



The January 2018 Board of Governors meeting was held January 26th and 28th at the 2018 Equine Symposium & Convention hosted by USPC, at the Galt House Hotel, Louisville, KY.

Upcoming National Events

Championships East 2018 will be held July 25-29 at Tryon Internation Equestrian Center in Mill Springs, NC.

Championships West 2018 will be held August 6-12 at Donida Farm Equestrian Center in Auburn, WA.

Championships West 2018 Eventing will be held in conjunction with the Area VII Young Rider Benefit Horse Trials in Chehalis, WA.

2019 Equine Symposium & Convention hosted by USPC will be held January 30- February 3rd at the Hilton Stamford Hotel in Stamford, CT in the Metropolitan Region.

General Comments

Comments from Outgoing President Nancy Pittman

Nancy expressed gratitude to the Board for all their hard work during her term as President. She has been honored to have been selected and served in this role and wishes Ben Duke well during his term.

Comments from Executive Director Teresa Woods

Pony Club continues to work with Locust Trace AgriScience Center regarding additional opportunities and partnerships going forward.

Pony Club members adopted 47 horses through the New Vocations/Pony Club Challenge and the 2018 competition will occur at the Championships East 2018 in Tryon, NC. The challenge format will be restructured in 2019 allowing Pony Club members to participate in a class at the Kentucky All-Thoroughbred Charity Horse Show.

Although overall membership is down, the steady growth of the new Professional Membership category provides an alternative ways for Pony Club to deliver equine education. Regional Membership Director, Karol Wilson attended the Kentucky Association of Agriculture Educators Winter Professional Development day where she was able to present the membership and equine management curriculum to a variety of educators. Continued marketing efforts and grassroots outreach are planned for 2018 and 2019.

Ben Duke was approved by the Board of Governors as President of United States Pony Clubs.

Board Committee Highlights

Governance: The Governance Committee has been reviewing Regional and Club Policies and By-Laws. The Board approved combining the standing Governance and Policy Committees into one.

Volunteer Development: The committee recommended revisions to the Member/Volunteer Protection Training Module (formerly Youth Protection) to include more information regarding bullying as well as to update existing data.

This committee also recommends reviewing and ensuring a consistent Code of Conduct and that it is signed prior to participation in all USPC national activities.

Strategic Planning: The Committee completed its review of the feedback received from members of the Board, Advisory Committee, and the USPC National Office team during the May 2017 “Year One Assessment” strategic planning activity. Based on the review and feedback the committee made revisions to the plan to clarify existing goals.

Marketing & Communications: The USPC Marketing Department has taken over the website content and has identified four areas of focus: Intuitiveness, Updating Information, Consistent Look and Feel and Search Engine Optimization.

The 2018 Equine Symposium & Convention was promoted to the USPC community and surrounding horse communities through media outlets including but not limited to: the Louisville International Airport jumbotron, articles in periodicals, social media, keynote speaker promos, live teasers, postcards, business cards, advertisements, and a line of spirit wear.

Expanded promotions and communication during the event were done through an app, Facebook frame and Instagram filter for an interactive experience with the USPC followers.

The 2019 Equine Symposium & Convention logo has been created and was promoted during the 2018 Convention.

Throughout the year Pony Club, Professional Membership, and the new Equine Management Curriculum were promoted and presented to new audiences at various events. USPC staff presented to the Kentucky Association of Agriculture Educators discussing the newly available Equine Management Curriculum as a follow up to handouts distributed to 250 KY Ag instructors in July. In October, we had a booth and hosted a roundtable discussion on Professional Membership during the Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) convention held in Lexington, KY (375 attendees). Material was provided for the 800 attendees of the 2017 annual conference of Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International in San Antonio, TX, and there are plans to submit abstracts to present during their 2018 conference.

The USPC table top display rental was launched in the spring of 2017 and has been sent several times to various regions, clubs and centers. The rental cost is \$50.

Safety: The USPC study on the effectiveness of body protection vests found a significant difference in incident severity level among members who wore a vest versus those not wearing a vests when participating in cross county jumping. The manuscript on the effectiveness on body protection vests has been submitted to the American Journal of Sport Medicine.

The Safety Committee recommended the following for a vote at the January 2018 Board Meeting: That the USPC Board requires body protection vests, properly fitted per manufacturers' guidelines, for Pony Club members at all levels, when jumping cross-country/solid obstacles. This motion was approved by the Board of Governors. A policy will need to be drafted and approved at the May Board of Governors meeting before this will go into effect.

Finance: Over 200 clubs and regions are signed up and currently using the Centralized Financial Reporting System (CFRS). All regions and clubs were required to comply with the CFRS by January 2018.

A task list is being developed to further the work on the Financial Literacy Life Skill Certificate Task Book. The purpose of this project is to educate members with a desire to learn Financial Literacy and hopefully foster volunteerism from graduates as club or region treasurers.

Charitable compliance has increased, due to many state law changes.

Development: Restricted giving exceeded the budgeted goal and unrestricted giving came in below budget; however, the overall *unaudited* fundraising revenue exceeded the budgeted goal for the year. There was an increase in donations to the USPC Disaster Relief Fund in 2017 after the devastating floods, fires and hurricanes that impacted many Pony Club members and families. Through these donations, USPC was able to help multiple clubs affected by these disasters.

In October several Board members participated in Phone-a-thon to thank and follow up with donors. We received great feedback from many donors who were contacted via a phone call and/or note and we are planning to continue similar events during future Board meetings. There was an increase in the number of new donors (294) compared to 2016 (156) to fundraising efforts, as well as to the Annual Fund.

Two corporate sponsorships were renegotiated to become "Official Product Sponsors of USPC": Shapley's Grooming Product and Triple Crown Nutrition with the designation "Shapley's Grooming Products, the Official Grooming Product Sponsor of USPC", and "Triple Crown Nutrition, the Official Feed Sponsor of USPC."

Technology: USPC has been working to continue to review ways to update online efficiencies across the organization. An online submission process is being implemented this year for college scholarship applications.

National Youth Congress (NYC)

Representatives from the NYC presented three proposals to the Board for consideration.

The first proposal was to create a Stable Manager banner pin for Championships. This special pin would help provide special recognition for those choosing to take on the responsibility of Stable Manager.

The second proposal was to offer an International Dressage Exchange. This would allow for more members to participate in an international exchange.

The third proposal was to offer a workshop (2-hour) for Pony Club members between the ages of 13-17 during the Equine Symposium and Convention. The NYC delegates noted a lack of programming geared towards members within that age group during the Equine Symposium & Convention. The proposed workshop would include discussion of upper-level opportunities, leadership skills (presentations from Alumni, possibly Academy of Achievement, and the National Youth Board (NYB)), and perhaps a roundtable discussion to allow participants to open up and provide feedback on Pony Club programs. This workshop could help identify future NYC candidates. The National Youth Board is in full support of this proposal.

Report of VP of Regional Administration

The Membership Committee conducted research regarding trends in youth organizations. Research outlined that as a whole, youth organizations, such as Boy/Girls Scouts, EAP, USDF, USEA, and 4-H are seeing a decline in membership and membership per unit. This common trend shows that an increase in year-round competitive team sports and youth organizations creates an overall decline in many organizations. Some research showed that among equestrian youth organizations and programs, Pony Club is sometimes viewed as heavy on regulations that can be cumbersome and not enticing to youth.

The Riding Center Program Committee is working to develop a competition platform more conducive to centers. The committee is also working towards educating centers on how the Professional Membership program and material can be utilized for camps and school programs.

The Leadership Education and Support Committee is focused on identifying ways to simplify local and regional leadership jobs, creating standardization of policies and tools like budget and meeting agendas templates where appropriate.

National Youth Board

The National Youth Board's service project during this year's Equine Symposium & Convention was at the Boys and Girls Haven in Louisville, KY. The Boys and Girls Haven is a campus that provides temporary housing for foster children that are middle through high school age. The campus has a small equine program that has two off-the-track thoroughbreds and two miniature horses that are used for emotional therapy. The NYB helped facilitate a body language exercise that allowed all of the students to interact with the horses. There were also additional stations for horse knowledge fun facts and equine career exploration.

The NYB will once again highlight the Pin Promise during the Kentucky Three Day Event this spring. NYB members will be finding Pony Club graduates to make sure they have access to the Pony Club pins and show how important it is to be #PonyClubProud.

The NYB reiterated its support of the National Youth Congress's presentation on developing a workshop or track for 13-17 year old members and will take an active role in developing this activity.

Report of VP of Instruction

The National Testing Committee worked on creating the new Horse Management/Horsemanship hands-on room at this year's Equine Symposium and Convention. They are continuing to work on the HM Attire Grid.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee, along with the D - C-2 Committee, National Testing Committee, and the Horse Management Committee are working to revise the Standards of Proficiency (Show Jumping, Dressage, Hunt Seat Equitation, and Western).

The Visiting Instruction Program Committee is currently working to finalize applications and fill current requests. Long-term goals for the committee include ways to promote the program by using alumnus and members' comments and ways to transfer the experiences to life and resume skills.

Report of VP of Activities

The unification of Horse Management scoring has now been incorporated into all of the championship mounted disciplines for the 2018 rally season. An evaluation of the impact of the new scoring formulas will be done in 2020 for any necessary revisions.

Discipline Committees are currently working on how to incorporate the attire grids into their rulebooks, specifically moving away from the terms "formal" and "informal" attire.

The Activities Council is looking into restructuring divisions to better to integrate Horsemasters.

A Pony Club International Alliance (PCIA) in-person meeting will be held in Great Britain in August, a USPC representative will attend.

The Activities Department is working towards facilitating better engagement of the Activities Council Committees, assimilating with "real world" equine competition activities, enhancing cohesiveness with USPC Instruction & Regional Administration initiatives and support of Centers/Clubs/Regions with regards to rallies. Areas related to these initiatives include:

- Developing better committee membership structure
- New Committee Chair Orientation
- Pony Club Attire, Bit and Saddlery Rules
- Uniformity in Discipline Rulebooks
- Uniformity in Championships Divisions
- Best Practices for Championships Discipline Organizers
- Championships Volunteer Compensation

Special opportunities during the Kentucky Three-Day Event in April include a Pony Club media internship, and barn tour, stadium course walk and a Grand Prix course walk.