

New York Upper Connecticut Regional Meeting
Saturday, January 31, 2009
Scoop This Café

In Attendance: Roberta Kost (RS), Ginny Del Conte (VRS), Holly Ely (Treasurer), Ellen Griffin (Secretary), Bonnie Korn (Ridge Riders), Doris Dunn (Ridge Riders), Liz Doering (NE), Dale Denning (Mad River), Gremmy Dey (Sleeping Giant), Cathy Wick (Sleeping Giant), Theresa Lehn (Lakeville), Barbara Meyer (Millbrook), Trish Heller (Millbrook), Susanna Rodell (Sleeping Giant), Ruby Rodell (Sleeping Giant), Ann Sullivan (Connecticut Valley), Martha Ruff (Running Fox), Joanna Lipman (Glastonbury), Roxanne Blaxe (Granby), Susan Iovino (Kent).

Meeting called to order 9:15am

Secretary's Report:

Ellen Griffin quickly read the minutes from the November 8, 2008 Annual Regional Meeting. There was a question from Holly regarding the cap on the upper level reimbursement. A reimbursement request was processed at one third of the cost, which exceeded the \$100 cap (approx \$116). It was determined that the minutes accurately reflected the policy. Trish Heller motioned, seconded by Martha Ruff to approve the minutes as presented. Motion approved. Martha Ruff, seconded by Gremmy Dey, made an additional motion to approve the additional reimbursement of \$16. The motion was approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Holly Ely presented the treasurer's Report as of January 9, 2009. The balance as of that date is \$21,113.64. For the year, we are ahead \$1,597.65, however Holly noted this includes the escrow for the now closed Litchfield Pony Club. Motion to approve the report was made by Gremmy Dey, seconded by Barbara Meyer. Motion approved. Holly reminded the group that all clubs are required to file their annual report with the national office by February 15, 2009. For more details, you can see the Newsletter on the USPC site.

Club Update:

Bershire Pony Club has folded as of 12/31/2008. Outreach attempts were made both by the region and other clubs, but the remaining participants seem to centralize around their barn, and were not participating in Pony Club programming.

Brumby Pony Club is investigating a switch in regions. They are currently in the Western New York Region. As their regional activities occur on the western end of the state, they believe they will be closer to our regional activities.

Additional membership discussion arose regarding recruitment and retention issues: i.e. trying to reach out to a show jumper barn - having those students learn to ride outside the fence, how to reach out to other trainers to illustrate that PC can coexist with a riding programs. How to balance having the right number of members with having members who are a drain vs. those who participate, how long is the learning curve in the pony club approach, and at what point should parents have "figured out" what their role needs to be.

As has been discussed on the national level, name association and recognition have been ongoing issues as well. Susanna Rodell is a member of the national communication committee, and shared with us that she is preparing an article for USEA regarding what their Pony Club background and experience has done for some high level eventers, in an attempt to get out the message of the value of Pony Club. As discussed was the value of piece in our own local newspapers with our accomplishments and activities. We need to find ways to let our communities know Pony Club teaches life skills using the horse as the medium.

Youth Congress:

Ruby Rodell expressed her thanks for being able to attend the youth congress at the national meeting. She had lots of fun, and found the experience very cool and interesting – she echoed to idea of the life skills learned from PC, such as leadership. Ruby valued the ability to have input on national policy changes that will go before the national committee. She also felt it would be great if the older PCers were able to be sponsors for the board of governors. In trying to identify why we are losing older members, some have felt they were not being taken seriously or treated with respect for the learning and experience they have from their years with Pony Club, particularly those who may not have obtained an upper level rating, but still have much to offer, and want to be heard. This doesn't seem to be an issue with the younger riders regardless of rating.

The National Youth Board wants to have regional youth boards. In this way highly motivated kids who want to have input have a way to do so. They're planning on using Facebook or other e forums, since transportation could be an issue. This can help keep the older kids involved so continuity is maintained for the younger members.

Another idea discussed was to have the older kids be available to switch off to other clubs for lessons. It has been observed that teaching (presentation, lesson planning, etc.) is not up to standard for our HA/A candidates. If the kids are willing we could form a region list of available candidates for teaching. Teaching could also include exposing younger members to other activities (i.e. musical kur, games, etc.) to benefit both the older and younger members.

Robbie suggested to Ruby perhaps she, Adrianna and Mark could try to set something up directly with the target group, perhaps at the instructors clinic about this concept.

Other ideas about membership were to highlight any community service pony clubbers do as a way to raise awareness and attitude, hang our club banners at other horse related events, and try to hook up with other kids at the school level.

Rally updates:

The list of club job assignments was handed out. Please look at the list to ensure you can do the job or if a switch is needed, please do so soon so appropriate plans can be made.

Eventing: Early bird registration has been dropped, and the deadline for registrations has been moved up, probably two weeks before the event. Late entries may still be accepted if space permits, but a surcharge will be charged. This will apply to the Dressage Rally as well. Liz will reach out to the surrounding regions to see if they will be participating in this, or any of our regional rallies.

SJ: There was some discussion regarding a revamping show jumping so it will move faster, perhaps running two rings, etc. but it depends on attendance to be economically feasible. Our Show Jumping Rally is targeted for C and above ratings.

Cross Country Issue: Fence judging\volunteer policy: As we often do not have enough individuals for fence judging, it was proposed that we go to one volunteer per rider, however a conclusion was not reached, as this may be more hands than needed. A concern was raised how do you ensure you have a job for all your volunteers? A question was raised would Metro deliver enough participation for the cross country field, but Sue Iovino stated she has an arrangement with a boarder who does landscaping that they will take care of the field in exchange for board (Yeah!).

Liz stated the scheduling for the SJ and Dressage Rallies will be done by the region, so please get the rosters to her as soon as possible after the close date to ensure proper scheduling (National Intent etc.).

Games Rally: Ridge Riders has 4-5 senior players, Running Fox has two juniors and one senior rider. If no regional spots are available, they can scramble with players from another region. The NJ Regional Rally conflicts with Prince Phillip, so that will not be our regional rally this year. CNE conflicts with a club rally, so it's between Western NY and Eastern Pa. After some discussion it was decided that if EPA will let us in, we will use that as our regional rally for 2009, June 21, 2009.

Quiz will be April 5. Metro has asked if their Cs kids can come to our regional quiz to qualify as they do not have enough this year. We agreed.

Upper level preps and test: The instructors' clinic is March 21. Maureen Pach is the presenter with mounted and unmounted sessions. This is REQUIRED for upper level candidates.

For those who want to know what is involve/expected at an upper level rating, Liz is willing to have a session for parents and future raters. The standards are new this year. For the upper level ratings, preparedness is critical.

Prep Camp: Sarah Adams, the HM for eventing, will stay for camp, along with Lora Lie Copeland, Liz and Maureen.

Reminder: paperwork for summer upper level testing must be IN GINNY'S HANDS (not in the mail) by April 1.

HB Prep:— There are a limited number of kids this year. We need a central place for preps. Again a big need is in teaching to teach issues. We need to have the upper levels candidates shadow trainers for mounteds, and possibly utilize Mrs. Brown for teaching skills for the unmounted, i.e.: how to do a lesson plan.

Pony Club Clinic Budget: A question arose as to how much should be allocated for reimbursement for clinics. The recommendation was a cap of 5% of budget.

Championships Allocation: The usual plan works with current budget. A question was should there be a cut back, but in comparing year to year, we did recover financially even though attendance was down at our rallies

NI forms: go to Robbie this year.

Suggested fundraising: In looking at other ways to raise money, suggestions made included holding a trailer cleaning, tack cleaning, general donation solicitation, spaghetti dinner, consignment sales, tack swaps, etc. We are going to try some form of consignment sale at the SJ rally, details to follow.

Policies: tabled until next meeting due to time.

Club policies: Robbie should have a copy of all club's policies. If you haven't already done so, please send her a copy.

Next meeting: April 5 at Regional Quiz

Meeting adjourned 12:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Griffin
Regional Secretary