

VII. Raffles and Celebrations

Although this is a minor concern in the overall Cleanup coordination, it has become an area worth mentioning. It can be a super fun part of the day and a great way to show appreciation to your hardworking volunteers. The following are suggestions that may be helpful in increasing participation and data collection. But, a celebration is by no means required.

A. At the Start of the Cleanup

Some coordinators choose to have some sort of ceremony before and after the Cleanup. The first ceremony may announce the Cleanup procedures, promotional distributions, and information about the party afterwards. It is a time to reward volunteers with juice, donuts, muffins, bagels, coffee, etc. before the Cleanup begins. The pre-Cleanup ceremony is also a great time to introduce important figures that may be in attendance, like politicians or celebrities. Often local bakeries and markets are generous with providing breakfast foods on the day of the Cleanup. Start inquiring now for September! If you choose to hold some kind of morning celebration/opener, be sure to keep it short in order to get your volunteers out on the river in time.

B. Party Down After the Cleanup

Most Cleanup parties occur after the Cleanup at the river sites. The challenge is getting people to stay until noon when the party is scheduled to begin or come to the venue if it is different than where they were cleaning up. One solution is to entice participants to attend with a raffle or an awards ceremony. Raffle off prizes like a GSRC Day T-shirt, posters, donations from local businesses, and dinners at local restaurants. Or you can give awards out to the biggest group, the group that collected the most trash, or the finder of the most unusual item.

Give out raffle tickets as people sign the waiver of liability to your event. This insures you get the waiver signed by people who want to participate in the raffle or receive lunch at the end of the Cleanup. Alternatively, you could give volunteers a raffle ticket when they turn in their data cards and trash bags after cleaning up. At the party afterwards, give volunteers the option of buying more (this could be a great fundraiser for Cleanup costs!).

C. Great Ideas for a Post Celebration:

- prizes for best item found, largest group, etc.
- free BBQ/picnic lunch
- donated drinks - including soda, juices, beer (don't forget an alcohol license)
- musicians/band
- ice cream social
- raffle - sell additional tickets at party
- special speakers, mayor, board supervisors, etc.
- your organization's booth and other local enviro groups' booths
- kids' activity area - crafts, rock climbing wall, bounce house, etc.

D. Important Things to Remember:

- pick a good venue - convenient for volunteers to get to
- purchase/arrange event insurance/permits/alcohol licenses
- order/get donated enough food/drinks
- create supply list for all party needs - do you need shade tents?
- properly thank and acknowledge all donors/sponsors
- rent a PA system if needed (if you hire a musician, use their system for announcements)
- arrange for a team of volunteers to help with transport of supplies (to/from), set up, serving, sales, clean up of party
- invite your sponsors/special guests/media
- create agenda for party

