

Tips on how to bring Bill Harley to your community and what to do once he gets there!

Congratulations – you discovered Bill Harley and are thinking of sharing him with your community. You are in for a fun and wild ride that will leave you smiling and humming for weeks!

Can I really pull this off? Yes, with some help. I hope these tips help you!

The first think to do is run the idea by some key people – some true backbones in your community and people you like to work with on projects such as this one: your spouse the PTA president, your principal, your religious leader, club leaders, etc...

How to get started:

A concert will need the following in order to work well:

*A large enough auditorium –

We used the local high school.

*Quality sound equipment –

We hired a company who was familiar with all of Bill Harley's needs to bring in sound equipment for the elementary performances. The high school's equipment was sufficient for the family show.

6-12 months out:

Secure a date with Bill Harley

Rent the auditorium space

Book the sound company (get a few quotes and always mention it is for a community event)

Find lodging for Bill Harley if necessary

3 months out:

Set a ticket price – we did a flat price – others do adult, child and/or group rate – and some do a cheaper price if purchased ahead of time and more at the door.

Create a ticket selling page – we used ticketleap.com and it went very smoothly. It was easy to make the page and the schools placed the link on their web pages. People had no problem getting tickets.

2 months out:

Email anyone and everyone you know in the area and tell them about the show. Tell them the date and time and how to get tickets. Post it in any free paper that you can -- local papers' "entertainment" section, places of worship's bulletins, preschools' bulletins, elementary schools' newsletters and most importantly – any school net you can. Our schools are all linked through email – it was an easy way to get the word out. Find a person at every private school who will post it for you. We did not post one sign up and we were sold out about 2 weeks before the show.

I gave our music teachers samples CDs and music sheets. The kids learned some of the songs and so they went home asking to go to the show.

I also gave our librarian some of Bill's books to read during media time. This made the students familiar with his writing style.

I also gave the teachers copies of some of his stories for kids to listen to so they were familiar with his work.

Start Selling tickets!

1 month out:

Ask for volunteers to help you with set up, check in, selling merchandise. Our 6th graders – HS students were able earn volunteer hours for things like this. I had 20 kids come and handle all of the ushering, greeting, ticket taking, selling – they were great! The adults handled the check in and money at the selling tables.

Find families in need and offer free tickets and transportation – I gave them tickets that look like the others so they did not seem obvious at check in. The school counselor found the families for me.

Call the press – let them know about the show!

Place CD and book order with Michele in Bill's office. Think about having a pre-sales order form and sell merchandise the week before the show.

Email blasts about tickets available

2 weeks before:

Hope you are almost sold out! Tickets should be selling now...email blast any and all contacts and ask them to pass it on!

Confirm sound company – give directions, date and time again

1 week before:

Have kids make welcome posters – we gave the kids names of songs and stories and had them put a picture to it – I asked the before/after care at the schools to do it – good activity for the kids.

Have final balance check written (for Bill and Sound)

Take inventory of all merchandise sent to you and understand the costs of everything

See if anything else is going at your concert site at the same time – make sure parking is ok

Days before:

Email reminders to ticket holders (time and date of show, when doors open, remind them you will sell merchandise after the show)

Write an intro or find someone to intro Bill – why did you bring Bill to your community – short and sweet...

Ask someone to get Bill his dinner for before the show

Get your “bank” together – one per selling station – including a cash box to hold money

Make “reserved” signs for any seats that need to be reserved

Make signs for check in -- example--- “Will Call A-D” and “Purchasing Tickets” – have several check-in tables

Name tags for volunteers – we also gave each person a song or story title to wear – made for good conversation when someone has “I’m Busy!” or “You’re in Trouble!” posted on their shirt!

Pack supplies – calculators, pens, pencils – sharpie for bill to sign

Hours Before:

Print out alpha list of ticket holders for check in – a copy for each check in station – add any names who got free tickets who may not be in the ticket system (if you use ticketleap.com, you can print an alpha list very easily)...

Order pizza for volunteers

Make sure you have water and food for Bill

Set up check in tables

Reserve seats for volunteers’ families and important guests

Hang welcome posters

Prep volunteers on how check in will work and how selling will work

Minutes Before:

Make sure traffic/parking was not too hairy before you choose to start the show – remind people to turn off all cell phones and other things that Beep.

Breathe...

Intro Bill...

Laugh...Enjoy...he is in complete control.

After the Show....

Sell merchandise – you will need 4 or 5 adults helping you

Pack up

Pay Bill

Pay Sound if necessary

Days after...

Sell merchandise for the next week

Ship it all back

Receive check from Ticket Site

Enjoy the sweet buzz from all the fun!