



“Volunteer Awards”

Recognising Outstanding Contributions to the Dressage Community

“For the writers, the runners, the poo pickers, the judges, the announcers, the arena groomers, the scorers, the Area Delegates, the Treasurers, the AJO's, the Presidents, the cup-of-tea makers, the scone bakers, the event secretaries, the first aiders, the committee members, the helpers and everyone else who make our sport great!”

Definition: Volunteers | tūao give their unpaid time and skills to communities and causes they believe in. (Volunteering NZ)

Volunteers are vital to communities, offering time, energy, and expertise to help others. The Volunteer of the Month and Year awards recognise those who go above and beyond.

Monthly recognition celebrates everyday heroes, fostering kindness and community. Recipients often reach higher milestones like Volunteer of the Year, encouraging ongoing involvement.

Below, we outline the comprehensive criteria for nominating and selecting candidates for this prestigious award, ensuring fairness, inclusivity, and the celebration of actual community impact.

Volunteer of the Month Award

This Award recognises community volunteers, helping Area groups highlight individuals and promote appreciation. It acknowledges both short-term achievements and ongoing efforts to encourage volunteers and support Area goals. Selection focuses on recent acts of service, leadership, or creativity supporting Area activities. A rotating committee may be used to ensure fairness and diversity.

Volunteer of the Month Award includes:

- A certificate of appreciation
- A \$50 voucher from **Vivant Equi**, sponsor of the Dressage NZ “Volunteer Awards”.
- A feature on the Dressage NZ website and FB page.

Evaluation Criteria

To ensure that all nominees are assessed equitably, specific eligibility criteria for the Volunteer of the Month award are established. These include:

1. Impact

The key criterion is the measurable impact of the nominee's service, such as the number of people helped, projects led and their outcomes, and long-term community benefits.

2. Leadership and Initiative

Taking the initiative to meet unmet needs, mentoring others, and developing innovative solutions to support the area's goals.

3. Commitment to Values

The nominee's work should reflect the core values of the award, including fostering connections, kindness, creating a sense of belonging and strengthening community ties.

4. Adaptability and Resilience

Persevering through challenges and adapting to change are key qualities. Volunteers who overcome obstacles and achieve their goals deserve recognition.

5. Collaboration

The nominee's ability to work well with others, including team members, community stakeholders, or partner organisations, is also essential. This emphasises the individual's role in encouraging teamwork and unity.

Nomination Process

The nomination process is designed to be open and transparent, encouraging Area members and peers to recognise outstanding volunteers.

Submission of Nominations

Nominations may be made by any individual or Area Committee acquainted with the nominee's work. This could include colleagues, beneficiaries of the nominee's efforts, or leaders of the initiatives they support.

Documentation Requirements

To provide a complete picture of the nominee's achievements, the nomination form (attached) should include:

- A detailed description of the nominee's volunteer activities and roles.
- Specific examples of the nominee's impact on the community or Area.
- Letters of recommendation from peers, beneficiaries, or others (minimum of three, or one co-signed by at least three nominators)
- A high-res photo
- Optional supporting materials as appropriate (reviews/feedback letters, etc)

Deadline for Nominations

Nominations must be received by the fourth Friday of the month to be announced the following month, ensuring sufficient time for the selection process. Late submissions are generally not accepted to promote fairness and a level playing field.

The table at the end of this document shows a calendar for Areas to submit their nominations. This aims to make the process easier for Area groups by providing a clear deadline. However, an outstanding volunteer might become apparent or come to mind in a different month from the one scheduled, so please feel free to submit at any time.

Please make sure to recognise someone throughout the year – most of us are volunteers and deserve to be recognised; every small effort helps build the whole.

Selection Process for the Volunteer of the Month Award

The selection process is designed to maintain transparency, impartiality, and objectivity.

The Selection Committee

A diverse selection committee comprising two DNZ Board members, the Dressage Sport Manager, our Vivant Equi Sponsor, herself a recipient of the VotY Award, and one of the Island Rider Representatives – rotated monthly. This ensures a broad range of perspectives.

Scoring and Ranking

Each nominee is assessed based on the evaluation criteria. Points are allocated across different categories, including impact, leadership, values alignment, adaptability, and collaboration.

The nominee should not be a salaried employee of the organisation or initiative for which they are being recognised. This award is intended for those who freely give their time without financial compensation.

Important note:

- While judges and stewards are often compensated for their skills and service, we understand many of these individuals also take on other roles and do much more than just their responsibilities on the day, so they, too, are eligible for nomination for Volunteer of the Month.
- There are separate Awards for Judge and Steward of the Year, usually nominated by their peers, although others are also encouraged to recognise outstanding performances in these vital roles.
- Nominees must not have any complaints against them that have been upheld by ESNZ.

Final Decision

The selection committee will choose the recipient, with joint awards or mentions possible if candidates are equally outstanding. Both the nominating committee and awardee will be notified before the social media announcement. The winner may need to provide a comment and approve their photo for use.

Volunteer of the Year Award

Selection Process

The recipient of the Volunteer of the Year Award will be selected from the ten winners of the Volunteer of the Month Awards. (August to May).

The Selection Committee, as described above, plus the Chair of the Dressage NZ Board, will select the Volunteer of the Year from the nominations received throughout the year for the ten Volunteer of the Month awards.

Announcement and Recognition

The Volunteer of the Year recipient is celebrated through a public announcement and recognition at the Dressage NZ Annual Awards ceremony. This ensures that the recipient receives the acknowledgment they deserve among peers and stakeholders.

Rewards

While the primary reward is recognition, additional perks include:

- A \$200 gift voucher from Vivant Equi
- Two Complimentary tickets to the DNZ Annual Awards dinner
- A commemorative deluxe rosette
- Media features in online platforms.

Conclusion

The Volunteer of the Year award recognises the outstanding efforts of individuals who strengthen and unify our community. By setting clear criteria and following a fair and transparent process, this award ensures that each nominee is treated with the respect and consideration they deserve. In the end, the recognition not only honours the recipient but also encourages others to engage in acts of service and kindness.

**PLEASE BE SURE TO THANK OUR WONDERFUL SPONSOR, VIVANT EQUI, FOR THEIR
GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THESE IMPORTANT AWARDS**

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VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH BY AREAS 2025- 2026

AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
All Areas can Nominate		WDC OC		
	Central Districts	Marlborough	East'n BOP	Canterbury
	Wellington	Otago	Nth H Bay	Waikato
	North Cantbry	Sth Hawkes Bay	Sth Cantby /	Morrinsville/
	Bay of Plenty	AMDG	Nth Otago	Te Aroha

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
	U25 Champs	SI Champs	Nationals	
Southland	Northland	Ashburton	HOY	Taupo
Waitemata	Taranaki	North Canterby	Central HB	Warkworth
Taihape	Tauranga	Rotorua	Bay of Islands	Nelson
Gisborne	Central Otago	Wairarapa		Horowhenua

This table is based on the 25/26 calendar of events incl Premier League shows.



Volunteer of the Month Nomination

Area:	
Date:	
Volunteer Name:	
Volunteer Phone:	
Volunteer Email:	
Nominated by:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Reason for nomination: **Criteria should include but are not limited to:**

Impact- the people , projects impacted by their work

Leadership & Initiative - supporting others, solution-focused

Commitment to Values – fostering connections, kindness, creating a sense of belonging/ strengthening community ties.

Adaptability & Resilience - perseverance, overcoming obstacles

Collaboration with others – working well with others, fostering teamwork and unity

Other Comments:

Please add additional pages if necessary and include letters of recommendations/ a hi-res photo/ any other supporting documents/feedback.