

## BCHI CONVENTION PLANNING

### What is the purpose of the State Convention?

BCHI is directed by its' by-laws to hold an annual convention to determine the direction and goals of BCHI for the following year. Traditionally the convention is held on the third or fourth weekend in March.

### How is the location for the convention selected?

The by-laws state that the location for the following year is voted on and decided at the previous years convention on the main convention floor. Currently, there is a rotation list going into future years that lists what chapter is responsible for the annual convention for a specific year. This document is listed on the website.

### Who is responsible for putting the agenda together?

The State Board of Directors (SBD) meeting will be all day the Friday before the convention. The agenda for the SBD meeting is the responsibility of the State Board of Directors (SBD) (see BCHI By-Laws, Article V, Section 5). The Foundation will meet Friday as well, from 0800-1200. The local chapter need only provide a space and refreshments.

State Chairman's checklist on recurring topics that should be included in the SBD agenda.

- Directors roll call
- Approval of the minutes
- Treasurer report (approval of bills & budget report
- Next year's budget proposal (*spring meeting*)
- Audit of State Treasurer's books (*spring meeting*)
- Proposals, resolutions or issues from a particular chapter
- State issues (past, current, future)
- National Board issues
- State Lands Liaison report
- State Education Chair report
- Foundation report
- Sportsman Caucus/Recreation Council
- Horse Council report
- Broomtales report
- Ways & Means report
- Next year's convention location
- Election of Officers (*spring meeting*)

The hosting chapter is responsible for the convention and Saturday evening activities and overall agenda. The SBD through the State Chairman is responsible for the business portion of the agenda (reference above) and the State Chairman shall chair that business portion of the convention (see BCHI By-Laws, Article VII, Section II). Here are some guidelines:

1. It's a good idea to have one hour for registration & chatting. Suggest 7:30-8:30 a.m.
2. First up - A Welcome by the local chapter, politician, or closet comic.
3. State Business should be conducted in the morning portion & will usually go 2-3 hours, including:
  - State roll call by the State Secretary.
  - Present budget report
  - Proposals, resolutions or issues from a particular chapter.
  - Report from Committee Chairs
  - Report from Foundation Director
  - Report from National Directors
  - Announce upcoming slate of Officers (if appropriate)
  - Next years convention site
4. Speakers. Depending on the length of the State business on any given year the number of outside speakers will change. ALWAYS include a legislative update from a local politician or aid concerning BCH issues in that local area and any bills before Congress that effect BCH. The State Chairman should be the contact, or will assign someone local for that contact (face to face is best).  
If you want to include a local speaker/presenter but there is not time on the agenda, offer it as one of the breakout sessions.
5. (OPTIONAL) Afternoon breakout sessions. Recommend these be the last item on the agenda when people are getting tired and can get up & move around. These sessions may only cover 1 hour, but have 3 different sessions running at once. If time allows for a second round of sessions they could be offered again with attendees having a second choice. Include topics like; horse care, tack care, training for chapter and foundation officers, light packing for overnight trips, equine rescue, LNT camp, local area person on topics of interest to horsemen.
6. All breaks should be one-half hour long to allow attendees to see vendors, silent *auction*, *photo contest* and/or *other local chapter* display items.
7. The main convention should end by 4:30 p.m. and resume with the evening social hour.

### What type of topics are appropriate?

1. Items of business to be addressed by the delegates from the chapters.
2. Educational & informational topics that support & enhance implementation of the mission of BCHI.
3. Presentations from agency officials & legislators on topics or subjects of interest to horsemen.
4. Topics of general interest or that provide entertainment. (while this category should be considered the lowest in priority, it is good to include some items solely of an entertaining nature to encourage attendance. Vendors/concessions of a stock oriented nature are welcome & encouraged as long as they do not detract from the business of the convention)

### Who pays for what?

1. Registration fees are intended to cover the cost of building rental, lunch and dinner, guest speakers, and incidentals related to hosting the convention. Fees must be kept at a reasonable level so as to not discourage attendance.
2. The state has agreed to pay \$100.00 for refreshments at the SBD meetings. \*\*
3. As an incentive to get local chapters to host the convention, they traditionally have conducted a raffle or live auction as a money maker. (it is important that state & local money makers are not competitive)

\*\*SBD increased the amount paid to each chapter for refreshments at the SBD meetings from \$50 to \$100 at the March 2010 SBD meeting in Lewiston.

### What is the responsibility of the host unit?

The following was captured by previous hosting chapters to help new chapters, & is offered as a guideline only. All of the Chairperson responsibilities listed below will not be used at every convention. Remember that each chapter & the area they are located in, brings their own unique flavor. Expand on that! That is what will keep our conventions fresh & not carbon copies of one another.

**ALL CONVENTION DOCUMENTS NEED TO BE POSTED ON THE WEBSITE.** Send these documents to the Website Coordinator to be forwarded to the webmaster.

LOGISTICS CHAIRPERSON – locate convention space. If meals aren't available onsite arrange for caterer (recommend starting with count for 100 people). Food needs: continental breakfast, lunch, dinner, soft drinks for afternoon break, coffee and water available at all times. If food provider wants meal tickets collected for payment count, decide who will do this, provider or you. Negotiate motel rates and notify registration chairperson so that motel names, prices, and phone numbers get on registration form. Work closely with convention center for room set-up for main meeting room (HINT: convention centers tend to crowd chairs too close, remember attendees will be sitting in same spot all day).

Make arrangements for AV equipment needs (projectors, podium w/microphone and/or cordless microphones). Arrange space and tables for vendors, photo contest, silent auction and other chapter items. Set up room for Directors meeting and (if possible) arrange the seating in a square or U arrangement for easy discussion allowing 2 chairs at the main table for each chapter

plus State officers, arrange for refreshments at the Directors and Foundation meetings (Optional: a social after the Director's meeting with local politicians/agency people). Arrange for a no host bar, band or entertainment for Saturday night.

**ADVERTISING & PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON** – contact the local radio stations and newspapers to do spots on the convention. This will help get the word out to local vendors and businesses to gain support. Get notices into the State BCH newsletter and website reminding chapters of the events your chapter is planning. Work with your local President AND the State Chairman on agenda and program development. Remember that the State Chairman needs a block of time to conduct state business at the main convention. Determine speakers and presentations WITH the State Chairman to deal with current issues. Make follow-up contacts with speakers/presenters to confirm times, AV equipment needs, etc. Contact logistic chairperson to inform of needs. Appoint an Emcee to keep the agenda moving and on time, be a contact for the State Chairman, and the speakers. Finalize agenda and have it and/or the program printed. Send Thank you letters to speakers after convention.

**REGISTRATION CHAIRPERSON** – will be the central person to receive all the registration applications and money. Make sure you have access to the chapter's P.O. Box or give your address on the registration form. Develop registration form and send to the State Chair to be posted on the website. Have registration form available at least 2 months prior to the Convention. Your caterer will probably be asking for a preliminary count at the earliest possible date. Prepare name badges and meal tickets (if necessary).

Keep logistic chairperson informed of head count for adequate seating and ordering of meals. Remind logistics chairperson that you need a welcome table at convention entrance. Organize a team of people to help register attendees and pass out convention gift(?) and/or packets. The morning of the convention when chapters arrive will be hectic with questions. Have enough people on hand. Delegate, delegate, delegate!!!!

*The following Committees are Optional for the hosting chapter.*

**DOOR PRIZE CHAIRPERSON** - contact local merchants for door prizes. Gather their business cards for a promotion page in convention program (if you do one). Work out routine with Emcee to pass out door prizes throughout the day. (HINT: everyone does not need to leave with a door prize. Collecting enough prizes for everyone takes up a lot of convention time. If you are given a large amount of a small advertising item, you may want to have people who have not won, stop by a table after your door prizes are gone). Purchase a roll of door prize tickets and include in registration packet. Write thank-you notes to vendors and attach them to each donated door prize along w/stamped addressed envelope.

**SILENT AUCTION CHAIRPERSON** – let logistics chairperson know of your table needs. Prepare bid sheets and decide on cut-off time for bidding. Let Emcee know so an announcement can be made. As cut-off to bidding approaches there will be a bidding frenzy. Recommend getting peoples attention when bidding is closed by PA announcement, loud bell, etc. and then

clear the room. Give assistants a chance to get organized for collecting payments from successful bidders.

**PHOTO CONTEST CHAIRPERSON** – provide information on the categories and rules to the advertising chairperson for the State newsletter and website. Print the categories for the boards, make up boards if necessary, set up display for the photos at convention, organize a criteria by which to judge, provide judges, determine appropriate awards (ribbons, gift etc.) purchase the prize(s), announce winners at convention banquet.

**VENDORS CHAIRPERSON** – write letters or call local vendors and invite them to display their wares at the convention. Establish cost for space (if any). Work closely with logistics chairperson and convention center to determine space needed, proper lighting, etc. Advise vendors when they can set up, when they should open and close, and price of convention lunch. Oversee vendor set up at the Convention Center. Write thank you letters after the convention.

**DECORATIONS CHAIRPERSON** – determine the theme, colors, decorations for banquet tables, and head tables. (may want to wait to put out table decorations until the banquet to provide more room for writing, etc. during the convention). Organize and schedule a work day to make decorations. Get volunteers to help decorate at the convention. Need to coordinate time to decorate banquet tables with meal provider, work through logistics chairperson. Decide how decorations will be given to attendees, ie; dots on napkins, drawing, etc.

**CONVENTION GIFT AND PACKETS CHAIRPERSON** -determine what the gift will be and order or have made up, (examples; tablets, pens, pencils, key chains with chapter or convention logo). If you do packets, gather literature, magazines, information of interest to the organization to be placed in packet, stuff the packets including the program. Work closely with the Program Chairperson so that the program is printed, put together, and ready for stuffing in packets. Regardless, if you choose to do packets or not, recommend having a small tablet and pen or pencil available to attendees.