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# WHAT'S NEW WITH USPC?



2006

*Many exciting changes have taken place in USPC in the last 52 years. We have several newsworthy items to share. For more information about any of these, please contact the person listed or call the USPC National Office at 859-254-7669.*

## **Maximum Age for Membership Extended to 25**

Beginning January 1, 2006, the age limit of participating (youth) members will be extended from the current age limit of 21 to 25 years of age for a trial period of three years.

There will be a 'grandfather clause' for recent graduates, provided they are under 25 as of January 1st, 2006. At their discretion, Pony Club members may 'graduate' (age out) at any point between 21 and 25 years of age. They will be listed as having 'graduated' the year after they select to age out, or December 31st of the year in which they turn 25, whichever comes first.

Extending the age of membership is consistent with the current practice in Pony Clubs in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The USPC Board of Governors, after careful research, has decided to take this step in an effort to meet the needs of Pony Club members. For more information contact the Member Services Director, Karol Wilson, at [karol@ponyclub.org](mailto:karol@ponyclub.org).

## **USPC Riding Centers Program**

The USPC Riding Center Program allows facilities with an established riding lesson program to offer the Pony Club program through their facility. Membership to USPC is available to youth 21 and under who join a local Pony Club Riding Center. Members through a Pony Club Riding Center do not have to have their own horse and will have access to the full Pony Club program. This includes learning to ride on the flat, over jumps, and in the open. In addition, members will be able to "rate" their riding ability and horse management skills against an established standard of proficiency and be able to participate in center, regional, and national activities.

In 2005 the United States Pony Clubs Board of Governors approved the formation of a test phase for the creation of USPC Riding Centers. This program is currently entering a five-year pilot program to allow analysis of the potential value of the Riding Center Program while enabling changes or adjustments as necessary. There will be controlled growth of the program during the test phase and only a limited number of facilities will be recognized in 2006. Contact the USPC Riding Center Liaison, Aileen Gordon, at [aileen@ponyclub.org](mailto:aileen@ponyclub.org).

## Specialty Ratings Available in Dressage and Show Jumping

The USPC Board of Governors voted to approve the 2007 implementation of Specialty Standards in Dressage and Show Jumping. The Specialty Ratings have been adopted to give our membership more opportunities.

Beginning in January 2007, Pony Club members may obtain C-3, B and A level ratings in Dressage and/or Show Jumping. Members may still obtain the traditional 'Eventing' ratings based on the requirements of riding on the flat, riding over fences and riding in the open, which Pony Club has used for the basis of its curriculum for 52 years.

The approval of the Specialty Ratings favorably concludes extensive work by an ad hoc committee appointed by USPC President Margo Leithead to study the feasibility of Specialty Ratings and the wishes of membership. The ad hoc committee included members of the USPC Board of Governors, Instruction and Activity Councils, and professionals from the equine world. Pony Club members across the country cite loss of Eventing venues and open land, increased time commitments at school, and financial constraints as some of the reasons the Traditional "Eventing" rating levels are difficult to attain by many.

Allowing specialization in Dressage and Show Jumping will permit members with particular interest in those areas to specialize. The requirements in each are more sophisticated and at higher levels than in the Traditional track, which also tests Dressage and Show Jumping in addition to Cross Country jumping. Numerous equine professionals, including judges and instructors, worked together to develop these Specialty Standards. For more information, please contact the Instruction Services Director, Lynn Anthony, at [instruction@ponyclub.org](mailto:instruction@ponyclub.org).

## USPC Horsemasters Program for Adult Volunteers

Are you an adult who wants to learn more and help a great group of kids? Join us. USPC would like you to participate in the test for the Horsemasters Program for Adult Volunteers! The Program is for adults who want to follow the USPC curriculum to learn more about riding and horse care and who enjoy sharing their knowledge with kids who love horses

You will spend time with other adults who love horses; learn more about horse care as you follow the high-quality USPC curriculum for riding and Horse Management; receive the quarterly USPC Magazine; receive access to the USPC Bookstore; get a chance to help at Regional Pony Club activities, including clinics and competitions; earn awards in Horse Management and Riding as you progress, and HAVE FUN! For more information about a Pony Club participating near you, contact the Horsemasters Liaison at the National Office, Shelley Mann, at [shelley@ponyclub.org](mailto:shelley@ponyclub.org).

The United States Pony Clubs, Inc.

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