



USDF

UNITED STATES *Dressage* FEDERATION

SECTION SIX – COORDINATING VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

In this section you will find some guidelines for coordinating and creating incentives for volunteers. It is best to appoint a Volunteer Coordinator for each activity.

The key to successful volunteer coordination is paying close attention to the traditional three “R’s” of Volunteerism -- recruitment, recognition and retention.

Why do people volunteer?

- Need of service hours
- Belonging to the team
- Self interest
- Status
- Learning
- Social time

Do not forget to submit an entry for you GMOs most deserving volunteer for the coveted USDF Volunteer of the Year Award.

How do you recruit and help volunteers to do their job?

- List and advertise help needed.
- Send e-mails to your GMO’s e-mail list.
- Post the need for volunteers on your GMO’s website.
- Phone members until jobs are filled.
- Train people for the job expected of them.
- Establish a check-in procedure as volunteers arrive.
- Provide supplies needed.
- Think of the little extras and provide those to volunteers such as sunscreen and insect repellent.
- Keep a list of who did what job.

How do you reward volunteers?

- Work credits towards entry fees or membership fees.
- Free food.
- Service awards.
- Prizes.
- T-shirts, hats, jackets, commemorative pins.

How do you keep volunteers coming back?

- Say thank you in person, in writing, in public and often.
- Provide consistent supervision and planning so they feel comfortable and competent.
- Explain jobs so that everyone is comfortable and at ease.

- Make it fun.
- Rotate jobs so that people aren't always stuck with the same thing.
- Provide refreshments and plenty of breaks.
- Announce periodically who is helping at the actual event.
- Listen to your volunteers, they may have suggestions to help improve the event or assignment of positions.
- If possible, assign volunteers in pairs, one experienced person with one new person for on-the-job training.
- Provide special volunteer-only perks such as a VIP tent or luncheon.