



Mission Valley Hunt New Member Sponsor Guidelines

Sponsor's Name: _____

Proposed New Member's Name: _____

Date: _____

Membership, along with our pack of hounds and generous landowners, contribute to the the lifeblood of Mission Valley Hunt. Thank you for assuming the task of bringing along new members. You are the liaison and 'go-to' person for answers between the new member and the hunt! Below are some guidelines for you as you take on the responsibility of guiding a new member in the Hunt.

As a member of MVH sponsoring a new member, it is important that we promote first the safety of all riders and hounds. Please carefully read the guidelines and reply to the questions to the best of your knowledge. Submit this form to the Hunt Secretary, along with the rider's application for membership and a check for initiation and membership dues.

1. Invite your friend to ride with you outside of the hunt. This will give you a chance to observe the rider's abilities and the horse's suitability for hunting before riding cross country in the hunt.
2. As a courtesy to the Hunt and Masters, before you invite a guest to hunt, please notify the Hunt Secretary.
3. If there is a hunt breakfast being hosted, it is polite to notify the host/s that you will be bringing a guest.
4. Counsel your guest about the basics for his/her first hunt.
 1. Appropriate and safe horse, tack, clothing and equipment.
 2. The importance of the country, hounds, huntsman, and staff.
 3. Organization of the Fields: Quarry, Hounds, Huntsman, Field Masters of respective fields, in order, then members with colors ride to the front of their respective field followed by members without colors and then guest.
(First Field will follow as closely as possible behind the hounds and Huntsman, fast gallops, jumps, possible extreme country;
Second Field will follow first field with gallops, jumps but will avoid extreme country;
Hilltoppers will walk, trot and canter but not jump and take a path of usually excellent views of the hounds working the line and very often have the best views!)
 4. Etiquette of the Hunters
 1. Courtesy to Landowners and their land.

2. Absolute quiet when hounds are working (Chatter distracts hounds and makes it difficult for staff to hear.)
3. Yield to hounds and staff
5. Arrive extra early the day of your guest's first hunt. Before you and your guest are mounted, introduce the guest to the Masters.
6. Hand the Hunt Secretary an envelope which contains a signed and witnessed **waiver** and **capping fee**. (\$50/adult; \$25/Pony Clubber)
7. 15 minutes before the hunt begins, be mounted and gathered together for announcements and introductions.
8. ***It is highly recommended that for your guest's first 3-6 hunts that you ride with your guest in the back of whichever field the guest is comfortable with. On a day you can't hunt, the sponsor should try to line up a member for them to ride with.***
9. After the hunt introduce your guest to other members.
10. Remember, a guest may cap a TOTAL of 3 times before they consider joining. And after he/she submits the membership application with appropriate checks, it will be a few weeks at best before the Board of Directors can approve membership.

**While this is just a beginning introduction to the traditions of fox hunting, gradually share more information with your guest. When appropriate or when asked by your guest, you can share the yearly financial and task (breakfasts, trail clearing, committees, fund raisers) commitments and expectations involved with maintaining a vibrant hunt such as Mission Valley. Social members are also asked to contribute to hunt breakfasts.

Thank you for taking on the Sponsorship of your guest! It is truly a privilege!

Some Additional Considerations: In the event your guest wishes to apply for membership, the below information will aid the Board of Directors in their decision.

How long have you known this rider? _____

Have you ridden with this person outside of the ring? When and Where?

Describe the level of riding skills you have observed: _____

Does this rider have a horse suitable for fox hunting? _____

Has this rider hunted somewhere else? Where? _____

Does this rider have transportation to the hunt? _____