The program will launch in 2021 and will be rolled out as an opportunity to promote equestrian and academic excellence.

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### **Board Committee Highlights**

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#### **Safety:**

There have been fewer Incident Reports submitted this year. This is more likely due to fewer activities due to COVID-19.

#### **Strategic Planning:**

The Task Forces evaluated, interpreted, and analyzed the findings from Dr. Garkovich’s report and brought forth recommendations to be considered before the Board of Governors. The three Task Forces brought forth the following recommendations:

- Organizational/Operations Task Force – Move to a staff-driven, volunteer supported organizational model.
- Education/Testing Task Force – Lead with education and fun in all testings and horse management judging.
- Membership Adults/Youth Task Force – USPC educational programming and expectations should remain as unified as possible throughout the full continuum of the membership, regardless of age.

#### **Marketing & Communications:**

The Lunch and Learn on-line educational program was on a 5-days per week schedule through spring. With the opportunities for more stable and riding time opening up the schedule continued with bi-weekly and then weekly participation. With the new blog relaunch some activities have moved to that location and Lunch ‘n Learn could relaunch as weather quality and outdoor activities decrease over the winter. These videos and quizzes are archived on Facebook and in the magazine and serve as a library of resources for future use.

New Website Menu Bars were rolled out with many compliments and few complaints. Continuing to improve intuitiveness, search features and accuracy will always be a goal. The committee continues to monitor for needed updates, broken links, etc. Please let anyone of us know if you find a problem.

USPC Blog with a new name (previously Pony Club Pizza, where you can pile on the knowledge) debuted during Festival week with several contests, informative posts, and Opening and Closing Ceremonies. While we did not have in-person Festival 2020, many made connections during Festival Hangout which can be incorporated into Festival 2021 to help engage members and family from home.

Social Media have been very active with Instagram takeovers, Quizzes shared within USPC membership and to the equestrian world, in general, with good Pony Club history and promotion. USPC Zoom account has been in much use for video conferencing for many committees and staff. We have been very successful in providing programming through digital and social media outlets. We are poised to continue with these platforms in our eventual “new normal.”



**Development:**

As of October 13, 2020, the Annual Fund has reached \$137,494.00 our goal for 2020 is \$247,600.00. With the membership loyalty discount, we are seeing members donate their discounted membership fee to the Annual Fund!

Official Sponsors for 2021 are Wintec, Shapley's Grooming, Triple Crown Nutrition, and Kerrits Activewear.

Festival 2021 Sponsors are SSG Riding Gloves, State Line Tack, AgCredit, University of Louisville Equine Industry Program, BeneFab, and The Plaid Horse.

The USPC Scholarship Committee awarded six scholarships to deserving Pony Club members in June.

**Governance:**

Proposed Amendments to the By-Laws were published to Corporate and Life Members for comment on 9/24/2020, before consideration by the Board at the October meeting. To view the updated By-Laws please visit the [website](#).

These amendments:

- Clarify that attendance is specifically permitted by electronic means for both Regions **4.2(c) Regional and Council Meetings** and Clubs **4.2(c) Sponsors' Meetings** at all regular, special, and annual meetings.
- Changed Quorum for club sponsor meetings from 1/3 of Sponsors of Record to a simple majority.
- Added Regional Instruction Coordinator and Horse Management Organizer to regional officers
- Clarified that the VPRA appointed *Regional Administration* Committee chairs.

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 have been eliminated:

- 1000 Attachments A through G
- 1002A Clarification to Member in Good Standing
- 1250 Committees of the Board
- 1250 Attachments A-G (no F), 1400 Equine Symposium and Convention, 7900 Audit Committee and 7900A Audit Committee Charter are all incorporated into Resolution titled **Standing Board Committees** (see Resolution #8)
- 3015 Regional Instruction Coordinator and 3015A (see By-Laws)
- 3016 Horse Management Organizer and 3016A (See By-Laws)

The following policies with their procedures have been revised:

- 0500 Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco to Substances and Weapons
- 1000 Membership; 1000B becomes 1000P Required Corporate Memberships
- 1002 Member in Good Standing
- 1003 Dual Membership and 1003P Procedures for Dual Membership
- 1004 Transferring members and 1004P Procedures for Transferring Members

- 1800 Volunteer Recognition and 1800P1 Founders and 1800P2 20+ Local Legends
- 3000 USPC Riding Centers Program

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 2021 Virtual Equine Symposium & Convention will be January 27-30.

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