

The 2025 USPC October Board of Governors meeting was held at the National Office in Lexington, KY.

Upcoming National Events

2026 USPC Convention – Lincolnshire Marriott Resort, Lincolnshire, Ill., January 28 through February 1.

2026 USPC Festival – Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington, KY, July 13-19.

General Comments

Comments from President Jennifer Sweet

At our Meeting of the Corporation meeting in January, I shared that USPC stood at a crossroads. To continue growing and expanding our programs, reaching more people and places who can benefit from everything Pony Club offers, we must be willing to invest in ourselves.

Over the past nine months, the Board and staff have worked diligently with Tim Burchum to dream, plan, and budget how to make this vision a reality. The result of that work is included in your Board packet and will be presented by Tim at our upcoming meeting. As you review the materials ahead of time, I encourage you to keep this in mind: our ability to exist and thrive in the future depends on our willingness to invest in ourselves today.

Comments from Executive Director Teresa Woods

National Office staff updates – Please welcome Addison Gore, who joined the USPC National Office Team originally as the Office Administrator and Charitable Compliance Coordinator. She has been promoted to the Membership Coordinator, as Dawn Strickler will be moving on to explore a new career opportunity. Karen Clark, Finance & Administration Director, retired in September. Staff Account, Bada Faber, has been promoted to Finance & Administration Director. Lizeth Musa, Office Administrator and Charitable Compliance Coordinator, has been promoted to Staff Accountant.

Since the June Board meeting, the National Office staff have concentrated on several key initiatives, which include – completing the data migration project from USEF to Bubble Duck; finalizing the 2026 USPC Festival contract with the Kentucky Horse Park; planning the 2026 USPC Festival Education and Championships under a new structure; communicating year-end club and region requirements to leaders; launching 2026 membership renewals and registration; advancing the year-end Annual Fund campaign; planning with the Lincolnshire Marriott Resort, staff and Local Organizing Committee for the USPC 2026 Convention; directing national testings and certifications; developing new content and courses for Allpony; and collaborating with Burcham Solutions on the strategic plan for the Transformation project.

Report from the Treasurer/Finance Committee

The 2026 Operating Budget was approved.

Report of VP of Instruction

2026 Festival Updates – Two big-name clinicians have been slated – Lendon Gray and Doug Payne. Mounted clinics will be offered in the following disciplines: Eventing Cross Country (starter to Training/Modified), Dressage (Training to 2nd/3rd levels), Show Jumping/Hunter Seat Equitation (2'3" to 3'3"), Mounted Games, ground training/horsemanship, Trail, Polocrosse, and schooling rounds for jumping and riding a Dressage test. D camp will also be offered for 6–12-year-old, D-2 and below members.

For 2026, for local and regional rallies, the required first aid kits will allow one per team per club or center, up to three teams, provided the organizers within the region can stable teams near one another. Otherwise, each team should have its own kits.

Examiners Committee update – The committee continues to develop examiner-related continuing education opportunities for examiners of all levels. There are currently four Apprentice National Examiners.

National Testing Curricula Committee update – The committee has been gathering information and reviewing resources shared by the Horse Welfare Task Force, and is developing a plan to create education on horse welfare (well-being) for all levels.

Regional Instruction Committee (RIC) update – The committee hosted a Zoom meeting in July, where participants were allowed to ask questions and share what is going well in the regions and where help is needed. In addition, the committee is working on a presentation for the USPC 2026 Convention.

National Youth Congress (NYC) and Academy of Achievement Committee update – Two alumni have agreed to be Academy of Achievement honorees: Carleigh Fedorka has agreed to participate, and she is a professor at Colorado State University. Jennifer Verharen, with strong interpersonal skills and founder of Cadence Coaching. The committee is undertaking various outreach activities to educate members and others about the value of the National Youth Congress.

Horse Management (HM) Committee updates – The committee's goal has been to create a Chief Horse Management Handbook. Lena McClelland from the Rocky Mountain Region is a new Chief Horse Management Judge, and Isabella Marini from the Lake Shore Region is a new Provisional Chief Horse Management Judge.

D-1-C-2 Curricula Committee updates – The committee has completed the "Standards Vertical Alignment". This idea is a worksheet that takes one standard topic for each level (D-1 through H-A) with questions or activities for that topic. The committee will present these documents and concepts at the USPC 2026 Convention 2026.

Report of VP of Activities

USPC 2026 Festival

The USPC 2026 Festival will be at the Kentucky Horse Park, July 13-19. There will be a change to the traditional format, due to Kentucky Horse Park removing one day from our schedule, the education portion will

take place first, with the USPC Championships following. As a result, this will alleviate move-in traffic and the need to move from one stall to another in the middle of the week.

Upper-Level Member Showcase

The Upper-Level Member Showcase will be moving from the USPC Championships to the highly visible and very prestigious Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event.

USPC High Point Program

The new USPC High Point Program will debut this fall for competitions beginning in 2026. Shows accredited by recognized national associations may apply for high-point awards to give to USPC members at their events.

USPC Convention

The 2026 USPC Convention will be held at the Lincolnshire Marriott Resort in Lincolnshire, IL, January 28 - February 1, 2026.

The 2027 USPC Convention will be held at the Madison Marriott West in Middletown, WI, January 27- 31.

Committee Updates

- Education Committee – Educational handbooks for resource disciplines: Foxhunting, Driving, Distance Riding, Polo, and Hunter Seat Equitation are being delayed until 2027.
- Competitions Committee – Quiz reference materials are being revised to rely primarily on USPC publications. Allpony courses are being incorporated as acceptable study resources.
- Special Opportunities Committee - There have been several events this year, with continued efforts on fundraising.

United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Pony Finals USPC Championship Team

Savannah Nieman – Midsouth Region
Pearl Baldi – Southern California Region
Molly Myers – Middle California Region
Audrina McCall – Midsouth Region
Emma Shade Kleintop – Carolina Region
Lily Brenes – Northwest Region
Richard Lamb – Team Coach and Mentor

2025 In-Person International Exchanges

Inter-Pacific Exchange – The exchange hosted by Pony Club Australia. This exchange was unique as the team participated in a training-based exchange, as Pony Club Australia encountered difficulties in sourcing horses for the Nation's Cup and Kangaroo Cup. USPC team members were:

Amira Cooney – Virginia Region
Hannah Fountain – Great Lakes Region
Lillian Oakley – Carolina Region
Mia Valdez – Old Dominion Region
Sierra Shurtz (Alternate) – South Region
Alex Ambelang – Team Manager
Jennifer Merrick-Brooks – Team Coach

International Mounted Games Exchange – The exchange was hosted by The Pony Club United Kingdom, with USPC placing fourth. USPC Team members were:

Landon Carrier – Western New York Region
Sienna Coffie – South Region
Joshua Ertle – South Region
Lyla Stotler – Virginia Region
John Ertle (Alternate) – South Region
Zoe Sanborn (Alternate) – Virginia Region
Tilly Westrich – Team Manager
Laura Gorrell – Team Manager
Sharon DeCant – Team Coach

Report of the VP of Regional Administration

Leadership training has been a strong focus through these recent months, with identification of areas of needed training and incentives offered to leadership for attendance at the 2026 Leadership Training at the USPC 2026 Convention in Lincolnshire, Ill.

National Youth Board (NYB) Report

Expanding the Pin Promise

The Pin Promise initiative is continuing to expand its message, encouraging Pony Club members and alumni to wear their pins with pride beyond official events. A giveaway was launched in October, and another outreach activity is being planned during the 2026 USPC Convention in Lincolnshire, Ill., to raise awareness of the project.

The Pin Promise Project aims to have Pony Club members and alumni commit to wearing their Pony Club pin outside of Pony Club events with pride.

The Pin Promise Pledge: I will wear my Pony Club pin with pride, knowing it stands for the best in horsemanship and sportsmanship. I will wear my pin as a symbol of Pony Club's purpose: to instill in me confidence, character, and leadership. I will wear my pin, honored to represent the community of the United States Pony Clubs.

Regional Youth Boards (RYB)

The Regional Youth Board (RYB) is strengthening communication with regional boards and held its first Youth Summit with nearly 20 attendees nationwide. A second summit was held on October 19th, which focused on project planning and follow-up. At the 2026 USPC Convention, the RYB will also host a Q&A session to support regions interested in starting or growing youth boards.

Annual Service Project at the 2026 USPC Convention

The Annual Service Project during the 2026 USPC Convention in Lincolnshire, IL, will partner with Northwestern Hospital, where youth will create cards and bracelets. This will be incorporated into the National Youth Summit, which will be held on Friday with educational sessions and the service activity.

Pony Club International Alliance Report (PCIA) Report

The PCIA board is working to finalize an accountability statement, which focuses on horse welfare, member countries, and affiliate standards.

2025 Virtual Exchanges

Virtual Quiz – Hosted by the Canadian Pony Club, December 6.

2026 In-Person Exchanges

International Mounted Games - USPC will host the International Mounted Games Exchange during the 2026 USPC Festival in July.

International Tetrathlon Exchange - Pony Club Australia will host the International Tetrathlon Exchange June 30-July 20, 2026.

Board Committee Highlights

Governance: The committee was tasked to ensure clarity, consistency, and enforceability in the safety policy language, while upholding USPC's safety values for [Policy 0810, Safety Requirements for Helmets](#), and [Policy 0830, Safety Requirements for Body Protection Vests](#). The Non-Member Release form has been updated to reflect these changes. Reminder: any non-member needs to sign the release, and the club/center/region should keep them on file for a minimum of 3 years or per state regulations. Please click here for the [form](#).

The Equine Welfare Task Force asked the Governance Committee to assist and review a new Policy Statement for Equine Welfare. Please click [here](#) to view the new policy.

Resolution #9, Standing Committees of the Board of Governors, has been updated to add an annual review of membership dues as a task to the Finance Committee.

Safety: The committee is working on sending out educational safety reminders.

Marketing & Communications: Clubs and Centers can receive promotional materials, including brochures, discipline rack cards, back issues of the magazine, and prospective member booklets/postcards in a promotional packet upon request (at no cost). Complete the Request for Promotional Materials form to receive materials before your next event. A tabletop display is also available (for a rental fee) by request. Please click here for information on promotional materials.

Development: *2025 Annual Fund* - As of October 13, we have raised \$55,536 of our Goal of \$350,000.

Thank you to our 2025 Corporate Sponsors:

Shapley's Grooming Products - Official Grooming Product Sponsor
Triple Crown Nutrition - Official Feed Sponsor
Wintec - Official Saddle Sponsor
Kerrits Activewear - Official Apparel Sponsor
Zoetis Equine - Official Health and Wellness Sponsor
The Horse – Sponsor of Pony Club IQ

Regional Challenge

The Regional Challenge Campaign kicked off on May 1 and ended on October 1, and raised \$34,955 for the Annual Fund.

Raising the Most Money – Midsouth Region

The Most Individual Donors – The Old Dominion Region

The highest percentage of club/center/region giving – The Hawaii Region and the Deep South Region

USPC Convention 2026 sponsors to date

Supporting Sponsors

Via Nova Training

Elizabeth Hamill Bramsen, 1961 A Graduate, Wayne-du Page Hunt Pony Club

Coffee Break Sponsors

Daniel Stewart (Saturday)

Tribute Feeds (Sunday)

Workshop Sponsors

Kentucky Equine Research

American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP)

Pony Paddock Sponsors

Arabian Horse Youth Association

Portfolio Sponsors

Kentucky Equine Research

Dressage4Kids

Research Fair Sponsors

Grayson-Jockey Research Foundation – Title Sponsor

Kentucky Equine Research

Leadership Training

Mattingley Leadership Training Fund

Western Specialty Insurers – Leadership Coffee Break

Strategic Planning: Following the June Board meeting, the committee has been in a holding pattern while Tim Burcham of Burcham Solutions worked with the USPC staff on the Transformation plan. After the plan is approved, the committee will help adapt the Transformation plan into a public-facing Strategic Plan to replace the current version.

Access & Engagement: The committee is prepared to support the next phase of strategic planning, with a focus on access and engagement initiatives.

Technology Infrastructure Advancement: Allpony Platform – There are 40 courses available, including the recent launches of the following courses: Feeding Horses: An Introduction, Rider Safety Basics, Horse First-Aid Fundamentals, and Inner Workings: The Skeleton, with Muscles (the next in the series) to follow in November.