

The playa's largest daily circulation since 1992

# Black Rock Gazette

Thursday September 3rd 1998  
burning man festival, black rock city, nv usa

## ART ON THE PLAYA

FREE

### Squares on the playa...

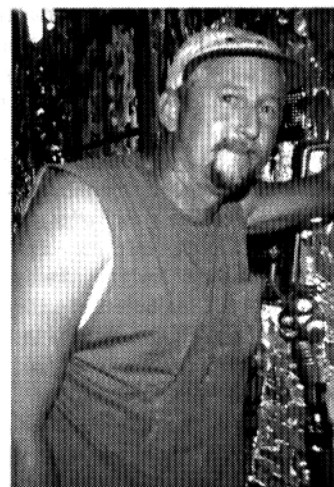


photo by Steve Schwartz

In this wild and shady city you will find some real squares on the playa. Finley Fryer, and his wife, Jayne, hail from Dunsmir, CA. They brought along a couple thousand pounds of recycled plastic and glass and have erected the *Chapel of the Burning Book*. It looks like a cathedral with ethereal figures embedded in a mosaic of glimmering colors, but there will be no book burnings. Fryer calls his creation *The Plastic Chapel* and first conceived it 18 years ago after seeing a small miracle on the island of Guernsey, a tiny chapel built of glass by a priest who wanted to spread The Word. What you will hear when you visit this chapel though will be spoken word and music, for the chapel is actually a theatre stage.

The front panels of the plastic chapel have been on display at the New Museum in New York, 1975 but the visitation of Finley's cathedral on the playa here took about 6 months to construct using 1800 tubes of acrylic caulk and the work, plastic bottles and shared inspiration of many individuals in his Mt. Shasta community. "Burning Man is the place I wanted to debut this piece," says Finley, "here you can do what you want." He hopes the chapel and some of the crew's performances will go on tour.

Anyone may perform on the stage of this flaming chapel (YES! LOOK UP!) if you schedule in with Eric at their camp directly across the Esplanade. Mario Rubino is theatre director and Steve Rice can make almost anything happen. Midnight Mass will be performed on the stage Friday and Saturday night. Guess what time.

There's also a big square to be seen in the quieter south end of camp. This one is actually a house with a loft and roof access, but Rubick doesn't live there.



### Cool!

The theme camp Antarctica at N15th & Atlantic is actually a huge, refrigerated truck kept at a cool 50° to 70° degrees by its coolest inhabitant, Zander Rose, a member of the non-profit 10,000 Year Clock project headquartered in the Presidio of San Francisco. Board members of the *10,000 Year Clock* project include Stewart Brand and Brian Eno. (It is rumored that Stewart, founder of the Whole Earth Access catalog and author of *The Media Lab*, will be on the playa by Friday!) Cool down and enjoy a cup of hot chocolate, and bring Zander a donation of water.



### A Toast

You know, the creativity on the playa this year is **EXPLOSIVE, BRILLIANT, ABSURD, APOCALYPTIC, astounding, over-the-top**, a feast for eyes, ears and inquiring minds, but some of the best "art" on the playa is brewed right in your blender.

Uncle Bill and Jeanine of Pinas Coladas camp, along with Jene and Rodney, mix some of the hottest cool drinks on the playa at S20th and Village Way, sure to set your day on fire, and it's FREE. Of course, this is a barter town... go on down and share an artistic challenge with a brew of your own!



### Art on the town

For those of you who were able to visit the Art of Burning Man... an incendiary exhibition, July 29 - August 29, at the San Francisco Art Commission Gallery, and appreciated the review of some of best of Burning Man — and let us know — we thank you, our citizens, for making it all possible!

## SPORTS

### Dust Devil Riding

A nifty thing about the Black Rock Desert is the dust devil. If you are lucky enough to have one come close, run to it as fast as you can, get into its center and look up. You'll see that you are in a swirling tube of dust and you'll realize you're a swirling tube of dust. WOW.

A few years ago I saw a really tall dust devil that hung around Boreldo hot springs the whole afternoon. I was dark brown and must have been over a thousand feet tall. The local Indians believe these vortices to hail the spiritual return of an ancestor, and so revere this natural wonder. They do not like Whities calling them "dust devils," but "geo thermals" just lacks feeling.

I doubt you could be carried off by a dust devil, although people have been lifted and thrown down by them. PLAYA FUN!

—Chris DeMontroy

## RADIO FREE BURNING MAN

### A very brief history

Welcome to Radio Free Burning Man, 99.5 FM. We are a 24 hour a day radio station broadcasting in our fifth year from the heart of Black Rock City, Nevada.

Radio Free Burning Man (RFBM) was founded in 1994, when friend and fellow cohort Dusty Balls dragged a few of us Bay Area folk to this shin-dig called the Burning Man. That first year we shared the back of an RV with the production crew of Black Rock Gazette, the camp newspaper. With about 1500 participants, people were coming and going all hours of the night and day. Our duty was just to be a pirate radio station in the middle of the desert: loud and obnoxious. We played music that would challenge our listeners and welcomed poets and artists to share their own words and ideas. John Hell lost his voice, and we began the yearly tradition of the "Sunday Morning Church Revival Show" with The Reverend John Hell and Father Oblivion.

By 1995 our General Manager and head engineer, Gordon Burke - along with his father - had built a masterpiece of a cathedral - a monument to pirate radiodom. Our 8 x 12 foot building was erected in the exact center of the camp, along with a fifty foot tower for the antenna. We allowed participants to get involved and everyone to sign-up for 25-minute shifts. It was fun, but hard work with everybody coming and going. Along with the wind, sand and rain storms that forced us to shut down a few times, it was a little dusty and crazy. By '95 we had a larger building; knew to keep the equipment dust-free, and housed all of the radio equipment for the Black Rock Rangers, those scurvy and loveable dogs who patrol the camp to keep all of us little ones nice and safe. My bike was stolen that year.

continued on page 2

## Let's talk trash

It's something most of us don't think about. We go through our daily lives getting coffee in to-go cups, pouring shampoo out of plastic bottles and unwrapping candy bars or cigarettes. Even those of us who conscientiously recycle their cans and bottles or bring groceries home in canvas bags leave a trail of garbage in their wake. We stash it in containers outside our homes, and in the morning find it has magically disappeared.

While Black Rock City feels like paradise found to many of its citizens, it still suffers from some of the ills of modern society. Automobile traffic in '96 made Black Rock City feel like downtown Los Angeles, with people commuting from the suburbs by car. And thus the organizers spoke: Thou Shalt Not Drive Thy Car in Black Rock City. And it worked. In the cozier confines of Hualapai Playa, the denizens of Black Rock learned that not only could we get around without our vehicles, but that it was much more pleasant that way. This year the plethora of creative transports is big entertainment.

In 1997, the heftiest problem was garbage. A poorly-placed dumpster caused some of our less-enlightened citizens to believe that their ticket price included garbage service. Mounds of trash were left on-site.

In mid-October, days before a big clean-up weekend, the Reno Gazette-Journal ran a story about the mess we had left on Fly Ranch, complete with one of those large, beautiful color photos Gannett is famous for. The paper later printed a retraction, but pictures speak louder than words. At the Burning Man booth in Reno on Earth Day, locals were surprised to learn we had cleaned up Fly Ranch. We went from being "the group with the excellent environmental record" to "the irresponsible people who had a big party and didn't clean up." People who objected to Burning Man for moral reasons now had some hard evidence to back up their claims that we were detrimental to Northern Nevada's fragile ecosystem.

It's easy to say that perception and reality often don't match, that adequate clean-up was done. But at BLM scoping meetings in May in Gerlach, garbage was the locals' numero uno complaint. This included not only garbage blowing away from campsites, but people depositing their trash in Gerlach and Empire on their way out. Taking it off the playa is not enough. How would we feel if a bunch of people came over, had a party in our backyard and expected us to clean it up? We would not be happy campers. Which brings us to the 1998 commandment: Thou Shalt Leave No Trace.

But what exactly does that mean? Of course there's the obvious stuff, like building materials, camping equipment and cigarette butts. The majority of Black Rock's citizens are conscientious enough to realize that all of this has to go, and do a good job of cleaning it up. But what they don't realize is that for weeks after the festivities have ended, a dedicated crew of people will be crawling around on the playa, looking for any evidence of our presence. Creativity has three parts: planning, execution, and clean-up. The last part is the least fun. It's also the most crucial.

We may not all be aware of what constitutes a "trace." Most of us have gone camping and thrown apple cores into the woods, knowing they will become part of the earth or feed furry little forest creatures. This concept does not hold true on the Black Rock Desert. There is nothing for organic materials to biodegrade into. The playa is comprised of alkali clay nearly a mile deep. Last time I checked, this clay contained no trace elements like chips and salsa. Human beings are the only animals foolish enough to try to live in this usually-inhospitable environment. Your crumbs will not nourish the squirrels, and the woolly mammoths found around Black Rock Desert are long dead and therefore have no appetite.

continued on page 2

Thursday 09.03.98

## Black Rock Gazette

Talking Trash... continued from page 1

Unless you live in a rural area with no services, garbage collection is a given, and part of the municipal plan. I'd like to take this opportunity to point out that the biggest expense in Black Rock City's budget is waste disposal — human waste, that is. Tack some more on the end for site clean-up, and that doesn't leave a whole lot of money for fun and games.

Of course, fun and games is one of the biggest reasons we take up residence in Black Rock City each year. There is a feeling of freedom which doesn't exist in everyday life. But the flip side of freedom is responsibility. It's a big stretch to baby-sit your beer bottles and cigarette butts while dancing madly or watching a performance at night. Just make sure you pick up your own, or someone else's, slack in the morning. Taking care of each other is an integral part of the Burning Man experience. Perhaps we could extend this to taking care of each other's trash.

The thought of driving hundreds of miles with bags of stinking trash when you leave Black Rock City is not a pleasant one. Instead of putting your trash off in Gerlach or Empire or Nixon and pissing off the locals, I invite you to visit beautiful Lockwood, Nevada on the outskirts of Reno. This is where the Washoe County Municipal Dump is located, and they will be more than happy to take that trash off your hands for a couple of dollars. It's their job.

Way too many people have unfairly compared Burning Man to a music festival, and more than a few have accused us of being a bunch of hippies or Deadheads. But there is a definite correlation between 90s Deadheads and ourselves. By the time Jerry Garcia clocked out, the Grateful Dead had been not-so-politely banned from performing in dozens of communities in the U.S. The reason? Their fans had a tendency to party it up and leave a huge mess. As we learned in 1997, finding a new location every year is an expensive and stressful process.

The Black Rock Desert is the perfect environment for Burning Man, and we want to continue to make it our home for years to come. The BLM, Washoe County and the citizens of Gerlach have been kind enough to give us another chance to show them that freedom and responsibility are not mutually exclusive. During the festival, consider carrying a small garbage bag while exploring our city (clean-as-you-go means less to do at the end). And when you leave, do your damndest to make sure no 22nd-century archaeologist will discover that *Burnus Sapiens* once roamed the playa.

Because, as the Black Rock Rangers have been known to say, "Your mother isn't here."

— by Fiona Essa

### Thought for the Day...

The world, an entity out of everything, was created by neither gods nor men, but was, is and will be eternally living fire, regularly becoming ignited and regularly becoming extinguished.

— Heraclitus, The Cosmic Fragments (c. 480 B.C.)

Radio Free Burning Man ... continued from page 1

By 1996 we realized that our job was to have fun, entertain and educate. And we did! We wanted to be THE radio station at Burning Man, and there's been some tough competition.

By 1997, we were a mainstay at center camp. Located along the perimeter of center camp, we now have a veranda with park benches and an overhang outside and the greatest addition of all inside, AIR CONDITIONING! We now have public service announcements every three minutes, loud & crazy regular DJ's, a daily news show, and a part time public service director, whose job it is to take the burden away from the jock by receiving notes to read on the air.

The entire camp can listen to 99.5 fm day and night. Stop by to say hi or offer a helping hand. We don't want to turn anyone away. And remember, we get the story before the big time media does. Who was the one to tell CNN that Princess Diana had died? Radio Free Burning Man, that's who. That's right, RFBM gets first crack at interviews with all the big wigs at Burning Man: Larry Harvey, Danger Ranger, Flash, Crimson Rose, Harley Bierman, Maid Marion, just to name a few. To paraphrase something that Michael Michael once said: everything that you did wrong this year, you will learn to do right next year (or not do it at all). And that is a true motto for Radio Free Burning Man.

— by John Hell

## Playa Crossword

Mike Woodridge

1	2	3		4	5	6
7						
8				9		
		10	11	12		
13						
		14				
15	16			17	18	19
20						
21				22		

### Across

- Russian-born sculptor
- It really lights up the playa
- iLaf lead-in
- The way to take tea on the playa
- PC key
- Lots of bare skin can be seen using this at Burning Man
- Roofing goo
- In \_\_\_\_\_ (disoriented)
- Econ. indicator
- A handy thing to have in a dust storm
- Inhale

### Down

- Regularly
- Expanse north of Gerlach
- Sex Pistols record label
- Familiar vehicle at Burning Man
- Ground-level digit
- Finish
- \_\_\_ Minor
- Talks noisily
- Estrada, et.al.
- To the rear
- Famous toy maker init.
- Exclamation of wonder

## Yesterday's Answers

1	O		2	B		3	E	4	R	5	T	6	E
7	F	8	U	L	L	M	O	O	N				
9	T	R	A			10	I	C	E	D			
11	E	S	C							K			
12	N	A	K	E	D	E		13	Y	14	E		
			R					15	T	A	R		
16	A	17	F	O	18	G		19	C	P	I		
20	F	A	C	E	M	A	S	K					
21	T	O	K	E					R				S

The Black Rock Gazette is published onsite by Burning Man's Interim Ministry of Propaganda and the Embassy of Ice. Opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of Burning Man LLC. Printed in the USA on 100% recycled paper.

Publisher: Stuart Mangrum  
 Editor: Vicki Olds  
 Distribution: Paisley Hayes, Tobone "Ku-ku-kui" geekboy@  
 Wiring: Doc Black, Fiona Essa, Vicki Olds,  
 Contributors: Mike Woodridge, John Hell, Phlizzz, Steve Schwartz  
 Thanks: Maid Marian, Darryl Van Rhey, BRC-OPW, Mr. Freeze

