

# C.O.R.E Volunteer Management

Sunday, May 3

Presented by:  
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## Presentation objective:

In this session PATH Intl. Professionals will learn the core ideas behind successfully managing volunteers in the EAS industry as well as strategies for growth.

Goal is that you will leave today feeling equipped to use similar methods for a successful volunteer program at your own centers.

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## **Our experience**

Elizabeth: 4+ years experience as a volunteer & certified professional at Renew TRC

Mia: Nearly 2+ years of experience as a volunteer & now Volunteer Coordinator

Witnessed both good & bad attributes of previous volunteer management; kept volunteers in the loop through a major barn build & change of routine. Being present in the barn/programming goes a long way in building relationships & familiarity with volunteers.

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## **CORE** stands for:

- Communication: key ways we keep everyone informed & engaged
- Organization: how we maintain the systems we have in place
- Relationship/Recognition: impactful appreciation for volunteers leads to retainment & recruitment
- Education: timely and frequent training opportunities for volunteers

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## Communication

- Always start with relationship & recognition (more on this later)
- Clear & concise is key!
- Tone is important
- Use multiple tools
  - We use: email, a private FB group, Bloomerang Volunteer, **texts**, phone calls
- Use the mode the volunteer prefers when possible

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## (Online) Communication

1. Weekly Emails
  - a. Short yet informative
2. Occasional
  - a. Posts on private facebook group
3. Daily
  - a. Schedule is “live” and volunteers can access it from their phones
  - b. Schedule is posted in the barn in more than one location

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## System Organization example: more about our Orientation & Training Log sheet

- Create one google sheet file for the whole year
- Create new tabs for each month & always “freeze” 1st 2 rows/3 columns
  - Also the monthly template & an orientation sign-in template
- Tabs for each volunteer training outside of NVO:
  - Horse leaders
  - Long Lining
  - Interactive Vaulting
  - Lunch N learns
- Volunteer managing staff use/reference this consistently/daily

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## System Organization example - Volunteer Availability Survey

- Google form for each of our semesters (Winter/Spring, Summer, Fall/Winter sessions)
- survey form
- Response sheet

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MONDAY: Please select all that potentially work for you. In the "other" section, \*  
write if there is a specific lesson time and/or a student or horse you'd like to be  
paired with again from a previous session.

- Monday morning (7:30am-12pm)
- Monday afternoon (12pm-5pm)
- Monday evening (4:30pm-8:30pm)
- I am not available on Mondays.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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## System Organization example - our program schedule

- Program schedule (staff master & volunteer view) - google sheets
- Confidentiality
- Red cells
- Display

Complete the availability survey if you haven't yet! Please email [volunteer@renewtrc.org](mailto:volunteer@renewtrc.org) to confirm your volunteer shift(s) ASAP. We look forward to having you volunteer with us again this session!

If your name is still red/pink, I am waiting on your confirmation. Please email [volunteer@renewtrc.org](mailto:volunteer@renewtrc.org) ASAP to confirm your Shift!

Time	Horse	Instructor	Vol. Supervisor	Leader	Side Walker	Side Walker	Lesson Asst.
12- 12:45pm	Nomad	Melissa		Brooke E	Marcia W	Juliya C	
	Scout	Melissa		Cece T			
	Fiona	Melissa		Nicole V			
	Honey	Melissa					
	Mick	Melissa		Anne S			
2 - 2:45pm	Red	Ellis		Beth P	Jane L		
	Mick	Ellis		Amanda L			
	Honey	Ellis		Cindy B			
	Scout	Ellis					
	Harry	Ellis		Cece T			
3-3:45pm	Red	Ellis		Amanda L			
	Libby	Ellis		Cindy B			
	Lenny	Ellis					
4-4:45pm	Jackson	Julia			Izabella M		
	Honey	Julia			Cindy B		
	Onyx	Julia		Hazel D	Rilee S		
	Babe	Julia		Cece T			

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Edit to add: this is the note template we use to keep track on our master schedule weekly.

EXAMPLE

May 18-23 S3 W5	Alternating Participant	Absent Participant	Instructor change	MORNING Absent Volunteers	AFTERNOON Absent Volunteers	EVENING Absent Volunteers	Notes: Temp/sub/new
Monday 5/18	NO RB						Lunch N Learn 11:30-12:30pm
Tuesday 5/19	DD				Hannah B		
Wednesday 5/20					Corinna C	Linda D	
Thursday 5/21					Beth P	Jane J	
Friday 5/22							
Saturday 5/23				Mara K			

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## Relationships & Recognition continued

- Inclusive volunteer program
  - Renew Crew(s) build life skills
- Consider learning styles & “love languages” of all individuals for how they will feel appreciated.
- Offer/discuss alternative roles when volunteers skills/abilities change (specific examples of beloved aging/injured volunteers)
- Remember everyone brings value!

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## Relationships lead to recruiting new volunteers

- Your current volunteers are your best recruiters.
- I (Elizabeth) rarely am seeking out new volunteers - they come to us!
- Other regular rhythms we have for recruiting/welcoming new volunteers: local college field placements, volunteer fairs (minimal), High School NHS, etc - but MOST have some relational tie to our organization.



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## Recruiting

Take a horse with you when you can! :)



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## Educating & Training Volunteers

Monthly rhythms for in person training - consistent timing

- New Volunteer Orientation
- Horse Leader Training

Schedule as interested/available with Equine Coordinator

- Feeder volunteer training

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## Educating & Training Volunteers continued:

Quarterly (ish)

- Deep Dive Horse Leader Q & A
- Long Lining volunteer training
- Interactive Vaulting volunteer training



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## Education & training for volunteers continued

Always accessible to volunteers:

- Volunteer handbook (print and online)
- Volunteer training Guide (google doc)
- Recording videos to build an online library of educational videos for volunteers to reference before attending in person training/after. (Work in progress)

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## Education & training for volunteers continued

- Occasional emails with tips for volunteers:
  - Example: notice saddle flaps tucked under; apply thrush; check the pasture assignment board before turning a horse out, etc.
- Monthly email reminders of upcoming volunteer training
- Monthly Lunch n learn opportunities

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## Education & training for volunteers recap

Daily: easy access to volunteer handbook & information to know on bulletin board & posted signs in the barn.

Weekly: mass email with a reminder/tip for something we want volunteers to know (example: how to treat thrush, how to spot colic, etc)

Monthly: Initial volunteer orientation; horse leader training; feeding training, brief videos etc

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## Wrapping up

There are many ways to manage volunteers well, but keeping these CORE ideas for volunteer communication, organization, relationship/recognition, and education will help your organization maintain/grow a strong volunteer program.



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