



Vernon District Riding Club Member Handbook

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Table of Contents..... | 2 |
| About Us..... | 3 |
| Our Mission..... | 3 |
| Updates and News..... | 3 |
| Shows & Clinics..... | 4 |
| Other Groups..... | 4 |
| AGM & Awards..... | 5 |
| Membership Fees..... | 6 |
| History..... | 7 |
| Our Venue..... | 7 |
| Operation Dates and Times..... | 7 |
| Grounds Layout..... | 8 |
| Approved Instructors..... | 10 |
| Grounds Maintenance..... | 10 |
| Clubhouse & Washrooms..... | 11 |
| Facility Rental..... | 12 |
| Use of Stalls..... | 12 |
| Club Rules and Policies..... | 12 |
| VDRC Member Code of Conduct..... | 12 |
| Rules and Policies..... | 14 |
| Violation of Rules..... | 17 |
| Ways to Support the Club..... | 18 |
| Volunteering..... | 18 |
| Join a Board or Committee..... | 19 |
| Collect Points at Natures Fare and Co-Op..... | 20 |
| Donations..... | 20 |
| Support Club Sponsors..... | 20 |
| Attend Events..... | 21 |
| Manage Events..... | 21 |



About Us

Our Mission

The Vernon District Riding Club is a non-profit Society that brings together equestrians of all ages, skill levels, and disciplines to ride, learn, teach, compete, and enjoy a shared passion for horses and equestrian activities. The club cultivates its unique connection to the District of Coldstream, City of Vernon and the beautiful Okanagan Valley and works to promote opportunities to build community between our Members, non-Members, neighbors and others.

The Vernon District Riding Club (VDRC) is run by a Volunteer Board of Directors. The VDRC Board is an operations Board and is the governing body of the Society, The Members of the Board focus on strategy, oversight, and accountability of the Society as well as oversee the day-to-day operations of the club. Directors are elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Society and serve two year terms. Board of Director meeting minutes and VDRC bylaws can be found in the “Members Only” section on the VDRC website, which is accessed by a password you receive in your member package once a membership is purchased. (<https://vernonridingclub.com/Membership/Members-only/>)

See our “Contact Us” page on the website for an up to date list of Board Members (<https://vernonridingclub.com/contact/>).

Updates and News

One of the main missions of the VDRC is to bring together equestrians of all ages, skill levels and disciplines and develop community. One way to do that is to ensure our Members are kept up to date on all the happenings at the club and provide ways for Members to connect with each other. There are multiple ways to do this:

- Check out our website at <https://vernonridingclub.com/>
- As a Member of the VDRC, you will receive a monthly newsletter by email highlighting past, current, and upcoming events around the Club.
- Also stay in the loop with regular posts on our social media platforms:



[VDRC Facebook Page](#)



[VDRC Instagram Page](#)



Shows & Clinics

The VDRC hosts multiple shows, clinics, and other events. Please see the “Shows & Clinics” page on our website to view the scheduled shows and clinics for the season (<https://vernonridingclub.com/events/shows/>).

Other Groups

The VDRC is home of the **Vernon Pony Club**. Pony Club offers the opportunity for young equestrians to develop strong equestrian and life skills in a fun, social environment with like-minded friends. Members are offered lessons in stable management & riding with exciting opportunities to put their knowledge & experience to the test.

Pony Club Contact:

VPC Instructor Ruth Moore or VPC DC Amanda Chamberlain. See our website for more details and contact information (<https://vernonridingclub.com/events/pony-club/>)

The VDRC is home to the **Crony Club**. Crony Club is a group of recreational riders who meet to ride together under the guidance of Claudia Zurmuhle (EC Certified Coach). There are 6 sessions, and Crony Club Members each chose 5 of the 6 sessions to attend.

Crony Club Contact:

Mette Felmark. See our website for more details and contact information (<https://vernonridingclub.com/events/other-activities/>)

Not only does the VDRC host riding events, we host social events too; get to know fellow VDRC-ers off their horses. This includes events like a Kentucky Derby watch party, wine and cheese socials, and Member BBQs. Keep up to date with our website, newsletters, and social media to hear about upcoming social events.



AGM & Awards

Each year in November, there is an Annual General Meeting at a location to be announced on our social media, website and newsletter. The AGM is a chance to hear about the successes and challenges of the past year, elect new Board Members and re-elect currently serving Board Members. The club's financial statements are also presented at the AGM. It is a fun evening and a great way to connect with fellow VDRC Members, socialize and contribute your thoughts and ideas about the club and its future.

At the AGM, the VDRC's annual awards are presented to their recipients. Candidates are chosen based on their activity at the VDRC throughout the season, the description of the available awards are listed below:

Sportsmanship: Awarded to a rider who demonstrates discipline, fairness, and respect and who handles both victory and defeat with grace and dignity.

Rising Star: Nominees should show significant improvement from the previous year. The improvement will be objectively quantifiable (ie. performance at show(s) and/or clinic(s)). This award is open to all ages.

Personal Achievement: Nominees will have shown initiative in reaching their riding goals and will be recognized by their determination, resilience, and commitment.

Horsemanship: Nominees will have a deep understanding of their relationship with their horse, from both a modern theoretical as well as intellectual view point. And to the best of their physical capabilities demonstrates clear and empathetic communication skills with the horse that ultimately result in a progressive development of horse, rider, and the equestrian sport through the past year.

Volunteer of the year: This award recognizes the exceptional Volunteer achievements of a VDRC Member. This award is created by Kim Shippam in honour of her mother, Liza Shippam.

Volunteer Draw: This draw recognizes Members who have done more than the yearly required Volunteer hours. Each name will go into a draw for a gift certificate.



Barn Rat: A free Membership will be awarded to a person displaying exceptional enthusiasm and sportsmanship. Applicant's names to be submitted by instructors and Board Members. VDRC will grant after the presentation by those submitting. Consideration to those will be made based on contributions to the Club, sportsmanship, and need. Open to all ages.

Membership Fees

Membership fees include a base payment, and a Volunteer fee as summarized by the table below:

| | | Early bird Membership (Apply: Before March 31) | Full Membership (Apply: April 1 - August 15) | Late Season Membership (Apply: August 15 - October 31) |
|--|---------------|--|--|--|
| Senior (Over 18) | Base Price | \$100.00 | \$120.00 | \$60.00 |
| | Volunteer fee | 6 Volunteer hours or \$150.00 | 6 Volunteer hours or \$150.00 | \$80.00 or 3 Volunteer hours |
| Junior (Under 18) | Base Price | \$62.50 | \$75.00 | \$37.50 |
| | Volunteer fee | 6 Volunteer hours or \$150.00 | 6 Volunteer hours or \$150.00 | \$80.00 or 3 Volunteer hours |
| Family (one+ adults and one+ children) | Base Price | \$150.00 | \$210.00 | \$90.00 |
| | Volunteer fee | \$300.00 or 6 Volunteer hours total | \$300.00 or 6 Volunteer hours total | \$150.00 or 3 Volunteer hours total |
| Associate (non-riding) | Base Price | \$31.25 | \$31.25 | \$31.25 |

There are two options for the Volunteer fee, either by completing 6 Volunteer hours **OR** an immediate payment.

The VDRC encourages and is appreciative of Members willing to Volunteer their time to help maintain and progress our riding club. With the groundskeeper as our only permanent annual



employee who keeps our grounds beautiful and functional, other operations of the riding club are largely reliant on your Volunteering efforts! Please see more in the Volunteering section below.

If you are not interested in volunteering, the second option is an immediate payment, which is the respective Volunteer fee price for your Membership type. This will be paid immediately with your Membership base fee.

History

The origin of the club dates back to 1912 when a group of horse enthusiasts banded together to form a polo club. In 1932 they named themselves the Vernon District Riding Club, however, it was not until 1943 that they became formally organized. Hal Symonds was elected as new president and Miss Phyllis French was the first secretary.

The club sponsored its first show at Kin track in 1944. It sponsored race meets and held gymkhana events in the infield between races. The reorganized club started with 20 Members. The club gained more Members and eventually raised the funds to purchase its present site from Hal Symonds on Aberdeen Road in 1955.

Since then, the VDRC has continued to be a host to equestrian activities throughout the years, building a community of multigenerational and new-coming Members!

Our Venue

Operation Dates and Times

The club is open for use during daylight hours. Being an outdoor facility, our opening and closing dates are weather dependent. Generally, the rings are maintained from the beginning of April until the end of October. Specific dates will be posted on social media, website, and newsletter posts.



Grounds Layout

The VDRC offers 52 stalls, 8 covered pens, 14 open pens, and a wash stall area.

There are three competition sand rings, each with a judges booth:

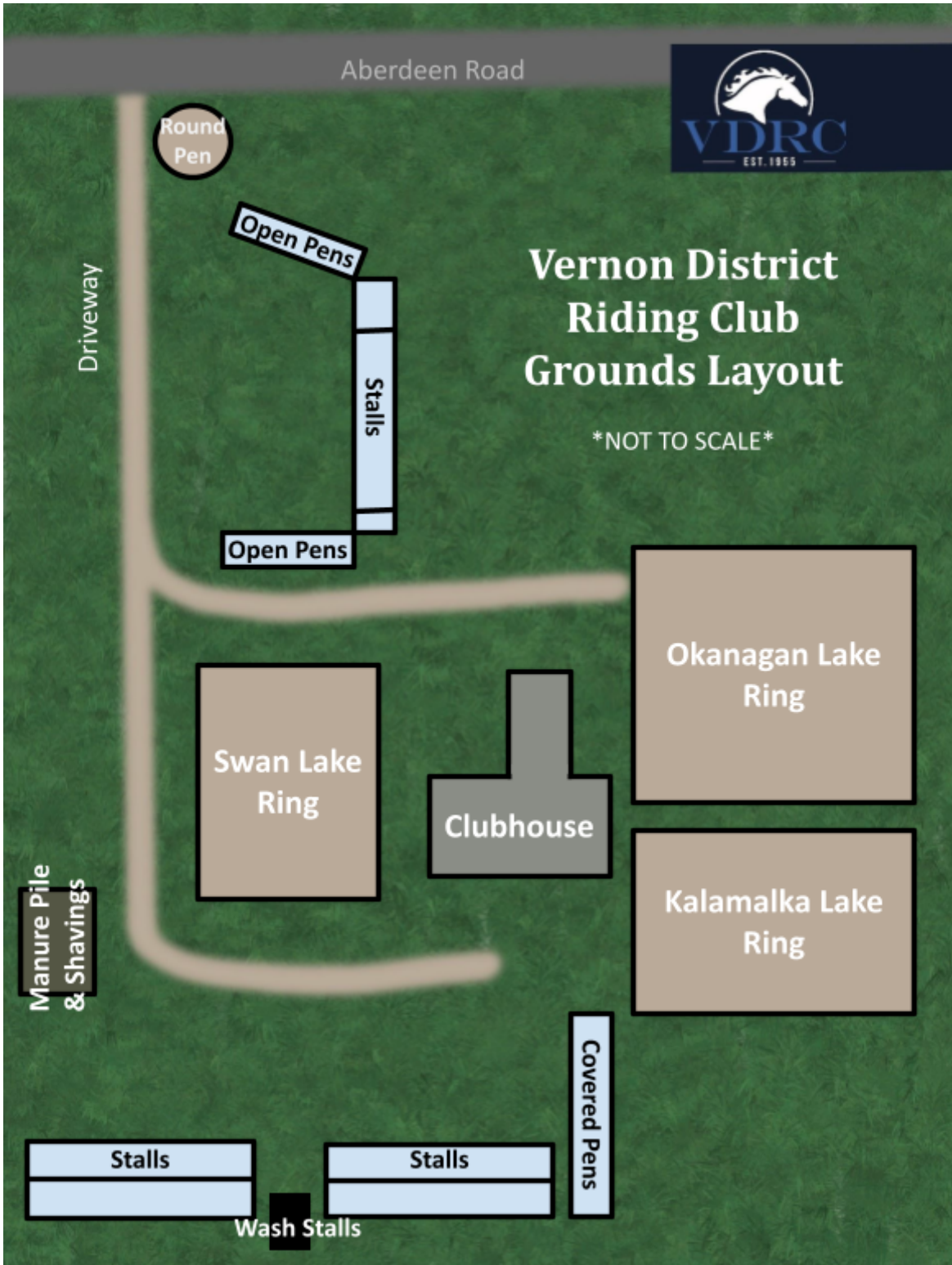
The **Swan Lake Ring** is 110 ft by 215ft; Regularly, this ring is for flatwork, polework, or a few jumps. During hunter/jumper shows it is used as a warm up ring.

The **Kalamalka Lake Ring** is 140 ft by 300 ft. During the riding season, jumps are set up in this ring.

The **Okanagan Lake Ring** is 200 ft by 300 ft. Regularly, this ring is divided in half, with a dressage ring set up on one side. During the hunter/jumper shows, half is used for competition, and the other half for warm up.

To see more about our facility, see our website ([HERE](#)) and our YouTube channel ([VDRC YouTube](#))





Approved Instructors

Only VDRC approved instructors are permitted to instruct at the riding club. Our approved instructors are insured, hold current first aid certificates, and complete ongoing education requirements. To read more about instructor policy and application, and view an updated list of current approved instructors and their contacts, see the website (<https://vernonridingclub.com/approved-instructors/>).

Our approved instructor list provides Members with a list of club-sanctioned instructors with a variety of specializations so Members can take the time to contact and determine an instructor that is the right coaching style for them. The club does not act as a liaison between instructor and students, and does not take responsibility for lesson fees; communication must occur directly between instructor and student.

Lesson times are scheduled through Timetree by approved instructors (https://timetreeapp.com/public_calendars/vernon). Pre-booked lessons have priority in their chosen ring. If you are there riding on your own during a lesson, be mindful of giving priority of space to the lesson goers.

All Members have access to the Timetree page, so you can check for any scheduled lessons before you ride.

Grounds Maintenance

The Vernon District Riding Club is a truly special place in the heart of Coldstream. We work very hard to ensure it is beautiful, accessible, and safe for our Members and the community at large.

Our grounds require regular maintenance so please be mindful of when and where the groundskeeper is working. Our groundskeeper works hard to keep the VDRC in top shape and maintain its beautiful park-like setting. This involves working and watering the rings, maintaining and moving jump and dressage equipment, irrigating and mowing the grass, as well as general maintenance of the structures and equipment; overall keeping our riding club clean, inviting, and functional.

The Groundskeeper and the Grounds, Facilities and Equipment Committee work diligently to provide the best possible footing and riding conditions at the club. Please note that it is impossible to incorporate each Member's personal footing preferences and opinions. It is our priority to provide the safest footing possible at the same time acknowledging that each discipline may have different preferences.



The groundskeeper takes direction solely from the Board of Directors, please see website for appropriate Board contacts for groundskeeping concerns (<https://vernonridingclub.com/contact/>).

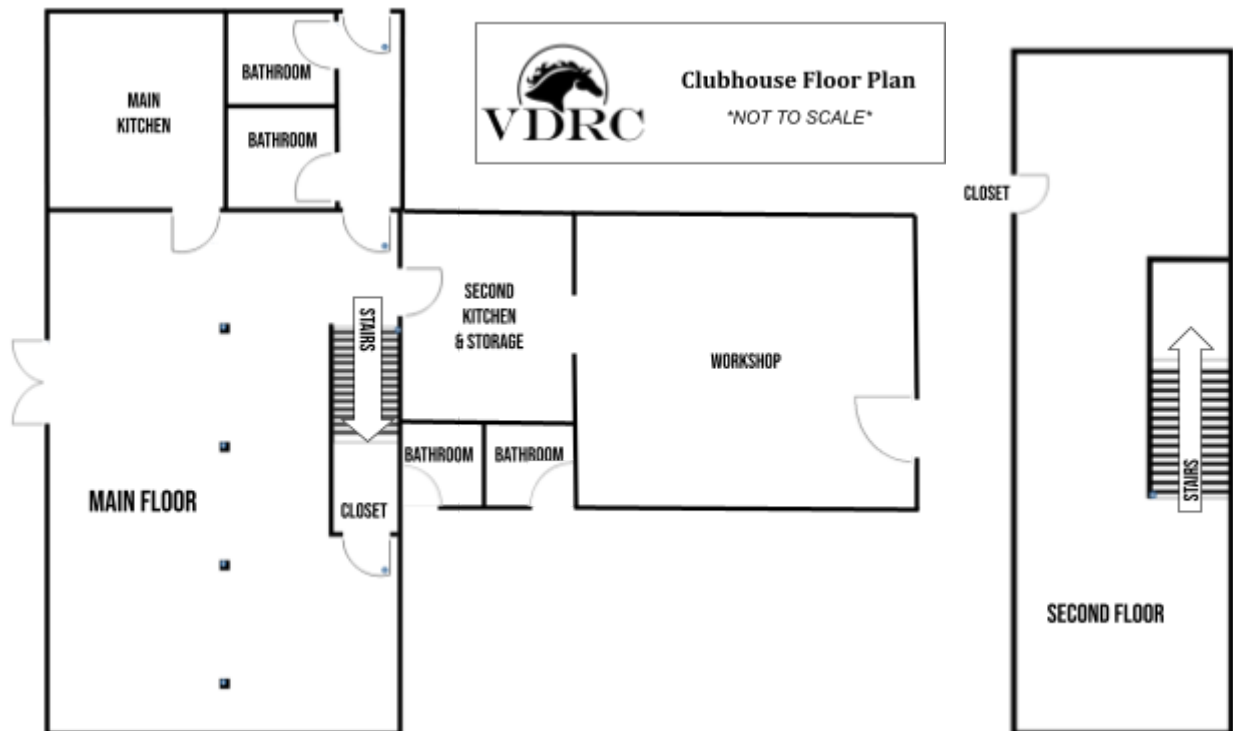
Groundskeeper: Jean Guy Doyon

Clubhouse & Washrooms

The Clubhouse is generally kept locked and only open during events. However, there are two washrooms accessible from the outside.

The VDRC Clubhouse is two floors. On the main floor, there is an office, meeting area with seating, a full main kitchen, a second kitchen and storage, two indoor bathrooms, and two bathrooms with outdoor access only. The second floor has a meeting space, announcers booth, and storage area.

The workshop is for the groundskeeper's equipment and tools. We ask Members to not go in this area, and use the main entrance or door by the indoor bathrooms to enter/exit the building.



Outside the clubhouse is a covered wrap around porch with seating, and a grassy area with picnic tables shaded by trees.

At some events, there is a concession that operates from the kitchen.

There is an honor system fridge located by the outdoor washrooms around the side of the clubhouse facing the Okanagan Lake Ring. This fridge includes some refreshments and horse treats! Payment instructions are described on the fridge.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The VDRC is on a septic system so please only flush the provided toilet paper.
NO sanitary products, wipes, paper towels, or other items!

Facility Rental

The VDRC is available for rental. This includes private equestrian activities and other non-equestrian events such as memorial services, dog obedience training and other gatherings. Note that all rental requests are assessed by the Board of Directors to determine suitability, and the club is not open in the winter months. Please see the website for more information and the rental form (<https://vernonridingclub.com/aboutus/rentals/>).

Use of Stalls

Members are welcome to use stalls when they come to ride on non-event days. Please ensure stalls are left stripped once done. Stalls can be used for overnight stays. Please contact info@vernonridingclub.com, if you are interested in overnight bookings.

Club Rules and Policies

VDRC Member Code of Conduct

The Vernon District Riding Club (VDRC) strives to ensure the club is a welcoming, safe, and positive environment. VDRC strongly believes in fostering the development of its Members, Coaches, Officials, Volunteers, Visitors, and Athletes. As such the Code of Conduct includes:



Respect for Others

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of fellow riders, members, staff, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators,
- Refrain from comments or behaviors which are profane, insulting, abusive, offensive, racist, sexist or otherwise belittling or demeaning to others. Also do not tolerate this behavior in others,
- Consistently demonstrate the spirit of sportsmanship, sports leadership, and ethical conduct,
- When appropriate, act to correct or prevent practices that are discriminatory, hateful, or mean-spirited,
- Respect the privacy of others,
- Do not endanger the safety of others or horses and take appropriate steps to correct any unsafe situations or practices.

Respect for Self

- Demonstrate discipline and handle both victory and defeat with grace and dignity,
- Behave in a professional manner relating to language, temper, and punctuality,
- Be courteous, kind and always set a good example in behaviour.

Respect for Horse

- Put the horse's needs first and believe in protecting the horse's welfare,
- Treat horses with the kindness, respect, and compassion that they deserve, and never mistreat any equine partner,
- Provide for horse's well-being before and after riding.

Respect for Sport

- Strive for personal excellence in sport,
- Abide by the rules and respect the decision of officials, making all appeals through the formal process and respecting the final decision,
- Promote drug-free sports.

Respect for VDRC

- Accept and abide by VDRC's rules, policies and procedures,
- Comply with the reasonable requests of Coaches, Board Members and Staff of VDRC,
- Care for and respect the equipment, grounds and clubhouse of VDRC,
- Recognize members and visitors have no authority to instruct staff in job performance and duties,
- Recognize your role as an ambassador for VDRC and always act in a way that enhances the character, integrity, good will, or community perception (local and/or the broader community) of VDRC.



Rules and Policies

Treatment of Horses

Horse cruelty and mistreatment will not be tolerated. All horses on the VDRC grounds must be treated appropriately and with empathy by their rider/trainer/handler. The VDRC adopts Equestrian Canada's *Horse Welfare Code of Conduct* ([link](#)) and all individuals dealing with horses are expected to abide by them.

Helmets & Footwear

The VDRC strongly suggests the use of helmets for all riding activities. No matter your riding experience or trust of your horse, unpredictable situations can arise and accidents can happen. The University of Connecticut Department of Animal Science highlighted that a minimum of 60% of horse-related deaths are caused by head injuries, meanwhile the use of a helmet can reduce this possibility by 70-80% ([source](#)).

The VDRC hosts both western and english activities. There are different helmet rules between the disciplines and our helmet rules respect those differences.

All junior riders are required to wear a helmet while mounted on a horse.

For senior riders (over 18 years of age) participating in western riding activities, helmets are not required, but strongly suggested.

For all riders participating in english riding activities (dressage and/or jumping), helmets are required as per Equestrian Canada rules.

All helmets will be ASTM approved.

Heeled footwear is mandatory for all riders.

Risk and Liability

The VDRC requires you sign the waiver submitted with your Membership, and have an active HCBC Membership. Riders ride at their own risk, and are expected to act safely. The VDRC takes no responsibility for injury to horses and/or riders on the VDRC grounds.

Grounds Etiquette

Do not tie horses to any fence rails in the rings or perimeter fencing. All gates must be kept closed.

Do not turn irrigation systems on/off, or tamper with in any way. If you have irrigation concerns please contact the Grounds Committee (<https://vernonridingclub.com/contact/>).



Ring Etiquette

If there is a pre-booked lesson, the lesson goers have priority in their designated ring.

When riding in a ring with others, if going in opposite directions, pass left to left. In general, be mindful of others in the ring; do not halt on the rail, and if you are walking, please keep to the inside track. If multiple riders are using the jumps, communicate with each other when/where you are jumping.

Do not be on your phone while riding unless safely halted out of the way of others.

Jumping

Jumps are regularly set up in the Kalamalka Lake Ring. Any junior riders using the jumps must be accompanied by an adult for supervision.

If you knock down a rail, it is your responsibility to reset it. If there is ever an accident and a jump component is broken, please report it to info@vernonridingclub.com.

Kalamalka Ring Etiquette:

- 1) Use unpainted rails for trot/canter poles.
- 2) When finished please ensure that all painted rails are off the ground. (In the case of ground rails, lift one side onto the foot of jump standards). This increases the longevity of our jumping poles and keeps them looking fresh.
- 3) All ramped oxers must have breakaway cups on the back rail. Square and swedish oxers must have breakaway cups on both top rails. Please ensure you are using the breakaway cups correctly. (see below)



Tack

A horse being ridden must be wearing appropriate tack that allows the rider to have control over the horse. Each rider is responsible for ensuring proper/ethical use of equipment and tack.

Lunging

You are always free to lunge your horse in the round pen near the entrance to the property.

During non-events, lunging is permitted in any of the rings. However, priority is given to riders; please be mindful of other riders in the rings you are lunging

During events, lunging is permitted only at/in the designated times/rings as stated by the events coordinator.

Dogs

Please only bring dogs that are well behaved around horses, other dogs, and cats.

Keep dogs on a leash at all times.

Vehicles

Horse trailers and vehicles can be parked on the grass in front of the stall areas.

During events, please follow any posted parking signs/instructions.

Unless arrangements have been approved by the club in advance, vehicles are not permitted to park on the grounds overnight.

Vehicles, trailers and their contents are left on Club property at the owners' risk.

Smoking/Vaping/etc.

Any form of smoking (includes smoking of tobacco, cannabis, or other alternatives) or vaping on the VDRC property is strictly prohibited. Use of narcotics is also not permitted on Club property. Violation of this rule can result in expulsion.

Drop-Ins

Non-Members are welcome to drop in to ride at the VDRC, they must:

- Have an active HCBC Membership



- Complete a drop in form and waiver (either online QR paper copy located in the bulletin Board on the exterior of the clubhouse, and deposit in drop box outside door to clubhouse)
- Pay drop in fee of \$20.00 (either e-transfer to info@vernonridingclub.com with memo of "DROP-IN FEE" QR deposit cheque payable to VERNON DISTRICT RIDING CLUB in drop box with form and waiver)

Spectators

If you are bringing spectators to the VDRC, it is expected that your spectators are aware of VDRC policies and they will act safely and responsibly around horses.

All spectators are expected to refrain from comments or behaviours which are profane, insulting, abusive, offensive, racist, sexist or otherwise belittling or demeaning to others.

Concussion Protocol

See the link [HERE](#) to VDRC's concussion protocol.

Emergency Procedures & Processes

In the case of an emergency and the VDRC grounds need to be evacuated, there are three emergency exits:

1. Exit through the main gate onto Aberdeen Road
2. Exit through east corner gate of the Okanagan Ring
3. Exit through north gate behind stalls close to shavings/manure pile

There are fire extinguishers located in the Clubhouse and at each row of stalls.

See the VDRC Emergency Plan [HERE](#)

Violation of Rules

The Board of Directors may take disciplinary action against a Member who violates the club's rules, bylaws, or code of conduct.

A VDRC Member who observes a violation of the club rules should bring the violation to the person's attention. If the person ignores or dismisses the warning, the Member should send an email to info@vernonridingclub.com and the matter will be investigated.



For a Member of concern who violates a policy:

Upon the first violation of a club policy, there will be an email warning to the Member of concern.

Upon the second violation of a club policy, the Member of concern may have their membership suspended for a period of time as determined by the Board of Directors.

Upon a third violation of a club policy, the Member of concern will have an opportunity to be heard at a Board of Directors meeting where their Membership can be revoked for the season as per the Constitution and Bylaws of the Vernon District Riding Club (Document Version 2013) point 15 and 16:

15. A Member may be expelled by a resolution of the Directors for conduct unbecoming a Member. "Conduct unbecoming a Member" shall include but not be limited to cruelty to animals; unsportsmanlike conduct; and/or unethical human relations; or a breach of the objects of the SOCIETY or its bylaws or of any other municipal, provincial, or federal legislation, regulation, or bylaw.

16. Any person who is the subject of the proposed resolution for expulsion shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the Directors meeting before the resolution to expel the person is put to a vote.

Ways to Support the Club

Volunteering

It was a dedicated group of Volunteers who started the Vernon District Riding Club and since then many generations of Members have kept it operating, growing, and thriving. Volunteering is an integral component of the VDRC and it is through Members offering their time, talents and skills that we can operate and improve the club while keeping access affordable.

There are many ways to Volunteer at the VDRC, we are thankful for any time and skill you have to offer to contribute to the riding club.



We have a Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/vdrcVolunteers/>) where we advertise specific Volunteer opportunities that arise throughout the season. Also look out for the newsletters where Volunteering opportunities will be posted.

We also encourage Members to take initiative and reach out to the appropriate VDRC Committee (see “Join a Board or Committee” below) if you have a Volunteering job you are interested in doing, or if you have an event or initiative you would like to put forward.

Join a Board or Committee

Our Boards and Committees are made up of Volunteers who help administrate the Riding Club.

Board Directors are appointed and serve for a two year term, and may be re-elected at the AGM. Board Members attend regular meetings where overall plans are discussed and put in place to monitor and progress towards the goals outlined in our strategic plan. If you are interested in joining the Board of Directors, please contact any member of the Board of Directors, see our website for appropriate contacts (<https://vernonridingclub.com/contact/>).

Committees are composed of Board and non-Board Members. There are committees for specific components of the riding club, which allows for directed focus towards each component. The committees include:

- Strategic Planning Committee
- Clinics and Camps Committee
- Sponsorship Committee
- Show Committee
- Grounds, Facilities, and Equipment Committee
- Coaches Committee
- Communications Committee
- Social Events Committee
- Volunteer Committee
- Dressage Committee

Each Committee has at least one Board Member, if you are interested in joining a Committee please contact a Board Member on the Committee of interest. Please see our website to find the appropriate contact (<https://vernonridingclub.com/contact/>).



Collect Points at Natures Fare and Co-Op



Nature's Fare has a loyalty program for non-profit societies. The VDRC can collect Nature's Fare grocery receipts and submit them back to the store; at the end of the year, Nature's Fare will calculate a small percent of the total money spent from the submitted receipts, and write it out as a cheque to the VDRC. Thus, we invite you to drop of your Nature's Fair receipts at the white dropbox outside the clubhouse, or deliver to a Board Member.



When making purchases at your local Co-Op you can donate the points to VDRC and the club can receive cash back or equity in our local Co-Op. The VDRC number is 87793 but you don't need the number to collect points. Simply mention the Vernon District Riding Club at the Co-Op at time of purchase.

Donations

Cash or in-kind, the VDRC is thankful for any donations you are able to make.

For any monetary donations, you can e-transfer info@vernonridingclub.com with a memo indicating a donation, or contact a Board Member ([contacts](#)) for other donation options.

Have any furniture or appliances you are looking to get rid of? Consider contacting us (info@vernonridingclub.com) to see if it is something we can use! The Riding Club has an ongoing list of some items they are looking for as we refresh the clubhouse and grounds.

Support Club Sponsors

The VDRC is thankful to all of their sponsors, and a great way to support the VDRC is to support our sponsors!

Please see our "Sponsors" page on the website ([sponsors](#)) for an up to date page on our sponsors, and see your Membership welcome letter for offers from some of our sponsors.



In addition to corporate and business sponsorships, individuals may also sponsor a class or an event. Perhaps you would like to honor a loved one by sponsoring a show, or your family would like to sponsor a class at a horse show. There are a variety of sponsorship levels and dollar amounts. Please contact the sponsorship committee for further information.

Attend Events

Here at the VDRC, we work towards building a community between our Members, non-Members, neighbours, and others; thus, we invite and encourage everyone to attend both sport and social events.

To stay updated on events, check out our social media and website.

Manage Events

Have an event you want to see run at the VDRC that isn't already offered? We encourage you to manage events you are interested in! Get in contact with a Board Member to discuss your ideas and plans, then we will provide you support in organizing the event.

Thank you for becoming a Member of the Vernon District Riding Club!

