



# Roanoke Valley Pony Club

## Member Handbook

Effective September 2018



### **Introduction**

Roanoke Valley Pony Club (“RVPC”) is a participating club of the United States Pony Clubs (“Pony Club” or “USPC”), and part of the Old Dominion Region Pony Clubs (ORDPC).

All bylaws, policies, and rules of USPC and ODRPC apply to RVPC. The following describes procedures and practices of the club, and do not replace or supersede any bylaws, policies, or rules of USPC or ODRPC.

RVPC supports the Mission of USPC and the Pony Club Core Values.

More information and current events may be found online at the following websites:

The official USPC website is <http://www.ponyclub.org/>

The official ODRPC website is <http://olddominion.ponyclub.org/>

The official RVPC website is located at <http://www.roanokevalleyponyclub.org/>

The purpose of this Handbook is to help new and current members and parents understand what is expected of them, and what the club will strive to provide for them.

### **Standing Rules and Practices of RVPC**

#### **1. Membership**

- a. Each member must be a “Member in Good Standing” (MIGS) to participate in any club, regional, or national events. MIGS requirements are defined by USPC.
- b. Club dues are paid for a calendar year, and the amount is determined each year at the Annual Sponsors Meeting. Club dues are not prorated for partial year membership.
- c. Since most meetings, ratings, and our fund-raising shows are held at Green Hill Park Equestrian Center (GHPEC), and we have an agreement with this park for use of the facilities, all RVPC members must be members of GHPEC.

## **2. General Expectations**

- a. Members and parents are responsible for knowing and following the policies of USPC, and all rules and procedures within this Handbook.
- b. RVPC uses TeamSnap to maintain a calendar of club, regional, and national events. Each member/parent will be invited to join the team, and will need to do so in order to keep informed of, and RSVP for, various events.
- c. All mounts brought to club functions must have proof of a current negative Coggins test.
- d. Per USPC policy, all mounts brought to any Pony Club event must be at least five years of age. Exception: C-1 and higher rated members may bring a four-year-old.
- e. All participating members must follow the Rules and Guidelines for the facility being used.
- f. Before leaving club meetings, the facility must be returned to the state in which it was found, or in better shape, including stall cleaning, trash removal, and equipment storage.
- g. Any behavior problems or conflict between participating members will be handled individually by the DC. Any member or sponsor wishing to express a grievance should initially bring his/her concerns to the DC verbally. The DC will immediately try to resolve existing issues. If concerns are not resolved, the member or sponsor may present his/her concerns in writing to the DC. If necessary, a meeting will be arranged to resolve all issues as soon as possible. It is the goal of club leadership to keep the club running smoothly with as little conflict as possible so that we can work better together as a team in which we all strive for the same goals.
- h. Sponsors discuss and vote on budget, officers, and major decisions at the Annual Meeting (usually October) and the Spring Planning Meeting (usually January). However, the DC and Jt-DC are responsible for administering and running the club, and making appropriate decisions throughout the year. They may delegate responsibility for certain activities (instruction, testing, rallies, etc) by appointing an individual as coordinator for that activity.

## **3. Fund Raising**

- a. Fund-raising is a primary means of generating funds for the club.
- b. The majority of profits from fund-raising will be used for training and educational purposes for all participating members.
- c. Some profits from fund-raising may be used for supporting members in upper-level certifications and certification prep clinics, which are organized by ODRPC. These funds may only cover registration fees for these certification tests/clinics. Annual limits to the amount any single member may use for these will be imposed, and may vary by certification level.

- d. Some profits from fund-raising may be used for supporting members participating at USPC Championships. These funds may only cover entry fees for champs. Members must qualify for champs via a regional rally in order to be eligible for this benefit.
- e. Each participating member or their family must participate in club fund-raisers. The DC will give every opportunity for each member and/or parent to participate in advance if they are not able to attend during the actual event. Fund-raising activities will be planned for the year at the Annual Sponsors' Meeting. Jobs/duties will be assigned at that meeting, as well as closer to the fund-raiser(s) as needed.

#### **4. Mounted and Unmounted Meetings**

- a. Mounted and Unmounted Meetings are scheduled by the Instructional Coordinator (IC), who is appointed by the DC. Preferences for instructors, ideas for lessons, etc. are discussed during sponsors meetings. A variety of instructors are used to accommodate different strengths and learning styles.
- b. Members must RSVP at least 4 days prior to a mounted/unmounted meeting, via TeamSnap. Failure to RSVP within the allotted time may result in a loss of participation privileges for that meeting.
- c. Lesson times take planning and the club often must pay for the expected number of participants, even if not all of them show up. If a member does not participate in a meeting for which they RSVP'ed, they may be held responsible for cost of the missed lesson. This may be waived for an emergency or illness or lameness of member/mount. If a member has such an emergency and cannot participate in a meeting for which they RSVP'ed, they must notify the IC as soon as possible to inform them.
- d. Unrated and D-level members may be taught by C-1 and up members with proper adult supervision.
- e. Most mounted meetings will be held at Green Hill Park Equestrian Center. Occasionally mounted meetings may be held in other locations. If the location has a facility or trailer-in fee, the member is responsible for paying this fee. Any such fees will be noted on the event in TeamSnap.
- f. RVPC generally pays the instructor fee (up to \$35) for each mounted meeting. Occasionally an instructor may charge more, with the member responsible for the additional cost. Any such cost will be noted on the event in TeamSnap.
- g. All members must come to all meetings that involve work around the horse wearing a medical armband with completed, signed Medical Card, or a medical wristband that meets USPC requirements. Any member not having these in place will not be able to participate in that activity.
- h. Before any member is allowed to mount, a safety check must be completed. C-1 and up members will be expected to conduct these checks for lower-rated members at each meeting. If no C-1 or up member is in attendance, the instructor or DC or designee will complete the safety checks. C-1 and up members may complete their own safety check.

- i. Dress for mounted meetings is neat and workmanlike. At mounted meetings, all members must wear approved helmets and footwear (as per the USPC guidelines) and a shirt with a collar and sleeves. Members must wear their Medical Armband or wristband. If riding pants have belt loops, a belt must be worn. Long hair must be tied back neatly or a hairnet must be worn. Wearing of the Pony Club Pin is encouraged at all meetings.
- j. Members who are under 18 attending a mounted meeting must have a parent, guardian or other designated adult present during the mounted meeting. The DC or designee must be made aware if someone instead of a parent or guardian is present.
- k. Each instructor may have a minimum required number of members in order to conduct the meeting. If the number of participants for any mounted meeting is fewer than this minimum, the meeting may be canceled.
- l. Unmounted meetings may be held in conjunction with mounted meetings, or separately.

## **5. Rally Participation**

- a. All members are encouraged to participate in Rallies. These are a great learning and team-building experience unique to Pony Club.
- b. All members are strongly encouraged to serve as Stable Manager (SM) at rallies periodically. Rally teams with an SM are encouraged to offer transportation to and from the Rally and housing during the Rally if needed for the SM. The team is advised to help with Rally expenses for an SM whenever it is deemed necessary.
- c. Rally team composition will be determined by the DC. Members must demonstrate to the DC their safety and readiness at the level they wish to complete prior to the Rally entry deadline. Complete paperwork and fees must be submitted to the DC or a designated Rally Coordinator at least 4 days before the stated closing date for each Rally. The DC or designee may reject late or incomplete Rally entries.
- d. Rallies have a participation fee. In order to facilitate and encourage participation at rallies, RVPC will set up a rally allotment, available to each member. This allotment is an annual total, and may be used only towards entry fees for any Old Dominion Region Rally (including Zone rallies). Unused portions do not carry over and cannot be transferred. Allotment amounts are set each year by the sponsors at the Annual Meeting, and depend on fundraising and budgetary constraints.
- e. Members are responsible for paying the entry fee (minus any allotment used) and any additional cost(s), such as their share of any coaching fee. Rally fees must be paid to RVPC.
- f. In rallies where coaches are used, any fees and/or expenses associated with the coach(es) will be evenly divided by the RVPC members receiving the coaching at the Rally. The DC or Rally Coordinator has the responsibility of hiring the coach, but will attempt to take into account member preferences as well as affordability. Members are highly encouraged to use the coaching available. In some disciplines, they may be required to use the coach.

## **6. Testing Guidelines**

- a. Club-level testings are offered a minimum of twice a year (per USPC Policy 5010). Please set your goals accordingly. Candidates must be a Member in Good Standing (MIGS).
- b. The DC will coordinate all club-level testing or appoint a Testing Coordinator to do so. This includes setting a date and location, and hiring an appropriate examiner.
- c. You must notify the Testing Coordinator of your intention to test in writing or email one month in advance, using the "Intent to Test" form on the RVPC website.
- d. You must pay for your test at the time you sign up for it, at least one month in advance. RVPC currently charges only \$25 per test, which is much less than the expense of hiring examiners. RVPC covers the remainder of the cost for our members. If the candidate decides not to test, this fee will not be refunded. If the candidate cannot test due to his/her illness or lameness/illness of the mount, this fee will be refunded with a doctor or vet note.
- e. Tests will be held at Green Hill Park Equestrian Center (GHPEC), or other suitable location as determined by the DC or Testing Coordinator.
- f. The DC or Joint DC (or their designee) must be present at any test, including re-testing.
- g. If a member wishes to test with another club, you must coordinate this with the DC ahead of time. The member will be responsible for the fees charged by the other club (these vary, but are usually around \$50 to \$75).
- h. National Tests are offered by USPC and the test dates and application deadlines will be published on the USPC website. Candidates apply directly online. Candidates must follow regional guidelines when applying for national tests. This may include participation in an Upper Level Prep at the appropriate level.

## **7. Expectations of Parents of Participating Members**

- a. A parent is expected to volunteer in some capacity at the club fund-raiser(s).
- b. Parents must volunteer as needed to help set up/take down equipment at mounted meetings at which his/her child participates, and help assure the cleanliness of the facility after the meeting is over.
- c. Parents must not interfere with the instructor at any time, and should not enter the ring during the lesson except to help with equipment, if asked. Any grievances must be made to the DC or designee.
- d. Parents are requested to volunteer as needed and as he/she is able in the running of the club.
- e. The region requires volunteers be submitted as part of each rally entry. Parents are expected to volunteer during any rally in which his/her child participates.
- f. Parents are expected to attend all his/her child's certification testings.

## **8. Regional Obligations**

- a. RVPC is required to host at least one Rally or other regional duty as assigned by the RS annually. Each member and/or his/her family will be asked to assist in preparation for and/or running of the event. Members will be notified several months in advance and are expected to participate as needed.
- b. The DC or a designee is required to attend regional meetings during the year, and expenses associated with this attendance will be paid for by RVPC.

## **9. National Meeting**

- a. The DC and/or Jt-DC is encouraged to attend the USPC meeting if possible. RVPC will pay for meeting fee and travel expenses when feasible within the budget.