

July 9 – Posting from the DC Digest and Response made on DC Digest.

Re: Changes to the Governance of Riding Center Programs

I have to comment about my riding center, and I am sure there are others like we are. My pony club went to their first ever rally last summer and got first place in horse management. The horse management judge told us our kids could have passed a C-1 horse management and they were only D-1's and and one D-2. I have a wonderful couple that works with our kids and I also work with them as the center owner. We spent all summer preparing them and were very proud of all the kids. So I don't feel good about being grouped and an overall statement about centers not being prepared.

Conni

www.summerwindstables.com

Summer Wind Stables

The Response posted on the DC Digest.

Conni,

We apologize if the recent post on this digest offended you. The statement at the beginning of the response that we believed the described scenario was the exception rather than the norm was sincere as we do not believe that the situation was pertinent to the majority of centers. We also intended that our statement "all members who rally need to have the proper instruction to best prepare them for rally" was meant for members of both clubs and centers.

Conni, you have obviously worked very hard to provide a strong program for the members of your center and placed an emphasis on rally preparation in anticipation of their first ever rally. Their performance at the rally was a direct reflection of this hard work. Your members were well prepared making their first rally experience a safe and pleasant experience for the members, their mounts and their parents and one that they will look forward to repeating in the future. Kudos to you and all those who played a role in preparing them for this big step. You have good reason to be very proud of your members. Keep this up and your center will have the reputation as the "team to beat in HM" at future rallies!! Way to go Summer Wind Stables.

Take care - The Governance Committee

July 8 – posted on the Board, RS, DC, RIC Digests.

We received a comment off digest and want to share the comment and response with all of you as it is our intent to keep everyone informed of the communications that are being put out regarding this change.

THE COMMENT: I was an official at a regional rally for 2009 and 2010 and in both years there were Center teams being unprepared for setting up tack rooms in trailers. Each year there were exceptions to allow for extra time for the teams. These teams were not ready to ride at the appointed time and could have been disqualified first and foremost for not being on time to ride either because they did not have properly fitting equipment; or could not find the equipment; or did not properly identify the equipment nor understand its purpose. In both years the Chief HM Judge did an admirable job in teaching and assisting the kids and managed to get them ready to compete safely. Unfortunately this delayed the rally. My point is this: it is not fair to the center kids to be so ill prepared to rally, nor is it fair to the club kids who have come prepared. If these kids had learned at the center how to groom their mounts, and which tack fits which horse, and how to properly set up a tack trailer, they would have been much happier and less stressed when at the Rally. In short: if they are going to rally then they need to be taught to rally. Pony club is about HM so let's not short change the kids at centers.

THE RESPONSE: We agree that all members who rally need to have proper instruction to best prepare them for rally. Although we think that the described scenario is the exception rather than the norm this scenario provides a good example supporting the reasoning of having the RS responsible for the oversight of Centers. If the teams in the above situation were from a registered club the RS would be able to intervene by putting in place instructional opportunities that would address this problem. Under the current model the RS has no recourse to do the same with centers and can only report these observations to some other party - be that the RCA who then reports to the AC. When the RS is responsible for the oversight of centers he/she will be able to provide the same interventions that would be provided to a registered club, perhaps having the HMO or some other knowledgeable person go to the center to conduct a HM Seminar with one component being rally readiness.

Thank you - Governance Committee

July 7 – Posted to Board, RS, DC, and RIC Digests.

This comment was received off digest.

THE COMMENT: I just read the posting about the centers, and I was so glad to see what they decided! It will make it so much easier to integrate the centers into the region. I had a difficult time last year trying to figure out what to do with the centers, and they didn't know what to do with the region! We worked it out, and this year it is all running very smoothly. But it will much easier now that the lines of communication and authority will be spelled out. I intend to keep my riding center liaisons to help get the centers fully integrated into the region

THE RESPONSE: We agree that this change will make it easier to "integrate" Riding Center Programs into the region and should serve to strengthen the relationships. The change will help to improve communications in both directions and will actually increase the communication between the two. It will serve to have the Riding Center Programs accepted by the region and treated as are all of the clubs assigned to that region.

Thanks for your encouraging comment.

The Governance Committee group

June 29 - Posting made off digest to the working group

It is satisfying to see that progress is being made on moving the Centers Program forward into obtaining full status as a USPC Program. It is also gratifying to see that the Governance Committee has been tasked with figuring out the details. Let me explain.

I was Overall Chief Judge at our Western NY Regional Games Rally in '09 and again in '10. Both years we had Centers send teams, and both years there were problems with those teams relating to HM and the tack trailers. Each year I had to grant exceptions to allow for extra time for the teams. They were not ready to ride at the appointed time and could have been disqualified first and foremost for not being on time to ride either because they did not have properly fitting equipment; or could not find the equipment; or did not properly identify the equipment nor understand its purpose. In both years the Chief HM Judge did an admirable job in teaching and assisting the kids and managed to get them ready to compete safely. Each time it delayed the rally. Thankfully the affected teams and divisions were not in qualifying divisions. My point is this: it is not fair to the centers kids to be so ill prepared to rally, nor is it fair to the club kids who have come prepared. If these kids had learned at the center how to groom their mounts, and which tack fits which horse, and how to properly set up a tack trailer, they would have been much happier and less stressed when at the Rally. In short: if they are going to rally then they need to be taught to rally. Pony club is about HM so lets not short change the kids at centers.

June 30 – Response of the Governance Committee Working Group to this posting placed on the Board, RS, DC, and RIC Digests.

You presented a wonderful example that supports the change that has been proposed. Under the current model, the RS has no recourse, other than to express concerns to someone (not clear if that would be the RCA or the AC) that the members of that center are woefully prepared and that it is obvious that there is a hole in their instructional program. Reportedly, in some regions Centers have not been included in the activities of the region (which would include HM clinics) or Centers chose not to attend or participate. Under the new model the RS will be reporting on the Centers each year, just as they do the Registered Clubs, and the RS will be making the recommendation to renew (or not renew) the contract. Observation of Center member readiness to participate in regional competitions will be just one tool that the RS can use when preparing the annual report and making recommendations for contract renewal. Also, the RS will have more authority in the oversight of Centers and will be able to provide interventions that will serve to strengthen the center instructional program which could include stipulations for that contract (a form of Regional Provisional Status). This is the line of thought and now we are charged with putting in place the details so that this new model can be implemented and done in such a way that we do not jeopardize the non-profit status of USPC.

June 29 – Posted to the Board, RS, DC, and RIC Digests.

Hi all,

Here is the response to Ada Holley's very good question.

The question: Will Regions still need to fill the RCA (Regional Center Administrator) positions for 2011?

The answer: NO, there is no need to have the Nominating Committee seek someone to fill the RCA position.

Information that is helpful to understanding this answer:

1) It is the plan to eliminate the Area Coordinators (ACs) and the National Riding Center Coordinator (NRCC). The Center Administrator (CA) will be accountable to the VPRA through the RS. This will give the RS the added duty of the oversight of Riding Center Programs in their respective region, similar to that for Registered Clubs.

2) If the RS so chooses, he/she is at liberty to delegate any or all of the duties and responsibilities necessary to provide oversight of the Riding Center Program to one or more individuals. The RS will offer the Riding Center Program the same assistance, guidance and support as is offered to a Registered Club.

3) The RCA is a misnomer in that this is not an administrative position but rather a support position and as such the title for the future will be changed to that of Riding Center Coordinator (RCC) or Riding Center Liaison (RCL), yet to be determined. The RS is at liberty to assume all of the related duties/responsibilities or to delegate any or all of the duties/responsibilities of Riding Center Program oversight to one individual with the title of RCC/RCL or to several individuals dependent on their skills. Since the RCC/RCL (if the RS chooses to appoint one) is an appointee of the RS this is of no interest to the Nominating Committee.

4) The original intent of the RCA position was to provide representation for center members on the regional council. When Center Administrators become voting members of the Regional Council this purpose is negated.

5) The list of duties and responsibilities as currently noted in the "job description" of the RCA will be revised and updated accordingly. If you would like to see the current list it can be found in the file section of the RS Digest or by asking Aileen Gordon at aileen@... for a copy. The title of the file on the RS Digest file section is RCA10. doc and it was uploaded on 1/21/10.

Thank you for asking this very good question. Keep them coming!! You can post your comments or questions on this digest or if you prefer to respond privately please send your comments to ponymom1027@yahoo.com .

Thank you,
The Governance Committee

June 24 – Posted to the Board, RS, DC, and RIC Digests . Also distributed by Aileen Gordon in an email sent to all Center Administrators as insurance that this message was received.

Message from the USPC President

The USPC Riding Center Program is now in its 5th year as a beta (test) program with Recognized Riding Centers. This program has been very successful and has shown considerable growth to the current number of 50 centers with 655 members (over 6% of the USPC membership). The USPC Governance Committee has been tasked with evaluating the governance structure of the Riding Centers and for making recommendations for changes that will improve the program and better integrate it into the existing USPC structure. We anticipate that with these changes the Center Program will move out of the test phase and become a permanent USPC program.

The Governance Committee reported its findings and recommendations to the Board of Governors at the May meeting. The recommendations are to align the governance of Riding Centers with that of the Registered Club to the greatest extent possible consistent with USPC's status as a not-for-profit organization. The proposed recommendations were accepted by the Board with the further instruction to the Governance Committee to have ready for the November Meeting, a detailed plan to move the administration of the centers to be under the Regional Supervisor and to continue work on the details for this model.

The changes that will be of most interest to Pony Club leaders are;

- 1) Center Administrators will be accountable to and report to the VPRA through the Regional Supervisor.
- 2) Center Administrators will become voting members of the Regional Council giving members who join the USPC through a riding center the same representation given to members who join through a Registered Club.
- 3) The agreements with Riding Centers as well as the By-laws of the USPC and By-laws of Regions will require some revision(s).

There is much work left to be done to determine the appropriate changes to the By-laws and the many details that will need to be addressed, including revision of all printed materials and the development of ongoing education and training for all leaders. Our timeline for completion of this work is by the fall Board of Governors meeting with the anticipation of changing the status of the Riding Center Program from a testing phase to that of a regular program.

We solicit and welcome your comments and will try to answer any questions that you may have. You may respond by posting on this digest or if you prefer to respond off digest please direct your comments to ponymom1027@yahoo.com . We will keep you informed of the progress as this work moves forward.