



VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Circle F. We are a non-profit organization dedicated to the care and rescue of horses. Our mission is to provide a safe and loving home for horses in need and to educate the public about horse care and welfare. We rely on the dedication and support of our volunteers to make a difference in the lives of these animals.

At times you will feel that you do not know many of the Volunteers and may feel a bit isolated. Do not let this discourage you. We will attempt to provide you with the orientation and support that you need and over time you will feel that you are a part of the Circle F family.

Our Purpose

Our main purpose is to care for horses that have been entrusted to our care and, when they are ready, to adopt them out to an appropriate home.

Our secondary purpose is to involve and educate volunteers in the care, maintenance, and handling of horses.

The Volunteer

- Loves and respects horses.
- Believes in the program and the resources required to carry out the program.
- Has the time to follow through on a morning or afternoon shift; usually about one and a half (1½) hours or more.
- When around horses the volunteer is relaxed, patient, and thoughtful.
- Believes in the non-resistance, natural horsemanship approach, made popular by Monty Roberts, Chris Irvin, John Lyons, and others.
- Is unhurried when catching, feeding, grooming, and handling horses.
- Is respectful and supportive of each individual involved in the program.
- Is self-motivated, reliable, and responsible for assignments agreed to.
- Is always upgrading his/her knowledge through reading, videos, or courses.
- Follows instructions and guidelines as set out by the management team; respects supervision.
- Works in a cooperative manner and is a good team player.
- Is observant of problem and improvement areas and reports them in a professional and courteous manner to a member of the Management Team or to the President.

Our volunteers are an essential part of our organization and we value their contributions.

Care of the Horses

- The horses belong to the Society; that is to each of us as member volunteers. While a volunteer may have a special interest in one horse over another, no horse belongs to any individual volunteer.
- The first responsibility is to provide shelter, feed, and health care. Many of the horses may not be rideable. Horses approved for exercise or riding by the conditioning team will be given an exercise/riding program that only volunteers with proven riding skills shall adhere to.
- Basic care will include daily feeding, grooming, hoof maintenance, medical attention, and maintenance of facilities and tack.

**When on Assignment**

- Clear your mind of hassles around you and come in a relaxed, calm, confident mood. Enjoy the horses. Enjoy the peace and quiet of the sun, the pasture, the clouds, and the rain. Enjoy the silence.
- Review the "Daily Log", going back to your last visit, before proceeding with your duties.
- Most of the horses can be easily caught. Do not chase or harass them. Let them come to you or let them follow you to the shelter **but not at a run**. Halter each horse and tie them one-by-one to their position in the feeding shelter.
- If you feel unsafe with a horse, the horse can also be fed separately.
- Do not hand-feed carrots or apples in the pasture or before the horses are haltered or fed.
- If you have a difficult time catching a horse, review literature on how to catch a horse or ask someone for assistance.
- Only feed the horses the grain and hay as per instructions left by the feeding team.
- If your time allows, groom each of the horses as outlined in the grooming instructional sheet and as taught at an orientation session.
- Note the condition of the horses and report any irregularity to a member of the management team.
- Assure that the facilities are looked after, that it is safe for the horses (i.e. no items are lying around which a horse could injure themselves on), all halters are left in their correct location, all grooming tools are returned to their correct location, all lids for feed buckets are on securely, any medication is put away and secured, and that all manure is cleaned up and removed.
- Before and after riding assure that all tack is properly cared for and put in its correct location. Bits must be washed and cleaned before and after riding and saddles must be cleaned after each ride.
- Before leaving enter your recording in the "Daily Log" book saying what day and time you were here and what you did when you were here. State any observations in an objective, non-scolding way.
- When leaving assure that all gates are properly closed.
- Breathe a thought of thankfulness for the joy that the horses have given you.

When Not on Assignment but Coming for a Visit

- Notify the person on assignment to assure coordination and cooperation.
- Let the person on assignment know the nature of your visit.
- The person on assignment has the responsibility for the horses at this time so therefore ask them if you can help of if there is anything which needs to be done that you can help with.
- Do not feed the horses unless the person on assignment requests it.

When Others Stop By

On occasion someone may stop by to look at a horse or just to see what's going on. They will likely have called one of the managers ahead of time about their coming. If you have not been notified before the visitor's arrival, meet them courteously and respond to their questions. They will have been made aware of introducing themselves to you. They may want you to tell them about the horses. Just give the basic information that you are aware of. The visitor will be in touch with one of the managers if they wish to follow through on something. Taking their name and phone number and a brief note of information to pass on to someone is appropriate.