By Maggi Wettstein, Mideast Regional Council

Locally, Central Illinois has seen the cancellation of two prominent triathlons. The effort and time it takes to host a race begins months in advance of the event. A race director works to not only make sure the event is fun; they make the event happen from beginning to end. The elements of race directing that happen behind the scenes include promoting the event, working with a registration and timing group, getting sponsors, working with police and volunteers , creating a logo and printing shirts, finding a course, and making sure everything needed for race day is in place on time. These are only a few of the elements to creating a successful event.

With so many moving parts to make an event happen, it is the race director who uses their spare time in the evenings and on the weekends to make sure the events happen. For volunteer directors, they take time away from family in order for the participants to have an event to participate in. Even on race day, they arrive hours before the first person gets there. They make the hard decisions when weather isn’t quite cooperating, and they deal with all of the issues that could come up at any point in time.

As participants, we must recognize and appreciate the time and effort it takes to put on any event. Supporting an event by paying an entry fee is a great way to keep local events going. But, it’s also helpful to volunteer in any capacity that helps take some of the load off of a race director’s shoulders. Without a race director, we won’t have events to participate in.