



The October Board of Governors meeting was held virtually via Zoom on January 31, 2021.

Upcoming National Events

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

USPC Equine Symposium & Convention – January 26-30, 2022 – Norfolk, VA, at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott Hotel.

General Comments

Comments from President Ben Duke

The year 2020, not just for Pony Club, but for the entire world, has been unprecedented and unpredictable. A year ago, none of us could have imagined the interesting challenges that we would face. But, throughout the year, Pony Club, its members, its volunteers, its leaders, and its staff stepped up to the plate, forging ahead with innovative solutions to unforeseen challenges (opportunities, maybe?). Virtual meetings. Virtual Festival and Equine Symposium & Convention. Development of safety protocols for our members and volunteers. Development of new discipline and activity guidelines due to Covid-19. Testings, when many thought there would be none. An International Virtual Quiz competition. Phenomenal fund-raising efforts. The beginnings of a new, sustained effort toward inclusion and diversity was established as the Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Committee at the January Board Meeting.

We all have remained “**Pony Club Strong**,” doing whatever it takes to keep our organization strong and vibrant, while continually adhering to the protocols and traditions of Pony Club while adapting to new norms, regulations, and guidelines.

The National Office Staff worked diligently and nimbly to develop programs and support for the many volunteers, that, across the country, have worked to provide exceptional (and safe) Pony Club experiences for members and families

In record time, the three Pony Club Task Forces analyzed, debated, and ultimately presented a concise set of recommendations for the Board of Governors to consider last October. The Staff now is busy preparing feasibility studies for the various recommendations so that the Board will be able to consider implementation options moving forward. The recommendations are far-reaching and aspirational, but also realistic, and will allow Pony Club to navigate the years ahead boldly and with relevance.

Comments from Executive Director Teresa Woods

Although 2020 had challenges, I am grateful and proud of the perseverance and adaptability demonstrated by the USPC staff and thank the USPC Board of Governors for their guidance and stable leadership. I am also grateful for the loyalty, patience, and understanding of our members, as our organization rapidly

pivoted to a remote workforce, virtual learning, and implementation of many pandemic protocols and precautions to continue programs and member experiences. In addition, our outstanding volunteers are to be commended for their efforts to overcome challenges and deliver the Pony Club program in 2020.

Following the October Board Meeting, the USPC staff focused on the planning and implementing the 2021 Virtual Equine Symposium & Convention which was a major undertaking on many fronts, but one that will have dividends well into the future as USPC continues to expand virtual programs and opportunities.

The other priority has been the development of implementation plans and feasibility reviews of the Task Force recommendations approved by the Board of Governors in October. The National Office was asked to return to the board with a committee/business model that would conform with the general recommendation of a staff-driven, volunteer-supported organizational model.

- Activities Department - Worked on the recommendation of restructuring the Activities Council Committees to focus more on education and promotion.
- Instruction Department – Is studying the feasibility and steps needed to move the administrative tasks of Testing and Horse Management to the Instruction Department (test request by regions, selection of examiners, collection of evaluations, running of reports, etc.). National Testing Centers will be investigated this year, but the logistics and implementation will not be for another year or so.
- Regional Administration / Member Services Department – Is reviewing committee structure, duties, and responsibilities for the revision of the Membership Committee. Further research is being conducted on creating paid regional zone Pony Club staff positions (that would report to the National Office) to carry out member services, program coordination, conflict resolution, and other administrative tasks.

Report from the Treasurer/Finance Committee

Despite the challenges USPC faced in 2020, the organization ended the year with a positive net income due to a forgivable Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan and a strong year in our investments.

Report of VP of Instruction

The primary focus since the October Board meeting has been to support members through a multitude of online materials, with each committee contributing to their landing pages with print and/or digital materials.

The D&C Committee investigated the possibilities of virtual certifications beyond the D-1, but due to safety factors with riding and being around horses, it was not recommended to go past the D-1 certification. The committee is creating more educational videos and using the members to help with this when possible.

The National Testing Curricula Committee continues to revise and review material along with developing new material and videos to add to the educational offerings.

The National Testing Committee continues to work on the new apprentice applications, along with creating new rubrics for the riding disciplines.

Visiting Instruction – Due to COVID-19, this program was canceled for 2020. Blog and social media posts were made in December and January to help promote the Visiting Instructor Program.

The Horse Management Committee – The committee is happy to announce that there are two new Chief Horse Management Judges, Eben Haber, and Stephanie Infante. The committee also produced a couple of short videos for the Equine Symposium & Convention.

The National Youth Congress Committee – Developed a wonderful program during the Virtual Equine Symposium & Convention for fifteen delegates and inducted three alumni into the Academy of Achievement program.

Report of VP of Activities

With the approved recommendation from the Task Force at the October Board Meeting, the Activities Council reviewed the proposed restructure and looked at how to reorganize the Activities Council Committees to emphasize education and promotion. The Activities Department proposed, and the Board approved moving to task-based committees structured around committee responsibilities instead of disciplines. The following committees were approved:

- Activities Discipline Competition Committee
- Activities Discipline Marketing and Promotions Committee
- Activities Discipline Education Committee
- Activities International Exchange and Special Opportunities Committee

The department is working on hosting the first Virtual National Quiz Rally using the Pheedloop platform on February 27 & 28 and March 6 & 7, with 894 members participating.

Rally Organizer's Guide – This is now available [here](#) and through Shop Pony Club. The Western Trail Rally Organizer's Guide section will be added when it is completed.

Discipline Rulebooks – All Rulebooks have been updated with and the new Western Trail Rulebook is available [here](#).

The Activities Council is working on Discipline Education Handbooks, which will educate members about new opportunities and disciplines which includes resource activities (Distance Riding, Driving, Foxhunting, Polo, and Vaulting) available within USPC.

Rallying During COVID-19 – Early in the summer of 2020 the Activities Department with the assistance of Instruction, Teresa Woods, and the USPC lawyers created two different “USPC Requirements and Recommendations for Rallying During COVID”. The documents (one for mounted and one for Quiz Rallies) were updated in November. Both documents closely follow the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) COVID-19 competition requirements and receive updates regularly.

The International Quiz Exchange was to take place in the United Kingdom in 2020. Due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, it transitioned into a virtual event in December of 2020. Two National Youth Board Members participated on a scramble team which placed second. USPC is tentatively scheduled to host an in-person International Quiz Exchange in 2023.

The eligibility period 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

Regional Administration in 2021 will continue to increase leadership training on its respective website pages, much of the content will derive from the leadership pieces of training from the virtual Equine Symposium and Convention.

At the October Board Meeting, the Task Force recommended and approved to eliminate the Document Review, Leadership Education & Support, and the Riding Center Committees from Regional Administration. A review of the duties and responsibilities of the Membership Committee, and perhaps evolving it into more of an 'advisory committee for the Vice President of Regional Administration (VPRA).

National Youth Board Report

The following are our 2021 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 has 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. Four to six NYB members have completed USPC Instagram Story takeovers, generating over 700 views!

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. We are looking to transform and relaunch the Pin Promise in 2021.

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. We continue to create a variety of videos for leadership style, organizing your club and events, and more.

The Service Committee had to revamp their Service Project due to the virtual format of the 2021 Equine Symposium & Convention, 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 Service and Pin Promise committees collaborated to create a Service + Pin Promise competition. We received pictures from members then we posted them on the USPC Instagram. At the end of the month, all submissions were voted on and a final winner was chosen. They received recognition and prizes.

The Film Competition Committee received three times the number of submissions in its second year of the USPC Film Competition.

The Upper-Level 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.

Board Committee Highlights

Safety:

The committee is reviewing and updating the Safety Handbook.

Strategic Planning:

The committee is working on several of the Task Force recommendations and conducting several feasibility studies on several recommendations that were approved at the October Board Meeting.

Marketing & Communications:

The Outreach & USPC Synergy sub-committee is reaching out to professionals, educators, famous riders, coaches, and other horse enthusiasts. Festival 2021 might be a great networking opportunity to continue outreach for Pony Club via social media.

The USPC Blog is regularly being populated with new material. Recent posts have included Member Spotlights, Winter Horse Care, Virtual Quiz, Visiting Instruction, and more.

Social media outlets are being updated and branding improved and “likes” and traffic have increased. We

are featuring each department and a post from the National Youth Board at least once throughout the week.

The ShopPonyClub website was overhauled and updated recently, click [here](#) to check it out!

Development:

The 2020 Annual Fund brought in \$232,508, which is \$15,000 shy of the goal of \$247,600.

2021 USPC Virtual Equine Symposium & Convention Sponsors:

Specialty Program Insurors
Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation
Stites & Harbison, PLLC
Arabian Horse Youth Association
Aurora Pharmaceuticals
Small Bytes, LLC
Flair

Official Corporate Sponsors for 2021:

Wintec as the Official Saddle Sponsor
Shapley's as the Grooming Official Grooming Product Sponsor
Triple Crown Nutrition as the Official Feed Sponsor
Kerrits Activewear as the Official Apparel Sponsor

Festival 2021 Sponsors

SSG Riding Gloves
State Line Tack
AgCredit
University of Louisville Equine Industry Program

Governance:

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:

- 7190 Sponsorships (it is now combined with Policy 7200)
- 7250 Access to Mailing Lists
- 7335 Reimbursement of Expenses (it is now combined with Policy 7300)
- 7325.A Peer Review of Club and Region Accounts & Finances Attachment (The procedure is on the Treasurer's Resource Page, with the link to it in the Policy).

The following policies with their procedures have been revised:

- 7200 Sponsorships and Endorsements
- 7300 Compensation and Reimbursement
- 7325 Peer Review of Club and Region Accounts & Finances
- 7350 Gaming Practices
- 7400 Budgets
- 7500 Operating Fund Disbursements

- 7800 Establishment of Funds and Funds Balances
- 7850 USPC Capital Fund Expenditure and Disbursement Authority

For all updated and revised Policies/ Procedures and Resolutions, please visit the [website](#).

Report of the Equine Symposium & Convention Committee

The 2021 Virtual Equine Symposium & Convention had a total of 532 attendees, with one attendee from Hong Kong!

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