

BURNING MAN ANNUAL REPORT 2014



Letter from the CEO

2014 was a remarkable year of change and growth for the Burning Man organization. Following the finalization in December 2013 of the Founders' transfer of ownership of Black Rock City, LLC to the nonprofit Burning Man Project (BMP), we went to work completing the integration of the two.

While we remain absolutely committed to production and management of the annual event in Nevada, which attracted 65,992 participants from 68 countries around the globe in 2014, we are expanding our efforts to bring Burning Man culture to the world. We have long pursued activities with a scope beyond Black Rock City. Now our nonprofit organizational structure reflects and supports this work and is better poised to further our mission of serving the public good.

2014 was a year marked by integration. For the first time ever, Black Rock City's operations and event production, the Black Rock City Art Department, Black Rock Arts Foundation, the Regional Network and administrative functions joined forces to create a cohesive, multi-faceted organization to better support, serve and nurture the growing Burning Man community. We also began the process for Burners Without Borders to become a program of Burning Man Project.

Burning Man culture continues to grow by leaps and bounds, as communities around the globe pick up the Ten Principles and apply them to their creative endeavors, entrepreneurial pursuits, civic projects and transformative events. In February 2014, we hosted the first European Leadership Summit in Berlin, bringing key community leaders together from 25 countries. In April, more than 350 Burning Man community leaders from around the world joined key volunteers and staff for our 8th annual Global Leadership Conference in San Francisco. They spent four days building skills, exchanging best practices, and getting mutually inspired to take "the playa to the planet". In May, we saw the first multi-day officially approved Midburn event in Israel, and the addition of Brazil and Korea Regional groups. I also gave a TEDx talk in Tokyo on building our culture through community, and visited regional groups in Europe, Asia and North America.

By investing the necessary time and resources, we are building a solid nonprofit that we are confident will successfully support the spread of our global culture of self-expression, participation, and civic responsibility. Our focused work over the past year has prepared us well for the promising years ahead. We thank you for all of your support, and we hope you will continue to join us on this important journey.

Warmly,
Marian Goodell
CEO/Chief Engagement Officer,
Burning Man

Folding all of our organizations into a nonprofit structure has given us the opportunity to recreate an organization that will best support our worldwide culture of inclusion, participation, and responsibility.



The Burning Man Event in Black Rock City



Black Rock City is our greatest opportunity to share Burning Man culture, to provide the fulcrum for transformative experience, and to foster creativity and civic responsibility.



The allure of the Burning Man event in Black Rock City continues to capture the attention and imagination of the world with incredible art, big ideas and boundless inspiration. The Burning Man organization creates just enough civic infrastructure to provide a framework to support civil society in Black Rock City. Within this structure, participants enjoy the freedom to radically express themselves, often beyond what they ever dreamed possible. The playa exploded with creativity in 2014, including 311 incredible art installations — from the deep-playa Black Rock Observatory to the Black Rock Bijou movie theater to the spectacular Temple of Grace. 61 art installations were funded by BRC honoraria grants. Standing above it all was the 105-foot tall Man, which, for the first time since 1995, stood directly on the ground.

The “Caravansary” art theme included an invitation to participants to create a marketplace of ideas and gifts in the Souk surrounding the Man, and 24 Regional groups joined members of the nearby Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe in offering playful interactions from their respective cultures through a wide variety of interactive “shops”.

Participants created 652 Mutant Vehicles — fantastical mobile art installations licensed by the Department of Mutant Vehicles — offering ad hoc public transportation around the open playa, where they enjoyed participatory art installations, spontaneous performance and the stunning natural beauty of the Black Rock Desert.

Meanwhile, within the City, 975 theme camps selected by Burning Man’s Placement team filled the first eight concentric circles of the city plan, where their creators offered the widest possible range of interactive experiences, performances, workshops, talks, and gifts. Aside from an incalculable number of spontaneous creative acts that happen at any given moment, participants created and engaged in thousands of scheduled activities — many listed in advance in the WhatWhereWhen guide — ranging from informative talks to pops symphony performances, a playa choir, and tutorials covering everything from jewelry-making to tantric meditation to conflict resolution, while the long-running Black Rock Scouts offered family-friendly adventures and educational programs for young Burners.

A multitude of experienced and new volunteers worked alongside staff to ensure the effective functioning of Emergency Services Department (ESD), Black Rock Rangers, Gate/ Perimeter/Exodus (PG&E), the Department of Public Works (DPW), ARTery, Arctica, Lamplighters, Café, Greeters, Recycle Camp, and other city infrastructure departments and teams. At Playa Info, the team matched 902 walk-up volunteers with 32 departments and projects during the event.

As for production logistics, we continued to refine and improve the operational planning process for Black Rock City. In order to support the long term viability and sustainability of the event, an increased effort was made to reduce vehicular traffic and improve arrival and exodus. This was achieved through enhanced carpool resources, the introduction of limited-quantity pre-purchased vehicle passes, and the expanded Burner Express bus service from San Francisco and Reno. In Black Rock City, we provided more porta-potties, longer hours for ice sales, monitored burn gardens in the open playa, and more extensive emergency services in the 3 and 9 o'clock plazas to help distribute the most-needed resources throughout the city.

The end of the week featured several monumentally large-scale burns including the burning of the Embrace sculpture at dawn on Friday. On Saturday night the massive Man burned, followed by a breathtakingly beautiful Temple burn to close the event on Sunday.

Black Rock City—whose population included participants from 80 countries—remains our nonprofit organization's greatest opportunity to share Burning Man culture, to provide the fulcrum for transformative experience, and to foster creativity and responsibility in the wider world. A more detailed review of Black Rock City 2014 can be found in the 2014 Afterburn Report.



Burning Man Arts



Burning Man Arts will create more opportunities for the creation, placement, and funding of interactive, transformative civic art, in Black Rock City and around the world.



In a significant step forward, we began folding Black Rock City's Art Department and the Black Rock Arts Foundation (BRAAF) into Burning Man Project, in order to create Burning Man Arts. Burning Man Arts aims to change the paradigm of art from a commodified object to an interactive, participatory, shared experience of creative expression. Operationally, the two organizations are bringing their resources together to create one robust art program that will work on projects both on and off the playa. This vital step will create more opportunities for the creation, placement, and funding of interactive, transformative, civic art everywhere in the world, while sharing resources and streamlining processes. This change included an intensive period of gathering input from artists to learn about their creative and business processes so that the organization could refine its systems to better offer them support.

Since its inception in 2001, BRAAF has funded 160 projects big and small, providing a total of more than \$1,290,318 in grants and support to artists worldwide. BRAAF awarded more than \$430,000 directly to artists through its Grants to Artists program and installed or otherwise supported 40 projects in towns and cities through its Civic Arts program. In July 2014 this celebrated organization became a legal subsidiary of

Burning Man Project. In this process, we honored existing commitments to BRAF's grantees, and continue to nurture established public art programs through BRAF and Burners Without Borders.

2014 Achievements for Burning Man Arts include:

- BRC Honoraria — \$827,000 in grants to 80 playa artists, with an additional estimated \$675,000 in in-kind installation and support services.
- BRAF Civic Arts Grants — \$217,836 in grants, including fulfillment of an NEA granted project to Our Town in Fernley, Nevada for Max Poynton and Andrew Grinberg's Bottlecap Gazebo, Zachary Coffin's Rock Spinner 6; and Pan Pantoja's Desert Tortoise; we also donated Michael Christian's Bike Bridge (initially installed in Oakland, California) to Gerlach, Nevada. In San Francisco, we supported the Flaming Lotus Girls' Soma, Kate Raudenbush's Future's Past, Mauro Fortissimo's Sunset Pianos and Brian Goggin's Caruso's Dream.
- Burning Man's first-ever media grant supported Laurent Le Gall's "Temples of Life" documentary which will chronicle 12 years of David Best temples on playa and in the world.
- Burning Man partnered with Artichoke to support the creation and ceremonial burning of the 75-foot tall Derry Temple in Derry~Londonderry Northern Ireland.
- BRAF Global Arts Grants — \$70,000 to 15 art projects worldwide, including projects in Barcelona, Spain; Brooklyn, New York; Zagreb, Croatia and Oxford, Mississippi.
- Artist-focused Efforts — In combining BRAF with the Black Rock City Art Department, we facilitated a public forum for artist feedback, identified a nonprofit provider for artist insurance, and provided fiscal sponsorship for tax-deductible donations to on- and off-playa projects.
- Arts Education — We continued to introduce Burning Man art and artists through widely attended Desert Arts Previews in San Francisco's de Young Museum and Reno's Nevada Museum of Art, and through public talks including one given by Co-Founder Crimson Rose to Los Angeles County Museum of Art docents.
- Publications — We provided editorial and communications support for the first comprehensive book about the art of Black Rock City. *Burning Man: Art on Fire*, which has sold 14,000+ copies has remained an Amazon category bestseller since its release.
- The Global Leadership Conference featured sessions and workshops on how to facilitate the creation and placement of public art.

Thank you to all the incredible artists who commit their blood, sweat and tears to the creation of inspiring artwork!



Civic Engagement



Burning Man Project programs seek to transform the spirit of civic responsibility and community service into practice.



Participation is at the heart of the Burning Man experience in Black Rock City and around the world. Cultivating civic engagement is an objective of all of our programs. In the Global Network, we train community leaders to organize and instigate civic projects, while Burning Man Arts engages communities with opportunities for art experiences. For the annual event in Black Rock City, Black Rock Ranger training teaches participants to be civic negotiators and community problem solvers.

In 2014, we began the process of integrating Burners Without Borders (BWB) more deeply into the Burning Man organization. There are 17 active BWB chapters across the United States. Since its founding in 2005, BWB has cultivated 123 grassroots initiatives in 11 countries, primarily focusing on civic involvement and disaster relief — from fostering entrepreneurship in Haiti with marginalized artists, to developing an award-winning alternative currency system for Kenya’s poorest. BWB also encourages community involvement through two microgrant programs which offer small honoraria to jumpstart promising initiatives that make a difference.

By incorporating the important work of BWB (see this awesome infographic) into Burning Man Project, which was its most recent fiscal sponsor, we are ensuring the continuity and success of an organization that transforms civic responsibility and community service into practice. The combined learnings and resources of the two organizations offers opportunities for the civic engagement track at Burning Man Project to grow and offer further assistance to civic projects around the world.

In 2014 we also supported the expansion of Freespace — a nonprofit initiative to temporarily repurpose underutilized urban space for skill sharing, collaboration, and building community in underserved areas — to six cities around the world.

Thank you to all the people who engage, participate and work tirelessly for the betterment of our world!



Education



Burning Man culture and methodology has proven to be of great interest to diverse audiences.



Burning Man staff took on several key infrastructure projects designed to increase our capacity for delivering educational content to a growing global audience. A new volunteer team was formed to handle year-round video documentation of educational events like the Global Leadership Conference, and to share the content with a wider circle of community members. Staff also began the process of creating “export” versions of key trainings, such as our manager curriculum for volunteers and staff. We’re excited to continue this process of open-sourcing more of the knowledge base developed in Black Rock City for the benefit of our wider community, including content from the Global Leadership Conference, the European Summit and more.

The Burning Man website was redesigned from the ground up and moved to a new content management system, giving us a modern communications and education platform that is scalable, easy to navigate, and mobile-friendly. In a parallel effort, we launched an initiative to digitize and publish a wealth of archival material, including historic publications, photos, and videos that are now being made available to scholars and the public through the website’s interactive timeline.

Requests for speakers and panelists from the organization continued to increase across geographical lines and sectors of interest. Leaders from the organization represented Burning Man in 35 speaking engagements, introducing aspects of Burner culture to a broad cross-section of professional and public audiences. These included two TEDx talks from CEO Marian Goodell, presentations by Chief Transition Officer Harley K. Dubois at The Feast and DLD Cities, a presentation at the Long Now Foundation by Chief Philosophical Officer Larry Harvey, and a keynote by Black Rock City Event Operations Director Charlie Dolman at the Project Management Institute’s annual conference.

Burning Man culture and methodology has proven to be of great interest to diverse audiences including municipalities, nonprofits, corporations, and organizations devoted to civic engagement, the arts, volunteerism, and process management. Burning Man representatives participated in conferences and public events — teaching and sharing the Burning Man story — including the Skoll World Forum, the Whole Earth Festival, San Francisco Earth Day, the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, San Mateo Innovation Week, and South By Southwest Interactive. Burning Man also hosted several outreach events at our offices in San Francisco, including a well-attended panel discussion on pop-up urbanism and temporary spaces.



The Network



Regional Events continue to be the drivers of Burning Man's cultural expansion ... demonstrating the adaptability of Burning Man principles to a multitude of constituencies, locations and endeavors.



Burning Man's Global Network continues to grow, as energized and inspired participants leave Black Rock City in Nevada determined to imbue their lives with the Burning Man ethos, and to encourage the same in their communities. As of December 2014, the Global Network included 120 official groups in 34 countries, with many more informal and nascent gatherings and collaborations happening across the world. In addition, more than 350 year-round volunteer Regional Contacts worked to support local projects, civic initiatives, and Regional Events.

For many in the growing network, their local burns and Regional Events are the core of their Burning Man experience, and a significant number of participants in Regional Events have never been to Black Rock City in Nevada. The growth of these events — in both number, popularity, and artistic scope — has demonstrated the power of the culture to transcend space and inhabit an ever-widening sphere of influence. Regional Contacts and Regional groups are not required to host large scale events in order to be an official part of the Regional Network. Burning Man seeks to recognize and support the culture wherever it flourishes. Some groups focus their energy on local artistic initiatives, civic projects, Burners Without Borders efforts and smaller scale gatherings.

In February 2014, the first-ever Burning Man European Leadership Summit was held in Berlin, with 100+ participants from 25 countries: Austria, Australia, Belgium, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States. Regional Contacts, community leaders and Burning Man staff members met to learn skills, exchange ideas and discuss best practices for event production, effective use of social media, challenges in community development, entity creation and volunteer engagement.

In April 2014, the eighth annual Global Leadership Conference (GLC) was held in San Francisco for 350+ Regional Contacts and community leaders from 10 countries. Participants attended four days of workshops and plenary sessions in four core learning tracks: Community Event Production, Civic Activation, Leadership, and Organizational Development. Both the European and GLC leadership conferences had a measurable impact on network-wide event planning, collaboration across Regional groups, and volunteer retention. Many conference participants noted that these gatherings are their most pivotal Burning Man engagements of the year — a chance to learn from experts, think, collaborate with their peers, and reaffirm their commitment to nurturing and expanding the culture.

Regional Events continue to be the drivers of Burning Man's cultural expansion, introducing the Burning Man ethos to a broader audience, cultivating and training leaders and volunteers, and demonstrating the adaptability of Burning Man principles to a multitude of constituencies, locations and endeavors. In 2014, more than 65 official Burning Man Regional Events were hosted across the world. Overnight events lasting three days or more are increasing each year and are the mainstays for the transformative event experience. AfrikaBurn, in South Africa, grew to more than 9,000 participants in 2014. Israel's Midburn event had 3,000 participants, and Flipside, the longest running Regional Event (started in 1998), sold over 3,000 tickets for its camping event outside Austin, Texas. Many Regional groups host "Decompression" events during the Fall months after Burning Man. Often one-day events, Decompressions are an opportunity for local communities to reunite after their travels to Black Rock City and to showcase their art projects, costumes, theme camps, and to plan for the year ahead.



Philosophical Center

A shared philosophy permeates every aspect of Burning Man culture. This ethos is the living heart of our community, our conscience and our collective memory. Outlined in the Ten Principles but more fully revealed in our actions, it informs all that we do. For our culture to survive and flourish we must continually work to nourish these core values. We refer to this ongoing mission of stewardship and scholarship as the Philosophical Center — its mission is to foment discourse that examines the Ten Principles. The motto that guides this is a quote by William James, "Belief is thought at rest."

In collaboration with writers and thinkers from the Burning Man community, Chief Philosophical Officer (and Burning Man Founder) Larry Harvey launched a blog series in late 2013 exploring the nuances and implications of Burning Man's Ten Principles, designed to stimulate discussion and create a wider context for understanding these core values.

Additionally, some of Harvey's early writings and interview footage from Burning Man's formative years were unearthed and published as part of our web redesign project, offering valuable historical perspective on the evolution of the culture and its ethos.

Harvey also addressed audiences concerning Burning Man's history, philosophy, and future prospects at events including a conference at London's Southbank Centre, a talk on long-term thinking at San Francisco's Long Now Foundation, and a leadership discussion with U.S. Navy officers hosted by the Chief of Naval Operations.



For our culture to survive and flourish we must continually work to nourish these core values.





Giftng: Engagement and Contributions



We strive to recognize and honor those who financially support the work of the Burning Man organization. We are deeply grateful to our donors.



Giftng is at the center of Burning Man's principles and its culture of self-expression and participation. We are deeply grateful for the abundant contributions of volunteer time and financial donations which are so essential to fulfilling our mission. We strive to recognize gifts of all kinds directly, and to honor the necessity of these gifts. Burning Man would not exist without this generosity.

We hold numerous events throughout the year to celebrate the role of giftng in our culture, and to honor those who give. In December 2014, we held a community panel discussion on Giftng at Burning Man Headquarters. Earlier in the year, our staff and members of the community sent handmade Valentines to the nondenominational Glide Memorial soup kitchen in San Francisco's Tenderloin District. The transformational experience of giftng which is so widely practiced in BRC is now being expanded and replicated wherever Burners gather and live.

We strive to recognize and honor those who financially support the work of the Burning Man organization. Donor contributions of every size are essential to the success of our programming and to the expansion of our culture. Financial contributions sustain our year-round arts, civic engagement and educational offerings, while strengthening our growing network of global change leaders.

We are deeply grateful to our donors, whose names can be found at the following link to the website:

www.annualreport.burningman.org/gifting-engagement-and-contributions/



About the Organization

Burning Man is a network of people inspired by the values reflected in the Ten Principles and united in the pursuit of a more creative and connected existence in the world. Throughout the year we work to build Black Rock City, home of the largest annual Burning Man gathering, and nurture the distinctive culture emerging from that experience. The hub of this global network is the 501(c)(3) non-profit Burning Man Project, headquartered in San Francisco, California.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Burning Man organization is to facilitate and extend the culture that has issued from the Burning Man event into the larger world.

Vision

The Burning Man organization will bring experiences to people in grand, awe-inspiring and joyful ways that lift the human spirit, address social problems and inspire a sense of culture, community and personal engagement.

Program Areas

Burning Man provides infrastructural tools and frameworks to support local communities in applying the Ten Principles through six interconnected program areas, including Arts, Civic Involvement, Culture, Education, Philosophical Center and Social Enterprise.

Board of Directors as of December 31, 2014

Will Roger Peterson, Chairman of the Board

Larry Harvey, President of the Board, Chief Philosophical Officer

Crimson Rose Peterson, Secretary

Marian Goodell, Chief Engagement Officer

Harley K. Dubois, Chief Transition Officer

Michael Mikel, Vice President

Terry Gross, Vice President

Jennifer Raiser, Treasurer

Chip Conley

David Walker

James Tananbaum

Kay Morrison

Leo Villareal

Matt Goldberg

Mercedes Martinez

Michael Farrah

Rae Richman

Financial Highlights

NON BRC PROGRAM EXPENSES



BURNING MAN ARTS



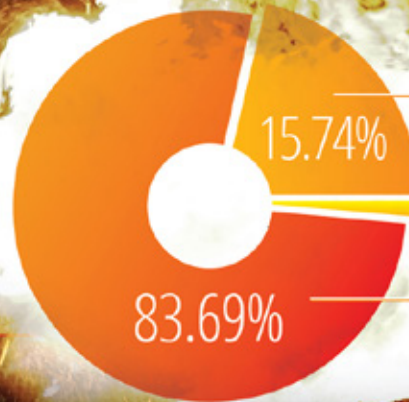
EDUCATION



REGIONALS



BURNERS WITHOUT BORDERS



OVERHEAD RATIO OF THE BURNING MAN PROJECT **16.3%**

ADMINISTRATION

0.57% FUNDRAISING

PROGRAMMING

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS



Assets

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$6,214,047
Accounts receivable	\$56,717
Refunds receivable	\$197,924
State tax receivable	\$159,023
Grants receivable	\$41,030
Other receivables	\$45,953
Inventory	\$36,110
Prepaid expenses	\$259,889
Total current assets	\$7,010,693
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT - net	\$3,041,154
OTHER ASSETS	
Deposits	\$89,222
Goodwill	\$4,320,295
Total assets	\$14,372,132

Liabilities and Net Assets

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$2,498,355
Notes payable - current portion	\$500,000
Total current liabilities	\$2,998,355
OTHER LIABILITIES	
Notes payable	\$1,401,000
Deferred rent	\$270,776
Total other liabilities	\$1,671,776
COMMITMENTS	0
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	\$9,560,410
Temporarily restricted	\$141,591
Total liabilities and net assets	\$14,372,132

Consolidated Statement of Activities

Year ended December 31, 2014

REVENUES AND SUPPORT	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Burning Man annual event	\$31,459,816	-	\$31,459,816
Contributions, gifts and grants	\$897,955	\$131,910	1,029,865
Contribution of Black Rock Arts Foundation	\$214,986	\$51,260	\$266,246
Other program revenue	\$20,443	-	\$20,433
Fundraising events - (net of direct expenses of \$263,717)	\$180,913	-	\$180,913
Interest Income	\$10,529	-	\$10,529
Other Income	\$94,654	-	\$94,654
	\$32,879,296	\$183,170	\$33,062,466
Net assets released from restrictions	\$176,780	(\$176,780)	-
Total revenues and support	\$33,056,076	\$6,390	\$33,062,466

EXPENDITURES

Program Expenses	\$25,764,708	-	\$25,764,708
Management and general	\$4,766,707	-	\$4,766,707
Fundraising	\$115,149	-	\$115,149
Total Expenditures	\$30,646,564	-	\$30,646,564
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$2,409,512	\$6,390	\$2,415,902
Net assets - beginning of year	\$7,150,898	\$135,201	\$7,286,099
Net assets - end of year	\$9,560,410	\$141,591	\$9,702,001