



ConFranciscoSM

The 51st World Science Fiction Convention

Bid

Party

Cookbook

Compiled and Edited by
Linda "Kitty" VonBraskat-Crowe
and Mary Mason



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(recipe for a WorldCon)

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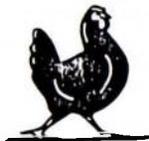
This is a personal response to the many requests Mary and I have recieved for the recipes for our party foods, a guide to throwing the parties like we did, and similar information on what it is like to run a WorldCon Bid. When the demands of the other essential publications kept Gail from preparing it, (and the budget did not allow for it), I fired up PageMaker and did it myself.

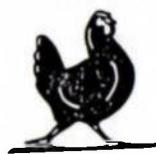
All the typos, etc., are mine. The opinions stated are those of the respective authors. All credit is shared by those listed.

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& Mary Mason.



This little book is dedicated to Mary Mason and Stephen Goldin, who spent the first 2½ years of their married life - including their honeymoon - throwing **ConFrancisco** bid parties. Among many other things, Mary got me involved in the whole thing, made my life a whole lot more "interesting" than I imagined it could possibly be for most of three mad, wonderful years, found us the initial sites, gave our parties their flavour and flair, and started the ball rolling; Steve gave us "**ConFrancisco**", "**SF ♥ SF**", and "**WorldCon In A City Called SF**".
Well, guys, this one's for you ...





Forword -

For me, the genesis of the madness of which this cookbook is but one result, was Friday evening at the 1987 **Baycon** in the "quiet bar" of the **San Jose Red Lion** with my friend Mary Mason and her friend and fellow author Ray Feist. At some point in the proceedings Sue Stone joined our table, and after a few rounds the talk got around (*as it often does in such a place with such company*) to the up-coming **WorldCon** and the bids for '90. We all compared notes on cons - World- and other - that we had variously attended, bid on, won/lost, run, and/or worked on. We found in all of us a shared vision of what our "dream" **WorldCon** in the Bay Area could be, and a mutual desire to seriously try for a **Bay Area Worldcon**. We should have had our heads thoroughly examined at that point, but none of us were in any condition to contemplate such a rational action.

After talking it up at parties that night several of us gathered the next morning in Mary's hotel room where we made the commitment (and, it is true, should probably have been committed) to give it our best shot - to run a first class bid to bring the '93 **WorldCon** to our beloved **San Francisco**. (*For a more detailed memoir of this, please see Mary Mason's reminiscences in the **Souvenir Book***).

I ended up working every bid party for the first two years (circumstances dictated that I could only help at parties at Bay Area Cons during the third and final year of the bid). Over all, it was an experience I (mostly) treasure and will certainly never forget. Working with a consummate caterer and party thrower like Mary Mason taught me a lot about “decadence done right” where food and atmosphere are concerned. There is no experience quite like landing in an unfamiliar city 1000 - 3000+ miles away from home with Mary, various members of our families, a rental car and the enclosed shopping list, locating the “local” 24-hour supermarket and/or bulk commercial food emporium, with rarely more than 24 hours to get the first night’s party set up and rolling. The resulting parties were a success (*after all, we won the bid!*)

The recipes we have selected for inclusion in this little book were the “staple” units of our bid parties, and we are delighted to share them with all of you who are here enjoying the fruits of our shared dream of 6 years ago.



Linda “Kitty” VonBraskat-Crowe
August 30, 1993
San Francisco

{N.B.: Although she was too young at the time to join us in the bar, my daughter, Sabre Von Braskat, helped out with many of the bid parties. As person in charge of the ConFrancisco Con Suite, she has chosen to feature two of our most popular Bid Recipes - the Lime Cream Cheese Dip and the Spinach Dip in French Bread Bowl as part of the Con Suite fare. We hope you enjoy them.}



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PARTY KIT

by Mary Mason

(The following is slightly abridged from materials provided to people who volunteered to run ConFrancisco Bid Parties.)

This is a basic guide to throwing a ConFrancisco Bid Party. If you've never done it before, relax. Most of us survive our first, and addiction does not always follow.

The most important part of selling the bid is the attitude of the people throwing the party. If you are an intelligent, informed, considerate person, that means as much as everything else put together. Take time to look over our hotel floor plans, and be ready for questions about them. If you're asked a question you can't answer, write it down and find out the answer for the next time; if it's something for which there is no answer at this time, such as "Who will be your guest of honor?" or "what will be playing at the Imax?" tell them they'll know when we do, in two or three years. Sensible questions, "What are the union reg's regarding dealer's set-up?" and such are the kind to make note of. Those can be answered via letter, or you can call someone who might have the answer if the person is too insistent. This makes people aware of the bid's accessibility and willingness to work closely together. It's worth the cost of an occasional \$1.50 phone call.

Most of these notes are suggestions, but we do have a few rules because the committee as a whole thinks they are important:

1. This is a cooperative bid committee. If you have a car and there are other bid parties in the hotel who may be stranded, offer them a lift to the store. If you see a bargain on ice, tell all other party throwers. There is one committee, with many regional offices. We should always help the other branches any way we can.

2. We run friendly parties. Yes, other bid party people are welcome - stickers, gizmos and all - as are families, First Fandom, and any polite person. Have loud, obnoxious drunks removed, except for those famous three you're thinking of -- they come under the heading of "floor show". Offer stickers to people and be ready to sell pre-supporting memberships, but don't force them on anyone. These are all your honored guests for the evening and deserve red carpets.

3. We run clean parties. I'm not talking about jokes. Have extra trash bags, big ones, and go around cleaning up whenever possible. Ask for help and/or take it when offered. **A dirty room is one where there was a party ...** If you keep it neat and re-stock the trays and keep them in order, it will look like a **party that is in progress**. People will feel more comfortable and stay longer. At the end of the evening, call for a houseman to haul away the trash, **TIP** him; or find the dumpster yourself if it's convenient.

4. This is a competition between cities and sites run by a large group of friends. Bad mouth the weather in the other places, the comparative lack of attractions, the difficulty in finding direct flights to there as compared to San Francisco, etc. **NEVER** abuse the rival bid committee, fans or staff. **We will defend our out-of-state friends**. Listen to the gossip, save the choice tidbits for laughs three years from now, but never spread anything malicious. When in doubt, take the high road even if it makes your nose bleed.

These basic good manners will help the bid tremendously. No matter what provocation, follow them. This isn't a treaty limiting a war, it's the common accepted rules of the game we are playing with our friends.

THE PITCH

Three things will sell your party: a good spread, a good attitude, and a little publicity.

The first thing anyone knows about your party is what they see on your notices. Post these anywhere and everywhere the hotel and the ConCom allow by mid-afternoon of the day of the party. NEVER post over or tear down anyone else's flyers. NEVER post anywhere that will displease the hotel, even if others do. ALWAYS pull your flyers that night when you shut down the party. We NEVER make someone else pick up for us. Bold colors stand out nicely. Mention the Irish coffee, it will double your attendees. Pass out flyers to all the dealers and as many of the pros as you can easily - and with good manners - approach. Make everyone feel welcome.

THE ROOM

The posters, booklets, and any items from your own collections should help make the hotel room seem festive. In addition to the items provided by the bid committee, look around for any appropriate items you may have that match the spirit and theme of the bid.

THE SPREAD

We have hit upon a basic menu that is reasonably priced and seems effective. You may add to the basics a little but stay with the basic theme of our city - San Francisco Originals. This helps give a consistent image and identity. The menu is also planned so that the people giving the party have time to talk to the guests and so promote the bid. Don't add anything that eats into that precious time.

MENU -- Irish coffee, Citrus punch, white wine, veggies, Lime Cream Cheese Dip with fresh fruit, Spinach Dip in French Bread Bowl, cheese, chocolates, and we always try to serve some "local" specialty: Moon Pies® in Dixie, Baked Beans in Boston, Pralines in New Orleans, Chili in the SouthWest, etc. That's it!

(see shopping list for amounts)

If you serve Irish coffee, wine and or beer, this means **someone has to be bartender**. Card people if in doubt. NEVER serve minors, or we serve you to the lions or the cops, whoever shows up first. You may get some complaints from those turned-away teenagers, but doing what is right and the respect of people with good sense is more important.

Above all have fun. Laughter that echoes down the hall is the best advertisement for a party. If you get too tired to enjoy it, close up. If it is "cooking" and you're happy, stay open as late as possible. The best serious people tend to show up during masquerade, very late at night, or just before you're ready to open. When in doubt, ask for help. People will surprise you with their kindness if you give them a chance.

[Several of our volunteers have since applied these basic rules to family reunions, weddings, etc. They keep on working, and on, and on, and on ...]



And now, the lists and recipes . . .

**STOCK/SHOPPING LIST FOR OPEN BID PARTY
@ WORLDCON-SIZE CON**

Non-food:

500 paper plates
1000 paper cold cups
50 plastic bowls
200 plastic spoons
100 gallon size Ziploc® baggies
10 14" trays
3 1-gallon pitchers
4 bus tubs
10 rolls paper towels
20 trash bags
1000 napkins
5 tablecloths, 10 hand towels (from hotel)

Restock the following items daily to these levels as needed:

Beverages:

8 cases Classic Coke®
4 cases diet Coke®
5 cases 7-Up® or Sprite®
6 cases diet 7-Up®
2 cases root beer
2 cases orange soda
2 cases all "natural" soda (Hansen's® or equivalent)
1 case ginger ale
1 case club soda
1 case Jolt®
2 cases assorted flavored spring waters
1 gallon Cranberry Juice for Forry Ackerman
1 case Pepsi® for Ben Yalow
if serving alcohol: add 5 cases dark and 7 cases light (NOT LITE) beer (Henry Weinhard's® or equivalent.) and 3 cases premium beer; 5 gallons white and 1 gallon red wine; 5 gallons orange juice for mimosas; 5 fifths Irish Whiskey; if not, add 10 gallons orange juice, makings for 5 gallons iced tea and an assortment of specialty coffees.

Munchies:

15 pounds assorted chocolates (M&Ms®, Andes Mints®, Hershey's Kisses®, Hershey's Miniatures®, etc.)

10 pounds other candies - at least 2 pounds of Gummis®; or 30 pounds cookies

15 pounds salty treats (pretzels, cheese fish, Super Snax®, etc.)

600 servings of something regional: Moon Pies® in Dixie, Baked Beans in Boston, Chili in the SouthWest, etc.

Makings:

4 boxes Knorr® Vegetable Soup Mix

4 10-ounce packages frozen chopped spinach

4 pints IMO® or sour cream

1 quart mayonnaise

4 cans water chestnuts

French Bread (2 round loaves and 8 baguettes)

In additon you will need on a daily basis:

20 pounds of veggies: carrot sticks, broccoli, celery, jicama, green onions, radishes, zucchini, and mushrooms go well

1/2 gallon ranch dip for veggies

50 pounds of fruit: melons, grapes, bananas, tangerines, plums, berries, oranges, and fresh pineapple work best

9 pounds cream cheese

3 pounds powdered sugar

20 limes

15 pounds butter cookies

500 pounds of ice

Irish Coffee Makings:

3 pounds good coffee

3 quarts whipping cream, whipped sugar

Sweet'n'Low® (for dieters)

3 tubs Cool Whip®

2 coffee makers, 500 cups, stirrers, serving spoons for the cream, and Larry Niven to preside

LIME CREAM CHEESE DIP

1 (3-pound) block cream cheese
6 fresh limes
1 ½ pounds powdered sugar

In a large Hobart-sized industrial mixer (if available), otherwise: in a large bowl or clean hotel bus tub: cut cream cheese into small chunks and let it reach room temperature while grating the zest of 3 limes. Cut all limes in half and squeeze juice over cream cheese. With large spoon mash cream cheese and lime juice together until thoroughly blended. Add zest of limes and mix some more. Add powdered sugar in portions (about 1 cup at a time) mixing thoroughly after each addition until dip is smooth and creamy. Cover with plastic wrap and ice down for at least an hour - the flavors will mellow and blend better as it sits. Wash and prepare about 12 pounds of assorted fruit - slice bananas, separate grape bunches, etc.). Serve dip in large bowls or equivalent (hollowed out melons work well) and serve with prepared fruit and Danish Butter Cookies (3 pound tin).

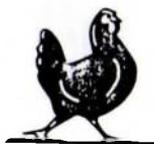
{N.B.: at NASFIC with approximately 6000 attendees, we went through 12 pounds - 4 full batches - of this each night.} Leftover dip may be saved iced down or in a refrigerator and is excellent on toast, bagels, waffles, etc. for the next morning's brunch.



SPINACH DIP IN FRENCH BREAD BOWL

- 1 envelope Knorr[®] Vegetable Soup Mix
- 3 - 4 green onions, chopped fine (include tops)
- 1 small can water chestnuts, chopped,
or ½ cup finely chopped jicama
- 1 (10 ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 ½ cups IMO[®]
- 1 large round Sourdough French Bread
- 2 - 3 French Bread baguettes

Squeeze thawed spinach to drain thoroughly. Combine mayonnaise and IMO[®], add drained spinach, soup mix, chopped green onions and chopped water chestnuts or jicama. Stir well. Ice down for at least 1 hour (flavors will blend better the longer it sits). Remove tops from round French loaves by cutting 1 ½ inches in from edge down to about 1 inch from bottom of loaf. With fork, loosen bread under top crust until it can be lifted off. Hollow out "Bowl". Just before serving, spoon dip into "Bowl" until mounded just above top edge. Serve with plastic knives for spreading. Slice top of round loaf, baguettes, and various vegetable crudite (broccoli, carrots, etc.). Place "Bowl" in center of a large tray and surround with sliced, breads, veggies, crackers, etc.



7-LAYER "WONDER" BARS

Makes 24 bars, approximately 2" square

- ½ cup butter
- 1 ½ cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1 (14 ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
(Borden's **EAGLE BRAND**® or equivalent,
NOT evaporated milk)
- 1 (6 ounce) package semi-sweet chocolate morsels*
- 1 (3 ½ ounce) can flaked coconut (= 1 1/3 cups)
- 1 cup chopped nuts

Preheat oven to 350°F (325°F for glass dish). In 13 X 9 inch baking pan, melt butter in oven. Sprinkle crumbs evenly over melted butter, pour sweetened condensed milk evenly over crumbs. Layer chocolate morsels*, coconut and nuts in that order evenly over all. Press down firmly. Bake 25 - 30 minutes or until slightly browned. Cool thoroughly before cutting. Store loosely covered at room temperature. These and the brownies can be prepared well in advance, and can be frozen until time to transport to the con. Both travel reasonably well.

**Variations: in place of the 6 ounces of chocolate chips, use:*

½ chocolate + ½ butterscotch chips

½ chocolate + ½ Heath Bar® chunks

½ chocolate + ½ peanut butter chips

6 ounces chopped, rinsed, dried apricots

½ dried apricots + ½ butterscotch chips

(this last was a popular non-chocolate alternative)





KRUSTEAZ[®]

CHEWY FUDGE BROWNIES

- 2 (12 ounce) bags chocolate chips
- 1 (7 pound) box **Krusteaz[®] Brownie Mix**
- 4 cups chopped nuts (optional)
- water in the amount specified on box

Cut, chop, blend or otherwise break the chocolate chips to crack the hard outer shell on many of them. Prepare **Krusteaz[®] Brownie Mix** as directed on package for chewy brownies, folding in the chocolate chips. This amount of batter will require 3 13 X 9 inch baking pans. Yields 72 2 inch brownies.

{N.B.: These taste so good, that one night when we put out a pan that had been underbaked, people took plastic spoons and used it as a hot fudge sauce on fruit, or scooped it up and ate it - à la "2 finger poi"}.



WAS IT WORTH IT?

When I became involved in Northern California fandom, a Bay Area WorldCon was like the weather - everyone talked about it but no one did anything about it.

Remember the story of "The Little Red Hen"? She found some seed grain and asked for help in planting, reaping and grinding the wheat and baking the bread. No one would help her do any of the planting, reaping, grinding or baking, although they all talked about how to do it and all agreed that it sounded good. However, when all the work was finished and there was a loaf of bread hot out of the oven, they all wanted to eat it.

In 1987, prodded by Ray Feist (*see the Souvenir Book for details*) several of us "Little Red Hens" did something about it. I contacted the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau, decided on sites to visit and opened negotiations. Sue Stone, Gail Sanders, Kitty Crowe, Terry Biffel and I met frequently, often spending 2 or more nights a week prepping for meetings and parties, attending - on the average - 2 cons each month to promote the bid with info tables, meetings and parties. And, during this time we did find a few more people who faithfully showed up and helped with what needed doing. This continued for 2½ years during which I attended 40+ conventions (many for the first time - WindyCon, DeepSouthCon, and OryCon, among others), throwing 2, 3, or 4 parties at each one - a quarter of those by myself. I spent everything I earned from my first published book and all I had gotten from my dad's estate on the bid. In other words, for 2½ years of my life every bit of money, time and energy I had went into the bid.

By then I, at least, was certain we would win (except late at night when I had nightmares of being basted and roasted alive on the **Anvil of Ghod** in Phoenix). My health was failing and causing emotional dysfunction as well as a lack of the energy needed to continue running the bid. I resigned as chair of the bid.

After a brief hiatus, Sue Stone took over the chairmanship and so it stayed with a "red hen". At her death Terry Biffel (a "rooster" but the principle held) was able to take over.

Also by that time everyone else was starting to smell the bread baking. It was obvious there would be a Con. It was also obvious that all the people who wouldn't work on the bid earlier - or risk money or prestige - were willing to come in now and be part of the Con. It was also obvious that the first agenda item for many of them was to force me the rest of the way out in order to create a power vacuum they could fill. I checked the trend, my resources, and my goals. I was burning out - my goal had always been to **bring** a WorldCon to San Francisco, **not** to run one - and there were enough good people around to keep the dream alive. I resigned from the committee totally.

Remember - be careful what you wish - some of us will give it to you. So, if you see frazzled committee people running around madly, bemoaning their fate, they not only asked for it - they battled for it.

And, if you see a badge with a little red hen stamp or sticker on it, you'll know that this was someone who worked hard in '87, '88, and '89 on the bid which many said had no hope; when all that existed were a dozen or so bid regulars crazy enough to think "Mary might pull it off". They helped sow, reap, and grind the grain. If you want to try one of these bids yourself, or just want to hear about the 30-piece kazoo band in Boston, or the broken shocks on the rental car from 50 cases of beer, or the psychic who tried to "hex" us in "N'Awlins", grab one of us Little Red Hens. Have we got stories for you.

And, enjoy the bread - thank all of those who pulled the loaves from the oven and sliced them for you.

And, yeah, after sorting out all my "false" friends from my true, going broke, being stiffed by some members of the committee and losing 2½ years of my life, I think it was worth it. The party goes on ...



Mary Mason
September, 1993
Alameda