

Black Rock Gazette

Your Playa Time Source for Infotainment Since 1992

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Population 30,466

Pack Early and Often

By Chris Penny

You planned your trip to Burning Man for weeks. You mapped out your camp, worked your check list, carefully packed and hauled your stuff to their playa. But when your vacation in altered reality draws to a close, it's time to pick up your toys. It's time to pack your art cars. It's time for Exodus.

Burning Man began organizing Exodus in 2000, said Black Rock Ranger Odwally, who oversees Exodus. "By 1999 Burning Man had grown to the point where we were getting bad bottlenecks. We realized we needed a system to get people off the playa and onto the pavement more efficiently," he said.

Last year the Exodus team was a bit too efficient. It did such a good job getting vehicles off the playa that it created traffic jams on the pavement. This year the team will better monitor the flow. There will be two exit lanes. If traffic gets backed up on the pavement, one lane will be shut down. Black Rock City so large this year that traffic could back up into city streets at the busiest times.

The Exodus team has more than 50 people. Volunteers are needed and may sign up at Playa Info.

The Exodus team controls the roads from the Greeter Station to Empire. Approaching the exit, the right lane is for large vehicles and the others for cars. Department of Public Works Extortion Areas are located right before the Greeter Station and will accept non-perishable food, cigarettes and alcohol for the crew.

Tips for an easy Exodus:

- Try to avoid the busiest times (10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday and Monday, and Sunday night after the Temple burn. Early morning is best.

- Try to avoid stopping in Gerlach or Empire. If you must, make sure you are completely off the road; don't block traffic.

- Listen to Black Rock Radio 94.5. Traffic reports are updated every half hour or as needed.

- Make sure your load is secure, especially trash. Trash bags can blow off and burst, spreading MOOP all over.

- If you break down, try to get the vehicle off the road. If you can't move the vehicle, the Exodus staff will call a tow truck for which you will have to pay.

- Carry that Burning Man spirit with you on the roads. Smile, wave, have fun.

Keep an eye out for the census takers as you exit. If you have not yet filled out a census form, please grab one. Wave the form out the window when you finish, and a census taker will collect it.



Photo by Chris Penny



Photo by Bryce Perry

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Photo by Bryce Perry

He Finds Himself at Burning Man

By Gotholot

I start at the Man. My goal is to find a home. I aimed for the center to begin my quest, but it was not to end there. I walk Northwest and the effigy recedes, shrouded from view by high winds carrying fine particles dust filling my nostrils and lungs.

I am thirsty and head towards it in hopes of finding water on Mars. On the horizon I spot a gigantic red orb loudly pumping music at the edge of the expanse. Inside humans reluctantly offer me a lukewarm sample. I leave feeling that the Martians are not the friendliest of races.

The storms worsen. I seek refuge behind large machines with noisemakers to adjust my gear between Mars and Jupiter. Humans peer at me from behind glass barricades.

I decide to head for Uranus, having heard it was a dirty but necessary place. I arrive at the edge and run into a small enclave of humanoids, exposing themselves to the Sun.

I inquire, "Can you tell me where the center of Uranus is?"

One reply, "We are holding up this end of Uranus. You need to head that way." He points down a bare outline of a boulevard.



Is this home?

Photo by Tokyo Pearl

Fragments of human waste fling past me as I head into the storm in a new direction. When I stop, a water-emitting vehicle pelts my legs as it passes, a cooling experience. Inspired, I return to the Red Planet. When I arrive, Tobias of the Camp of Incestual Nipples greets me. I am offered sausages and a cool drink. Tobias, tells me of a day when they create a large omelet. An Orgasm Omelet. Participants are required to scream their most convincing of human orgasm or tell a tale of their favorite ecstasy.

Satiated I return to my quest. Tobias points me to Center

Camp, which he identifies as possible center, a place where humans meet and pour libations.

I arrive and find this is true, but there is so much more. A sea of humans engage in various activities: making music, a verbal diarrhea called rap, some form of contortionism. I exchange some scrip for a delicious beverage called Chai, which I quickly imbibe. But it's not the center, so I move on.

I exit the large red and gold tent and resume my search. I head toward the Sun, following an Esplanade. I spot a communications device, emitting a ringing sound. I

operate the device, and a voice says "Hello, who is this?"

"Who is this?" I ask.

"God"

"God? Do you know where the center of the universe is? I'm looking for a home."

"The center of the universe is where ever you are."

"This booth is the center of the universe?"

"Wherever you are," the voice confirms.

Another dust storm swirls. I panic and leave the communications device dangling on its cord, heading toward the effigy at the place where I began my search. The storm subsides, revealing a small white structure.

It is a house. Completely white. Inside, a simple white-sheeted bed sits. I go inside and sit on the mattress. Was I home now? A perfect house and a white picket fence? I search for answers in the universe and the more I see, the more I learn, is that there are just more questions. Even when God said I am the center of the universe, surely he must have meant each human as well. That no matter where we are we create our own center.

Taking That Burning Feeling Home

By Liane Gabora

Nobody's quite sure what it means, but Burning Man leaders are quite certain they want to head toward development of regional Burning groups. In a panel news conference on Wednesday, they discussed recruitment and development goals, along with the challenges of taking magic off the Playa and performing it in distant towns.

"Most of the salient lessons after a decade and a half is that what we do on the playa is scalable," said Founder Larry Harvey. He says plans for regional groups could make today's large-scale playa experience comparable to the origin of Burning Man at Baker's Beach in 1986.

This year's Burn included low-profile training for regional leaders around the country. Projects under consideration include inter-city art exchanges and multi-camp decompressions. There was also a Regional Playa Info desk run at Center Camp by Steven Raspa. But regionalism is new enough that nobody knows how it will work.

"We're learning as much from them as they learn from us," said Marian Goodell, Mistress of Communication. "We're not dictating a program to them. It's not about ideology."

It may not be a rigid ideology, but they clearly want it as an extension of their value system. Harvey even compares regional burning groups to the old Elks Lodge. "A whole array of groups are dying at a drastic rate," he says. Burning Man could provide another motif for public



Photo by Richard Gillmore

service on the local level.

"It may seem a stretch that we're all talking about what's happening beyond an exotic event in such a remote location, but the clear majority of people (here) are exotic if given half the chance," he said. He calls it an effort to "reinvent the culture", and calls the Playa a "life lesson in civics."

As for the nuts and bolts of regionalism, the group appears to be stepping cautiously. It wants to provide autonomy while not endangering the Burning Man name or sensibilities.

To obtain regional status, groups will have to agree to follow the "10 Principles" articulated on www.burningman.com. These include "transparent books" and other sorts of accountability. It also includes "radical inclusiveness" and "interactivity" to find a role for everyone.

"We ask them to sign a letter of agreement with us, and to acquire a formal

structure that allows them to do specific types of corporate busines," said Goodell. She says the use of Burning Man logos and symbols is "still under review," and might be resolved by allowing "variations on a theme", without faithful logo duplication.

Burning Man staff will make regional training a priority, and visit cities around the country to lend support and help leaders develop their skills. "Our job is to empower," says Harley Dubois.

Less clear to the national leaders is how specifics of the Burning Man culture will translate to other settings. Harvey admits the "gift economy" is not going to work in a permanent community.

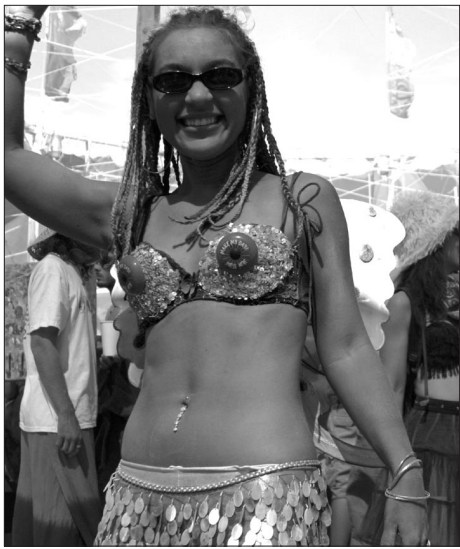
"You'd have to meet everyone individually just to get a ball point pen," he said.

But he suggests it can co-exist with the commerce-based "Real World".

"(They) can do projects they could never do with a credit card. There's a huge amount of social capital out there," says Harvey. He is also interested in how to provide the community building associated with arduous travel and primitive conditions (the struggle of achievement).

Organizers appear to be counting on the passions and energy of the artists that comprise the Burning Man community.

"All of these communities sprang up spontaneously," said Harvey. "You can't plan culture."



Photos by Johnny Switchblade

Dedicated Leaders Of Playa Fashion

By Famous Melissa

Fashion on the playa is a vacation of the imagination combined with survival accessories. Think of it as G.I. Joe cross-dressing with Barbie's wardrobe.

This year, along with neon fishnet thigh highs, parasols and thongs, hot pink is the rage. Technicolor space cowboy hats and (politically correct) faux furs also are popular.

Men in skirts have joined scantily clad women as a Black Rock City trademark. Sighted this year: tartans, tie-dyed sarongs and the increasingly popular utilikilt. A delightful variation was made entirely of stitched white cotton utility gloves.

This year's uber-accessory is a chic, plastic belly band. Also known as the holographic hula hoop, it is decorated with hieroglyphs and reflective candy bands of mylar.

Looking down at high fashion but up on foot fetishes, six-inch heels are being replaced with six-inch black pleather flats. Clean them with slaves to fashion.

If fashion is your passion, the 14th annual Burning Man Fashion Show takes place in Center Camp from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Saturday.

Powerful Alternatives

By Caleb Clark

Burning Man is a Leave No Trace event. Black Rock citizens work together to make sure that the playa is used respectfully during our stay and that after we leave nothing remains but fond memories. That is great but there are additional impacts on the environment that a city of 35,000 people powered largely by generators and addicted to fiery arts must consider. Burning Man will explore alternatives for fueling generators and fire-based art installations.

Using alternative power sources is not a new idea, and past discussions have taken place about using more of them in the infrastructure of Black Rock City. Given the absolute critical nature of our power supply, running a city in the middle of nowhere and the harsh and unpredictable environment, there has been hesitation to implement any widespread changes. As is sometimes necessary to turn an idea into reality, the right group of determined people came together, formulated a plan, and was given the go ahead to execute a series of experiments using alternative fuels.

This year, the Greeters station is powered by a generator running on B20, which is a fuel with a 20 percent biodiesel mixture. Biodiesel is made from substances such as vegetable oils.

The generator is maintained and serv-

iced outside of our normal generator contract specifically for this experiment, so that the results of running biodiesel can be carefully monitored and documented. A small team is working together on the test, including experts in alternative fuels and mechanics with experience in biodiesel engine maintenance who will be on hand just in case there are any problems. No serious issues are anticipated, based on the knowledge and experiences shared from other events which have been operated entirely on alternative fuels. The only anticipated effect of changing a generator which had been previously run on straight diesel to run on biodiesel is a slight temporary increase in the number of filters needed as a result of the transition. The same should happen when that generator transitions back to running straight diesel fuel.

Burning Man uses fuel for more than just generators, and this year an effort is taking place to test alternative fuel options in some of the art. The Flaming Lotus Girls will be conducting a series of experiments with different fuels in The Seven Sisters. This installation will be shooting plumes of fire 100 feet into the sky, and that fire might be created by ethanol, a Biodiesel mixture, or some other explosive combination.

Animal Control/False Ecosystems

By Daisy

Some burners come here unprepared, whether they are first-timers or those who forgot essential items such as a first aid kit. But what about animals that come here unprepared because they have gone unnoticed by not only the Gatekeepers, but also their drivers? Black Rock City Animal Control is in charge of rounding up pesky humans dressed as non-native animals in Black Rock City, but there is a growing issue of "real world" animals finding their way into BRC unnoticed until they are inside the gate. These are "real" animals meshing unexpectedly with the non-reality world of Burning Man. And often they need help.

Earth Guardians recommend folks check their wheel wells, under the sides of cars, and in rolled-up carpets before leaving for Burning Man. You may otherwise find creatures that didn't expect to be here and may not survive in the harsh climate of the desert.

Andy, an ecologist with the Earth Guardians, helps to repatriate native Black Rock Desert animals back to their desert eco-system, which is not necessarily the playa. Praying mantises and beetles are sometimes relocated to the Frog Pond just east of the playa. Praying mantises are drawn to the bright lights of Black Rock City. Fall migration has begun around Black Rock Desert, which means that BRC residents may see kestrel, sage sparrows, and other birds flying overhead.

A garter snake that found its way to Black Rock City this year has been placed with DPW until it can be taken to the

Burning Man ranch just north of BRC to be released. A rat that also snuck past Gatekeepers was last seen roaming around the city and suspected of creating havoc in some camps. And yes, this year, kittens have secretly made their way to Black Rock City. E.Z. Bob, a staff member for BRC who is camped at Little Texas, bought a trailer in Reno almost two weeks ago. After being parked at Burning Man for a couple of days, a fellow campmate heard meowing as she walked by the trailer. After walking into the trailer four kittens were found. Three were alive. Dehydrated and without a mother, the kittens were immediately taken to a veterinarian in Fernley, where the vet stated that as long as the kittens were fed milk in a syringe and given a prescription formula, they could return to BRC. Dwayne, camped at



Photo by Johnny Switchblade

Event Horizon Camp, and his girlfriend Breanna had just lost their cat, Ring, which Dwayne had for 18 1/2

years. Just 12 hours after they returned from ceremonially creating the cat at Pyramid Lake, Maid Marian brought them two cats who had no home. It was the ultimate Burning Man gift for Dwayne and Breanna. A Little Texas campmate adopted the third cat. The kittens have provided extra magic for some at Burning Man this year and have been referred to as the "Playa Miracle Kittens." And the kittens have been given the gift of finding owners who know they have found a very special gift, unlike any other they have ever received at Burning Man.

Cut the Shit

Apparently, there are some people who would want to shut down Burning Man by sabotaging the porta potties.

Their M.O. is to bankrupt the banks of potties of toilet paper, put MOOP in the potties, and otherwise attack our most faithful vendor, Johnny on the Spot.

Andie Grace, communications manager, said, "It has never been more important to impress upon people that nothing should go into the potties unless you ate it first."

All participants keep your eyes open, let a Ranger know who they are, and remember descriptions of people. To the people doing this, come to the BRG, and let's discuss your grievances in an open and honest debate.

Dorks on Wheels

You might not know it from nighttime appearances, but bikes and scooters in Black Rock City must have front and back illumination if they are operated after dark.

Ranger Fixit dropped by the Black Rock Gazette's office on Wednesday to tell us what we already knew: Lots of dim citizens are whizzing around the playa in the dark, endangering themselves and, more significantly, everybody else.

"Blinkers front and back," he said, are the minimum standard for night riders. "Glow sticks are not enough."

Besides the common sense and safety aspects of using proper illumination, Ranger Fixit noted that "the spirit of the event" should impel Burners to glow.

Burn With the Man

Burners who have special objects to burn in The Man should bring their burnables to the box at the 6:00 perimeter by 6 p.m. Saturday. Your stuff will be put in the crate and placed in The Man before the burn.



Photo by Pearl

Repurposing our fallen Mac Classics to paperweights

Don't jump on or off moving art cars.

If you do, run as you hit the ground.

On the subject of commerce, Danger Ranger says:

"Everything is free except your attention."



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www.burningman.com