



*The United States Pony Clubs, Inc.*

The Kentucky Horse Park, 4041 Iron Works Parkway, Lexington, KY 40511  
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Dear Pony Club Members, Families, Leaders, Volunteers, and Supporters,

All of us find ourselves in uncharted waters, engaged with a reality few could have imagined a short time ago. After careful consideration of our options and COVID-19 information available at this time, The United States Pony Clubs' Executive Committee, Board of Governors, Teresa Woods, and I have made the difficult decision to postpone the 2020 USPC Festival that was scheduled for July in Lexington until 2021. The new Festival dates will be July 19 – 26, 2021. The risks of having such a gathering this summer are too great, and protecting the safety and well-being of our members, volunteers, Pony Club staff, the Kentucky Horse Park staff, and the local community must take precedence.

I personally would like to thank the many organizers for the 2020 Festival, on both the Championships and Educational sides. Your work, fortunately, will not have been in vain, as we begin today the preparations for 2021!

This is not what any of us could have predicted. The Festival is the triennial showcase of Pony Club's educational programs, exciting team competitions, and fellowship that define this great organization. It truly saddens me to see this opportunity and celebration be yet another victim of what has become the greatest challenge of this century, thus far.

However, Pony Club is a resilient and proactive organization that leads through common sense, strong will, and solution-oriented planning. For these reasons, I challenge each of us to find the positive in an otherwise discouraging climate. Together we will work to celebrate and create opportunities, albeit with considerable distance between us, for learning, fun, camaraderie, and exploration. Clubs, Centers, Regions, and the National Office already are working to develop exciting and fun-filled activities that can keep us connected to one another, while enhancing our knowledge of the sport and activity we love so much.

As I have said in recent communications, reaching out to loved ones and family always should come first. For those not able to visit their equine friends and partners, don't forget to thank those who so unselfishly are providing for them the best possible care. For those lucky enough to still be connected to their horses and ponies, be sure to share your experiences with as many as you can.

To the countless Pony Club volunteers, instructors, and supporters, I want to say "Thank You" for going the extra mile to ensure that all in the vast Pony Club family are safe, happy, and connected. For sure, we will emerge from 2020 as a stronger, more creative, innovative, and bonded organization.

The Board of Governors and the National Staff will work diligently to keep all of you informed as we continue to navigate through these unusual and interesting times of the coming months.

Sincerely,

Ben Duke  
USPC President