



Largest Circulation Daily on the Playa since 1992

BLACK ROCK Gazette

Rumor Hazzit...

RUMOR HAZZIT that Helco has bought out Hell, but in an unexpected takeover move, IBM is now the corporate owner. No, not International Business Machines, stooopid, the real IBM: "I'm Burning Man" . . . There was a terrible error made at the sign printers shop. It's not the Mail Order Bride Camp, but the Male Odor Bribe Camp (those of you hoping to get hitched will have to go elsewhere, and might I suggest the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence Camp where the ever-lovely Sister Zsa Zsa Glamour will perform wedding nuptials for you - but it's strictly BYOB: Bring Your Own Bride) . . . speaking of The Sisters, one of the nuns (whose name shall remain anonymous) has lost the keys to her van [this one's not a rumor; could I make up something this dumb?] and would appreciate assistance in either hotwiring or carjacking or something like that . . . Couch Potato Camp is serving neither potatoes nor couches - it's a total rook, folks . . . Lazy Camp used to be called Apathetic Camp, but they were too lazy to spell all that out. Be sure to drop by and give Eric the Listman (sysop for the Burning Man e-mail list) a great big thankew for putting up with our on-line shenanigans (especially Sister Dana, better known as the Spaminator) . . . The Alien Landing Site was unable to provide cattle mutilations as promised (the Meat Camp got to the cows first and sold the carcasses to McSatan's Beastro; talk about your mad cows, these cattle were furious!) but strange crop [dust] circles did appear . . . A hostile group of wymmyns libberz tore down the Burning Gallery, claiming "Gal" is not a politically correct term (hey, that's not funny) . . . Why do they call it House of Doors? Jim Morrison was nowhere near the joint . . . Due to a temporary water shortage, Mudhenge is now Dustbowl, so stop by, all you dust bunnies . . . The Camera Obscura has run out of film. Can anyone at F-Stop Camp help out? . . . Just a friendly warning

to anyone intending to visit Lounge Lizard Camp; man-eating geckos and Gila monsters will nip at your heels while you're cocktailing, but if you bring a box of flies, it could divert the lil' lizards. . . Sinful Rhino Camp has a lot of horny hippos charging around and they might try to mount you. Remain calm. Sex with a hippopotamus lasts 10 seconds max . . . Mona Mongoose's Massage Parlor is open and doing a thriving business; sailors admitted free (Mona loves seafood) . . . I'm sorry to report that Camp Darwin has not evolved one bit: it's still just a bunch of knuckle-draggers! . . . The Fashion Show was cancelled due to numerous sartorial violations and resulting citations, so don't believe anyone who says there's a Fashion Show: puh-leeze! A bunch of half-naked people working a runway in really bad drag does not qualify as fashion . . . Beware of Cacaphonies running around masquerading as members of the Cacophony Society . . . The Glow Camp was issuing faulty cockings and has announced a total recall; apparently a chemical in the glow-in-the-dark paint causes a permanent hard-on and terminal horniness. . . Although the Staggering Libido Sisters put on a fabulous show, they're bitter that they didn't get a helicopter opening their set like the staggering Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence did! Watch for SPI's next miracle, when they turn water into piss and feed the masses brownies at their communion. This just in: a group of rogue Helco rebels intends to take over Sunday night's event, calling it Moistest Person - the Man will not burn, but just get wet. Bring squirt guns and fire hoses, and feel free to Piss Clear on the Man.

- Sister Dana Van Iquity

DISCLAIMER: Almost all of the following is a tissue of lies, myths, and outright rumors. For entertainment purposes only. Do not use internally. If swelling persists, seek medical help.



The Portland Cacophony crew (you may know them as the Disgruntled Postal Workers) staged a book burning Friday night, handing out white-trash fiction and other well-thumbed tomes for attendees to torch.

Book Review: Inferno (from The Divine Comedy)

It may seem strange to review a work that was written in the early 1300s, but the relevance of Dante's Inferno to Burning Man 1996 is inescapable. Last night's procession to the Inferno—through the Gates of Hell, across the River Styx and into the City of Dis—followed the narrative set down by Dante nearly seven hundred years ago.

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) is considered by many to have been Italy's first "modern" writer. He came from Florence, which was, at the time, a fractious democracy whose nascent modernism engendered an intellectual and political climate that might not seem foreign to us.

In the Inferno, the spirit of the ancient Roman poet Virgil conducts Dante through Hell, interpreting and describing as they descend. When Dante does not comprehend the meaning of the inscription above the Gates of Hell ("...ABANDON ALL HOPE, WHO ENTER HERE"), Virgil replies that "here one must leave behind all hesitation..." a fitting reminder for all of us around the playa to free our minds for the total experience of Burning Man. "Voices shrill and faint and beating hands all went to make a tumult that will whirl forever through that turbid, timeless air, like sand that eddies when a whirlwind swirls" [Canto III 21]. Make a tumult tonight and leave behind all hesitation.

Other recommended reading for a deeper understanding of the Burning Man phenomenon is a new book out of England, George McKay's *Random Acts of Senseless Beauty: Cultures of Resistance Since the Sixties*. A good overview of two decades of free festival culture in Britain, from the Stonehenge battles over access to the site to the development of anarchopunk response to Thatcherism, McKay's personal account of England's counterculture will ring bells with B-Man veterans and newcomers alike.

- Patrick Gavin Duffy

A great recipe for jackrabbit - open season year-round in Nevada - is spreading like wildfire through camp. The spit-roasted "Jackrabbit Marinade" "tastes like salmon," says Will Roger. (Sources say not a good survival meal, however. Lean jackrabbit flesh takes more calories to consume than it provides.)

Recipe Corner

Geyser to Open with Bovine BBQ

Fly Geyser has transformed itself into a pay-per-plunge entity this year (which beats getting busted for trespassing). For anyone staying here through Monday night it will be doubly well worth a visit. In addition to the soothing warm waters of the place, on that night they celebrate their official grand opening of the mineral pools with the Burning of the Cows.

Sculptor Annie Westerbeke invites artists, bands and any other interested souls out to the Geyser to help renew the old Fly farm and future artists' retreat. Celebrants will be able to swim in the hot pools while a number of desiccated and/or mummified cow carcasses from the site are returned to the earth in a grand bovine conflagration.

To get to Fly Geyser, turn right along highway 34 at the Burning Man entry site and drive for about five miles. The springs are on the right just before the road becomes unpaved.

- Linda Comer

Fringe Faction to Melt Mallard

The Burning Duck Festival is billed as your alternative to the alternative. Unlike some single-species pyrotechnic events you may be attending this weekend, this multispecies pyrotechnic festival is difficult to interpret. Organizers warn that making any sense of it requires hyperintelligence.

No lawyers were involved in the conception or planning of the Burning Duck Festival, so there will be no perimeter ropes. Celebrants will be encouraged to jump over the flaming fowl.

Bring your hibachi to celebrate hibachi diversity in the camp. Witness a one-car art car parade. Get in on this hot new festival while it's still small and intimate . . . Monday at 9:30 a.m. in the Central Circle.

- Linda Comer

Scary Performance Art: Burning Man Foodstuffs

- "Chipped beef and Cheez Whiz." Rick Pottor
- "Oranjaboome" beer and wedding cake." Doc Anderson
- "Spicy Chili Dogs, Pop Tarts" and Sauerkraut." Max Rx
- "Canned brown bread, kiwis and red wine." Richard Petersen
- "Lobster, steak and shrimp." Les Seidler
- "Not much." Pilot Jeff Smith
- "Twelve boxes of Little Debbie snack cakes, pickled her-ring and Bloody Marys." Brody Culpepper
- "Tuna fish in A-1" sauce." Yome Amma
- "Hominy, collard greens, scotch and soda, twelve pounds of spaghetti." Bindlestiff Family Circus
- "Salmon with green apple in a cream sauce, fresh basil pesto, sliced mozzarella and tomatoes." Dr. Michael Moore

- Rusty Blazenhoff

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In yesterday's Gazette, Rusty Blazenhoff was inadvertently omitted from the masthead. The Black Rock Gazette regrets the error.

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Central Camp Quotes (Saturday afternoon)

- "Have you seen my kitty? She's 5'10", blonde with big thighs."
- "Man, they should bring a soda machine out here or something."
- "So far there are over 15,000 people here today."
- "I forgot to bring my sunscreen. They must have a shop around here for sundries and stuff."
- "Yeah, I work in San Francisco, here's my card. Give me a ring and we'll do each other over lunch."
- "Dude, I just saw major hooters."
- "Maybe they should do this over Columbus Day weekend when it wouldn't be so hot."
- "They use that gel stuff to light the dogs on fire."
- "We are trading pancakes for syrup, pancakes for syrup."
- "Give me my stick back. Why would you steal my stick? I worked hard to make that."
- "Free sex with a fat hairy man with halitosis!"
- "Harry Harvel is the guy who started this festival 14 years ago. Yeah, he's a good friend of mine."
- "Dude, I just drank a whole six-pack!"
- overheard by Rusty Blazenhoff

11 WEIRD THINGS 2 DO IN THE RENO AREA

1. Stare at The Silver Legacy Casino's 40-foot moving sculpture of a mining derrick. It looks like it's mining the gamblers and tourists. Also, it's the world's first amusement park ride that you can't touch or ride on, and it has an amazing simulated sky display if you're tired of the real thing.
2. Look at every car in the National Automobile Museum: the surprising thing about this is that it's so boring. But then, you drove there, for crissake.
3. Climb around in the abandoned cyanide/gold leaching factory in Goldhill: built after the turn of the century, it was one of the largest concrete structures of the time. It's been abandoned for decades but you can still get into it. Lots of tunnels, stairs and graffiti. Beautiful blue ponds inside.
4. Drive through the brothel/junkyard complex at Moundhouse: warehouses and auto dismantlers together in one place, this would make a great set for a movie by the guy who did "Sympathy for the Devil."
5. Tour the National Bowling Stadium: it's like an indoor football stadium with lanes. The public is not allowed to bowl here.
6. Spend an afternoon at The Wilbur D. May Museum: first, see the trophy room furnished entirely with nearly-extinct animal parts and then see a real shrunken human head!
7. Lay on the ground next to Pyramid Lake at night when it's very clear and dark: if you want to reflect on things, don't do it here, you will go way too far.
8. Go to the Nevada Club after midnight for pie: a classic casino, it was better before the remodeling but it's still pretty good. And, it's right next door to Dick Clark's American Bandstand Nightclub!
9. Drink at The Moon Rocks and motocross racetrack: beautiful granite outcrop in a natural setting that's also used as a motocross racetrack and fraternity party destination. Watch for profound graffiti and pretty bits of broken glass.
10. Listen to the singing bridge over the Truckee River on I-80 in Verdi: great asymmetrical music created by natural technology: it's the best thing I've heard in a while.
11. Dream about going to the Bargain Mart: for 5 years, there's been a sign next to the freeway in Reno that says "100,000 Square Foot Bargain Mart Indoor Swap Meet Opening Soon" on an empty lot.

-Bill Barker

MARKET DEBACLE! HELCO COLLAPSES!

Reports of a breakdown in talks between Burning Man and HELCO have sent shock waves through world financial markets. HELCO stock, valued at \$10,000 per share at the end of yesterday's trading on the New York, Tokyo, and Black Rock exchanges, has plunged to a minus value. Many investors, caught in panic selling, have leapt to their deaths. Danger Ranger has issued a community advisory directing all playa participants to steer clear of the towers in Central Camp.

The long-expected acquisition of Burning Man by HELCO began to unravel on Saturday night when thousands of playa activists stormed a HELCO stockholders' meeting in downtown Black Rock. Chanting, "Hell Co! Hell No!" the angry mob overturned Satan's throne, sending HELCO's board of directors scurrying for cover. The outraged participants proceeded to storm Hell's Gate. In the ensuing confusion, the City of Dis—Satan's Citadel—was destroyed, and the HELCO Tower, world headquarters of the supranational conglomerate, was burned to the ground. Property damage totals in the billions. There are no reports of injuries.

According to local sources, unrest over the proposed buyout of Burning Man by HELCO has been building for several months. Dissident Burning Man participants were joined on Saturday night by outlaw artists from PLUNDERTOWN, a group of renegade bohemians who have resisted HELCO takeover attempts throughout the summer. As a result of Saturday's turmoil, the acquisition of Burning Man by HELCO has been canceled and merger talks with Heaven, scheduled to take place later this year, have been indefinitely postponed. The Angel Gabriel, Heaven's chief negotiator, was unavailable for comment. Sources report, however, that Heaven's higher-ups, alarmed by yesterday's disturbance, fear a public relations backlash.

"This is only a beginning!" vowed Bishop Joey, a leading Burning Man dissident. Clad only in a soiled burnoose, the disheveled firebrand spoke to a scattered group of supporters early this morning. "Tonight we will celebrate!" he stated. "Tomorrow we will take this fight straight back to the heart of corporate America!" As of this writing, however, it appears that Hell itself will survive the demise of its parent company. HELCO has collapsed into a morass of insolvency, but Hell, enriched by a bumper crop of suicides, seems likely to remain with us for a very long time.

-Darryl Van Rhey

ASK DR. DOUG...

IT'S ALIVE!

With the wild times and greener pastures of the Pleistocene megafauna and Lake Lahontan squarely in the past, the Black Rock Desert of today may seem like a hollow shell of its former self. The Climatic drying at the end of the Ice Age also created greater extremes in temperature (freezing winters and broiling Labor Day Weekend events). It may seem a dull, desolate wasteland, but I call it the greatest mid-elevation desert sagebrush-scrub community the world has ever seen! This specific habitat is found nowhere else on earth, and you're sittin' (or face-down drunk) smack-dab in the middle of it. (Although you may not see much, the Black Rock Desert and adjacent areas are teeming with life. Deer, pronghorn antelope, coyotes, bobcats and mountain lions live here (see the taxidermy displays in Gerlach for some prime examples). So do a variety of other creatures like kit foxes, badgers, weasels, kangaroo rats and about a dozen species of bats. To beat the heat, most of them are active at dawn, dusk or night.

The Playa itself is rather sterile and relatively void of life, so don't feel too bad for camping here. The occasional spider, centipede, scorpion or solpugid may make its way into your sleeping bag, but that's about it. (or no-see-ums. —ed.) The edges of the Playa host abundant but scrubby vegetation that form the basis of the food chain, and this is where your wildlife viewing should begin. In the local hills you can find the Great Basin rattlesnake, which only lives in this area, as well as tarantulas, horned lizards, whipsnakes and the elusive ringtail cat. Thousands of birds migrate through the area each year, and many local species are found only in the Great Basin, but oddly enough, Nevada is the only state in the U.S. where salamanders have never been seen. There is a free keg of beer for the first person who captures one and brings it to me (along with their State of Nevada Scientific Collection Permit).

Lake Lahontan was once a haven for fish, and many species were totally unique, but in the past 100 years many have become rare or extinct. The construction of the western railroad system in the 1870's opened up a commercial venture that depleted Pyramid Lake of its fish. Packed in ice-filled rail cars, the fish could be shipped anywhere from Ogden to San Francisco, and up to a million pounds were harvested yearly. With fishing unchecked, dams being built and pollutants from sawmills and mining entering the lake, the fish populations collapsed. The Lahontan cutthroat trout was almost wiped out, but a few still linger on today. If you stop at Pyramid Lake on the way home, take a dip, and fish if you have a license, but toss the poor surviving bastard back alive this time. Murry thanks you.

-Doug Long

BE CAREFUL OUT THERE, OK?

There's no better way to harsh a post-Burning Man mellow than to get pulled over by the Nevada Highway Patrol. So while you may have dispensed with all your inhibitions when you rolled onto the playa, please recover some behind-the-wheel good sense before you hit the road for the ride home.

Don't give the authorities any reason to pull you over and, if they do, don't give them any reason to bust you. (Vehicle searches may include a once over with a drug-sniffing canine!)

Here's what the Nevada's finest are driving these days: mostly late-model Chevy Caprices and Camaros, with some earlier generation Mustangs. Motorcycle cops drive Kawasaki 1100s. All vehicles are painted a dark, metallic blue. Cars have white diagonal bars across the front doors with a state seal in the center. Newer cruisers have low-profile, clear-lens lights that can be hard to see from a distance. There are also some unmarked cruisers and all-black Ford Broncos.

According to speed trap registries, the stretch of highway 80 between Reno and state line is notorious for officers on patrol. Fast Burning Man veteran will tell you, however, that cops have definitely made themselves conspicuous on highway 447 between Gerlach and Wadsworth over Labor Day weekend.

Civilization can be just as nasty and brutish as the desert. So drive safely, okay?

MURRY OF DA DESERT



DR. ANDERSON