

Adopting or Buying a Wild Horse/Burro through the Bureau of Land Management

Have you ever wanted to adopt a wild horse or burro? Come join Natalie Lirette and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as they share the different avenues of adoption. The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for managing the 26.9 million acres where wild horses and burros live. Part of the management process is to gather the animals to achieve a healthy population in the wild and keep the rangelands healthy. Many of these animals are placed into private care through the BLM's adoption program.

Presented by [Natalie Lirette](#)

Natalie Lirette is a wild horse and burro specialist with the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Eastern States State Office and focuses primarily on the outreach and marketing of the program for all states east of the Mississippi River. After studying water resources in Wisconsin and range ecology and management at Colorado State University, she began her career with the BLM in the Wild Horse and Burro Program in 2019. Today she helps educate about the importance of managing the herds and different ways to be involved and adopt a wild horse or burro of your own!

All Things Allpony!

Ready to kick your Pony Club education into high gear? Join Connie Jehlik and Alyssa Sands on an interactive tour of USPC's new online education platform. From grooming and tack basics to exploring the rider's aids and learning the finer points of the leg-yield, Connie and Alyssa will introduce the wealth of knowledge available through Allpony in a fun, engaging setting.



Presented by [Alyssa Sands](#) and [Connie Jehlik](#)

Connie Jehlik joined the staff of USPC in June of 2010 as Instruction Services Director. She holds a bachelor's degree and teaching certificate in agricultural education and middle school science from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, Calif. She also holds a Master of Education in instructional design. Connie taught middle school science and high school agriculture for a total of 22 years. She joined Contra Costa Pony Club when she was 11 years old and received her A certification from Morgan Territory Pony Club. Connie has stayed active in Pony Club through the years as a Chief Horse Management Judge, District Commissioner of Hoofbeats Pony Club, and as a Chief Horse Management Organizer for Sierra Pacific and Midsouth Regions. Her two daughters are also both Pony Club alums.

Alyssa Sands is a C-3 Dressage alum of USPC. She earned her bachelor's degree in Equine Business Management from the University of Kentucky. Alyssa is the Information Technology Director at the National Office. She is also a Chief Horse Management Judge.

Are You Prepared for an Emergency?

Forest fires, flooding, and hurricanes happen all across our country and can create a crisis without warning. On the trail, you might become separated from your horse or get injured while riding. Are YOU prepared for an adverse event? Join Nancy to learn what you can do to be proactive and prepared in any situation.

Presented by [Nancy Thomas, DVM](#)

Nancy Thomas, DVM, is a retired veterinarian with a special interest in educating owners about good animal husbandry and safety practices. She put her veterinary career on hold when she started a national nonprofit, the Attachment & Trauma Network (ATN). The organization grew from a need to support parents dealing with traumatized children, most of whom were adopted or in foster care. Since retiring, Nancy and her husband have taken up trail riding, where she realized how

unprepared she was for emergencies. Whether the emergency involves an injury while riding or a wildfire, she found a need to educate and encourage equestrians to make a plan.

Bandaging Through the Levels (D-A)

Join Bunny in a fun look at the bandaging requirements for all Pony Club certification levels from D through A. For members of all ages, Club/Center Leaders/Instructors, and Examiners at all levels, learn tips and tricks to improve bandaging skills for your next certification.

Presented by [Bunny Hendricks Gerwin](#)

Alita “Bunny” Hendricks Gerwin is an A Eventing and H-A Horse Management alumna of USPC. She received her Bachelor of Education from the University of South Florida. Bunny volunteers as a Horse Management Judge and a National Examiner for all levels. She is a retired elementary school teacher. Bunny spends her time as a freelance cross-country course decorator for United States Eventing Association- and Fédération Équestre Internationale-sanctioned competitions at the Florida Horse Park. She rides and competes in eventing with her Appendix Quarter Horse, Stanley.

Be a Research Rockstar: Tips for a Successful Research Project Fair

Sponsored by [Kentucky Equine Research](#)

Have you considered entering the USPC Research Project Fair, but don't know where to start? Are you a veteran competitor who wants to get a leg up on next year's competition? Join a longtime USPC Research Project Fair judge to get tips for brainstorming, organizing, and presenting your project. In the second half of this session, participants will break out into small groups to workshop their project ideas and create outlines.



Presented by [Shawna Herrala](#)

Shawna Herrala is a Pony Club alum from the Western New York Region. As a Pony Club life member, Shawna is an avid supporter and longtime judge of the USPC Research Project Fair. She is a Chief Horse Management Judge and is always the first person to volunteer to work in the vet box! To fund her horse habit, Shawna works as the director of digital technology at Kentucky Equine Research. Shawna lives on a small farm in Central Kentucky with her husband, dogs, and off-track Thoroughbred Sota King.

Breathing for the Rider

Breathing is the first thing we do when we are born and the last thing we do when we die. So, does it matter how we breathe, especially when we ride? After observing and teaching riders all over the world, the answer is a resounding yes! The way we breathe has a huge impact on our communication with the horse. Everyone can learn how to use their breath to ensure their best performance while in the saddle!

Presented by [Christian and McKrell Baier](#)

Christian Baier is a diplomaed Swedish Equestrian Federation riding instructor and Internationally Certified Level 3 Instructor. He is a graduate from the riding instructor program at the Swedish University for Agricultural Studies and the Aachen School of Course Design. Christian has worked as a stud manager, trainer, and course instructor all over the world throughout his career. He created the Global Equestrian online curriculum for riders and trainers, a certified breathing instructor, and author of the book, *Arena Tracks*. He is also the director of riding education at BridgeUP GiddyUP, a nonprofit championing equity, diversity, and greater inclusion across the equestrian ecosystem by serving under-resourced communities.

BridgeUP GiddyUP director, **McKrell Baier**, is a native of Memphis, Tennessee, and received a Bachelor of Science from the University of Miami in biology/anthropology. McKrell has shown winning hunters, Grand Prix jumpers, and coached successful students around the country. She has assisted show jumping course designers at events such as the 2008 Olympic show jumping trials in Wellington, Florida, Spruce Meadows, Canada and Maastricht, Netherlands. McKrell was the course designer for the United States Hunter Jumper Association's Emerging Athletes Program in its inaugural year.

Concussion Recognition and Response

Concussions and other riding-related injuries require quick recognition and response. This informative presentation will walk through scenarios from the viewpoints of a paramedic and a pediatric trauma program manager.

Presented by **Rachel Skirvin** and **Tracy Spitzer**

Rachel Skirvin is an H-A Horse Management and B Eventing alum from White River Valley Pony Club. She now serves as a National Examiner. Rachel is a paramedic in Shelbyville, Indiana. She has a small farm, competes in eventing and dressage, and teaches and trains locally.

Tracy Spitzer is a registered nurse from Greenwood, Indiana. Her daughter grew up eventing and was an active Pony Club member. Tracy is a trauma program manager at Riley Hospital, a Level 1 pediatric trauma center in Indianapolis.

Creating a Horse-Farm Friendly Pollinator Habitat

We all know that pollinators (birds, bees, butterflies, and more) are important—but did you also know that with a few simple shifts in management practices, your horse farm can offer prime habitats for these critical players in plant reproduction? Join Christina Keim, founder and principal horseman at Cold Moon Farm, a working horse farm dedicated to promoting the principles of sustainable living, conservation, and the highest standards of horsemanship, to learn how YOU can make a difference for pollinator populations—all without compromising equine well-being.

Presented by **Christina Keim**

Christina Keim, M.Ed., M.F.A., is a USPC H-A alumna and National Examiner, Certified Yoga Teacher (CYT-200), and author. Based at her Cold Moon Farm in Rochester, New Hampshire, she is an avid and accomplished professional equestrian with competitive results in hunter seat equitation, dressage, eventing, jumpers, and competitive distance riding. In 2024, Christina developed her signature Mounted Mindfulness and Equestrian Yoga program, combining horsemanship with yoga philosophy and unmounted asana physical practice. Ms. Keim is the co-author of *The Athletic Equestrian* and *Equicize* (with Sally Batton) and *Unwanted: The Causes and Effects of America's Horse Population Crisis*, all published by Trafalgar Square Books.

Dressage: A Judge's Perspective

Come see dressage through the eyes of a judge. Whether you are brand new or just a fan of dressage, join Jennifer for an engaging look at the sport. Understand the overall goals of the test; the training scale, the geometry, and the movement. Discover dressage in a fun and interactive way.

Presented by **Jennifer Kotylo**

Jennifer Kotylo is a United States Dressage Federation (USDF) Bronze and Silver medalist, "L" dressage judge with distinction, and a sought-after clinician specializing in body awareness for riders. She has presented at many equine educational conferences and events. She is also a certified Pilates, Equilates, and Balimo instructor. Her Movement Studio is located in Chicago. Jennifer is the author of the children's book, *My Best Friend Betsy*, and the DVD series, *Improve Your Riding Through Movement*.

An English Saddle Deconstructed

Join a discussion about all of the parts of a saddle as it's being taken apart in front of you. We will focus on each part as we learn more about their purpose with relation to how the rider sits in the saddle and how the saddle fits on the horse. Discover which parts of the saddle can be easily replaced and those that can't. See what a broken tree can look like and learn some of the underlying causes that can cause a break, twist or sprung tree.

Presented by [Adrienne Hendricks](#)

Adrienne Hendricks is an H-A Horse Management and B Eventing alum of Boise Pony Club. She is the founder of Adrienne Hendricks Saddlery, where she is learning from Suzie Fletcher to become a Master Saddler. Adrienne builds and repairs English saddles, along with providing saddle fitting sessions and seminars on saddle fit.

EHV Exposed: What Every Rider Needs to Know

Sponsored by Zoetis, the Official Equine Health and Wellness Partner of USPC

Join Dr. Holly Helbig for an engaging and essential talk on Equine Herpes Virus (EHV), a contagious threat every horse owner and rider should understand. We'll explore how to recognize early warning signs—from fevers to neurological symptoms—why timely vaccinations are a game-changer, and how smart biosecurity practices can protect your barn. With recent outbreaks in the U.S. and Canada, staying informed is more important than ever.

Presented by [Holly Helbig, DVM](#)

Holly Helbig, DVM, is an Equine Technical Services Veterinarian with Zoetis. She graduated from Ohio State University with a focus in lameness and sport horse medicine. Dr. Helbig was the official veterinarian for The World Equestrian Center-Ohio and The Kentucky Horse Shows for 10 years prior to joining Zoetis. She has covered Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI) competitions such as Split Rock Jumping Tour and spent time working at competitions in Michigan. She also previously had an ambulatory practice serving patients around her hometown of Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Helbig is an avid rider and competes professionally at hunter/jumper shows in her free time.



Equestrian Sport Psychology with Daniel Stewart

This upbeat, light-hearted, humorous seminar, based on Coach Stewart's four equestrian sports psychology books, is perfect for anyone wanting to feel more confident and courageous instead of disappointed and defeated. Learn how to effectively manage and overcome negative emotions related to sports. Do you experience nerves, show jitters, or struggles with fear, failure, or frustration? Put a little more happy in your happy place!

Presented by [Daniel Stewart](#)

An equestrian for over 40 years, **Daniel Stewart** combined his 25 years as an international coach and clinician with a degree in physical education to create an empowering and motivating series of equestrian clinics, workshops, seminars, and training camps. As the internationally acclaimed author of the books *Pressure Proof*; *Ride Right*; *Fit and Focused*; and *Braver, Bolder, Brighter*, he's widely considered one of the world's leading experts on equestrian sports psychology, athletics, and performance. He teaches clinics to thousands of riders each year and is the equestrian sports psychology and rider-fitness consultant to many equestrian associations. When not teaching clinics, he coaches four-day equestrian athlete camps at colleges and athlete training centers around the country, produces rider sports psychology videos, and offers one-on-one mental coaching sessions.

Evaluating Body Composition of Horses

Observation is key to good horsemanship. This workshop will guide participants through practical methods for evaluating a horse's body composition, including body weight, body condition score (BCS), cresty neck score (CNS), and muscle assessment. Attendees will learn different body scoring methods and what they indicate. By regularly recording observations, equine caretakers can detect early signs of issues and make better informed management, exercise, and nutrition decisions.

Presented by Sara Mastellar, PhD

Sara Mastellar, PhD, is an associate professor and the coordinator of Equine Programs at Ohio State ATI in Wooster, Ohio, where she teaches a variety of equine science courses. She is originally from New York, where she participated in Pony Club and 4-H. She earned her bachelor's degree from Cazenovia College, and her PhD in equine nutrition from the University of Kentucky. Her current research program in applied equine nutrition focuses on creating undergraduate research experiences for students.

Expert Tips for Show and Rally Management

Discover ways to make horse show management easier. Michael Lenard and Lindsay Lenard, co-founders of Horse Spot, will provide tips and tricks to make show management stress-free. Walk away with tips from Michael's decades of show management experience to make your events run smoother, faster, and better for everyone involved.

Presented by Michael and Lindsay Lenard

Michael Lenard is a co-founder of Horse Spot, where he serves as CFO and leads sales and customer service. He was a childhood USPC member, which led him to 20 years in horse show management including USEF competitions. He recently earned his USEF "r" Jumper Judge license. Michael uses his bachelor's and master's degrees in accountancy to modernize horse shows with Horse Spot.

Lindsay Lenard is a co-founder of Horse Spot with a focus on product design. She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts in illustration from the American Academy of Art. Lindsay also attended The Chicago Portfolio School for graphic and digital design.

Feeding the Easy Keepers and Managing Metabolic Conditions

Sponsored by Triple Crown Nutrition, the Official Feed Sponsor of USPC

Join Emily to learn what it takes to manage a horse's weight. Whether a horse is an easy keeper or has a metabolic condition, there are ways to manage weight. Discover helpful tips and tricks to help you manage your own horses.



Presented by Emily Smith

Emily Smith is a regional sales manager for Triple Crown Nutrition. She earned her Bachelor of Science in animal science from Iowa State University and her master's degree in horse science from Middle Tennessee State University. Emily focuses on equine reproduction and nutrition with the goal of promoting horse health and educate others.

Festival Education 2026

If you are wondering why Education is coming before Championships this year, this workshop is for you. Join USPC Instruction Services Director Connie Jehlik as she goes over what to expect at the 2026 USPC Festival that will be taking place at the Kentucky Horse Park in July. Learn what will be offered for Education and how it will be different from previous years.

Presented by Connie Jehlik

Connie Jehlik joined the staff of USPC in June of 2010 as Instruction Services Director. She holds a bachelor's degree and teaching certificate in agricultural education and middle school science from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, Calif. She also holds a Master of Education in instructional design. Connie taught middle school science and high school agriculture for a total of 22 years. She joined Contra Costa Pony Club when she was 11 years old and received her A certification from Morgan Territory Pony Club. Connie has stayed active in Pony Club through the years as a Chief Horse Management Judge, District Commissioner of Hoofbeats Pony Club, and as a Chief Horse Management Organizer for Sierra Pacific and Midsouth Regions. Her two daughters are also both Pony Club alums.

From Wild to Wonderful: Discover Chincoteague Ponies

Step into the enchanting world of the Chincoteague Pony. Join Susan Friedland alongside Rebekah Hart, as they trace the history, unique traits, and enduring legacy of these hardy ponies from Assateague Island. Discover the backstory of Misty, the pony who trotted off the page and into hearts around the world, and learn how community traditions keep the breed thriving today. Saddle up for a session filled with history, heart, and pony magic.

Presented by Susan Friedland and Rebekah Hart

Marguerite, Misty and Me author **Susan Friedland** is an equestrian blogger at saddleseekshorse.com and popular speaker. Susan has presented at the International Museum of the Horse, the Museum of Chincoteague Island, and Chincoteague Elementary School. She hosts the *Horse Illustrated* "Barn Banter" podcast and is learning dressage on her off-track Thoroughbred, Knight, in Bull Valley, Illinois.

Rebekah Hart is a Chincoteague Pony breeder. She serves as the president and a registrar of the International Chincoteague Pony Association and Registry. Her involvement with Chincoteague Ponies started at the age of 13. She owns and operates Hart's Island Pony Ranch in Minnesota, where she discovered the need to form a new Chincoteague registry. Rebekah used her equine degrees from Ellsworth Community College to create the International Chincoteague Pony Association and Registry in October of 2021.

The Future is in Your Hands

Have you ever wondered what an animal bodyworker does? Join Lola as she shares her career journey from zoo animals to Olympic-level horses. Learn more about this rewarding field and ask an international practitioner and educator questions. Hear stories and learn about the different methods used to care for our animal friends.

Presented by Lola Michelin

Lola Michelin founded the Northwest School of Animal Massage in 2001 and has been practicing animal massage for 40 years. As a graduate of the animal science program at Michigan State University, Lola has experience in both the veterinary and zoological fields. She maintains a private practice in addition to teaching and curriculum development. Lola consults with zoological park veterinary teams and owns Paxhia Farm, an equine retirement and rehabilitation facility on Vashon Island. She speaks and writes on the topic of animal bodywork and is active in promoting standards of practice and legislation for the industry.

Get Equine Conformation Right the First Time

Evaluating a horse's conformation can be complicated. In this workshop, learn a process that will help you evaluate the conformation of any horse, whether it be for a certification, a potential purchase, or perhaps even judging. Learn about good balance and angles, front and hind-leg conformation, and more. See how it can relate to soundness and affect aptitude for a certain discipline. Practice evaluating with an expert!

Presented by Laurie Chapman-Bosco

Laurie Chapman-Bosco is a life member and alumna of USPC. She is a National Examiner and a Chief Horse Management Judge and has held various positions in USPC as a committee chair, a member of the Board of Governors, and Vice President of Instruction. She is an emeritus professor from the University of New Hampshire, where she taught equine studies for 39 years.

Getting Back in the Saddle: Release Fear and Reclaim Joy in Your Horse Journey

Has anxiety taken the fun out of your horse journey? Horse-related trauma is surprisingly common and frequently overlooked. In this interactive workshop, you'll discover how to calm your nervous system using somatic, body-based tools; common mistakes equestrians make when trying to regain their confidence; and a five-step process to get to the root of your anxious thinking.

Presented by Sarah Louise Lilley

Sarah Louise Lilley is a clinical Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT or "Tapping") practitioner. As both a coach and speaker she helps equestrians overcome fear, blocks, and trauma. When she isn't riding or working with clients, Sarah mentors the next generation of EFT practitioners at EFT Universe, the largest EFT certification program.

Gut Health for Performance Horses

Dr. Roddy's talk will explain how the equine digestive system and gut microbiome work, and how to support your horse's digestive tract for optimal health and performance. Come explore the link between immune health and the microbiome, how to treat and prevent gastric and hindgut ulcers, and what your horse's manure can tell you about his health.

Presented by Erin Roddy, DVM

Erin Roddy, DVM, is a graduate of the University of California at Davis Veterinary School and is the chief veterinary officer at Poseidon Animal Health. Dr. Roddy has always been focused on equine nutrition and the role that it plays in performance and disease. She is passionate about researching the relationship between equine nutrition and gut health, and the outcome different feeding practices can have on behavior, development, performance, and disease.

Hay Analysis 101: Useful and Easier than you Might Think

Hay analysis is an important tool to understand your horse's diet. Hay forms the bulk of our horses' diets, yet the nutritional value varies tremendously from place to place. Hay analysis is the best way to understand the hay you are feeding, and what other feeds and supplements might be needed. This talk introduces hay analysis, describing the tools and techniques, what to test for, and how you can use the results.

Presented by Eben Haber

Eben Haber is an H-A alumnus from Jericho Forest Pony Club. He became reinvolved in USPC, first as a Pony Club parent and later as a District Commissioner, Vice-Regional Supervisor, Horse Management Organizer, Assistant Horse Management Judge, and now a Chief Horse Management Judge, all in the Middle California Region. Coming back into horses after some time away, he was fascinated by how much better we now understand horse health and nutrition and has enjoyed a much deeper understanding of what his horses are getting from their feed.

Helpful Winter Barn Hacks

Who doesn't want to find ways to make life easier and more efficient around the barn? This presentation does just that with tips specifically for dealing with winter challenges. From keeping water troughs ice-free to using heaters safely, and the proper way to fasten horse blankets, Fran will teach all you need to know to manage your barn in the winter.

Presented by Fran Severn

Fran Severn is a freelance writer and broadcaster. She is the author of *Riders of a Certain Age: Your Guide to Loving Horses Mid-Life and Beyond*; *Creating Your Journey*; *Barn Fires: Preventing a Disaster*; and *The Riders of a Certain Age Book of Barn Hacks*. Fran has had her work appear in *Horse Illustrated*, *USDF Connection*, *Newsday*, *The Trail Rider*, *Western Horseman*, *Dog Fancy*, and *Games*. She has covered events like the Kentucky Derby, the Ascot Races, and the Calgary Stampede. Fran lives in Newark, Delaware, with her husband and dog.

Horse Management: Simple, Fun, and Educational Ideas

Horse Management is a pillar of the Pony Club program. This session will cover activities to take Horse Management topics to a new level, including icebreakers, games, and hands-on activities. A USPC Horse Management Organizer will share simple and effective ways to incorporate teaching Horse Management into every meeting.

Presented by Tracie and Tatem Johnson

Tracie Johnson is a C-1 Horse Management, D-2 Eventing, D-3 Western Pony Club participating member, and District Commissioner of Desert Hooves Pony Club. She also serves as the Horse Management organizer for the Southwest Region.

Tatem Johnson is an H-B Horse Management, C-3 Eventing, C-2 Western Pony Club participating member and enjoys teaching Horse Management and the USPC badge program at her local club meetings.

Horse Senses: How Different are We? And Why it Matters

As humans, we think every animal experiences the world the same way we do. We couldn't be more wrong! Humans "see," dogs "smell," and elephants "feel" the world. What about horses? This interactive workshop explores how horses experience the world and how to help them thrive. Learn how horses use their senses to perceive the world, and how to provide a safe, kind, and encouraging equine environment. Through understanding, discover a better way of caring for and riding horses and how you can form a happy, lasting partnership with your horse where welfare is at the forefront.

Presented by Heather Bell

Heather Bell is a A-certified life member of Pony Club and alumna of San Francisco Pony Club. She has rallied all over the U.S. and has since become a National Examiner and Chief Horse Management Judge. Heather is a member of multiple USPC committees and has owned, bred, and worked with many different breeds of horses. She currently enjoys competing her Irish Sport Horse, Bruno, who loves to jump and tolerates dressage.

Horse Welfare, Social License, and USPC

The USPC task force on Horse Welfare and Social License will present this informational workshop, discussing the concepts of "horse welfare" and "social license," explaining why they are crucial for all of us involved with horses to understand. We will discuss the public's role in influencing the future of the horse industry, including USPC. USPC is poised to be a leader in the promotion of equine welfare by staying current with this contemporary research, and teaching members why "doing things the way we always have" can not only lead to issues with social license, but also inadvertently cause harm to the animals we love the most.

Presented by Heather Bell and Christina Keim

Heather Bell is a A-certified life member of Pony Club and alumna of San Francisco Pony Club. She has rallied all over the U.S. and has since become a National Examiner and Chief Horse Management Judge. Heather is a member of multiple USPC committees and has owned, bred, and worked with many different breeds of horses. She currently enjoys competing her Irish Sport Horse, Bruno, who loves to jump and tolerates dressage.

Christina Keim, M.Ed., M.F.A., is a USPC H-A alumna and National Examiner, Certified Yoga Teacher (CYT-200), and author. Based at her Cold Moon Farm in Rochester, New Hampshire, she is an avid and accomplished professional equestrian with competitive results in hunter seat equitation, dressage, eventing, jumpers, and competitive distance riding. In 2024, Christina developed her signature Mounted Mindfulness and Equestrian Yoga program, combining horsemanship with yoga philosophy and unmounted asana physical practice. Ms. Keim is the co-author of *The Athletic Equestrian* and *Equicize* (with Sally Batton) and *Unwanted: The Causes and Effects of America's Horse Population Crisis*, all published by Trafalgar Square Books.

#Horses – Using Media Literacy to Improve Your Online Equestrian Experience

Misinformation, bullying, echo chambers and bandwagons. They are the usual hazards online. We will use a journalist's knowledge of writing stories and verifying information to examine debates, memes, ideas and other content in online equestrian spaces.

Presented by Karen Hopper Usher and Christina Keim

Karen Hopper Usher, Club Secretary of Rose Lake Pony Club, is a USPC alum, receiving her D-2 at age 40! She is a freelance reporter focusing on equine health and equestrian lifestyle. Karen has a master's degree in journalism from Michigan State University and has written articles for both *The Plaid Horse* and *The Chronicle of the Horse*. She is now a Pony Club parent with her oldest daughter joining USPC in 2025.

Christina Keim, M.Ed., M.F.A., is a USPC H-A alumna and National Examiner, Certified Yoga Teacher (CYT-200), and author. Based at her Cold Moon Farm in Rochester, New Hampshire, she is an avid and accomplished professional equestrian with competitive results in hunter seat equitation, dressage, eventing, jumpers, and competitive distance riding. In 2024, Christina developed her signature Mounted Mindfulness and Equestrian Yoga program, combining horsemanship with yoga philosophy and unmounted asana physical practice. Ms. Keim is the co-author of *The Athletic Equestrian* and *Equicize* (with Sally Batton) and *Unwanted: The Causes and Effects of America's Horse Population Crisis*, all published by Trafalgar Square Books.

It's Never Too Late for Horses

The fastest growing segment of the recreational horse world is women over 40. Whether new to horses or returning after years away, it is an exciting adventure. This presentation looks at the reasons women are riding, how well-accepted they are in the horse world, their abilities to successfully deal with the new world of horses, and ways to handle the physical challenges of riding when you're older.

Presented by Fran Severn

Fran Severn is a freelance writer and broadcaster. She is the author of *Riders of a Certain Age: Your Guide to Loving Horses Mid-Life and Beyond*; *Creating Your Journey*; *Barn Fires: Preventing a Disaster*; and *The Riders of a Certain Age Book of Barn Hacks*. Fran has had her work appear in *Horse Illustrated*, *USDF Connection*, *Newsday*, *The Trail Rider*, *Western Horseman*, *Dog Fancy*, and *Games*. She has covered events like the Kentucky Derby, the Ascot Races and the Calgary Stampede. Fran lives in Newark, Delaware, with her husband and dog.

The Pelvis: Rider Position and Theory

Explore the integration of the rider's pelvis, the saddle, and the horse's back. Understand how the pelvis's position influences your seat and balance. Learn simple exercises to help find your way to a more effective position in the saddle.

Presented by Jennifer Kotylo

Jennifer Kotylo is a United States Dressage Federation (USDF) Bronze and Silver medalist, "L" dressage judge with distinction, and a sought-after clinician specializing in body awareness for riders. She has presented at many equine educational conferences and events. She is also a certified Pilates, Equilates, and Balimo instructor. Her Movement Studio is located in Chicago. Jennifer is the author of the children's book, *My Best Friend Betsy*, and the DVD series, *Improve Your Riding Through Movement*.

The Perfect Seat Starts with Your Saddle

Sponsored by Wintec Saddles, the Official Saddle Sponsor of USPC

The influence a saddle can have on a ridden seat, positive or negative, cannot be underestimated. Experts from Wintec Saddles share the critical saddle factors every rider and coach should know when assessing rider position. Learn how to see when a saddle is sitting the rider correctly and simple solutions to instantly improve the rider's balance, so they can enjoy their time in the saddle to the fullest and reach their true potential with their horse.



Presented by a Saddle Specialist from Wintec Saddles

As America's favorite synthetic saddle brand for over 30 years, **Wintec Saddles** has been the choice for young, growing riders with the durable materials and innovative features ensuring these practical saddles can handle whatever young riders throw at them. Hard-wearing, easy-care and indestructible—parents and riders have always appreciated owning a Wintec. Instructors have noticed the benefit of an adjustable and well-fitting saddle on rider position and horse movement.

Plaidcast in Person: Sport, Strategy, and Stewardship in the Modern Equestrian World and How YOU Can Make a Difference.

Join The Plaidcast, horse show sport's longest running and most listened-to podcast, for a special Plaidcast in Person live recording at the 2026 USPC Convention. This dynamic and interactive conversation will feature two special guests: Christian Baier and Michael Lenard. In this workshop, attendees will experience an engaging conversation exploring how evolving strategies in coaching, competition, and communication are shaping the future of our sport.

Presented by Piper Klemm, Christian Baier, and Michael Lenard

Piper Klemm, PhD., is the owner and publisher of *The Plaid Horse*. Piper's mission is to educate young equestrians in every facet of our industry and to empower young women in particular to find their voices and stories—and to share them. She has spent her entire career focusing on education through various channels, including *The Plaidcast*, and by providing educational articles, grants, and experiential learning opportunities for riders of all ages and levels.

Christian Baier is a diplomaed Swedish Equestrian Federation riding instructor and Internationally Certified Level 3 Instructor. He is a graduate from the riding instructor program at the Swedish University for Agricultural Studies and the Aachen School of Course Design. Christian has worked as a stud manager, trainer, and course instructor all over the world throughout his career. He created the Global Equestrian online curriculum for riders and trainers, a certified breathing instructor, and author of the book, *Arena Tracks*. He is also the director of riding education at BridgeUP GiddyUP, a nonprofit championing equity, diversity, and greater inclusion across the equestrian ecosystem by serving under-resourced communities.

Michael Lenard is a co-founder of Horse Spot, where he serves as CFO and leads sales and customer service. He was a childhood USPC member, which led him to 20 years in horse show management including USEF competitions. He recently earned his USEF “r” Jumper Judge license. Michael uses his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in accountancy to modernize horse shows with Horse Spot.

Progression of Local-Level Riding Expectations, D-1 Through C-2

This workshop will cover the progression of local-level riding expectations from D-1 through C-2. Through presentation, pictures, and interactive activities, participants will see and feel the terms in the riding test expectations and how Pony Club education progresses a rider’s position from D-1 through C-2.

Presented by Asia Thayer

Asia Thayer has been involved in USPC for over 30 years as a member and in leadership roles, including Regional Instruction Coordinator (RIC), National Examiner, USPC RIC Committee, Instruction Council, co-chair National Testing Committee, and a member of the Board of Governors. Asia is an active competitor and coach within the United States Dressage Federation (USDF) and United States Eventing Association (USEA), competing to the Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI) level. She earned her master’s degree in biology and Graduate Certificate in Public Health Genetics. Asia owns an equine boarding and training facility in Gig Harbor, Washington.

Progression of National-Level Riding Expectations, C-3-A

This workshop will cover the progression of national-level riding expectations from C-3 through A. Through presentation, pictures, and interactive activities with participants. The participants will see and feel the terms in the riding test expectations and how Pony Club education progresses a rider’s positions through the national levels from C-3 through A.

Presented by Asia Thayer

Asia Thayer has been involved in USPC for over 30 years as a member and in leadership roles, including Regional Instruction Coordinator (RIC), National Examiner, USPC RIC Committee, Instruction Council, co-chair National Testing Committee, and a member of the Board of Governors. Asia is an active competitor and coach within the United States Dressage Federation (USDF) and United States Eventing Association (USEA), competing to the Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI) level. She earned her master’s degree in biology and Graduate Certificate in Public Health Genetics. Asia owns an equine boarding and training facility in Gig Harbor, Washington.

Q&A with Christina Keim, Author, “Unwanted”

Join Christina Keim for a Q&A session about her latest book, *Unwanted: The Causes and Effects of America’s Horse Population Crisis*. Christina will share a short reading from the book, discuss her journey to becoming a professional writer, and answer questions regarding the book, publishing, writing, and more!

Presented by Christina Keim

Christina Keim, M.Ed., M.F.A., is a USPC H-A alumna and National Examiner, Certified Yoga Teacher (CYT-200), and author. Based at her Cold Moon Farm in Rochester, New Hampshire, she is an avid and accomplished professional equestrian with competitive results in hunter seat equitation, dressage, eventing, jumpers, and competitive distance riding. In 2024, Christina developed her signature Mounted Mindfulness and Equestrian Yoga program, combining horsemanship with yoga philosophy and unmounted asana physical practice. Ms. Keim is the co-author of *The Athletic Equestrian* and *Equicize* (with Sally Batton) and *Unwanted: The Causes and Effects of America’s Horse Population Crisis*, all published by Trafalgar Square Books.

Rider Fitness and Bootcamp with Daniel Stewart

This upbeat and humorous equestrian fitness workshop and bootcamp will teach you how fun and easy it can be to become an equestrian athlete! Learn how to build a bootcamp that will improve your stamina, balance, core strength, suppleness, posture, symmetry, and more. Discover ways to use equipment found at the barn, such as mounting blocks, buckets, lead lines, jump poles, cavalletti, cross-rails, and bales of hay to become a better rider and athlete.

Presented by Daniel Stewart

An equestrian for over 40 years, **Daniel Stewart** combined his 25 years as an international coach and clinician with a degree in physical education to create an empowering and motivating series of equestrian clinics, workshops, seminars, and training camps. As the internationally acclaimed author of the books *Pressure Proof*; *Ride Right*; *Fit and Focused*; and *Braver, Bolder, Brighter*, he's widely considered one of the world's leading experts on equestrian sports psychology, athletics, and performance. He teaches clinics to thousands of riders each year and is the equestrian sports psychology and rider-fitness consultant to many equestrian associations. When not teaching clinics, he coaches four-day equestrian athlete camps at colleges and athlete training centers around the country, produces rider sports psychology videos, and offers one-on-one mental coaching sessions.

Seats of Lameness and How to Find Them

Sponsored by the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP)

This presentation will show the exact locations, structures involved, and basic pathology of the seats of common lamenesses, with photos, videos, and radiographs. Learn from an expert veterinarian how these lamenesses are diagnosed and treated.



Presented by Paula Horne, DVM

Paula Horne, DVM, is an H-A Horse Management, B Eventing alumna of USPC. She serves USPC as a National Examiner, and is a member of the USPC Curriculum Committee. Dr. Horne practiced veterinary medicine for 40 years, building five mixed animal veterinary practices in Northern Virginia, and is now semi-retired in Maine. She has competed and participated in dressage, eventing, show hunters and jumpers, and foxhunting since she was a child. She obtained her USDF Bronze Medal with her current mount, a homebred Lusitano/Dutch Warmblood cross.

Special Opportunities and International Exchanges

Special opportunities and international exchanges are the carrot that lies beyond other Pony Club activities. It is an honor and a reward for all the hard work acquiring skills and certifications to be selected to go on one of the exchanges or be part of a special opportunity here in the U.S. Each exchange will be explained, along with team members from exchanges sharing their experiences.

Presented by Jennifer Merrick-Brooks

Jennifer Merrick-Brooks is a professional equestrian with a multifaceted background including coaching, event organizing, and business management. She is an A-level Canadian Pony Club graduate. She continues to train, coach, compete, and operate Equi Jenn Equestrian International, LLC. She is a board member of The Eventing Association of Michigan, an organizer of the Honey Run USEA Horse Trials in Area VIII, and a member of the USPC Special Opportunities Committee. Jenn coached the 2025 Inter-Pacific Exchange Team competing in Australia.

Supporting Your Horse's Nutritional Needs During Travel and Competition

Supporting your horse's nutritional needs during travel and competition is essential for optimal performance and recovery. Learning why keeping a diet consistent under stressful conditions and during periods of increased physical and mental

demands requires special attention to forage intake, water consumption, vitamins, minerals, caloric needs, and gut support. This presentation will discuss the strategies to maximize your horse's health, comfort, and performance while competing and during transport.

Presented by Brandy Miller

Brandy Miller is a Tribute Superior Equine Nutrition Consultant with Kalmbach Feeds, Inc. She has a diverse equestrian background spanning over 40 years to include American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) all-around competition, hunter under saddle, Western pleasure, showmanship, halter, barrel racing and trail riding. Brandy is also a USPC alumna. She currently serves as a representative for riders to the Department of Natural Resources for Central Lower Michigan and holds a master's degree in education and bachelor's degree in biology.

Teacher's Toolkit—Level Up Your Instructor Game!

You've been assigned a topic for your club/center's monthly meeting. Now what? How do you figure out what exactly to do for a giant topic like "D-level Veterinary Knowledge" to fit in 30 minutes? What in the world do you do with four D-2s, ages 6 to 16, on different sized ponies, for one hour? This session is about hooking you up with skills you need to be an awesome instructor, including: lesson planning, classroom/arena management, and expecting the unexpected.

Presented by Sedate Kohler

Sedate Kohler is an H-HM Pony Club alumna from Racine County Pony Club in the Lake Shore Region. As an advocate for Pony Club's Horse Management education, Sedate has been an instructor and examiner, served as Horse Management Organizer for the Lake Shore Region, and is a current Provisional Chief Horse Management Judge. In the past few years, she has been an Assistant Horse Management Judge at Pony Club Championships and an instructor at the USPC Festival. Professionally, Sedate is a biology and chemistry teacher in south-central Wisconsin.

Teaching Tools for Horse Management

Get some fresh ideas for teaching Horse Management from members of the D-1 to C-2 Curricula Committee. These tools are great for any teacher, new or seasoned, to use with members from D-1 through H-A.

Presented by Melissa Dabadie, Ginger Wisseman, Cindy Medina, Karen Skoric

Melissa Dabadie is an H-B Horse Management and C-3 Eventing alumna and life member of USPC. She is a former AMS Elementary I & II Montessori teacher and teacher trainer. She is a graduate from Peak to Peak Pony Club in Rocky Mountain Region, District Commissioner of Liberty Oaks Pony Club, and Horse Management Organizer of Sierra Pacific Region. Melissa has been a National Examiner for 20 years. She currently lives in Galt, California, with her pony.

Ginger Wisseman is passionate about all things Pony Club. She is an active member, parent, District Commissioner, local instructor, regional examiner, and regional board member. Ginger currently serves as the Horse Management Organizer for the Great Lakes region and is a member of the USPC D-1 through C-2 Curriculum Committee. Ginger and her family own a small boarding facility, hosting regional rallies, clinics, and camps.

Cindy Medina is an H-B Horse Management and B Eventing alumna from Brush Run Pony Club. She is a Horse Management Organizer for Midwest Region, a Chief Horse Management Judge, and serves on the D-1 through C-2 Curricula and Horse Management Committees. She is also the Provisional CHMJ Program Coordinator. Cindy is a retired jockey and one of only a handful of female jockeys to win over 1,000 races. She currently works for Willoughby Heritage Farm as the equine specialty educator. Cindy also founded the Silver Springs Pony Club.

Karen Skoric is the Regional Supervisor of Big Sky Region. She is also on the D-1 through C-2 Curricula Committee. Karen is a Pony Club parent to her two children.

Treasury 101

This workshop will be broken out into two parts. The first part will be an overview of what the treasurer needs to do to keep the clubs and region in compliance. The second part will be a start-to-finish Central Financial Reporting System tutorial.

Presented by Seherzada “Bada” Faber

Seherzada “Bada” Faber is the Finance and Accounting Director at the USPC National Office. Bada has lived in Kentucky since age 9, moving there from Bosnia with her family. Bada began working at USPC in 2012 while finishing her accounting degree at Eastern Kentucky University and has stayed on ever since! In the meantime, Bada has built a family with her husband, Brian, and her son, Torin, and enjoys spending time outdoors with them.

USA Working Equitation

Experience working equitation with USA Working Equitation (USAWE), the governing body of working equitation in the United States. Working equitation is a versatile sport for a variety of breeds, riding abilities, ages, and tack choices. With this workshop led by professional instructors, you will learn about the phases of working equitation (including dressage, ease of handling, speed, cattle) and the opportunities available to instructors and youth participants.

Presented by Kasey Riddle

Kasey Riddle is the youth development chair for USA Working Equitation (USAWE), the governing body for Working Equitation in the United States. She is a USAWE Bronze Medalist and holds multiple national and zone champion titles. Kasey is also a C-2 Eventing member of the Greenville Foothills Pony Club in the Carolina Region. Kasey enjoys Pony Club and learning horse sports with her two daughters, her cattle farm in North Carolina, trail rides, and teaching riding lessons.

Vet Box Tips & Tricks

Sponsored by Kentucky Equine Research

The vet box is an important part of Horse Management at an Eventing rally, but if you haven't competed in a long-format three-day or at the FEI level, it may seem like a daunting challenge after crossing the finish flags. Come learn how to set yourself up for success and to make the most of your horse's post-cross-country recovery from the "Vet Box Queen" herself, as she has been dubbed by Horse Management. Judges You'll also take home a worksheet that can be used to practice your skills or as an unmounted meeting outline.



Presented by Shawna Herrala

Shawna Herrala is a Pony Club alum from the Western New York Region. As a Pony Club life member, Shawna is an avid supporter and longtime judge of the USPC Research Project Fair. She is a Chief Horse Management Judge and is always the first person to volunteer to work in the vet box! To fund her horse habit, Shawna works as the director of digital technology at Kentucky Equine Research. Shawna lives on a small farm in Central Kentucky with her husband, dogs, and off-track Thoroughbred Sota King.

When Mom Can't Volunteer: Multigenerational Families in Pony Club

Adults can now be full participating members of Pony Club, which opens the possibility of parents and children working alongside each other in pursuit of their Pony Club, horsemanship and riding goals. Join Karen and Amy as they explore the benefits of being a multigenerational Pony Club family, the challenges, and how local clubs and regions can support these members.

Presented by Karen Hopper Usher and Amy Fidler

Karen Hopper Usher, Club Secretary of Rose Lake Pony Club, is a USPC alum, receiving her D-2 at age 40! She is a freelance reporter focusing on equine health and equestrian lifestyle. Karen has a master's degree in journalism from Michigan State University and has written articles for both *The Plaid Horse* and *The Chronicle of the Horse*. She is now a Pony Club parent with her oldest daughter joining USPC in 2025.

Amy Fidler is a USPC alum and graduate of Foxwood Pony Club. She is the Region Secretary for the Great Lakes Region and has two children in Pony Club.