

MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

February 6, 2010

The first Central New England Regional Council meeting of 2010 was held at the First Parish Church in Groton MA on February 6, 2010 at 10:00. The following members attended: Helen Robinson, Kim Mello, Iris Realmuto, Lara Hubner, Beth Platt, Sarah Robinson, Susan Beliveau, Heather Burns, Allison Blood, Joe Kovacs, Amanda Ellis, Donna Lapierre, Elaine Brazeau, Karen Marcotte, Wendy Johnson, Curtis Renner, Shelly Patrick, Elizabeth Kohler and Betsey Reeves.

Betsey opened the meeting by sharing some of the new rules and updates discussed at the USPC Annual Meeting in Houston TX in January. We have a new VP of Regional Administration, April Smith. There is a lot of concern nationally regarding local club compliance. All clubs need to submit their club policies to Betsey as soon as possible for review. The general recommendation was to keep policies as simple as possible and to be sure not to supersede the national by-laws and policies. Problems areas appear to be qualifications for Championships and requirements for upper level testings- i.e. can regions require preps, etc. There was some discussion about our regional preps and whether we can require participation. It was agreed that some prep is necessary to determine if a candidate is ready to test, but can it be mandated. Also, we need to have adequate participation levels to be able to cover the cost of the preps and to hire good clinicians. Karen Marcotte suggested opening clinics to all levels, not just upper levels, to increase number of participants. Allison Blood mentioned we open clinics up to other regions as well.

Betsey mentioned that there are new changes to the Horse Management Rulebook and a pilot program will be launched this year to try out an earned points system at rallies. Lara Hubner shared a handout comparing the changes to the new HM Rulebook and discussed the new rules. The earned points system will be piloted at different rallies around the country with the possibility of being introduced in the future. Lara urged DCs to make sure their members are familiar with the new rulebook. Also, there will be a regional HM Clinic on March 20th.

Another big change this year is to the rating tracks. Betsey explained that the Standards have not changed, but the ratings will be broken out into three separate sections starting at the D2 level. As of April 1, members must pass the HM portion of their rating first, then flat and then jumping. A member can advance in HM without advancing in the riding portions and can achieve a different rating for flat and jumping at the same time. New test sheets will be available prior to April 1st.

Medical arm bands are needed at all mounted activities and when working around horses. It is also advised to have medical armbands at unmounted meetings where it is important to have that medical information at hand in the event of an emergency. It is recommended that DCs and Rally organizers have extras on hand. Parents are ultimately responsible for content of medical information, not DCs or HM judges.

Finally, Betsey reminded DCs that there are still some clubs that have not handed in their List of Officers. They must give Betsey their LOOs right away. Information must go to the National Office as well to be in compliance. Check with her if you are in doubt.

Next, Wendy reviewed some notes from the DCs' sessions at the Annual Meeting. Some of the important topics were as follows:

In order to keep charitable status, clubs must be compliant with financial record keeping. Clubs need to submit form IRS 990 if they make more than \$25,000 or submit a 990N (e postcard) which they can get on the IRS website to verify they make less than \$25,000. All clubs must do this or USPC could use its tax exempt status.

Clubs must always send out letters acknowledging charitable donations. Donations must be made to the club in general and not to a specific member's "account". Individual fundraising accounts are not allowed.

All safety incidents must be reported to the safety committee at safety.ponyclub.org. The committee tracks these incidents so they can determine safety issues and how to improve on overall safety.

DCs were reminded to follow their club by-laws, to appoint nominating committees on a timely basis, hold their club annual meetings according to proper protocol, follow rules regarding sponsors, and stay in compliance on the club level to avoid potential future problems.

Clubs need to submit their list of locations for landowners and activities, and consider extending liability insurance to club treasurers and others. The National Office can be contacted with any insurance questions.

Finally, there will be a background check program instituted some time during the year. Initially, regional and local club officers, judges and organizers will be required to go on line and complete information for a background check. USPC will only get a green or red light and will not be advised of any personal details. More information will follow.

Quiz Rally was the next topic of discussion. Amanda Ellis was kind enough to volunteer as Rally Coordinator. The rally will be held on March 27th. Pegasus will organize the Mega Room, Pentucket and Hybrid will coordinate the Classrooms and Stations sections, Talia will coordinate the written test, and the Upper Level group will man the food booth. Squamscott will manage a used tack sale again if anyone is interested.

Betsey advised that there are a number of very good pony club promotional items available from the National Office if any club is interested.

Continuing on, Beth Platt handed out a Financial Summary for review. There were no questions regarding the statement. This year the region is not paying for entry fees but we have an amount set aside in the budget for Championship scholarships. A suggestion was brought up about adding an additional amount to all rally entries to be allocated to the Championship Scholarship fund.

A motion was made to increase all rally entry fees by \$5 per participant, including the stable managers, to be allocated to the Championship Scholarship Fund. This charge shall be indicated as a separate line item on the entry form and identified as a "Championship fee". There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Beth Platt mentioned that she had spoken with Jeff Brem regarding a combination golf fundraiser and social event to be held at the Meadow Creek Golf Club in Dracut MA. She will continue to explore details, possibly a modified shotgun during the day and a buffet dinner on a Sunday night. Allison Blood and Lisa Doyle would coordinate a silent auction.

The Show Jumping Rally will be held on June 5th in Fremont NH. Rockingham will organize.

The HB prep camp will be held on June 6th at UNH. The HB rating will be on July 10th. The UL prep camp will be July 7-11th. A C3, B and A mega rating is scheduled at GMHA in August. CNE has applied to host an H/A test in August.

Games Rally and Eventing Qualifier will both be held on the weekend of June 12th. Some of the Games qualifying rules will need to be confirmed prior to the Rally.

Dressage Rally will be on the weekend of June 19th, move in on Friday night. The next DC Council meeting will be at Nashoba Valley Tubing Park on April 10th. The fall Council meeting is scheduled for September 11th and the CNE Annual Meeting is scheduled for November 13th.

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 1:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Johnson
Regional Secretary