

# Black Rock Gazette

The Naked Truth Since 1992

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BURNING MAN 2002

BLACK ROCK CITY: POP. 12,347



## At the Edge- Trash Fence Tales

BY POSEIDON REX

Gaze in any direction from Black Rock City and, given an unobstructed view, you will see an orange band somewhere out on the periphery. At five miles in length, this four-foot mesh fence serves as a silent partner in our efforts to leave the playa free of evidence of our having been here.

The fence is not completely without a voice, since the garbology of a place can speak volumes in litter iconography. A sampling of today's two black plastic bag loads yielded a sheet of instructions for a closet organizer, a number of entrance gate handouts, a label from a five-gallon gas can, seven aluminum cans—and a copy of a past issue of this paper.

Conceived in 1996 by Larry Breed (aka Ember) the first trash fence, of 2-ft black net and orange ribbon, was built for \$400 and ran for a mile in a meandering, Christo/Running Fence fashion. His intent, he said, was to capture escaping trash; but "at Burning Man, everything can be art."

Several volunteer trash-fence cleaners mentioned finding ziplock bags containing an herbal substance. All had also experienced finds of small denominations of paper legal tender, and they said a past volunteer had found a hundred-dollar bill during the post-burn clean up.

The Earth Guardians are looking for more people to help scour the orange perimeter—who knows what you might find? ☞



**Impatient Soul from Mystery Camp asks:**

*Three of us are sharing a rather small tent, and we have discovered that one person's idea of "roughing it at Burning Man" means totally ignoring personal hygiene. In other words, he is starting to stink up a storm! What should we do?*

**Finally! Someone is starting to get an appreciation for the olfactory torment I'm subjected to each year when you hairy beakless freaks invade my home! You spend all that time primping and preening and slathering yourself with lotions and potions and notions, but nothing can mask that horrid primate musk that oozes from every one of your featherless follicles.**

**What I'm trying to say here is that you humans stink. And it's pretty damned funny that one of you even stinks enough to offend another. From my nasal perspective, you're all offensive and it's all I can do to keep from choking to death on your thick scent. I'd peck your eyes out, but that would involve getting a tad too close for my comfort.**

**So we're going to try a little experiment here. I'll help you with your little problem, and let's just see if others won't take my none-too-subtle hint and start to clean up their act. Maybe by the time this is all over you freaks will be a tad more tolerable.**

**First, take your friend out to the Greeter Station to have sex with a Greeter. This will do nothing for his smell, but I've noticed the Greeters are getting a bit desperate and I kind of feel sorry for them. Then bring Mr. Stinky back to camp, shave his body, exfoliate his skin and place a comfy pillow under his feet. Finally, whack him on the back of the head with a shovel and then use the same shovel to bury him in a shallow grave. Move to the next camp and repeat.**

Do you have a question for the Playa Chicken? Drop it off at the Gazette office in Center Camp. ☞

## errata

Pirates took over the Black Rock Gazette on Monday! Pirates who knew just enough about putting out a newspaper to be dangerous. Fortunately, they were also punctual pirates, and nearly met our publication deadline.

Buccaneers are seemingly not as concerned with Strunk and White as is the Black Rock Gazette. If there were not cutlasses to our throats, we would not have forgotten WeeGee's photo credit for the Creature of the Deep. Only the threat of a keel-hauling could have forced us to omit Walter's photo credit of her picture of Rubia. It must have been the shackles that made us not write out that yesterday's paper was Volume XI, Issue 42, that the event is Burning Man, and we are all in Black Rock City. On top of that, they reported the weather! The Nerve!

This is why we prepare meticulously, but still come on out just to see what happens! We hope that we find calmer seas as we sail into midweek of the Floating World! ☞

## Mean Streets

BY ENIGMA

It may have been a harmless prank or intended as a form of radical self-expression, but a group that altered Black Rock City street signs could have created a disaster, Black Rock Rangers said on Tuesday.

On Monday, a group that called itself "Takin' Back the Streets" changed the longitudinal street signs back to the previous system of clock hours. In some cases, only one side was altered, but the protest could have led to confusion among drivers of emergency vehicles.

Disko, a Black Rock City Ranger, noted that people who respond to emergencies are often from outside agencies. They are not as familiar with the city as are Black Rock residents, and they need to be able to find the official coordinates. Since the city grows throughout the week, landmarks change, adding to the difficulties, he said.

Altering the signs also is disrespectful, Disko contended, since they are a form of expression. The protesters, he said, were "messing with someone else's artwork."

The new system was the vision of the Floating World created by Larry Harvey, the Burning Man founder. Referring to a change in the name of the road through Center Camp from Ring Road to Great Circle, he said: "Burning Man is about coping and surrendering to constant change, as is life on the ocean. Learning new names and coping with a rea-

## whistleworks

BY JONNO

Hey buddy. Wanna make a whistle? Out of clay?

Then trundle your creativity out to Whistleworks Studio at 90 degrees and Bowsprit. On Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 1-3 PM. Ceramic artist Greg Worthington will provide you with clay and enough instruction to produce your own unique design. Several dozen other whistles are then mounted on a 18 foot long, rotating, musical instrument powered by steam. This unique device will be wheeled onto the playa for a 9 pm concert on Thursday. There will, be fire, the Whistleworks drummers, and percussionists are invited to join in.

Worthington holds a masters degree in ceramic arts. He hatched this idea more than a decade ago, but when he tried it with a 55 gallon drum for a boiler, it self-destructed. This year's boiler has been professionally designed and inspected according to Worthington.

Whistleworks is sponsored by the Burning Chicagoans, who have been conducting beach burns on the shores of Lake Michigan for 20 years. They also have an arts component in the Second City. ☞

## Send A Message Into Space

BY MAN-TASTIC

THERE ARE THOSE AMONG US who are not content to depart the mellifluous dust of Black Rock City merely to acquiesce to the quotidian; for some of us, gnawing through the handcuffs of the Free-Market, watching Just Shoot Me, or stocking up on tartar-sauce flavored dildos may be a sane way of life. For many, however, going "home" in the domestic sense after Burning Man is simply not an option.

In one mad, sacred week, you cannot build a stairway to heaven and then spend the rest of your life taking the elevator. For the love of god, you need to kiss the joy as it flies—you need to go home—and this time, for real.

Enter the wise souls of the Mad-Scientist STS project, located at 290° in Center Camp. The STS crew (who have brought us L2K and the Hypnotron in the past and present) are two hardware engineers, several software engineers, a tech writer, and a masseuse who have built a device where you can, at last, send a message to intelligent folks on distant planets. They've invented a blessed device of scientific pulchritude, which, in layman's terms, can translate your voice (and your words) into light patterns, which are beamed into space.

"Anybody can come in and record a 30-second message," says TJ, an STS crew member. "We have a selection of up to 50 stars for targets—any star that is visible in the night sky with a minimum distance above the horizon, for safety."

"Rigel is popular," claims Mark, one of STS' two hardware engineers. "The Pleiades are popular."

After selecting a destination for your interstellar message, you must submit it for approval, a step in the process that STS regards as essential. "With a message that's going to be sent off-world, there should be some checks and balances," TJ opines. "Voting stations are open to anyone who wants to come in and vote. It takes three votes to approve or



sonable amount of confusion that may come with this should be part of a theme devoted to finding one's way in an unpredictable world."

The Rangers had concerns about changing the street naming system to compass degrees from hours on a clock. Cypher, another Ranger, said the safety group decided consistency was the most important thing.

Ranger Big Bear cited an example from Monday evening: "I called in a possible medical emergency and some of the medical personnel report to an area where there was a purposely misplaced sign." Big Bear added that the individual turned out to be okay, but that the four- or five-minute delay created by the sign could have been crucial in a critical situation.

Black Rock City residents have offered mixed reviews of the new streets. Some preferred the clock system but said they could adapt to the new method.

"Once you adjust, it's not that hard," said Julius, a Black Rock resident, although he said it required more thought than the times.

Everyone knows the clock, while some people might not know how many degrees are in a circle, said Blake, another resident.

Some were more adamant. "What the hell were they thinking?" said Mother, a Black Rock resident. "Half of us aren't sailors."

The new system is confusing, said Toasty, but also "brilliant."

"It challenges those of us who have been here before to think about how the city's laid out," he said.

Cypher said he did not think sign-changing would be an ongoing problem, and that people will understand the safety issues. If you see someone changing a sign, Cypher said, talk to them and explain the problem. If you see an altered sign, fix it, if you can, or report it to the Rangers. ☞



Photo by Henry Valenzuela

eliminate, and if it gets approved, it gets sent to the queue to get sent up that night."

Certain contributions are more appreciated than others. "We had one message, it was a call for help, we're screwing this place up, send help, please," Mark says. "And then there was one that was very unpopular—basically screaming into the mic."

"Frat boy antics that had no message, no creativity," TJ adds, noting that the message was reviled and summarily executed by voters.

As simple as the interface is, to send a plea, an exaltation, a question, or a platitude into space takes an unwieldy amount of arcane hardware. "It started when Tim Black (hardware developer and 'The Wizard' behind this invention) got a hold of some surplus xenon/mercury arc bulbs," TJ states. "He started thinking, maybe we could modulate one of these things."

"We're actually doing something that all publications on xenon bulb technology say you cannot do," Mark says. You're not supposed to be able to fluctuate a bulb like we do. We're the first that we know that can actually modulate a xenon bulb."

"It's actually a very difficult thing to do," Mark claims. "You have to generate extremely high voltages with a Tesla coil, and as soon as you create an arc, you have to drive current in, and it actually acts as negative resistance—the more current you drive in, the lower the voltage goes."

"We have light coming in, the light is basically pulsing to the audio," TJ adds. "You can take a solar cell and hook it directly to the speaker, no electronics, nothing else—just hold the solar cell up to the light."

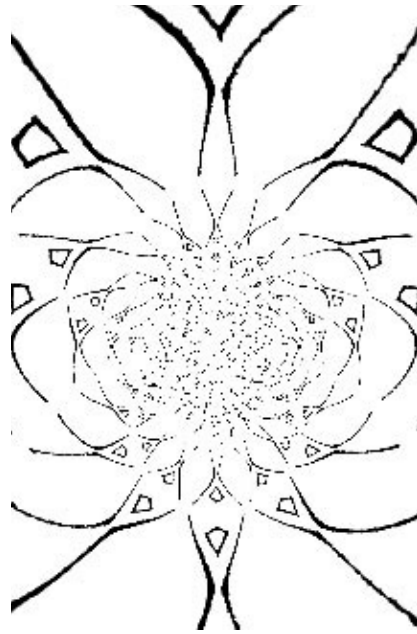
Although the message is recorded in Center Camp, it's beamed into space through the use of an impressive machine way out on the playa. "We found someone with a spare tracking mount from SETI that can handle a 3,000 pound satellite dish," Mark mentions. "It's one of their test mounts."

"It's this incredibly heavy industrial thing totally built for the playa," TJ smiles. Heavy indeed—the SETI satellite mount, the tank light that's responsible for the beam, the computer, and other hardware add up to over 1,000 pounds of equipment.

What's more, it all came together at the last second. "We basically put this together in the last three days. We had been working on it for months, but all of the pieces fell into place last week," TJ says. "It was a bitch to drag all that stuff out there."

But will your message be understood? No problem. "Universal translators," Mark proudly claims. "Advanced alien cultures should be able to translate

our language." Those of us who justifiably refuse to return to our quotidian lives beyond the alkaline sky next Monday owe a dept of gratitude to STS. Rides to Rigel, the Pleiades, and Betelgeuse will be available in Gerlach. ☞

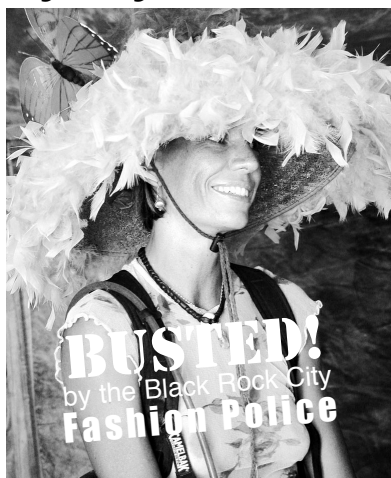


The sun will set tonight at 7:36, although Black Rock City has arranged for supplemental twilight to extend until 8:04. After that, you will need a flashlight, sonar or good luck, at least until 10:32, when the moon joins

the party and keeps an eye on events for the rest of the night, setting at 12:44 p.m. on Thursday. That you probably will not see because the sun reappears promptly at 6:22 a.m. on Thursday.

**It takes a village to raise a village idiot.**  
—Cooper Wiseman

**Flyaway Feathers . . .**



Um, apparently you people haven't been listening! Sure, it LOOKS fabulous, but won't you PLEASE think of the Playa? Feathers and anything else that can come lose from yourself, your outfit or your theme camp are all going to haunt you as you're doing your 2 hours of BRC cleanup. Accessorize wizely, or the BRC F'n Police will bust your ass.

**Datebook**

CHILLED DRUM & BASS DJ SET. Yoms Areni from London. 5 p.m. at Illuminaughty, Esplanade and 60 degrees.

Space permitting, the Black Rock Gazette will publish listings of community events that were not included in What Where When. Only listings that occur or begin the day of publication will be considered. Visit our City Desk in Center Camp to drop off your information or send an email to [brgazette@burningman.com](mailto:brgazette@burningman.com)

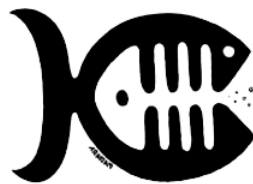


Illustration by Dadara



Photo by WeeGee

**So Me Th,ng Twisted**

BY VAUGHN SOMETHING

Do you want to talk about the street names? Do you want to complain that this system of degrees and such is hard to learn and you are going to get lost? TOO FUCKING BAD, i don't! i wanna talk about the naked people.

Good on the naked people! (Aussie-speak hang-over) Keep on stripping it down. Keep on with the unclothed Radical Self Expression. And definitely keep on with clever and attractive accessories that accent the nudity with the pretty scarves and wraps and hats and body paint and piercings if you are so inclined.

And of course i want to talk about the clothed people also. Walking into center camp yesterday, i saw Miss Raggedy Anne Meets Road Warrior (which might not, of course, be what she calls her outfit). She ROCKED! i would desperately love to see a bunch of little girls playing with a doll that could and would seriously kick G. I. Joe's ass and steal power and supplies from those fucking, lame-ass Transformers.

Okay enough talk about the cool outfits and warm naked people, i suppose i can mention the street names a little. It's easy: there are 360 degrees in a circle (remember eighth-grade geometry). Straight out from the man is 0 and 360. Right down at the bottom of the city is 180 degrees and it runs just like the beloved fucking clock; smaller to bigger clockwise, from 60 degrees on the far right to 300 degrees on the far left. As far as the numbered cross streets go, i can not help you there, I was either asleep or completely spaced out for those geography classes. i do have one tip: 2000s are inner streets and 3000s are outer streets. And if you get a little lost, just quit your fucking complaining, relax and try following a naked person for a while. You might not get where you were going right away, but you will get somewhere and you can start fresh there. And save the damned whining for the outside world where it belongs.

**BurningMan and 9/11**

BY LADY MERV

This has been a difficult year. Four days after our return to New York from Burning Man 2001 our world came crashing down around us. Everything turned upside down and inside out.

On Sept. 11, my husband and I huddled close to the TV and watched the replay over and over, not believing our eyes. I wanted to go to the West Side Highway and see for myself that what was being broadcast was not a prank or a movie. We had no idea what was going to happen next, or what was on those planes. All we knew was we needed to get supplies.

It was a perfect fall day. Gorgeous. It seemed that all of NYC was walking uptown. Bankers, secretaries, accountants and suits were walking, walking, walking. Some people were lucky and were getting lifts in delivery trucks or on the back of motorcycles. Some people were dusty. At the supermarket, the line was out the door and those inside were grabbing anything they could get off the shelves.

A few of us NYC Burners went down to the site on Sept. 12 to help. We needed to see first-hand what had happened to our city. Not on TV. Not in a newspaper. Not in the endless loops and discussions. It was an unfathomable vision, the closest thing to war I have ever seen in my life. And it was eerie how much it reminded me of Burning Man. We grabbed boxes of apples and water to hand out to the firemen and rescuers. We could help.

On the NYC Burning Man email list, people were shouting out for others. Love was pouring out from the

ence pull the whale, singers will produce a new form of music with influences ranging from Balinese scales and rhythms to Balkan vocal polyphony to African drumming and Tuvaluese throat singing.

Periodically the whale will stop and the performers will engage in a short, improvised opera in which the audience will merge with the performance and interact with the characters.

The performance format was designed to allow audience members to learn the basics quickly enough that they can almost immediately join in and enrich the show.

"We're trying to develop a culture that provides all you need to know and initiates you during the performance," said

Christopher Fuelling, one of the project's organizers. "Treat the audience as if they know, and they will know."

Opera Arkipelago camp offers classes in Tuvaluese throat singing, Middle Age singing, acrobatics and many other modes of self-expression. Check the list of classes and times at the camp, or show up any day this week at 1 p.m. for Kecak (Balinese Monkey Chant) lessons, or at 2 p.m. for "ritual theater finale" lessons.

"It's a power blast to learn with a bunch of trained professionals who really know about singing and are really excited about it," said Pepe Ozan, one of the 200-person camp's leaders.

Organizers view the project as the first

of the Burningcans were brought from NYC and are located around center camp in BRC 2002.

Burning Man and Ground Zero. How could I mention those two things in the same breath? Perhaps it is because I see Burning Man in things around me all the time—my life is Burning Man on and off the Playa.

What I saw on Sept. 12 in the middle of the night included waves of dust (primarily from the gypsum sheet rock, 80 percent of which originates in Empire, Nev.), people in dust masks and goggles riding golf carts, and roads getting sprayed with water to minimize the dust.

What I no longer saw was The City's navigational symbol. The Towers had fallen. Each year, when The Man falls at the end of the week, you feel lost. I felt lost. I realized however, that like Burning Man, we can rebuild, we can come back, and we are not alone.

Our community has grown larger and stronger, and it creates magic of the Playa together. And now, going to BRC means so much more. A place that is not on any map, a place where people are genuine, caring and want to be where they are, a place where your neighbors say hello, and you get to know their names. Black Rock City is a place that has all the ever-changing art and curiosities, 24 hours a day, that are so, so intense. Just like New York City.

When we return from BRC to NYC, Sept. 11 will be just a few days away—one year since thousands of innocent people died on an average workday. This year, Burningman should remind us to appreciate our time on the Playa, and the importance of bringing our Playa feelings home. [E]

**SING WITH THE WHALE**

BY SEAN SAVAGE

With your help, the most ancient form of human self-expression will evolve each night this week on a 60-foot whale-galleon, as scores of singers hand-pull the vessel across the playa.

Take a one-hour singing lesson at Opera Arkipelago camp (at 265° and Esplanade) by day and by nightfall you'll give voice to your creativity as you travel along with the human-powered Ark of the Nereids.

About 100 trained performers from Opera Arkipelago, including 40 professional singers from around the world, will take part in the performance. As performers and audi-

stage of an evolving form of theater that utilizes contemporary mythology and a wide range of musical styles to treat the entire world as one tribe, said Fuelling.

The performance will include a new language and musical system developed by the members of Opera Arkipelago called Atlantean, he said.

The San Francisco-based Opera Arkipelago camp has performed operas on the playa for more than five years. This year the camp also built the Mystic Mermaid, located about 700 feet north of the Man, and the Water Woman at 265° and Esplanade. If you'd like to get involved with the ongoing project off-playa, visit [www.burningmanopera.org](http://www.burningmanopera.org). [E]

**Head Games Part III**

BY RICK-BOY

My situation was this: I was on Easter Island to write the story of the heads for the Black Rock Gazette.

The Gazette editors were not going to pay my expenses; they had wanted a story about some guy making replicas of the Moai to adorn the potties at Burning Man. My cut-price flight seemed to have been one-way instead of the round-trip I thought I had bargained for. To top it off, a whiny, nosy pseudo-archaeologist named Janice had attached herself to me with the tenacity of a barnacle.

For my first full day, I hired a local taxi with driver. I explained to the hotel desk clerk that I wanted "something that could go over rugged terrain to the back side of the island."

"Why?" asked Janice, tagging along as usual.

"Well you know when Doc and Otto left in the plane, they didn't go back to the mainland. At least not directly. The plane circled around the island and I figure they're back there and I intend to find what they are up to."

"Oh," said Janice. "Mind if I come along?"

"Yes."

"Why? You know I could be very helpful. I know all about the Rapa Nui. I can even read their language, Oceana. Bet you didn't know that."

"No I didn't, that's amazing." I said with mock sincerity. She never caught on.

Our driver's name was Pete. He was in his late 20s and looked like he spent most of his time surfing or diving. His body was taunt and lean and had the minor cuts and bruises you'd get from surf pounding you around a bit. He looked like a man of action.

"Where to?" he asked.

"Is there anywhere on this island besides the airport where you can land a plane?"

"Depends how big."

"Let's say it's a beat-to-shit piece of garbage that looks like it was left over from World War II, twin prop."

"You mean like an old crate flown by a guy who fancies he's in the Luftwaffe with a passenger in a Panama suit that looks like an extra from 'Casablanca'?"

"Yeah."

"Get in," said Pete. "It landed yesterday on the back side of the island."

Some time later we came around a bend and there before us was a large field with a wooden shack and a few planes, including Otto's.

"There it is," I said. "But where are they?"

"The Rapa Nui," said Pete. "If anything is happening on this end of the island, it's at the Rapa Nui."

He gunned the engine and we sped off. We came upon a long, narrow cinder-block structure painted blue, with red neon signs in the small windows. "The Rapa Nui Inn," they said.

We marched in and saw Doc and Otto in conversation with two locals.

Doc gave a start when he saw us.

"Doc, so glad to see you again. Listen, about our return flight—" Before I could finish, Doc bolted up, grabbed my arm, and pulled me into a corner. "Excuse us, una momenta."

He smiled nervously. "You see, my friend, I was able to negotiate a cheap airfare due to certain negotiations I'd had with these gentlemen, which I hadn't told you about. They concern a lady who came on the same flight as you. I just wasn't..."

"...able to get a word in edgewise for 1,300 miles because who-who over there never stopped talking?" I finished his sentence for him.

"Precisely."

"So you got us the cheap flight because you figured you could get her to do something for you, but she wouldn't shut up long enough for you to ask her."

"Yeah, kind of."

"So what is it?"

"It concerns a ceremony that requires a kind of goddess."

"And you need Janice to be the goddess."

"Exactly. What do you think? Will she do it?"

"Well, she's already a princess."

"Really?"



EquiMali

"Kind of. I think you could get her to do it if you convince her it's an anthropology thing, and if it isn't too weird."

"Yes, exactly. The lady said she was interested in learning native culture, and these gentlemen are the organizers of a ceremony they do here every few years—a reenactment of an old Rapa Nui creation folk tale, Hotu Matua landing on the beach founding the original Easter Island civilization. I thought she'd like to participate."

"I'd love to," said Janice who had snuck up without our realizing it. "You know they have a festival here every year at the end of January, beginning of February called the Tapati Rapa Nui where they give song and dance competitions and all kinds neat stuff. It sounds a lot like your Burning Man thing."

One of the locals looked up and said, "Burning Man? Yes two men were here and saw Tapati festival in January with our many bonfires and said that it was so much like theirs. They had this crazy idea to make copies of our Moai for your festival and put them on the back of your toilets to give a proper image to your site." [E]

(To be continued)

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• The views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the views of the Burning Man or its principals. We try; but after all, we're volunteers. We make mistakes. And this is a camping trip. A big gloss, trussed up, kick-ass camping trip in the middle of the desert. Don't take this too seriously, just enjoy the ride...