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# Black Rock Gazette

Tuesday September 1, 1998  
burning man festival black rock city NV usa

## BRACE FOR IMPACT!

Quick, violent Playa storms can blow away everything in sight.

FREE

One of the signature traits of the Playa is its capacity for extreme weather. A desert storm is an occasion of great power and majesty, a primal experience that has touched the soul of every desert survivor. Newcomers to the area — and that includes those of you who attended last year's Burn at Hualapai Flat — need to be aware that the topography of the Black Rock Desert tends to create highly unstable weather conditions. Hot, dry air rushes across the flat desert floor for miles, unopposed by any terrain and then — bang — it slams into cold mountains. With its hot, dry center pushing up powerful thermals, it's not unusual for the Playa to be completely ringed by thunderheads all afternoon. When the central airmass finally begins to cool and the pressure drops, squalls can come ripping across the Playa at freeway speeds, bringing dust storms, lightning, rain and hail.

These summer storms tend to be brief and intense — seldom more than 20 or 30 minutes in duration — but they can do a lot of damage. In addition to shredding flimsy shade structures, Playa storms have been known to carry off tents, tables, chairs, clothes, luggage, and countless works of folk art. Worse, they've been known to blow personal effects and trash right out of camp, creating a serious clean-up problem in the nearby foothills.

To counter the risk of windblown debris leaving our city limits, we ask that everyone take special care this year to secure their camps — and particularly their kitchen areas and trash bags — at all times. You never know when the weather is going to make a sudden shift, so it's particularly important to batten down your camp before leaving it unoccupied — even if you're just going to be gone a few minutes.

If you have questions about storm preparedness or techniques for better camp construction, ask a Ranger. Better still, talk it up with your neighbors. Survival — in storms as in most everything else — tends to favor the group. —Jesus Cuervo



### Black Rock City Radio Stations

- 89.5 KBHR FM AND ZQ, BEAREA 51
- 90.5 Wonderful WIND / KIGS, Irrational Geographic Society
- 91.5 Frequency Publica (Radio by the people, for the people)
- 92.3 Radio KTOA, "The Voice Of The Temple"
- 94.1 The "Salt the Eunuch" Poetry Beacon
- 95.3 Radio Loose Whirrygig, Gigsville
- 97.5 DIOX
- 99.1 KMO
- 99.5 RFBM, Radio Free Burning Man
- 99.9 No Radio Here (move along please)
- 101.3 bUrNing MAuS Radio
- 102.3 Assault Radio
- 103.1 SPURT radio
- 107.7 KFRK (K-Freak!), Disturbia Radio

### Nebulous Entity Seen Prowling the Playa

Animal, mineral or vegetable? Maybe all three, and perhaps none. Local authorities have been inundated with reports of a large, slow-moving object on the Playa. The origin and purpose of this strange phenomenon have been the subject of intense speculation, with witnesses describing the otherworldly apparition as "squidlike," "pulsing," and "like a big thingy with thingies hanging off of it."

### Submit!

Bring your stories, rumors, digital photographs, comix, ice, etc. to the Gazette office in Center Camp, 1-5pm daily.

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### 911 Network for CBs and Hams

If you're packing a CB or licensed HAM radio, you can use it to reach the Black Rock Rangers in the event of a medical emergency, disturbance, or other problem requiring Ranger assistance.

#### Emergency Channels:

- CB: Channel 8
- 2m: 146.52 MHz (No CTCSS or PL tone)
- 70cm: 446.0 MHz (No CTCSS or PL tone)

Tune to the appropriate channel and call "Break Break Emergency Traffic." A dispatcher should answer your call quickly. Once contact has been established, be prepared to state your name, your location (theme camp, landmark(s), intersection, and/or other distinguishing features), and the nature of the emergency. Try to remain in radio contact until the Rangers arrive.

Please do not use these emergency frequencies for other purposes, as this may interfere with someone else getting help.

### 12-Step Group

Burning Desires 12-Step Meeting Group, Friday through Monday, 9/4 - 9/7, 9:00 am, Center Camp next to the Cafe. BYO coffee.

### NeighBARhood Pride

The NeighBARhood, Black Rock City's all-barter dive district, invites conscious adults to stop by and tip a few cocktails. Bring booze, ice, or mixers to donate to your favorite bar in this land-o-bars. Barter only; no cash sales or freeloaders. Grand opening Thursday at Sundown.

### The Black Rock Gazette

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"All writing is garbage" —Avalard

## BRC Department of Public Works doesn't care about you

As Black Rock City has grown in size each year, there has been an ever-increasing need for on-site construction to begin well before the event gates actually open. Site manager Will Roger arrived in Nevada on July 1st to establish a staging area north of last year's site, on an 80-acre plot unofficially dubbed 'Willville'. These 80 Acres would serve as the onsite base of operations until the activation of the BLM permit on August 15th. Street signs were constructed, supplies were stockpiled and a large polebarn was built to act as an open-air shade structure for workers and artists.

And this year, the loyal core of workers who actually build the city and then remove all traces of it post-burn, finally have an identity: The Black Rock City Department of Public Works.

Will Roger is the Superintendent of the DPW, and proudly announces their slogan: "We Don't Care and You Don't Matter." Days after the DPW moved onto the playa, to become the first established camp in Black Rock City, Will talked about the work involved in making Burning Man a reality. "I work with a designer (Rod Garrett) who designs the city, and then he hands it over to me and we build it. Now last year, the difference was that we had to cut roads into sagebrush, and this year we're out on the playa again. I don't have to



Sign at the entrance to Willville, HQ of the BRC-DPW

do any work with heavy equipment." Road construction may be easier, but there's still a lot to do. "We make all the fireplaces, we do all the rented buildings for staff functions, all the fencing, and all the signage which will probably approach 600 signs. We'll be on call for firefighting if necessary. We also have to keep all the main roads free of parked cars. We'll have a wrecker there... and we'll just tow 'em." Will smiles mischievously, "We'll even have an impound lot." The DPW also will be responsible for clean-up after the event is over. "I can only be (on-site) for 14 days (after the Burn) to clean up, and then I'll spend about 3 weeks up at the 80 Acres buttoning everything up."

"My crew is just a crack crew, these guys work in the heat all day long, and the morale's so good we feel like we could build anything at this point, especially (Head Foreman) Flynn (Mauthé), Tony (Perez), Circus Boy, Cowboy Carl..."

There's a lot more to Will than his DPW persona. It was fire-artist Will Roger along with BM Performance Director (and Naked Fire Goddess) Crimson Rose who lit the man from 1994 to 1996. Will was 'Mr. Clean' in 1996's HELCO takeover of Burning Man, was declared Mayor of Black Rock City last year, and is an accomplished black and white photographer as well. His duties with the DPW come first, though. "We're kinda the unsung heroes, we do it every year and finally we have a name and an identity and I think these guys, my staff, they're the real heroes of Black Rock City."

—Greg Rose

## Strong Grounds for Survival

By Miss P

Last year, a charming graduate student doing a thesis on Burning Man interviewed me for his research. He asked one question that I have been asked many times before: "If the policy of Burning Man is 'no vending', how is it that you can sell coffee in the café?"

It's time to set this issue to rest. The café at Burning Man is far more than just a place to buy things. It is in many ways a place unique in the world, in the very middle of a community that is equally unparalleled. Most significantly it meets more than one essential need.

As a member of the Burning Man community since our first year in the desert, I've seen that first encampment of 89 friends grow into a world-class city. We had radio stations, a newspaper, art, concerts, theater, fashion, and one massive public event, the burn. There was only one thing missing: a great café.

All big city coffeeholics know the value of place near home where you can get a perfect latte or cappuccino on the way out for the day, or as a mid-day or late evening restorative. But regulars at neighborhood spots also get to meet their community there, those faces seen daily.

Unlike cafés anywhere else, ours is a meeting place above all else. You don't need to see faces for a month before you exchange words; interactivity is the objective. Lazing under the only big shade in town, sipping the perfect latte (the only thing you might be missing except plumbing) you are surrounded by a sea of potential friends you haven't met yet, and no one will think you're strange if you immediately say hello.

The café at Burning Man never closes. In the one week we spend in our desert lives, we live a mini-lifetime. There is no time to sleep because there is too much to do, and coffee is there at any hour to maximize the days. When most of the camp has settled in for whatever sleep is possible, there is still a great place to go, and this year, with chamber music by the Sprockets Ensemble in the evenings and the flamenco troupe from San Francisco's Sol y Luna playing late nights. By a curious coincidence, the band from Sol y Luna will play under the canopy which, seen from the air, is shaped



continued on reverse

Tuesday 09.01.98

## Media to Undergo Rite of Passage

by Lee, Double Agent Media Whore

"How have you come prepared to participate?" This basic yet essential question will be put to every member of the media who makes the pilgrimage to Media Mecca this year.

There is no escaping the fact that Burning Man has become a widely known phenomenon eagerly sought after and extensively covered by the international press, resulting in a controversial symbiotic relationship between the media establishment and the Burning Man Project. There are some who feel that the media's scrutiny has become too intense, and many participants have encountered disrespectful members of the media who thoughtlessly impinge upon the primary creed of Black Rock citizens — do nothing to interfere with another's immediate experience.

Journalism is paradigmatically inscribed as a spectator's profession. Individuals are expected to divorce themselves from their own subjective opinions and experiences. Yet other students of the human experience have increasingly learned that "pure" objectivity cannot exist any cultural context, and we encourage the media to take a more anthropologic approach by interacting as participant-observers



## On Heat and Aggression

Wherein: \*Science!\* postulates that human aggression undergoes — complex mediation in extremely high ambient temperatures. It is specifically proposed that moderate levels of provocation, such as name-calling alone or an unpleasantly hot environment alone, tend to facilitate hostility (i.e. a primitive mode of adjustment) against other human beings, whereas the combination of strong provocation and an unpleasantly hot environment tends to inhibit aggression (i.e. induce alternative coping mechanisms). Fallen, fallen like the apple in the "long, hot summer": The ignorant presumption of a simple and straightforward relationship between heat and anger shrivels under Laboratory analysis.

The \*Science!\* Method: In a series of experiments, a secret "confederate" of the Laboratory is hired to provoke an emotional response from 72 subjects, who are later given an opportunity to aggress against the confederate by means of electric shock of varying intensity and duration.

The confederate and a subject are asked to evaluate themselves and each other on a series of traits. These ratings are then exchanged so that the subject is able to learn the impression he has made on his partner. In reality, the Laboratory has directed the confederate to systematically rate both himself and the subject very negatively (e.g., insincere, immature, hostile, below average in intelligence). The subject is then seated in a cell adjusted to one of three ambient temperatures (cool, warm or hot) with 10 push-buttons that administer shock levels to a modified Buss "aggression machine" (Buss, 1961). Ostensibly to study the effect of heat on his physiological reactions to electric shock, the confederate is then strapped into the "aggression machine".

Hilarity ensues. As illustrated in Figure 1, the mean level of aggression (Intensity x Duration) among the hot group is, of course, significantly greater than that of the cool group. Oppressive heat facilitates aggression by subjects who become pissed off under hot conditions even after being treated really nicely by the confederate.

By contrast and as \*Science!\* predicted, aggression under heat is inhibited in those previously provoked by a highly negative evaluation, as escape from discomfort becomes the prepotent response in their behavioral hierarchies. \*Science!\* postulates that combining extreme provocations elevates these subjects' desire simply to get out of the frying pan and off the hook, short-circuits directed hostility, and reduces their attacks against the confederate in order (a) to avoid delays that might result from having to listen to the confederate's cries of pain and (b) to minimize further negative reactions such as guilt, or long-winded reprimands from the Laboratory. Aggression is thus compromised.

\*Science!\* concludes: How do you beat the hate? Keep your shirt on, asshole.

throughout the event.

To facilitate a transition from spectator to participant, we're going to try something a little different this year. Members of the media will be educated, manipulated, and initiated into the mystery that is Burning Man. There will be costuming and we will turn the eye of the camera on them for a change. Enough said. The resulting images will be put on display at Media Mecca, and we encourage you to stop by and visit our little exhibition.

Specific theme camps, especially those with an interactive element, will be suggested as destinations in which to seek their own immediate experience. If yours is a media-friendly camp or village, please come by Media Mecca and let us know you'd like to join our fine contingent of media sluts. And bring your press kits!

As a token of their commitment to participate in the values of our community and to not do anything that disrupts another's immediate experience, they will receive a stylish set of eyeball feeliey-boppers and a matching eyeball media pass. Ask someone to tell you what he or she had to do to in order to acquire their hard-won token, and see what happens. The eyes also serve the practical purpose of ensuring that reporters and photographers treat our community with respect. Large cameras will be tagged with numbered eyeball stickers. If someone continues to get in your face after you have asked them to stop, take note of the number written in the eyeball's pupil and report them to one of the Rangers or Media Team members. We will deal with the naughty little stinkers accordingly.

Tagged with our watchful eyes and bearing remnants of our costuming, we will send them out to discover the stories that await.



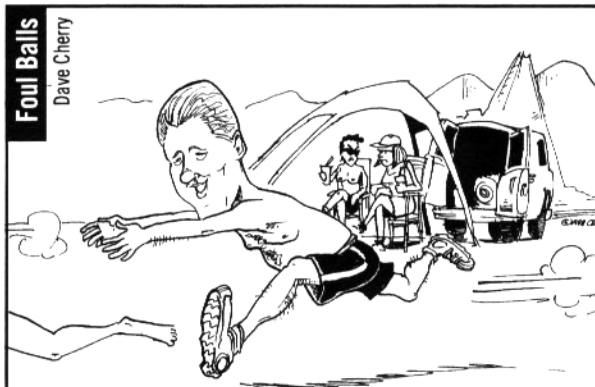
Authorized media folks will be sporting this "Eye of Approval." If not, send 'em to Media Mecca.

## Strong Grounds (continued from page 1)

like the sun and moon.

We would love to operate this café on the barter system. If everyone could trade us perfect coffee beans, a steady supply of milk, water, cups, equipment and qualified labor, yes. But failing that, we charge. No one is kicked out of this café for not buying something.

I call this establishment "Cafe Temps Perdu", the café of lost time. I chose this name because I am Black Rock City's resident Proust nut, and this name recalls the title of Proust's great work "A La Recherche du Temps Perdu." The cafe's name both satisfies my Proustian fixation and suggests exactly what a great café is, a place to lose many hours in interesting conversation. I have lost several small lifetimes here myself, and hope you'll enjoy it even half as much as I do.



"If there's one thing I can't stand, it's these jerks who show up just to chase naked women."