

Guide to Organizing a Citywide Medallion Hunt

The Medallion

→ One of the hardest parts of starting a medallion hunt is to find something to use as your medallion. Your medallion must be a unique object so that hunters cannot try to make their own replica medallion and then try to turn it in for the prize. Also, your medallion must be reasonably durable and weatherproof to withstand harsh outdoor conditions.

→ Your medallion should clearly state that it's the medallion. For instance your medallion could say "Faketown Days of Fun Medallion Hunt. Return to the Faketown Chamber of Commerce for your prize." Try not to include things like dates or sponsors on your medallion so that it can be re-used in future medallion hunts. If your medallion doesn't clearly state that it's the medallion, someone who has never heard of your medallion hunt might find it and take it home just because they think it's a nifty trinket. Then no one would be able to win your medallion hunt.

→ Traditionally a medallion would be some kind of novelty engraved large metal coin or pendant. However, medallion hunts are often a single event of a much larger celebration. The medallion is commonly used to tie your medallion hunt into the theme of the larger celebration. A rural community may use an engraved horseshoe to tie the medallion hunt into a farming theme of the celebration. Winter festivals may use a snowman ornament for their medallion. Halloween & harvest celebrations may use a pumpkin or autumn leaf decorations for the medallion. Regardless of what your medallion is, try to make it at least 3 inches in diameter so hunters have a fighting chance of finding it.

Fundraising

→ Medallion hunts themselves generate revenue by attracting visitors who will spend money in your community. However, it's common for people organizing medallion hunts to solicit sponsorship from local businesses to help finance the prize. In return, the sponsors receive recognition in advertisements for your medallion hunt. For instance your medallion hunt may be named "The Frank's Widget Factory Horseshoe Hunt" in return for a donation. Again, I highly suggest that your medallion NOT include a reference to "Frank's Widget Factory" in case "Steve's Widget Factory" sponsors your medallion hunt next year.

→ Another way to raise money for your medallion hunt is to sell event buttons. There are many online companies that can make custom buttons, usually for less than \$0.25 per button. By selling the buttons for about \$2.00 at frequently shopped local stores you can easily fund your medallion hunt independent of any sponsors. You may choose to hold a button-design contest or use a city logo for your button. Try to

use a different design or color button every year to make sure people don't save buttons from previous years. Hunters may be required to purchase a button to participate in your medallion hunt, or hunters may only receive half the prize without the button.

Event Rules

→ Medallion hunts are lots of fun, but when hunters get desperate some have been known to resort to destructive measures in their search. To avoid this and to make your event more fun for everyone, make sure hunters know what your medallion looks like and how big it is. After all, it's much harder to find something when you don't even know what you're looking for. Hide your medallion so that it's at least 50% visible and make sure hunters are aware of that. Explain to hunters that your medallion will be hidden so that they are NOT required to dig, climb, or break any laws to find it.

→ Clearly define what areas your medallion can be hidden as well as what areas it cannot be hidden. Try to verify any questionable areas and try to think if there are any specific areas you don't want hunters roaming around.

→ If you're trying to sell buttons to fund your event, make sure hunters know about the buttons and how it affects their prize eligibility (either no prize or half prize without button). Make sure hunters know where to turn in your medallion when they find it. Also, instruct hunters to turn in the medallion as soon as possible after finding it so that you don't have to keep writing new clues days after your medallion has been found.

→ Make sure that you state that in the event of problems, your decisions are final and that you're not responsible for accidents, injuries, or any other damages/losses that result from your event. Reserve the right to cancel your event in case no one finds your medallion for a long time (although you can continue to make clues easier and easier). Reserve the right to disqualify hunters who don't follow your rules. Be sure to mention if there's anyone that you don't want to be eligible for your event (your organization's employees, people who are not citizens of your community/surrounding areas, members of sponsor's management).

Advertising Your Event

→ MedallionHunts.com provides a free webpage for your event, but people must know about your event before they'll think to visit that webpage. Therefore, you'll have to get the word out about your event. If your medallion hunt is a part of a larger celebration, it may be as simple as listing your medallion hunt in the schedule of events of the larger celebration. However, due to the length of typical medallion hunts, your medallion hunt will probably be the first event of the celebration. Many people will be unaware that the celebration has started. As a result, it's always a good idea to have some extra advertising.

→ An advertisement in a local newspaper may be your best bet. The ad may be somewhat costly, but in reality it would be advertising the start of the entire larger celebration, not just your medallion hunt. If newspaper ads are out of the question, you may consider a simple banner sign located at frequently shopped stores or near local busy intersections (especially near stop-lights so people have time to read your sign). As with your medallion, I would suggest that the banner sign NOT include dates or sponsors where possible so that the sign can be re-used. You may also be able to purchase advertisement on a local business's electronic or letter sign, in which case dates and sponsors are just fine.

Clues

→ In the past, medallion hunts demanded lots of time answering questions about the event, distributing clues, and explaining where the medallion was hidden after the event. MedallionHunts.com has taken the vast majority of that load off, but writing clues can still be tricky. Consider who your audience is. If your event is targeted to children only, make sure your clues aren't too difficult. However, don't underestimate hunter's intelligence. Remember that there will probably be hundreds of people looking for your medallion. It only takes one person to unravel one clue to end your medallion hunt.

→ With that said, always try to make your clues vague and riddled. It never hurts to purposely try to throw hunters off course. Your clues *should* have some meaning that points hunters toward your medallion, but that doesn't mean they can't also seem to suggest other possible places. Chances are you're not a professional writer, so don't spend too much time trying to make things rhyme. Cheesy clues actually add to the fun of your event. It's common for the first clue to reiterate rules in case hunters haven't read them yet. As your event progresses, clues should gradually become easier and more specific.