

THINKING OF STARTING A COUNTY CHAPTER? HERE ARE SOME TIPS !

HOW CRAWFORD COUNTY HAS MAINTAINED A SUCCESSFUL AND ACTIVE COUNTY CHAPTER

First, you have to have a strong and dedicated core group who believe in what the PEC stands for.

Your meetings can be anywhere... someone's house, a fire department, church, restaurant...anywhere there is enough seating.

Set your first meeting with your core group to decide on the best place that can accommodate your needs. We at Crawford County have been having our meetings at Perkins in Meadville in the banquet room. They don't charge us for use of the room because a lot of us have our evening meal at that time. You may want to have the meeting at a church or a fire dept. Anywhere is fine if it can accommodate your needs in space and availability. If you use a church or fire department, you may want to raise funds to make a donation to your meeting place.

The most important point we can make here is keep it consistent on TIME AND PLACE. Once you decide on a permanent place to have your meeting, keep it the same day of the month (ex: the first Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday etc.) and also the same time. Ours are always the first Thursday of the month at 7 pm. We try to get there at 6 pm to eat and have a little chat time.

We also have guest speakers every month and buy their meal since they have come to donate their time. Our past guest speakers have consisted of equine massage therapists, Equine dentists, veterinarians, people involved in 4H, people who specialize in breed specifics (gaited horses, Quarter Horse, etc.) We had the President of the Paint Horse Association, farriers, reiners, bit and saddle fit experts, equine chiropractors; we had Pam Kline-Eikleberry from Ohio who sold everything she owned and rode her horse from the east coast to the west coast in the 1980's. Others include horse rescue personnel, people involved with therapy horses, Bud & Gwen Wills from our own Pennsylvania Equine Council were here and became our guest speakers at a meeting when our scheduled speaker had an emergency and couldn't make it. We had one guest, Kathy Beahon of Allegheny River Ranch, who spoke on training your horse for obstacles, Pam Bradshaw on cutting and sorting cows, manure management, parasite control, the hazards and benefits of owning a stallion. Youth Rodeo is another one, equine photography ... there are endless possibilities for choosing people who are more than happy to talk about their particular equine passion. Use your imagination and share with your fellow equine lovers.

We also have fund raisers. Tack Swaps, 50/50 raffles, currently we are having an Equine Calendar sale from a photo contest we sponsored. Again the possibilities are endless.

And the last thing to remember is to use everything at your disposal to get the word out about your meetings and who your speakers are. We use social media (facebook), email, newspapers; you can also use the radio or put up fliers in local businesses; whatever works for you particular situation. Invite everyone who owns a horse and even those who may not be able to own one of their own but share your passion for horses, mules, ponies and donkeys. We do not restrict these meetings to members only. We welcome everyone with the hope that they may decide to join PEC.

