

Black Rock Gazette

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Burning Myths Star in the Night Sky

By Caleb Clark

In A.D 140, Ptolemy named the original 48 constellations we see today. Brad Templeton and Kathryn Myronuk redrew these constellations to the mythos of Burning Man in 2004 and displayed them on a beautiful backlit star map at 444 Mercury. "We looked for the icons of Burning Man," Brad explained. "What has always been, has not always been taught," added Kathryn with a knowing smile.

"This is the mythos of Burning Man, uplifted to The Vault Heaven. The Dust Devil uplifted the representation and placed them in The Vault," Brad continued. "In the beginning there was the Dusty Way. There has always been the Dusty Way which stretched across the roof of heaven," Kathryn added with a solemn look.

Thus the mythology of the Burning Man Constellations began. Now we as a people can always look to the night sky to remind us of our heroes, villains and everything in between.

Go out on a clear night around 9:30pm and you can see the foggy Dusty Way stretching across the sky. (The Dusty Way is what non-burners call the Milky Way.) The brightest star, Vega, straight overhead, anchors the constellation Lamplightus.

Look to the North to find The Water Truck (Big Dipper). The handle is the spout of water. The North Star is top cage of Cherrypickus. Northwest of the Water Truck is the Nonsensical Installation, which is hard to identify because it's, well, nonsensical.

Along the Dusty way we find Devil Dustia, Costco Carportus, The Evil President (the "W"-shaped Cassiopeia), and Tentus Majorus and Linus Exodus in the South.

Westward sits the "U"-shaped cluster of stars (Coma Berenices) that is Black Rock

City. Grooving south we see The Naked Raver dancing near the Ranger, Rebar, and Stetsonus named in honor of Larry Harvey's famous hat. Playa Virgo sits lowest in the West looking at The Man which, "true to its Phoenix nature," explains Kathryn, disappears by 2:00am.

In the East we find The Fed waiting for Hippie to light up, but as Brad explains, "The hippie is in a constant state of tranquility. So the Fed is always watching but never catching her. It's a roadrunner and coyote kinda thing." Pices El-wirea sits low in the east along with Fire Spinner and Spectatius sporting a camera and Nike shirt. But the Eastern sky is really

dominated by The RV.

There is of course the other half of the sky that we don't see until winter. Here constellations like The Boss and The Cubical lurk. And in the Antipodes, the part of the sky we cannot see at all from our latitude, float the constellations that symbolize our deep past: The Ocean, Beach Burn, Mapless City and Drive By Shooting Range.

Stop by the back streets 4:45 & Mercury around 9:30pm and grock our new mythology. Then spread the myths so we can all look to the stars throughout the year to remember those naked runs behind the water truck.

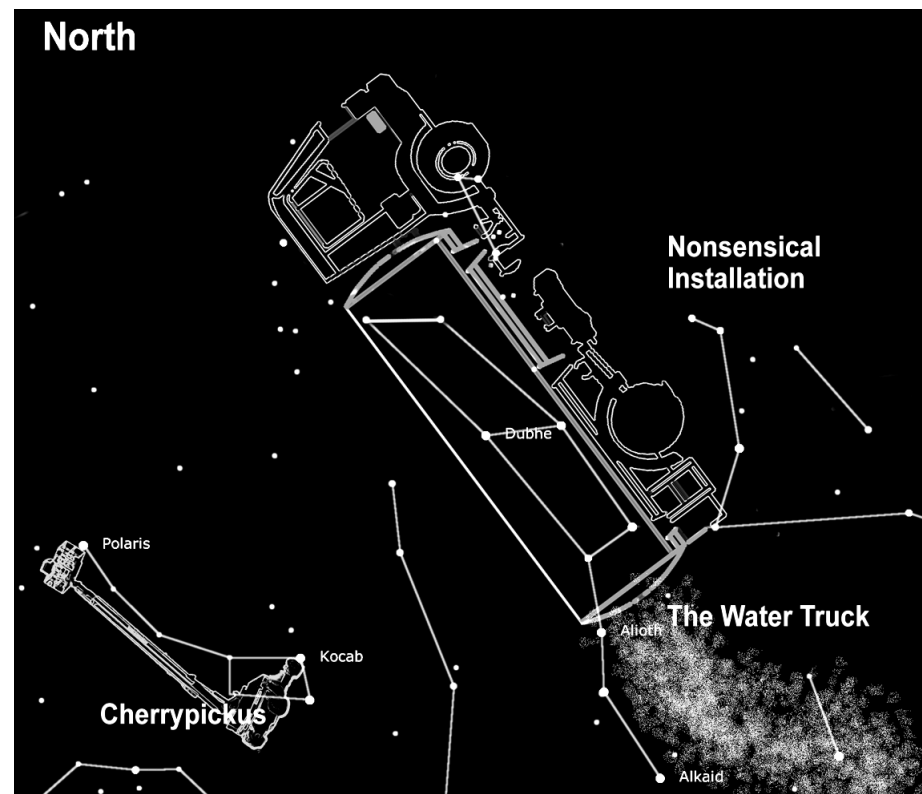


Illustration by Brad T. & Kathryn M.

Gate Crashers Can't Beat Border Patrol

By V.A. Wooden

Admit it. You've thought about it. Non-conformist by nature, nearly every Burner has wondered how hard it might be to sneak into the event.

Be afraid. Be very afraid. Black Rock City's border patrol gets on gate crashers faster than playa dust coats a peanut butter sandwich. It operates nonstop, 24 hours a day, including during the Burn.

The cost of failure is high. "With the money I lost from trying to sneak in, I could have paid for my friends to get in, too," admitted an interceptee.

On Tuesday night, this reporter tagged along with Perimeter Ranger Mobius. Mobius moves with the grace of a panther and sports an effective combination of black leather multi-pocketed pants and flowing black trench coat. "Be ready to move quickly," was his terse advice as I climbed up into his black sports-utility vehicle and headed off to that mysterious area known as the Outer Perimeter Fence. This orange, four-foot-high, plastic enclosure is a pentagon that stretches almost eight miles around the city.

When we arrive at the outer playa, the radio is crackling an alert for Mobius. "Two just jumped out of a car and are heading directly toward Point One." Point One, one of the angles of the pentagon, is a popular infiltration attempt area, located near the entry road to the city.

Headlights off, Mobius scans the inky black horizon with night-vision goggles, spotting the pair dashing across the playa in the direction of the Glowing Blue Man. Then he used the SUV's lights to reveal a fashionably dressed 20-something couple, contrite, but a little excited to have been caught.

Their excuse of "We have friends bringing our tickets and we just didn't want to wait," didn't cut much ice with Mobius.

The couple probably did not know that they had committed a federal Class A misdemeanor by entering a restricted area. But rather than summoning nearby federal agents from the Bureau of Land Management, Mobius decided to firmly encourage the duo to buy tickets at the gate.

"We don't want to have to catch people," said Mobius. "We want people to spread the word that evading the Gate isn't worth it. They'll save themselves a lot of time and trouble by just buying a ticket."

Mobius escorted the giddy couple to the main gate, where they paid the going ticket price and entered legitimately. The price can be raised in cases where people stall or stick to excuses for sneaking in — a surcharge called "the stupid tax."

It pays to plan your attendance and buy tickets early as prices are raised each night of the event. Midnight tonight is the last night that potential attendees can purchase tickets at the gate.

Gadgets and Gizmos

By Matt Mullin

If necessity is the mother of invention, where better than Black Rock City to explore the wonderful world of gadgets and gizmos? From the giant lizard at Exploratorium Camp to the Shocket Rocket Shower at Blast Off To The Planet Awesome, Burners are creating thousands of high- and low-tech inventions to improve our quality of life on the playa.

"I'm not an engineer, but I wanted to create something that would improve the evaporation process for my gray water," explained PropellerHead of 8POD Camp. "Using solar energy to turn a roller-bar, I'm able to drag a sheet of black shade fabric through my gray water catch basin, and lift it up into the air where the water evaporates with greater efficiency." PropellerHead estimated his contraption was evaporating an average 2.5 gallons of water per hour.

At the other end of the water gadget spectrum, Mustafa Allah Akbar Al Jafar Jones created an advanced (by playa standards) shower system. "The Shocket provides the user with an immersion in water that cleanses every inch of the body,

explained Mustafa. "The water pump is powered by a generator, but the electrical system inside the shower is low voltage, which cuts down on electrocution."

The shower operates with an on/off switch inside the cylinder-shaped shower stall, and draws water from a 35-gallon drum located adjacent to the stall. Designed to look like a rocket, it ties in nicely with this year's theme.

Seeking to increase the volume and intensity of playa orgasms, Gasso Camp has created the Orgazmatron. "We have literally had to carry people off this thing," said the aptly named Lucky Bastard, who operates the device. The Orgazmatron is a seat with a strategically placed vibrating knob, designed to titillate the fancy of the average woman. "This baby goes from zero to 2,000 VPM (Vibes Per Minute) in an instant."

Not all women take to the Orgazmatron. "But those that do can reach some extreme pleasure levels," Lucky Bastard said. "The fastest orgasm I've seen took less than half a minute. Others may take 15 to 20 minutes. Our motto here is 'Get Off or Get Off'."



Photo by WeeGee

Gasso Camp also offers Spankomatic. This air-operated automated spanking device can be as gentle as a love tap or as dynamic a spank from an enraged nun. The Orgazmatron and Spankomatic are classic examples of the inventor's code: "Build it and they will come."

Give Beer to the DPW!

Publisher's Note

Have you ever seen one of those space movies where the ship is getting blasted all over space? The people rock back and forth with each blast. Finally the engines go off and they seem dead in space. That was kinda like last night at the Black Rock Gazette.

We had three forced shutdowns of our computer system with the power going out. Our living Mac museum started to show its age. My trusty Mac Classic "Text 4" took a major hit and refused to reboot, its fan still working, still trying to give whatever it had left, but with no sign of life on the screen. We were carrying computers out in digital body bags, our original force of 15 older generation Macs down to a mere eight.

The call came over the radio that the satellite was knocked out. "When will it be back online?" we pleaded over the radio.

"One, maybe two days," was the reply. "We need to get a new satellite!"

"Dammit man. We don't have the time! We need to upload the paper!"

Taz grabbed some cables and started up the tower. He was going to start replacing the connection on the burned out satellite. Within our deadline, the satellite team created a workaround. John Graham came into our trailer and reset the TCP/IP numbers minutes before we cranked out the proof. We uploaded just about on schedule.

Needless to say, without all of our resources available we did what we could, but may have fallen a little short on fact checking. Like the 2002 Floating World really was a nautical theme, but the theme is up to the interpretation of the individual. We hope that any confusion caused by what we wrote would have been caused by something entirely different.

Part of the fun out here is actually trying to figure out how to make do with what we have, and to learn. What we learned that night is the importance of having a back-up power source to buy time to do a proper shutdown of the computers. What we also learned was that it takes a variety of folks in a community to pull together to make this whole thing happen.

No
MOOP
in the Poop!!

Living the Desert Life Year-Round

By Babesodelicious

As a long-time desert lover, dweller and conservationist, Rommel knows the desert is "a beautiful space."

"When I mention I live in the desert, people tell me that it is lifeless and like hell. But the desert has abundant life. And I love it. How can you not?" he says.

Rommel, 39, is a mellow, black-Stetson-wearing Burner (since '94) who grew up helping his geologist parents conserve deserts throughout California, Arizona and New Mexico. He lives the desert life year-round in Llano, CA, in the Mojave Desert.

Desert living, whether on the playa or in the Mojave, is "very easy," he says, because "all you have to do is stay cool." The only real difference between the two is human: For him, that people would steal from or injure one another on the playa is unfathomable.

How could anybody love living in a hot, dry environment? For Rommel, it's like trying to explain why anyone would love chocolate: he just does. The desert offers him cottontail and jackrabbits, as well as valley ground squirrels, woodpeckers, and up to 35 other birds to enjoy. Sure, he'll occasionally encounter rattlesnakes, including the Mojave Green, which can kill humans with its blood- and nerve-damaging toxin, as well as scorpions and lizards.

But just as on the Playa, he can rest on a

cot or blanket and look up at the night sky and see the Milky Way and meteor showers, something he likes to say a city-dweller cannot do.

Rommel runs Gigsville, a 45-member camp between 4:00 and 4:30 at Venus. For Burners who are fans of BDSM, Rommel conceived the Temple of Atonement. And



Photo by Yvonne Soy

His greatest contribution to the desert, he believes, has been his volunteering to place chain link fences around abandoned desert vertical mine shafts. He cannot put a figure on how many lives he has helped to save, but he is satisfied that his efforts have prevented deaths.

yes, the real Rommel, the German military general dubbed the "Desert Fox" during World War II, is one of his heroes. Come Saturday, Rommel will be proudly sporting his Desert Fox uniform for the Burn.

Back from Iraq

By Mary Jane

"They were wonderful for a lost soul in the wrong desert." That's what veteran, and veteran burner, Johnny Jet has to say about the hundred plus letters he received from Black Rock citizens during his tour in Iraq. Letters from his burner buddies were slow the first month he was over there. But then, a couple weeks before the 2003 burn, his name and military mailing info hit Jack Rabbit Speaks.

Jet says he answered anything that included a return address. "I became a letter writing machine," he says. The tenacity of some Burning Man correspondents even rivaled that of his own father. "And Dad," claims Jet, "almost answers them before he opens the envelope."

The word from the playa offered Jet a bit of balance to the mess hall cable feeds

of FAUX News. "My experience at Burning Man helped prepare me for the absurdity of life in Iraq."

Jet found the deserts of southern Iraq hotter and wetter than the Black Rock desert. "One guy's wife sent him a meat thermometer. It hit 158 in the cab of our truck," he says.

The ease of imbibing was another contrast. Alcohol was prohibited, but the Iraqis sold beer. When the convoys stopped for the night, they'd line the trucks up to create a private party space. Hmm, perhaps not so different from our fair city.

You can find Jet on 5:30 near Saturn in the Alternative Energy Zone. He's got a new solar panel this year. "I bought it with my earnings as a mercenary for the Texas oil barons."



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- www.burningman.com

Leave no trace!
Never let it hit the ground!

Miss Black Rock City

Everyone in Black Rock City is a beauty queen, but if you'd like to experience the thrill of competition and receive an official imprimatur—satins, sash, tiara and all—you're invited to participate in the Miss Black Rock City Pageant. The preliminaries are at 3:30 today at Asylum.

Then the main event is Friday afternoon at 2:30 in the Disorient dome. Brush up on your great humanitarian speeches, whip out your finest evening gowns and get ready to make your walk down the runway.

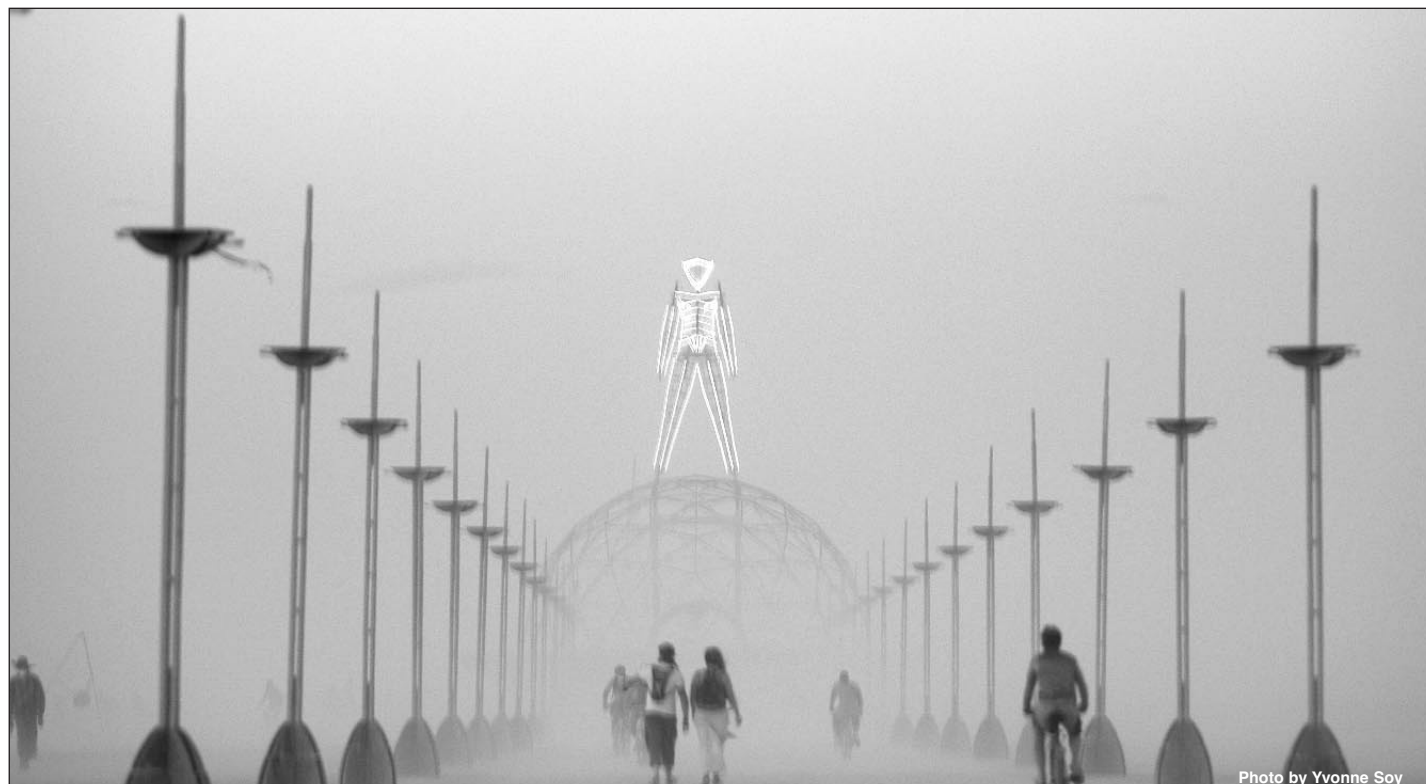


Photo by Yvonne Soy

Our kind of desert storm!