

Colorado Bernal Equinox 2019: ShamFrost After Burn Report

Attendance: 91 • Tickets Purchased: 95 • Gross Revenue: \$6,455.00 • Total Expenses: \$8164.67 • Net Revenue: -\$1,693.67 • Philanthropy: \$0 • Planning Team: 14 • Total Volunteers: 47

Overview

Colorado Bernal Equinox has existed in Colorado for 4 years. This year was it's second as an overnight event rather than a 12 hour event in the city. It was it's second year for budget and planning in the new format. The intent behind this event is to produce as little everything that is safe and legal and encourage the participants to facilitate all the entertainment, activities and content. We believe that this year, we hit that mark.

Financing/Organization

The event returned thanks to the financial backing of the Denver Regional Fund in 2019. The role the 501c3 took was to pay for the upfront costs and then collect the revenues after the event. While the event did not make money this year, the organization had a win by providing \$1650 in art grants which about equals the net loss from the event. Other large factors in costs this year were the almost \$1800 for skid steer rental, insurance and the land costs. Next in line for large expenses were the porta-potties, which came in at \$950.

Bomb Cyclone

Forty eight hours before the gate was set to open and 24 hours before setup began, the entire front range was shut down by a phenomenon the forecasters dubbed, a "bomb cyclone." The unique weather pattern dropped over 2 feet of drifting snow up and down the front range. No one could travel on that Wednesday. Early in the morning on Thursday, several of our vendors called to inform us that they were unable to deliver the porta-potties or the skid steer. We were able to get the main road cleared by sunset on Thursday and a small team of core volunteers surveyed the event site which had received 18" of snow. Knowing that we had a long day ahead, the team retreated to the DPW Lead's house in Pine Junction. Upon arrival on Friday, the skid steer was delivered and the process of cutting out the main road for campers and flat spots for porta-potties commenced. Once those were cleared, the porta-pottie vendor arrived and began placement. Gate, Medical and warming tents were assembled and most of the infrastructure was complete by the time that participants began arriving. Not a single participant complained about the conditions, as they all knew what they were in for. They set up their camps and began creating experiences for the other participants. The Bomb Cyclone is possibly the worst weather scenario that could have occurred and CBE participants stepped up and

supported their community. It also helped organizers plan for future problematic weather, and develop strategies for greater community safety.

Event Management

Event Lead Steve continued asking everyone to come with an open mind and new ideas in the initial planning meetings.. It was encouraged to present ideas outside the box. CBE would be a blank slate for a new burn with as few rules as possible. We emphasize the principle of radical self reliance, while still making sure we had the ingredients for a safe event. We followed the 10+1 principles and created space for art and community.

Event Name

The event theme was ShamFrost. There were suggestions to use a theme that was more heat oriented since the 2018 was very comfortable in climate and weather. These ideas were passed on because we did not want to encourage the opposite from the mother nature. That ended up not helping and will likely be ignored for next year.

The Big Risk: Weather

Throwing this event in the Colorado mountains in late March was a risk. We were entering a new burner frontier, preparing for possibly unfriendly terrain and weather, and it therefore had a smaller number of participants. As the event began and the weather was lovely, several people bought last-minute tickets even with the bomb cyclone looming. It was an intimate event, with several new-to-Colorado burners choosing CBE as their first event in Colorado. There were great feelings were had all around about how it went from burners, old and new.

The 11th Principle

CBE adopted Consent as an official 11th principle, as part of a community effort to bring increased awareness and vigilance to consent, so that our participants feel safe to radically participate. Next year, we plan on expanding the awareness of this principle through social media discussions and artful signage throughout the event, reminding everyone of the importance of consent and that it doesn't stop when you purchase your ticket.

Volunteers

CBE tried 2 unique tactics to incentivize volunteering. First, all volunteers were given an extra day for the event by allowing them to arrive the day before the event officially began, which would still be below our permitted allotments on site for setup. Second, volunteer options extended beyond shifts in the database, and included different forms of significant contributions that people made for the event, such as setting up a theme camp or bringing art installations. Volunteers were not carefully tracked at this event. However, specific numbers exist for volunteers outside of traditional shifts, such as ensuring people were aware of specific areas that were extremely slippery after the sun went down. The number of shift volunteers were 47, just about half of the participants, and many volunteers took more than one shift.

Leads

Colorado Bernal Equinox had 14 community members step up into the role of Lead. They each took on key responsibilities and many managed other volunteers. Events like this are a testing ground for people that may have never “lead” anything in their life. Leads are accepted by the Event Lead knowing that if they fall short on their duties, the ultimate responsibility lies on the Event Lead to carry out those important tasks. There were a few leads whom, in the end, were unable to attend the event. Most had already fulfilled their duties before the event started, After discussion the lead team chose to not try and backfill those positions. It was determined that we had the right people and enough people to shuffle responsibilities. Participants stepped up when needed and due to limited infrastructure, most on site jobs were minimized.

The Gate lead may have been overtaxed, but realized prior to the event that the addition of a Radio lead would help him, and that position will be added.

Porta Potties

Portos were ordered generously, since this event was taking place during the winter, with people wearing lots of layers, to keep things especially easy and clean. It didn't cost much extra and was worth the cost to keep them extra clean.

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Due to weather conditions and limited infrastructure the only activity that was done prior to the event was a scrape of the road to dirt. The plow driver appreciated being able to learn the road with someone that knew the twists and turns. Since, he too was local, he would be able to clear the road on his own should the need arise or should significant snow fall prior or during the event. This is exactly what was needed and during one of the busiest days/nights of the year he showed up and was able to clear the access before anyone arrived. He was an asset to the event and should be retained.

Feedback for Next Year

- Overall, leads and other organizers were overwhelmingly happy with the event, and nobody shared any major criticisms.
- There should be a Radio Lead position and a DPW Lead position added.
- The Medical and Ranger leads were worked hard, with limited staff in both cases. Fortunately, the event was free of major events requiring handling by these 2 departments, but thanks to the leads they were prepared. We should try to increase volunteers for both departments.
- Medical needs a way to be able to make rounds at the event, but still have a way for someone to get help at the medical tent, given a limited number of volunteers. Several ideas to handle this included more volunteers, a radio at the tent, another non-medical volunteer at the tent, and teaming up resources with Rangers.

Ticketing Breakdown:

of Tickets at Tier 1(\$65) = 38

of Tickets at Tier 2(\$80)= 22

of Tickets at Tier 3(\$90)= 17

of Tickets at Door(\$100) = 4

Low income/Vital Role Tickets(\$35) = 11

\$80 was collected for art grants in 2020

Expenses Breakdown:

**these are rounded for reporting

\$1650 Art Grants

\$1250 Insurance

\$1250 Land Lease

\$1175 Skid Steer

\$1160 Snow Plow for Main Road

\$970 Porto rental

\$200 Radios

\$198 Propane for fire and heating

\$150 Permit for Park County

\$100 Stickers

\$25 Medical

\$10 Wristbands