



2009.09.04

Vancouver Pony Club

New Parent Information

About Pony Club

- The Canadian Pony Club (CPC) is an organization run by volunteers for young people up to 25 years of age who are interested in learning more about horses/ponies, riding and horse care. Our motto is “Loyalty, Character, Sportsmanship”, and we believe we instill these values into our members. We are proud of our CPC members who learn to be responsible, confident, motivated horse people, with a high degree of knowledge and skill in equestrian arts. They have an opportunity to learn leadership and teamwork, make many new friends, and understand their responsibilities as horse owners and/or riders. We have about 3,200 members in about 180 Branches from coast to coast in Canada. World wide, the Pony Club is in at least 20 other countries with over 100,000 members!
- Vancouver Pony Club is part of the BC Lower Mainland Region (BCLM) of CPC which has about 300 members in 15 branches. The Vancouver Pony Club (VPC) has between 70 and 80 members.
- Pony Club provides a framework for standard based riding and equine education. Members progress through nine increasingly challenging levels starting with “D” and finishing with “A”, a course of studies that takes 10 to 15 years to complete.
- An ‘A’ level member has the skills to manage a barn anywhere in the world. Achieving the ‘A’ level is a globally recognized accomplishment and is the equivalent of a level 1 riding instructor.
- Aside from educational elements there are various activities and disciplines which are described below

Major Vancouver Pony Club Activities

- VPC provides 10 weekly stable management lessons, starting in the fall. Sixty percent attendance is required to participate in testing or any other activity. The lower levels are taught by the members in higher levels. B and higher levels receive professional instruction organized by the BC Lower Mainland Pony Club.
- We have approximately 7 member meetings which have various horse themes.
- Quiz is a non-riding competitive event. It tests equine knowledge at the D, C, and A/B levels. Quiz is held at the regional and national levels. Participants join weekly pizza study sessions from December to February to prepare for the annual February regional final.
- Prince Philip Games (PPG) has teams of 4 to 5 riders up to 15 years old doing relay-type or gymkhana games on horseback. PPG has 3 divisions: C is for younger and beginning riders. The remaining participants, except for the ‘A’ team, will be part of the “B” division. There is only one ‘A’ team for each branch. Members must try out for this very competitive division. There are 4 play days regionally for all divisions. The ‘A’ team competes to represent BCLM at national as well as international PPG competitions. We also have Masters Games for PPG graduates. VPC provides weekly spring PPG training sessions in Southlands.
- Horse Shows: We have two shows in the spring. The Hunter/Jumper Show is for the more experienced riders and the Mini Show is for beginning riders under 14. (These two shows are VPC’s major fundraising events.) BCLM also has a Regional Jumping Championship, and one member from the region is picked to represent BCLM at the National level.
- Dressage is the “ballet” of the horse world, with horse exercising a series of prescribed movements with precision and grace. (No jumping is involved.) BCLM has regional competitions which VPC members participate in.
- Tetrathlon is a four phase competition including running, swimming, shooting (air pistols at targets) and riding.
- Badge Program: This program consist of 40 badges which the members may earn by demonstrating special skills or by making a presentation at the branch meeting.
- Rally: This is like a three day event, where riders compete in dressage, cross country and stadium jumping. Rally is a demanding team competition that requires all members (captains, riders and grooms) to be able to work together under the supervision of a peer (captain). The whole team is closely watched and judged for “everything”. -- from the tack room and stalls to the horse and rider “turn out”, the team’s workmanship and attitude and the performance in the riding competition. Rally is a regional competition with teams at the D and ABC levels.

About Vancouver Pony Club

- VPC does not provide basic riding lessons or horses/ponies. However you don’t need a horse for many Pony Club activities.

- To prepare for your practical test you can take lessons at one of the local barns on a school horse/pony. For higher levels you may want to lease or buy a horse and consider joining Southlands Riding Club. Making these arrangements is your responsibility.
- The Southlands Riding Club (SRC) is a private club which generously allows VPC to use its club house and facilities from time to time. VPC membership does not give members any privileges at SRC.
- All members must belong to Horse Council BC (HCBC) and are required to pay HCBC fees on registration day. Membership in HCBC provides insurance for horse and rider while participating in equine-related activities.

Supporting your child and required volunteer commitment

- Young members can't manage a horse without an adult and in case of even minor difficulties one adult can't manage two horses. Consequently when horses are involved each child needs an adult to support them.
- We also need adults to actually organize activities. Expect a substantial volunteer commitment in addition to the time spent supporting your child when she is taking part in an activity. Do not worry if you are not comfortable dealing with horses, as we have many other jobs you can help with. Volunteer choices: supervise/organize communication for stable management sessions, social committee, testing, mock test, Dressage rep, Hunter/Jumper Show, Mini Show, members meetings, Prince Philip Games, Rally, badge program, Treasurer, Secretary, registration, quiz coaching, volunteer co-ordinator, communications, supplies, library, education, safety officer.

To show our appreciation to Southlands Riding Club for use of the club house and facilities we assist at Southlands Riding Club shows (i.e. runners for food, dressage tests, gate whipper in). We also volunteer at the Southlands Riding Club Country Fair every fall.

THE VPC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE is comprised of ten parents who are specifically affiliated with the coordination of one or more pony club events/jobs or activities. This enables the executive to fulfill some of the "steering committee" functions necessary to minimize overlap/conflict in dates and other planning details for the pony club year. All those interested in becoming executive committee members can prepare for this role through working closely with one of the event/job/activity co-ordinator. Please feel free to discuss this further with the DC (District Commissioner). Contact information is below.

Communications

- The club runs on email. There is no phone tree. Our communications co-ordinator's contact information is below. Please make sure your e-mail address is added to the VPC list.
- Parent meetings: We have a meeting for new parents early in the year, an AGM in the fall and a parent meeting in the spring. It's extremely important that all members are represented at these meetings.
- The "Year in Pony Club" on the website provides a rough guide to the year.

What level?

- New members start out as an "E" (untested) and usually only test D or D1 the first year. The 'D' levels are analogous to Primary school, the 'Cs' to High School, and the B's to college with the 'A's' as graduate school. As in the school system, the member works his or her way up the ladder; some finish at the 'A' level, some lower. The achievement process is an educational one, and is not competitive.
- Members must attend 60% (6 out of 10) stable management lessons to be able to write the exam for their level. If they pass they will then be given a practical (riding/stable management) test.
- The riding component at D level is walk and trot only, with the D2 and up including a flat test, stadium jumping and 4 cross country jumps.
- VPC provides a practice "mock test" after the written and before the practical test to help the newer members prepare for the practical test.

What happens next:

- You should respond to the email confirming your email address
- If you would like a mentor please contact the DC (info below)
- You will be receiving the club list with "Year in Pony Club". This is a loose schedule of activities.
- First members meeting DATE!!! At this meeting we organize members in stable management study groups. It is very important that members and parents be there to resolve schedule conflicts.
- Quiz starts in November with a sign up before that, so watch for email.

Contacts:

DC: Debbie Anderson ddaycare@shaw.ca
 Communications: Erin Schneider, eschneider@shaw.ca
 Website: www.canadianponyclub.org/bclm/vancouver