



President's Message

Volunteers are the backbone of UFDC and the most important asset. As we near Convention and the close on August 31 of our fiscal year, it is good to take the time to look at the contribution made by our volunteers and recognize them. Volunteers represent thousands of dollars of time and service. Recognizing volunteers for their efforts is an important part of retaining as well as recruiting them.

In UFDC we are all volunteers from the club level to the national officers. Recently I have been reading the Annual Club Activity Reports submitted by each club president. I find the pages full of lists of wonderful projects. These projects are generously carried out by our volunteers. They are varied and creative, and based regionally; they provide service to communities wherever UFDC clubs are found.

Club officers are those wonderful leaders out in the field managing our clubs and seeing to it clubs meet UFDC requirements for membership. They lead their clubs by joining in on luncheons, displays in public places, seminars, parties for Junior Collectors, doll shows, doll programs, working with libraries and museums to identify dolls, making centerpieces for UFDC luncheons, presenting programs, working with Girl Scouts, restoring dolls, and sponsoring or attending a myriad of other events. Each of these projects is run entirely by our volunteers. These members have great heart! The clubs are our backbone; they don't just do the work, the members make the club work.

One of the most important parts of club work is the great gift our volunteers give to each other. Members understand what Johnetta B. Cole has stated, "The ultimate expression of generosity is not giving of what you have, but of giving of who you are." As I read the Annual Club Activity Reports I understood how each club was giving of themselves. Our clubs are special groups in which the members gain knowledge about dolls, enjoy friendship and receive support from belonging to the group. In many ways, our clubs are like families; they are a place to go when you need help and a friend.

Sometimes clubs and members feel they are only one entity and, therefore, not significant enough to make a difference. I am reminded of what Anita Roddick observed, "If you think you are too small to make a difference, you haven't been in bed with a mosquito." Each of you counts!

Our National Convention is held annually so the organization may fulfill the mandate in our Bylaws to hold a business meeting of the membership once each year. All clubs may elect representatives and alternates to attend this meeting and, in doing so, exercise their right to advise and consent on the issues presented. This part of Convention alone requires the dedication of many volunteers. National Officers, Members of the Board of Directors, UFDC Parliamentarian, monitors, credentials chairman, and many others work during the year and at Convention insure this meeting will be carried out. It is your duty as a Delegate to attend this meeting, exercise your right to vote, and report back to your club.



"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart."

Elizabeth Andrew

Convention, however, has grown over the years to be more than the Annual Meeting. It has blossomed into four days of educational and entertaining activities, conceived of and planned and executed by the dedication of many volunteers. Convention is already an expensive venture, but without volunteers, the Director of Convention Services, ReAL Services Coordinators and general Chairmen with all of the other volunteers who assist, the cost would be prohibitive and could not be held as we know it today.

The Crew at Convention is a very special and unselfish group of volunteers who work behind the scenes and make the entire convention go smoothly. They give their gift without adulation!

Did you know that DOLL NEWS is edited and published by volunteers? The editor and her staff of mainly volunteers produce the wonderful magazine we all admire. It is a huge job but it has been cheerfully undertaken by a group of volunteers since the early days of UFDC.

What does this all have to do with the theme of our Convention, Jambalaya Jubilee?

Jambalaya is a spicy local dish containing a variety of different ingredients which when placed together meld into a culinary triumph. The English Oxford Dictionary indicates that Jambalaya comes from the Provençal word "Jambalala" meaning a mish mash, but result of which is a glorious blend of flavors.

This is not unlike UFDC. We are a blend of many things, a love and appreciation for all dolls made from an endless variety of materials, created to serve as a reflection of the many cultures from which they have emanated throughout history. What keeps us all together is the dedication and endless commitment of our volunteers.

UFDC salutes all of our volunteers. We thank you for your endless gifts. It is appropriate for each of us to be thankful for the many gifts we receive from each other. If those among us did not extend a helping hand our organization would not exist. Dick Gregory tells us, "One of the things I keep learning is that the secret of being happy is doing things for other people."

UFDC needs all of you. The strength of an organization depends on the dedication of its volunteers. It has been said "volunteers don't get paid, not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless." (Sherry Anderson)

You are all priceless! Join with me and your officers to keep our Federation a national and international inspiration to preserve and protect dolls, our mission. Let us keep the light of UFDC strong and bright!

In Unity,

Ada

UFDC President