

# **CALIFORNIA BLACKSMITH ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE GUIDELINES**

Update 2019

## CBA CONFERENCE GUIDELINES

Every California Blacksmith's Association Conference is, above all else, an educational event where members come to learn about blacksmithing. The CBA is chartered by the State of California and registered with the IRS as a non-profit educational organization.

The CBA Spring Conference is our largest event of the year. It is also, usually, the largest blacksmith gathering on the West Coast, drawing participants from many diverse areas. As the single largest educational event that CBA sponsors, our Spring Conference should provide a valuable learning environment for professional and amateur blacksmiths. Demonstrations, seminars, and workshops must be tailored for all levels of interest: novice, intermediates, and advanced. You should keep in mind that suppliers, like dealers of welding and grinding equipment, could provide valuable information. Dealer representatives can be just as educational as someone teaching a workshop or putting on a demonstration.

This document, updated annually, is intended to be a support tool with useful information to help plan a successful conference. It will be up to you to decide what is useful or if there are other items you would like to see at your conference. Be sure to add your ideas to this document!

## Contents

Conference Chair .....	5
Demonstrators and events .....	5
Demonstrator expectations .....	5
Site coordinator .....	6
Education .....	6
Hands-on .....	6
Workshops .....	6
Young Smiths .....	7
Demonstrator .....	7
Slide Show/Lecture .....	7
Open forge .....	7
Facility .....	7
Location .....	7
On site amenities check list .....	7
Lodging .....	8
Food .....	8
Volunteers .....	9
Finances .....	10
Typical spring conference budget .....	10
Promotion .....	11
Reporter and Social Media .....	11
Public Tours and Schools .....	11
Registration .....	12
Registration information needed: .....	12
On-site registration .....	12
Conference Program items: .....	12
Credit Card Payments .....	13
Refunds .....	13
Vendors .....	13
CBA Merchandise .....	13
Tailgate sales .....	14
Gallery .....	14
Safety .....	14
Incident report .....	15
Safety volunteers .....	15
Equipment .....	15
Tool Area .....	15
Workshop .....	15
AV Equipment .....	15
Contests .....	15
Big Contest .....	16
Small Contest .....	16
Examples of Past Small Contests: .....	16
Saturday Night Festivities .....	16
Agenda .....	16
Membership Meeting .....	17
Auctions .....	17
Iron in the Hat .....	17
Silent Auction .....	17
Live Auction .....	17

Planning Timeline .....	18
APPENDIX .....	20
Sample Registration Form: .....	21
Sample Conference Schedule .....	22
Sample Safety Sign.....	23
Sample Conference Budget: .....	24
Sample Tracker Spreadsheet:.....	25
Sample Vendor Form .....	26

## **Conference Chair**

The conference chair is a volunteer position although the CBA will reimburse all budgeted, reasonable and documented expenses incurred in the creation of the conference. A few conference chairs have negotiated with the board for a stipend as part of the budgeting process. The Conference Chair is responsible for oversight of all the items listed in this document which provides various things that need to be planned out to put on a successful conference. This will be your chance to set the tone and theme of the conference; your chance to see your vision come to life. The chair also determines the location, date and selects a team that can assist in each of the designated areas. The chair will be expected to present the budget and planning progress to the board at regular intervals. Using this document and relying on past chair's guidance you will be able to put on a successful conference. Planning will make a huge difference on how well the conference unfolds as many things can be accomplished ahead of time, be sure to use the tracker and the timeline provided to keep on track.

## **Demonstrators and events**

The demonstrations and demonstrators should reflect the theme of the conference as well as the needs, desires and diversity of the community. Determine how many demo slots need to be filled. Usually there are morning and afternoon slots for each demo site. The main demonstrator is usually for the advanced level and may be brought in from outside the state or even the country.

### **Demonstrator expectations**

- Sign a written contract specifying the times of their demonstrations, the subjects they are covering, and the fee or other reimbursement they are to receive.
- Provide a list of tools and supplies they will need.
- Provide their social security number. Demonstrators should understand that, under the law, CBA is required to send out IRS Form 1099 to everyone who receives a fee greater than \$600.00. A line for this can be placed on the contract.
- Join the CBA to be covered by our insurance. If they are not currently a member, the Board of Directors has voted to allow for a free membership for all demonstrators providing they fill out a membership form.
- Selected demonstrators should provide slides for a lecture.
- Provide a bio for publication
- If using handouts, the demonstrator should provide copies well ahead of time to ensure enough can be made available for all attendees.

- Demonstrators are expected to work specific time slots which will become the schedule for the conference.

### **Site coordinator**

Each demonstration site should have a site coordinator whose job it is to make sure the demonstrator has all the supplies, tools, equipment and teaching materials needed to put on an effective demonstration. The main goal is to make sure the demonstration goes as smooth as possible by handling any issues that come up diplomatically and quickly. The coordinator should be aware of the time and adjust or provide reminders as needed. If there is a demonstration piece created, s/he is responsible for arranging for a photo and for getting the finished piece to the auction on time. The best site managers anticipate the needs of the demonstrator and the projects as follows:

- Transport demonstrator to and from airport, hotel, etc.
- Make sure that the correct material is available; be familiar with the project and what material will be needed
- Make sure the tooling is set up in good working order and organized.
- Assist during the demonstration so that it goes smoothly, keep the forge running at optimal temps, make sure that the audience can hear and understand what is happening, assist with striking.
- Always enforce/maintain safety standards
- Able to react in a calm, responsible manner if a member is judgement impaired and that judgment interferes with the demonstration or those watching the demonstration.

## **Education**

Many members come to the conference for the opportunity to get hands on instruction and to use the forging stations in the education area. Over the years the CBA has built and purchased over a dozen sets of anvils, post vises and forges – both solid fuel and gas. This becomes an important element in a successful conference.

### **Hands-on**

All workshop leaders need to be qualified CBA instructors, or you can hire an educator that will run this area. At least one site should be used for hands on work for beginners and other skill levels. The educator will provide demonstrations that are typically progressive and move a student through a project or set of tools to make a specific item. At the same time, students that are only arriving on Friday or even Saturday should be able to participate even if they haven't made the necessary tools.

### **Workshops**

Workshops are focused educational sessions with limited attendance. These are popular with attendees as they create something requiring a higher skill level although an extra materials fee is usually necessary. It is imperative that each registrant has a chance to sign up for limited slots. What doesn't work is having all three days filled on site on the first day. Options to avoid this are to offer signups online prior to the conference start date or have a sign up each day at the workshop site by the workshop site manager on a first come first serve basis.

## **Young Smiths**

A Young Smith area that is manned by a qualified instructor is recommended for Saturday when younger smiths are out of school. The instructor should come with a set of projects ready to go and create a warm, welcoming environment. You can define what a Young Smith is, but typically they are focused 8-15-year olds.

## **Demonstrator**

Scheduling a main demonstrator in the education area is a unique idea that has been used successfully. The focus will be something related to the demonstrator's main project allowing what is typically an 'observation only' event turned hands on with attendees able to ask questions as they attempt to emulate the demonstrator's piece. The demonstrator will need to ensure that the project is geared to all skill levels and is something that can be accomplished in a 4 hour period. Plan on having enough material for 30 or more participants.

## **Slide Show/Lecture**

Any demonstrator can present a slide show of their past work or you can set up someone to provide a lecture on an interesting topic.

## **Open forge**

Open forge areas are popular but can cause considerable damage to equipment if poorly managed. Some attendees come to conference just to have a chance for hands on time at the anvil. These folks can be encouraged to join a contest team or wait until the evening time but allowing them to work unsupervised does lead to problems and injuries to the attendee and the equipment. A "lights out" time that is well communicated is recommended.

## **Facility**

Site selection is a crucial element for the conference and must be affordable. Usually the chair has a site lined up before they volunteer to lead a conference, however there are some essentials that need to be offered at each site or accommodations made to provide them.

## **Location**

The location should have easy access to freeways, airports, bus, etc. as well as public transportation options. It should have enough available parking. The facility should be near expected resources for the basics: food, lodging and conference necessities. It is extremely helpful if the site is near a supermarket and sources for essential items such as material, fuel and equipment. Also consider the availability of local blacksmiths and volunteers that know the area.

## **On site amenities check list**

- On site camping with Bathroom facilities - with showers for campers (see Lodging discussion below)
- Sites that allow car camping and parking RVs are preferred. Full hookups for the RVs are not necessary.
- Food preparation facilities and a coffee area (see discussion on Food below)
- Enough demonstration and education areas that have a built-in cover or you will need to provide tents. Expect rain but, at minimum, you will need to have shelter from the sun

- Power available at all demonstration and education sites: 110, 220, and sometimes 3-phase or you will need to arrange for a generator.
- Secure area for conference or it will have to be patrolled at night
- Gallery and trade/vender facilities that can be locked
- The gallery will generally be open to the public, at least some of the time. A public demonstration area can help recruit new members.
- Tail gate sales area that is accessible but not in the way of other conference activities
- Lighting at night for contests
- Lecture and slide/film area
- Things that will need to be provided if not offered by the conference facility itself:
  - Set-up and clean-up of non-demonstration areas
  - Wayfinding/Road markers - red anvils
  - Trash cans and trash disposal
  - Tables/chairs make sure there are enough for all planned activities

## **Lodging**

Not all participants will want to camp, and you will need to provide demonstrators with hotel rooms. Demonstrators can share a room. You will need to list several motels (with their names, addresses, and phone numbers) for attendees to choose from that are convenient to the site. Blocking or reserving rooms for your event will guarantee that your attendees have a place to stay. Often hotels will offer a reduced rate, but you will need to contact local motels in person and negotiate for the best deal. Contact the CBA Treasurer to issue a check to hold the block of rooms.

## **Food**

Depending on the site facilities, a meal package for the whole conference could be provided. The conference chair will need to determine the best practice for their conference. Providing food for all dietary requests is typically too much for the conference chair and committee. Ensuring that attendees have access to food options is another way to go. For instance, having food trucks on site or providing information on local restaurants. For conference sites that have cafeteria access it is reasonable to provide food on site or as part of the conference fee.

The CBA Board of Directors voted in 2000 that all Spring Conferences should have a 'no-food' option. This is to reduce the cost of the conference for low-income members. You will need to offer a 'no-food' conference price. You will also need to track those who have paid for food to ensure that those who have not paid are not in the food line.

If there are insufficient restaurants nearby you will need to plan for food trucks or other options. Be sure you are aware of the facilities policies and possible extra charge for having a food truck as sometimes they will want a percentage of the sales. Food trucks have been used successfully but be sure to communicate carefully the number of people to be fed broken down by conference day. Get a written commitment to show up at appropriate times.

Provide for people with special dietary needs such as vegetarian, vegan and gluten free.

### Coffee/water Station

The coffee station should have coffee, tea, hot chocolate, etc., available during the day. Provide the usual condiments of sugar, artificial sweetener, real cream, and artificial cream. Soft drinks and water should also be in this area. Make sure demonstrators and participants can stay hydrated.

### Alcohol

THE CBA DOES NOT ALLOW THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES. The CBA should not sell any alcoholic beverages, but the conference may arrange for vendors to do so.

### Saturday night banquet (see Saturday Night Festivities)

Regardless of other food choices made, cater the Saturday night banquet. You will need to get quotes from at least 3 catering services. Make sure they have accurate numbers. It will be imperative that registration only sell that number of dinner tickets or a little less so that you have enough food for all those that paid. Don't forget to include your demonstrators and volunteer comps in this number. Provide for people with special dietary needs such as vegetarian, vegan and gluten free.

## **Volunteers**

To run a successful conference, you will need several volunteers filling many different roles. Having local blacksmiths or their family members lend a hand is usually the first place to look for volunteers. Complementary attendance should be at the discretion of the Conference Chair and should not be given without demonstrated dedication to the success of the conference. A comped volunteer will often be working during the conference so that there is little time left to attend conference activities. It is customary for conference staff to be given unique t-shirts and many volunteers may only get a tee shirt. This chart outlines options based on commitment to ensure all volunteers are treated fairly. As family or friends would not have purchased an event ticket, they are not considered a 'comp' but will be given a badge and allowed on premises to complete their assigned duties. Examples include parents or spouses of blacksmith attendees.

Level	Description	Demo Fee	Comp ticket	Travel expenses	Hotel	Meals	Sat Night	T-Shirt
Level 1	Full Demonstrator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Level 2	Part Time Demonstrator; less than half time	X	X	X				
Level 3	Equipment Loan		X	X				
Level 4	Volunteer working greater than 16 hours and includes a set up or tear down day		X				X	X
Level 5	Less than 16 hours							X
Level 6	Family/Friend here to help						X	X

## **Finances**

The Spring Conference is the largest fundraiser for the CBA and without a certain income above expenses the CBA ceases to be financially viable. As you prepare a budget for your conference you will need to check with the CBA treasurer to see what kind of revenue is expected of your conference. Aim for a 14% revenue after expenses.

The attendance at the conference will need to be estimated to determine the budget and conference fee. The CBA has by custom held the Spring Conference at venues in the northern, central and southern areas of the state. Attendance at northern and southern sites has been in the range of 200 – 250, while centrally located conferences have drawn 300 – 400 paid registrants, unfortunately there is no guarantee. Unless there are special circumstances, the basic (no food plan) registration should be kept under \$200.

The figures below should be adjusted to fit the particular costs of individual conferences as different sites and travel costs of different demonstrators will greatly affect the totals. Base the budget on people attending. For food costs, however, the number should be increased by 20% to accommodate volunteers, demonstrators, etc.

A budget must be presented to the Board and approved by the Board before you can receive an advance to start your conference. The use of the budget spreadsheet (Excel format) will be used.

### **Typical spring conference budget**

SITE -----\$5,000 to 10,000

Affected by facilities used and services provided. Negotiate with the site to pay for only the spaces and services actually needed.

FOOD -----\$20,000 to \$35,000

By far the largest cost and the most variable – This amount might be appropriate for a conference where food is an option in the attendees' registration. It is too much for the banquet.

SUPPLIES -----\$2,000 to \$4,000

Supplies can often be acquired through donations

LODGING ----- \$5,000- \$8,000

Lodging is usually provided for demonstrators and out-of-area conference committee members. The conference budget usually doesn't pay for CBA board members unless they are working the conference.

DEMONSTRATORS (total cost) ----- \$15,000-20,000

Guideline for demonstrator reimbursement:

- \$500 per half day (CBA member demonstrators)
- \$2,000-3,000 main demonstrator fee, three half days; if international, this is often a flat fee that leaves travel up to the demonstrator.

- Travel expenses will be paid for all demonstrators (except if a flat fee as noted above)
- CBA Membership will be given to out-of-state demonstrators that fill out an application

Work closely with the treasurer to make sure that you have the following available during the conference:

- Cash on hand for change
- Prize money disbursement
- Reimbursement for expenses incurred on behalf of the conference
- Scholarships and comps
- Final report and necessary 1099 forms

## **Promotion**

Promotion starts with an announcement at the prior Spring Conference. After that it includes posters and brochures, social media posting, announcement on the CBA website, press releases to the media, solicitation of donations from manufacturers and suppliers, and assembling a trade show. Develop the conference logo and poster early so that the posters and brochures can be used to increase attendance from the local area and distributed to welding suppliers, schools, horseshoeing suppliers, steel suppliers, etc. Local suppliers may be interested in having a display at the conference and/or demonstrating their products. State and national suppliers should also be approached. Donation of items for Iron-in-the-Hat or the Auction should also be considered. (See “Time Line” for publication deadlines.)

You should make sure that articles about the conference appear in the three *California Blacksmith Magazines* published before your conference dates. Information on the conference should be posted on the CBA web site over the same 6-month period. It’s also a good idea to post conference schedules and other last-minute information on the web site. Other popular blacksmith publications such as ABANA, Arizona, NWBA, etc could also be considered. Contact them early to determine ad due dates and if they would be willing to ‘trade’ ad space for their upcoming conferences.

## **Reporter and Social Media**

A person or persons are needed to write articles for the magazine and to post information to social media websites about the conference. It will be necessary to provide photos and information for several postings which can be applied to more than one social media web site.

## **Public Tours and Schools**

Make available free, or paid, tours open to the public. These tours need to be a part of the publicity and included in press releases and other communications visible to the public. This is a good opportunity to explain how items created during the conference or some of those on display in the Gallery will be auctioned in various ways on Saturday night. These auctions are open to the public.

School outreach should be a part of every conference. Make public tours highly visible to the community and reach out to local schools to offer learning programs. School programs can be limited to one afternoon.

## **Registration**

All registration responsibilities are typically handled by the secretary or their chosen representative. You **MUST** be in communication with that person. Online registration should be open by January at the latest and having participants pre-register is very advantageous for planning meals and other logistics. Offering a discount for pre-registering is usually effective. The cutoff date for this discount is usually set about three weeks before the conference date. The CBA uses membership and event planning software that will keep track of registrants.

On-line registration needs to be cut off about 5 days prior to the start of the conference to allow the registrar time for badge printing and travel.

### **Registration information needed:**

- Name, address, phone numbers (home, work, cell), and email
- Current or new member
- Family or significant others attending
- Paid for banquet (food)
- Fees paid for workshops
- Other relevant information ... such as paid meals, etc.

### **On-site registration**

The on-site registration booth will provide attendees with their badge, conference program and other giveaways or pertinent items. The booth is best paired with the vendor area and CBA sales area. Since all attendees need to register, this will ensure that the merchandise sales and vendors are immediately available to the attendees.

Signage: **POINT** people to the registration at first point of access. If you think you have enough signs, you're wrong! Until attendees get to registration they won't have a map. Signs are all entrances with a map and arrows pointing the way are essential.

Conference programs shall be available at the registration area of the conference at the beginning of the conference. Find someone that can put this together for you and make sure they have all the information needed. Printing will take a couple days go be sure to have to them in time.

### **Conference Program items:**

- Vendor paid ads that typically cover the cost of the brochure
- Welcome
- Site Map
- Schedule of events
- Demonstrator biographies and notes
- Small Contest

- Gallery information
- Food vendor
- Large Contest
- Iron-in-the-hat, Silent Auction and Live Auction descriptions
- Site rules
  - The facility will have rules that must be followed
  - Curfew – define lights out in the forging areas
- Saturday night agenda and banquet menu
- Safety policy
- Harassment policy
- Graph paper for notes (about 4 pages)
- Upcoming events

### Credit Card Payments

The Treasurer, or qualified representative, will handle credit card responsibilities at the time of registration and throughout the conference.

### Refunds

A refund policy needs to be stated on the registration form and on-line. Generally, a full refund is given if the member cancels three or more weeks before the conference begins, 2/3 refund more than 2 weeks before, and 1/3 refund more than a week before. In the last week before the conference, no refunds should be made except in cases of extreme hardship, a death in the family, major illness, etc.

## Vendors

Select and invite vendors to display and sell goods on site. These are paid booths that are separate from tailgate sales. The number of vendors is dictated by the space available. This space should be with the registration area for optimal visibility. Vendors require a clean, dry inside area that is lockable for all their goods.

Equipment vendors may be willing to provide a power hammer or other large equipment that can be used or available in the demonstration area. The vendor may want to demonstrate their equipment and should be noted on the schedule. Assure that at least one welding supply vendor is invited. Although not traditional, welding and cutting technology plays a significant role in improving the productivity of the blacksmith. Contact local welding suppliers, steel suppliers, and tool dealers

### CBA Merchandise

Typically, t-shirts are sold with the conference logo. There are t-shirt printers that can be found locally or online. A printed t-shirt will take a couple weeks to get ready for printing as you will need to make sure the logo fits correctly and works with the selected color; Start early! You may also want to have brightly colored t-shirts printed for staff (usually red). If you want to sell other items, hats, stickers, etc make sure you have these all printed and ready

to go at least 2 weeks before the conference. A booth manned by one or two people next to registration works well.

### **Tailgate sales**

Tailgate sales are generally outdoors and managed by the individual sellers. A well-marked area should be set aside for tailgate sales and noted on the map. All tailgaters should have purchased a conference pass to participate or they will not be allowed admittance.

### **Gallery**

A gallery chairman is appointed by the Conference Chair. The gallery chairman needs to:

- Have a system for registering items in the show, noting if they are for sale and, if so, the price. The registration form should have a cell phone number for contacting the owner.
- Give receipts for each item consigned to the show.
- Check out the facilities ahead of time to see what might be required.
  - The Education trailer has pedestals and cases for displaying items.
  - Determine how many chairs/tables will be available and ensure they will need the needs of the Gallery.
  - Make sure there is an area for the photographer.
  - The area must be well secured
- The Gallery Chair is responsible for organizing the “People’s Choice” Awards
- Have and communicate a plan for what to do with items not picked up at the end of the event.
- If possible, a good photograph should be taken of each piece in the gallery as record for the CBA library or for use in the Magazine.

### **Safety**

This is a major concern. At a CBA event all the standard CBA safety rules and guidelines apply. These guidelines are available from the CBA Education/Safety Committee and are posted on the CBA web site. (See Sample Safety Sign on page 22.)

Safety glasses are required, and hearing protection is a good idea for all demos. Safety glasses and earplugs should be available for sale at the registration table. A good policy is to post signs at each site reminding spectators to wear their glasses. Demonstrators may need to be reminded to set a good example.

The Safety Policy should be posted at the registration table and should be listed in the conference program. First aid kits shall be available to all site managers. There is a first aid kit always available in the education trailer.

### Incident report

There will be an incident reporting form in the first aid kit to record the circumstances of all accidents. Get all the details down in writing as soon as possible. If there is an insurance claim this information will be vital.

### Safety volunteers

All volunteers should be empowered to enforce the safety requirements for safety glasses and hearing protection in demo and education areas. They should wear t-shirts, hats or vests that are easy to see. Their job is to be aware of safety problems and to help keep the conference running smoothly.

## **Equipment**

Equipment and supplies needed for the conference should be located as near to the site as possible. The demonstrators will supply a list of required tools and supplies for their area.

Some things to consider at each site are power availability, water locations, seating for demo areas (bleachers), and a tool area.

### **Tool Area**

The tool area is where supplies such as steel and coal are kept until needed. Ensuring that this area is restricted to authorized staff members will ensure safe and proper use of the equipment. This will prevent any mishaps with equipment that results in unusable equipment or injury to others.

### **Workshop**

A general "workshop" set up should include (with redundancy in case of breakage):

- Drill and bits
- Welder
- Grinder and/or belt grinder
- Measuring tools
- Band saw and/or abrasive cutoff saw
- Wrenches, screwdrivers, nails, drywall screws, etc.
- Cutting torch

### **AV Equipment**

Each demonstrator should have a PA system so that they can be easily hear above the noise of blacksmithing. Some may wish to utilize a white board. For any demonstrators performing work that is best viewed up close, a TV displaying a video works well.

A projector with a computer will be needed for lectures and slide shows but these must be held in a room that can be darkened.

## **Contests**

Contests are easy ways to keep attendees forging in a controlled, fun environment. Be sure to encourage all those hanging around to participate. Pairing up experienced smiths with the less experienced is recommended.

## **Big Contest**

A big contest is usually held over 24 hours and has pre-set rules. Teams can be formed ahead of time or just before the contest forms. This can be a fun addition to your conference that provides attendees with hands on experience as well as providing big ticket items for the auction. This is also fun for other attendees to watch the creations come to life. Develop and publish rules well ahead of time.

## **Small Contest**

Contests add an entertaining element to the evenings keeping attendees directed, supervised and provides something fun to do. To get good participation, vigorous promotion is needed at the conference with considerable coercion to sign up. The effort is usually worth it, as everyone has a good time. Contests are usually easier to organize with teams. Offer a prize for winners.

### **Examples of Past Small Contests:**

- Cube Contest: upset a piece of 1 x 1 x 4" into as nearly a perfect 1-1/2" cube as possible in one hour.
- Sculpture Contest: given a packet of steel; assemble some kind of sculpture in one to 3 hours.
- ¾ square x 3" draw out the farthest in one heat
- Eagle eye contest: visualize a knife or other item for 15 seconds and then go forge it
- Chain link contests: make a long chain, make it and break it, etc.
- Open Form - given one-hour, which team can produce an item or items, which will sell for the highest bid.

## **Saturday Night Fesitivites**

### **Agenda**

Having a set agenda that is publicized in the conference Handout will be helpful in keeping things on track. The following is a sample agenda and the presenter.

CBA General Membership Meeting – President  
Welcome – Conference Chair  
Education Certificate presentation – Education Chair (or those in charge of each area)  
    Young Smith Awards  
    Small Contest Winners  
    Pendulum Contest Winners  
    People’s Choice Awards – Gallery Chair  
    Demonstrator Awards  
Group Photo – this is a nice to have but difficult to organize  
Dinner  
Iron in the Hat  
Silent Auction  
Live Auction

## **Membership Meeting**

The by-laws of the CBA call for one meeting of the full membership a year which is always held at the Spring Conference. You will need to schedule this meeting at a convenient time, either Saturday afternoon after lunch or Saturday evening after the banquet. Sometimes there is an issue the membership must vote on. You will need to coordinate with the current CBA president. As well as a business meeting, this is a time to honor out-going board members and introduce new members.

Time is always a problem on Saturday night because of the banquet dinner, Iron in the Hat, Auction, and any other program that you may have planned. Your best bet is to make sure dinner is not late and to keep things moving. You can also move any slideshow or talk to some other time during the conference.

## **Auctions**

Auctions are the major fund raiser for the conference and need to be well coordinated and advertised to all members. Advertise that the auction is open to the public. The conference chair should designate a respected member to “triage” the items into Live Auction, Silent Auction or Iron-in-the-hat.

## **Iron in the Hat**

Collect contributions from members and suppliers, handle raffle ticket sales during the conference, and oversee the drawing. Encourage attendees to donate tools and items they have forged that they are proud of. Not their scrap.

Some traditional customs are multiple ticket discounts such as 6 for \$5.00, the first choice going to one of the contributors, and the "by". The "by" consists of passing on the second ticket held by an individual that is drawn, so that a prize is selected on every other ticket held that is drawn.

Do not forget to purchase enough rolls of tickets, you will need 3,000 to 4,000. You will need to line up people or their children to sell tickets. You should have people at every food line, in the hall just before the drawing, and around the conference in general. This income is very important to CBA's education program.

Iron in the hat can run long and you can set this up more than one way. You can have people select which item they want as their ticket number is called or you can have buckets by each item allowing raffle ticket holders to place their tickets in the bucket next to their chosen item.

## **Silent Auction**

Silent Auction is another option for creating sales for items donated to the conference. To prepare, you will need to inform participants of the rules by posting in the conference brochure and at the beginning of the Saturday night banquet. Each item will need to have a list next to it where attendees and sign how much they are willing to pay for the item. Regular announcements of when the auction will close ramps up the excitement and competition to win an item.

## **Live Auction**

Most of the money a conference brings in above expenses is from the Live Auction. The demonstrations and contests held during the conference create the bulk of what is sold at the Live Auction. You can also solicit contributions from members well ahead of time. The

demonstrators often bring an extra item to be sold at auction. You need pieces of more substantial value than is customary for Iron in the Hat. Select an auctioneer to oversee the auction. The auctioneer may choose to group or reject items so that the process doesn't bog down. Also the conference chair or CBA officers may establish minimum bid amounts on particularly valuable items. The auction is usually held after the banquet.

## **Planning Timeline**

### **12 months or more before: (to be approved by Board of Directors)**

- Select site and conference chairman
- Select dates
- Identify main demonstrators
- Develop theme or focus for the conference. This will guide development of the logo/posters, demonstrator projects and contests.

### **8-12 months before:**

- Build your team and check in regularly.
- Prepare Budget and submit preliminary version to Board of Directors 12 months in advance of conference
- Meet with Treasurer to coordinate financial matters

### **6-8 months before:**

- Select and send contracts to demonstrators; work out the pay rate, hours working and expectations for their final piece.
- Put together promotion materials - poster, brochure, news release. Print publications such as the quarterly ABANA Anvils Ring often require more than 8 months advance notice to provide effective coverage.
- Contract with site; walk the site with your selected team members
- Submit draft budget to board; should be presented at Oktoberfest meeting. This will be used to set attendee fees.
- Begin development of logo and select who will create the art/graphics

### **5 - 6 months before:**

- Put together registration package and update the registration form
- Put together demonstrator contracts
- Write promotional articles for the CBA Magazine and web site
- Develop the demonstration schedule
- Distribute posters and brochures
- Mail news releases
- Contact suppliers about trade show and donations
- Contact motels and arrange for rooms
- Present final budget to Board of Directors
- Site visit (if not done) to review placement of demonstrators and other specifics

### **4 - 5 months before:**

- Get the three bids for cook, caterers, etc.

- Update articles for publication and provide social media coordinator with photos
- Locate equipment and tools
- Find someone to put Conference Handout together and provide them with information

### 3 - 4 months before:

- Solicit helpers for set up and clean up (offer incentives)

### 2 - 3 months before:

- Contract with caterer or banquet facilities
- Send out registration materials through publication
- Check that demonstrators have returned their contract with social security number

### 1 - 2 months before:

- Post on social media and send out more news releases
- Contact tradeshow participants for any special needs they may have
- Final promotion in CBA publication

### 1 month - 1 week before:

- Check with all chairpersons to be sure everything is covered
- Line up volunteers as to what they will be doing and when; make volunteer schedules.
- Check on food suppliers – be sure expectations are clear on the number of people to be fed.

### Day before:

- Set up sites for demonstrations
- Set up gallery
- Bring in drinks, coffee supplies, etc.
- Set up kitchen (if used)
- Set up registration area and vendor area (should be together)
- Set up tailgate area (signage or someone to coordinate)
- Post schedule for workers
- Put red anvils at the entrance
- Place signage (and more signage) inside venue to point the way to Registration and other events. Post maps with the signs.

### 30 days after the event

- Write or have someone write an article about the conference for the next magazine. Include a lot of pictures. This is a good task for your reporter.
- Submit invoices for Conference expenses to the treasurer (preferably sooner).
- A complete P&L and a variance analysis of the conference be prepared by the treasurer and provided to the Board of Directors

### 45 days after the event

- Formal review of the conference P&L's, etc. will take place by the Board of Directors and the conference committee.

### Update this document

Your last duty as a conference chair is to make the next chair's job a little easier. After your conference is over, please review this guide and make any corrections and/or additions. Then bring them to the next CBA Board meeting. Conferences are one of the most important things CBA does and your input can make the next one better and easier.

## **APPENDIX**

Sample Conference Registration Form

Sample Schedule for Conference

Sample Budget

Sample tracker spreadsheet

Vender or Trade show participant form

Note on the Sample Budget:

This is the budget going into the 2019 Spring Conference in Grass Valley.

There are some lessons to be learned here.

First, the actual paid attendance was around 205 rather than 280. We felt 280 was justified based on the approx. 315 paid attendees at Placerville SC 2018.

Why the shortfall? We may never know but perhaps the prior conference in the same geographical region satisfied some people's conference desires. Or perhaps the hammer-ins that have started happening including one at the same site 3 months later siphoned off some demand. Or something else?

The final accounting is not in yet; but the conference will probably break-even and not much more.

Sample Registration Form:



California Blacksmith Association  
**Spring Conference Registration**

Register by April 3 and Save  
 Register online at [www.calsmith.org](http://www.calsmith.org) or complete and mail this form.

To avoid late fees, registration must be postmarked by April 3.

You must be a current CBA member to participate.

2019  
 Conference  
 Thursday, April 25 -  
 through  
 Saturday, April 27  
 Grass Valley,  
 California

**Membership Information.** Please print clearly and complete in full so that our records will be accurate.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 \* Family/Co-worker Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Safety Agreement.** I understand that blacksmithing and other metal work are inherently dangerous industrial processes and agree to attend and participate in any and all California Blacksmith Association events at my own risk. Further, I agree to wear all required safety equipment, including, but not limited to, safety glasses and earplugs. I understand that if I am not wearing said safety equipment, I may be asked to leave the demonstration and workshop areas and agree to do so.

**Signature(s)** (Member, Family/Business Associates) \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership Fee - Individual \$55 Family \$65 Business \$65 (new and renewal) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Temporary membership for members of ABANA or affiliate groups - \$20. (Print group name below)

Conference Fees	Before April 3	After April 3	Number	
Full Conference	\$ 170	\$ 195	X _____	\$ _____
Single Day	\$ 85	\$ 100	X _____	\$ _____
Saturday Banquet Dinner Ticket	\$ 25	\$ 30	X _____	\$ _____
Banquet Dinner for Children 12 and under.	\$ 12.50	\$ 15	X _____	\$ _____
<b>Additional family members (listed on a CBA Family Membership) can participate at half price. Print names here:</b>				<b>Total \$=</b>

**Non-participating attendees – family members and friends – may visit the public areas at no charge.**

For mail-in registration, make check or money order payable to CBA.

To pay via credit card, register online at [www.calsmith.org](http://www.calsmith.org).

**Mail Registration Form & Payment**  
 2019 CBA Conference Registration  
 c/o Herb Upham  
 4747 Vine Hill Road  
 Sebastopol CA 95472-2236

**Registration Questions**  
 Herb Upham  
 Phone 707/823-1251  
 Email [secretary@calsmith.org](mailto:secretary@calsmith.org)

**Refund Policy.** A full refund of conference fees shall be given if a member cancels three or more weeks before the conference starting date. A two-thirds (2/3) refund shall be given if the member cancels between two and three weeks before the conference starting date. A one-third (1/3) refund shall be given if the member cancels between one and two weeks before the conference starting date. In the last week before the conference, no refunds shall be made except in cases of extreme hardship, a death in the family, major illness, etc. "Extreme hardship" shall be determined by the conference chair.

Sample Conference Schedule

2019 Spring Conference Schedule			
	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Coffee Tent	7:45 Morning announcements	7:45 Morning announcements	7:45 Morning announcements
Site	8 am to 12	8 am to 12	8 am to 12
1	Mark Aspery/Victoria Ritter	Meagan Crowley	Mark Aspery/Victoria Ritter
1b	John Williams	OPEN	John Williams
1c	OPEN	OPEN	Young Smith's
2	OPEN	Contest sign-up at Site 9 / V. Patti	Victoria Patti - Contest
3	Jack/Heather/Pat	Jack/Heather/Pat	Jack/Heather/Pat
4	OPEN	Andrew Meers	Andrew Meers
5	Maria Cristalli	Andrew Kyte	OPEN
6	Elijah Burnett	OPEN	Elijah Burnett
7	Stenico Brothers	Stenico Brothers	Stenico Brothers
9		Victoria Patti - Contest Sign-up & Demo	
	Noon - 1 pm	Noon - 1 pm	Noon - 1 pm
	LUNCH/CBA Board Meeting site 9	LUNCH	LUNCH
	1 pm to 5 pm	1 pm to 5 pm	1 pm to 5 pm
1	Andrew Meers	Mark Aspery/Victoria Ritter	Andrew Kyte
1b	OPEN	John Williams	OPEN
1c	OPEN	Young Smith's	Young Smith's
2	OPEN	Victoria Patti Contest START 1pm	Victoria Patti Contest - Ends 2pm
3	Jack/Heather/Pat	Jack/Heather/Pat	Jack/Heather/Pat
4	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
5	Andrew Kyte	Maria Cristalli	Mike and Cody Chisham
6	Maegan Crowley	Elijah Burnett	Maegan Crowley
7	Stenico Brothers	Stenico Brothers	Stenico Brothers
	5 pm to 7 pm	5 pm to 7 pm	5:30 pm
8	Free time	Gallery Party	<b>Site 9 Northern Mines:</b>  Presentations / Dinner Group Photo / Auction
9		7 pm	
		Slide Show	
	7 pm to 9 pm	8:30 pm	
1	Small Contests	Small Contests	

## Sample Safety Sign

### Blacksmith Safety

#### Impact-Type Safety Glasses or Goggles

Eye protection shall be worn anytime a CBA member or guest is smithing, watching or demonstrating. This is a mandatory requirement.

ANSI approved impact-type safety glasses or goggles shall be worn to ensure greater eye protection from flying particles. The glasses shall meet the requirements of ANSI Z 87.140 with side shields.

#### Approved Hearing Protection

It is strongly recommended that all CBA members and guests use hearing protection whenever work at the anvil is in progress.

The ring of the anvil is usually greater than 85db and requires the use of hearing protection.

#### Standard Work Clothes

Clothing that is in a good state of repair should be worn. Active participants in CBA sponsored events must wear clothing that covers the tops of their footwear. Open toe and synthetic material shoes shall not be worn in the forging areas.

Spectators choosing to wear clothing that exposes the body do so at their own risk. Heavy duty, high topped leather shoes are important. Closed hi-top shoes constructed of canvas will be allowed in the forging area. Spectators are advised to do likewise. Many athletic type shoes are made of synthetic materials that can melt onto your skin when exposed to heat, flame, or sparks. Sparks or hot slugs can find their way into these shoes and therefore will not be worn in the forging area.

#### Alcohol/ Drugs

CBA members, CBA Instructors, and Demonstrators shall not consume alcoholic beverages when: Forging Demonstrating Instructing

Be aware that some prescription and over the counter medications can cause drowsiness. CBA will not tolerate the use of illegal drugs at any CBA sponsored event. Use of illegal drugs is grounds for expulsion from the CBA event. CBA has a zero tolerance policy.



## Sample Tracker Spreadsheet:

This is an example of the basic project management tool we have used over the last few conferences. It forms the detailed agenda for our regular status conference calls. In this sample most of the “Updates” column has been cleared out for brevity. Note the red – yellow – green – gray status color code. This allows quick focus on the areas needing attention. The file gets updated and distributed every meeting which happen as often as once a week.

type	Item #	Item Title	Date Created	Date Updated	Date Due	Owner	Status	Updates
Budget	16	Budget		1/22/2019	4/25/2019	Paul	done	
Conference Activities	10	Small Contests		1/15/2019	12/11/2018	Denis Murphy	yellow	
Conference Activities	1	Demonstrators	7/6/2018	2/13/2019	6/25/2018	Dennis	yellow	
Conference Activities		Pendulum Contest		1/23/2019	1/20/2019	Victoria Patti	yellow	
Conference Activities	7	Lectures		11/7/2018		TBD	Green	
Conference Activities	9	Public Tours		8/29/2018			Green	
Conference Activities	8	Sat. Eve Dinner, etc.		1/15/2019	12/11/2018		green	
Conference Activities	21	Schedule	7/6/2018	1/15/2019	11/11/2018	Dennis	green	
Equipment	24	CBA Edu Area.		1/30/2019	12/11/2018	Dennis / Dan	green	1/30/19 ABANA to send representative to see how the demonstrators in the education area works out. 1/15/19 Dan to provide write up for Mike M for mar/apr mag 12/12/18 Education area is set for Mark aspery and demonstrators. Will have a Young SMith's area run by Beth Holmberg 9/26/18 DD reported all are very excited to be in education area for one 1/2 day. 9/12/18 DD talked to Meagan who was very positive about working in the education area; DD will approach Andrew Miers and Andrew Kyte. 8/29/18 Considering having demonstrators hold a session in the education area; Dennis to approach and see what type of response he gets.
Equipment	3	Equipment		1/30/2019	12/11/2018	Dennis / Dan	Green	
Equipment	25	Signage		12/12/2018	2/9/2019		Green	
Facilities / Logistics	23	A/V equipment		2/6/2019	2/9/2019	Dennis / Dan/Paul	yellow	2/6/19 Need projector for Andrew Meers (cable to work with Paul's camera); Dennis/Dan will need to make a stand for the screen. Paul will work on Camera hook up with ATV.net used last year. Cordless microphones - Dan to see if Denis can do this 11/27/18 Dan may know someone with projector and screen. DD to see if can repair CBA screen 9/26/18 Victoria P will need a projector and screen for her demonstration Friday am. DD has the screen. 8/29/18 mentioned having a TV so people can watch knife guy or Carol demo engraving techniques
Facilities / Logistics	20	Fire Marshall		11/7/2018	2/9/2019	Dan	done	
Facilities / Logistics	2	Food Trucks	6/30/2018	2/6/2019	2/9/2019	Dan	done	
Facilities / Logistics	6	Hotel		1/8/2019	11/11/2018	Dan	done	
Facilities / Logistics	27	Site Contract		2/6/2019	8/28/2018	Dan	green	
Facilities / Logistics	4	Tail Gating			2/9/2019	DH	done	
Gallery	15	Gallery		2/13/2019		Marti	Green	
Gallery	17	Outreach/Social Media		1/8/2019		Celeste/Dennis	green	
Promotion	17	ABANA submission		8/8/2018	12/1/18 (for 1/15/19 edition)	Mike/Dan	done	
Promotion	3	Distribute posters		2/6/2019	11/11/2018	Dan	done	
Promotion	17	Anvil's Ring Submission		8/8/2018	10/15/18 (for Dec 1 edition)	Mike	done	
Promotion	17	CBA submission				All	done	
Promotion	14	Conference Hand-out		1/30/2019	12/11/2018	Victoria/Tom	green	
Promotion	18	Posters/Logo		1/15/2019	11/11/2018	Dan	done	
Promotion	4	Promotion materials developed		11/15/2018	6/25/2018	Dan	done	
Promotion		Web Site		12/12/2018		Paul	green	
Promotion		Write article for CBA Magazine		1/30/2019	10/20/2018	Dan/Dennis	done	
Registration	12	Badges			2/9/2019	Herb	green	
Registration	19	Vendors - initial contact		1/15/2019	11/11/2018	Victoria	yellow	
Registration		Registration Package prepared		1/15/2019		Paul	done	
Registration		Open registration on web site		2/13/2019	1/25/2019	Paul	green	
Volunteers / Staff	26	Sub Committees		9/12/2018	8/28/2018	Dan	Yellow	
Volunteers / Staff	5	Volunteer Coordinator		12/12/2018	8/28/2018	Carol(non education)/Steve (education)	Yellow	
Volunteers / Staff	28	Contact Volunteers for set up/clean up, offer incentives			12/11/2018	Dan/Dennis	Yellow	
Volunteers / Staff	29	Create volunteer schedule		1/30/2019	3/24/2019	Victoria/Carol	Yellow	
								Color Code
								Red = Not started set up
								Yellow = at risk of slipping behind schedule
								Green = on schedule
								Done / Deleted = Gray
								Blue Font = most recent changes

## Sample Vendor Form

### Vendor options for CBA Spring Conference 2019

April 25-27, 2019

Nevada County Fair Grounds, Grass Valley, CA

1. Table in Northern Mines building (same as registration area),  
10x10 space, 2 Conference tickets, 2 banquet tickets:
  - \$225 for CBA Member
  - \$250 for non-member
  - add a 2<sup>nd</sup> 10x10 space for \$150
2. Ad in black and white brochure to be given to each attendee:
  - a. BUSINESS CARD AD
    - \$25
  - b. CAMERA READY COPY
    - \$75 for 1/4 page,
    - \$120 for 1/2 page and
    - \$200 for whole page

+	Vendor Name	
	Contact name	
	Contact number	
	Credit card #	
	Zip code Expiration date 3 digit code	

Send to: Victoria N. Ritter  
5141 Mississippi Bar Drive  
Orangevale, CA 95662  
or email:  
[springconf2019@gmail.com](mailto:springconf2019@gmail.com)  
or call:  
916-947-1388