



## **Policies**

**(Approved October 24, 2008)**

Groton Pony Club (GPC), a registered club of the United States Pony Clubs, Inc. (USPC), has adopted the following policies for managing the operations and activities of GPC, in accordance with *USPC By-laws*.

### **1) Mission Statement**

The mission of Groton Pony Club is to provide opportunities for participating members to develop their proficiency in riding, mounted sports, and the care of horses and ponies, thereby developing responsibility, leadership, and self-confidence.

### **2) Officers**

The duties and responsibilities of the required Administrative Officers and Club Officers are defined in the By-laws of the Registered Clubs of The United States Pony Clubs.

### **3) Participating Members**

- a) Participating members of Groton Pony Club are children between the ages of six (6) years and twenty-one (21) years, who have met the eligibility requirements set forth in the *USPC Rules, Regulations and Policies*, paid all USPC, Regional, and GPC dues and fees, and been accepted for membership by GPC.
- b) While it is not necessary for members to own their own horse or pony, members must have regular access to a suitable mount and share an interest in developing their equestrian knowledge, horse management skills, and riding ability. Access to transportation for the member's mount (trailer) is also often required for participation in mounted activities.
- c) Members of the Groton Pony Club are representatives of our club and are expected to exhibit good horsemanship, sportsmanship, respect, and courtesy at all times.
- d) Members are expected to arrive on time for any meeting, rating, rally or other planned activity.

### **4) Member-in-Good-Standing**

To remain a member-in-good-standing, members must attend a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the mounted meetings and fifty percent (50%) of the unmounted meetings held. Educationally related absences are excused. The District Commissioner (DC) may, at his or her discretion, excuse a member's absence for good cause (such as

illness or a death in the family) or, in extenuating circumstances, allow the meeting missed to be made up in a manner to be determined by the Coordinator of Instruction.

## 5) Volunteer Participation

- a) Member's, parent's, and other volunteer's active participation in GPC activities is essential to our ability fulfill and finance GPC's mission. Accordingly, each member's family (either the member's parents, the member themselves, or a designated adult), is expected to contribute a minimum of twenty (20) hours per year service to GPC. At least twelve (12) of those hours must be working at the Groton Pony Club fundraising shows. Service is defined as any activity approved by the DC that promotes GPC's mission and typically includes working at GPC fundraisers, Spring fairgrounds setup, Fall fairgrounds cleanup, and club officers or other volunteers (such as the show secretary, newsletter editor, event coordinators, etc.) performing GPC business.
- b) When a member participates in a regional rally, it is required that an adult volunteer accompany the member. This volunteer participation does **NOT** count toward GPC's service requirement.
- c) Prospective members and their families should be aware of this participation requirement and agree to it before their membership is accepted. The DC may, at his or her discretion, decline to accept the membership renewal of members whose families fail to meet this minimum participation requirement. An appeal of the DC's decision may be made by the member or their parent at the next scheduled sponsors meeting and shall be decided by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the sponsors present at the meeting.

## 6) Meetings

- a) General
  - i) Attendance is required at all mounted and unmounted meetings.
  - ii) It is the responsibility of the member or designated adult to sign in on the official sign-in sheet. If the member or designated adult fails to sign-in or notify the meeting coordinator of the error within 3 days, the attendance will not count.
  - iii) It is always the member's responsibility to notify the meeting coordinator of an absence prior to the meeting as soon as possible, but no later than the Monday prior to the meeting for planned or excused absences. Notification of absences due to illnesses or other unexpected reasons should be made ASAP. Failure to notify the meeting coordinator prior to 48 hours before the

start of a meeting will result in the member reimbursing the club \$25 prior to the next meeting. This reimbursement may be waived once per year at the discretion of the DC.

- iv) Parents are responsible for their child(ren) during meetings and should remain at meetings. If a parent is unable to remain at a meeting with their child(ren), they must notify the meeting coordinator which adult at the meeting has agreed to take responsibility for their child(ren). Under no circumstances should members be left at a meeting location after the meeting has ended.
- v) New England weather can be unpredictable; it is the goal of the club to hold meetings as scheduled. Meetings will be cancelled for thunder/lightning, heavy rains and snow storms, but not rain. Notification of cancellation will be sent 2 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time.
- vi) When creating Riding Groups, many factors may be used to determine member placement such as ability of the current rider/mount combination, rating, age, experience, and goals. Final determination will be made by the DC in consultation with the Instructional Coordinator.

#### b) Mounted Meetings

- i) The group instruction provided at mounted meetings is intended to supplement, not replace, a member's lessons with their own instructor.
- ii) Regular mounted meetings will be held weekly, generally from April through June and September through October.
- iii) The dates and times of mounted meetings will be announced in the GPC newsletter, website, or through email at least two weeks prior to the first meeting of the season.
- iv) A Pony Clubber's horse or pony must be properly kept at all times. The horse or pony should be well groomed, mane and tail neat and clean, hooves regularly shod or trimmed, and the animal's general condition kept up.
- v) An ASTM-SEI approved riding helmet, proper footwear (having a well defined heel and covering the ankle), and clean, safe tack in good repair are required.
- vi) Proper dress for mounted meetings is:
  - appropriate footwear - jodhpur boots with jodhpur pants or tall boots with breeches (no chaps)

- a neatly tucked in shirt with a collar
  - Pony Club Pin
  - riding gloves (optional)
  - sweatshirts, sweaters, or coats may be worn in cooler weather
- vii) All riders should be ready to present themselves and their mounts for a safety check 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- viii) Members whose mounts are unable to be at a mounted meeting must attend the meeting dismounted and ready to ride.
- ix) To ensure a young rider's safety at mounted meetings, the parent or adult responsible for a young rider (under 12) must be able to assist them in handling and preparing their pony.
- x) C-1 and higher level rated members are expected to assist D level riders as requested by their Pony Club instructors.
- xi) C-2 and higher level rated members are expected to demonstrate proficiency in teaching an unmounted lesson to D level riders under the supervision of their Pony Club instructors.
- xii) C-3s and higher level rated members are expected to assist with instruction at mounted and unmounted meetings as requested by their Pony Club instructors.

c) Unmounted Meetings

- i) Unmounted meetings will be held approximately twice a month November through March.
- ii) The dates and times of unmounted meetings will be announced in the GPC newsletter, website, or through email at least two weeks in advance.

## 7) Ratings

- a) GPC will have at least two rating exams per year.
- b) The prospective candidate must be a member-in-good-standing to be eligible for the rating exam.

- c) The Coordinator of Instruction, in consultation with the member's regular Pony Club instructor, will make recommendations as to the candidate's readiness for the rating exam.
- d) The DC's approval must be obtained to be eligible for the rating.
- e) The regular GPC instructors will **NOT** perform rating exams within the club.

## 8) Rallies

- a) Only members-in-good-standing will be eligible and receive invitations to participate in a rally.
- b) Eligible members entering a rally must fulfill all requirements (paperwork, chaperone, coach, volunteers, etc.) of the rally organizer.
- c) The DC, in consultation with the member's regular Pony Club instructor and the GPC Coordinator of Instruction, must approve the horse/rider combination as being able to compete **safely** at the level entered.
- d) Team members will be chosen by the DC, or his or her delegate (typically the GPC organizer for that rally, the Coordinator of Instruction, or a Jt-DC).
- e) It is the policy of GPC that all eligible members fulfilling the organizer's requirements and able to compete safely should be afforded that opportunity. Accordingly, entries will be submitted for all such members. However, members should understand that rallies are regional events not under the direct control of GPC. Since the region sometimes limits entries, the regional rally organizer may not accept all qualified entries. In this event, the team members will be selected according to such criteria as GPC attendance and other criteria as established by the DC.

## 9) GPC Summer Camp

- a) If there is sufficient interest from members, GPC may offer a summer camp. Campers are responsible for covering room, board, and craft activity costs. The club will cover instructional and overhead costs.
- b) Summer Camp is open to all members. If space is limited, campers will be selected according to such criteria as GPC attendance and other criteria as established by the DC. Members-not-in-good-standing may participate only if space is available.

## 10) Sponsors' Meetings

- a) Parents of members who have paid the sponsors fee and interested adults approved by the DC who have paid the sponsors fee are the *GPC Sponsors of Record*.
- b) The annual sponsors fee shall be determined at the annual sponsors' meeting.
- c) All sponsors and parents are eligible to attend, although only sponsors may vote.
- d) A quorum of one-third (1/3) of the sponsors is required to conduct business.
- e) The annual sponsors' meeting will be held between October 1 and November 1.
- f) The purpose of the annual meeting and agenda shall be as specified in the *By-laws of the Registered Clubs of The United States Pony Clubs, Inc.*

## 11) Financials

- a) Membership Dues
  - i) Annual Membership is from January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> and includes USPC National dues, Regional dues, and GPC dues. A reduced fee for the GPC portion of the membership dues applies for families with more than one child in Groton Pony Club. The GPC dues for members who have graduated high school or attend school out of the area may be waived. The cost of GPC portion of the membership dues shall be determined by the DC prior to distribution of membership forms. GPC Dollars may not be applied.
  - ii) All membership dues are non-refundable.
- b) Corporate Dues
  - i) Corporate dues for officers will be paid for by the club.
- c) Fundraising
  - i) GPC membership dues pay for a very small portion of the club's costs; the majority of the club's programs are subsidized by GPC's main fundraising activities: the April 2-phase, May 3-phase, and October 3-phase schooling shows. Without these fundraising shows, members' costs would be drastically increased or programs would need to be curtailed.
- d) Expenditures

- i) Requests for all reimbursements must be accompanied by applicable receipts and a GPC reimbursement form. All expenditures require DC pre-authorization except for normal recurring transactions i.e. porta-potty, postage, etc.

e) Volunteer Incentives

- i) It is the goal of GPC to reward those who volunteer where we need them most while encouraging greater participation in Pony Club Events. The GPC Dollars program accomplishes this by providing members with a credit that can be used to offset up to fifty percent (50%) of the cost of Pony Club programs.
- ii) Volunteers receive a volunteer dollar credit in the amount of \$5/hour for work at:
  - Fairgrounds Setup Day in the Spring
  - Fundraising Show Setup
  - Fundraising Show
  - Any special fix-up work at the fairgrounds
  - Fairgrounds cleanup day in the Fall
- iii) Volunteer dollars are used to pay for up to half the cost of any GPC, CNER, or USPC activity (for example, GPC fundraising shows, ratings, rallies, regional clinics, camps, and championships entries). They cannot be used for the annual membership renewal or non-GPC shows.
- iv) Volunteer dollars are issued to a family, are non-transferable, and expire at the end of the NEXT calendar year. For examples, volunteer dollars issued in the Spring of 2005 can be used until December 31, 2006.
- v) D Rally is our regional responsibility and members do not earn GPC Dollar credit. Helping to set-up for D Rally does count towards volunteer service hours.
- vi) Occasionally refunds may be issued for CNER or USPC activities. Reimbursements will be made by check to the member regardless of whether GPC Dollars were originally applied.
- vii) In order to receive credit for volunteer hours, the hours must be submitted within 3 weeks.

f) Rallies Entry Fees

- i) The club will pay the stable manager entry fee and the coach at a rally. The GPC competitor pays the individual cost as specified in the CNER entry. GPC Dollars may be applied to half this amount.
  - ii) Rally entry fees are non-refundable.
- g) Ratings Fees
- i) The cost of GPC ratings shall be determined by the DC based upon the actual cost of the rating. GPC Dollars may then be applied to half this amount.
  - ii) Rating fees are non-refundable.

## **12) Club Colors**

Club colors are cobalt blue and gold.