

Black Rock Gazette

Your Playa Time Source for Infotainment Since 1992



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Webcast Burn

By Painter Carl & Lianimal

You thought that spontaneous moment with a friend was hidden from the eyes of the real world? Maybe not. There's a satellite connection at Burning Man. At least one live webcast is taking place. From a tower behind Center Camp, a high-resolution camera is panning the playa. Periodically it zooms in on The Man. Following a programmed pattern, the camera can be pointed manually. A burner with a Segway Human Transporter recently asked about webcasting a speed trial at the playa's airstrip. The lens easily reaches that far. To see that—and much, much more—you, your friends and family can access the webcast from the burningman.com site.

There are doubtless some more personal webcasts taking place too. As of mid-afternoon Thursday, some 650 computers in BRC have wirelessly accessed the internet through "ibm"—that's Internet at Burning Man. Some webcams are rumored to be traveling with pedestrians. One of your campmates, the one with the laptop, may be able to get you to your e-mail—if you really want to go there. "Just like at Starbuck's." Think first.



There have been comments received at Playa Info about webcasting the Burn. Some say that the feeling of safety and freedom experienced here is largely due to the fact that we are far from the critical eye of the masses. Raines, at Playa Info, thinks that the culture here is strong enough to stay intact even in the face of ties to the world beyond; that in showing people who we really are and what really happens here, we help dispel some of the negative hype, and the world gets to see and be influenced by the creativity that flourishes here.

John Graham, in the tech trailer, says that Burning Man has been using the satellite link to webcast "sporadically for quite a few years, successfully for a couple." Community benefactors supplied much of the equipment and the satellite access. Graham, Clif Cox,

RalfMuehlen and others in the "ibm" community have been providing the technical expertise and volunteer hours.

Many Burners have been able to get messages out to people on their way in, Ralf says. "If it makes people's burns better, we're glad to help." Cox says that keeping it running is his primary goal. And the playa is a great test environment, both for hardware and ideas. "If you can make it work here, you can make it work anywhere," says Ralf. "It's dusty and hot as hell." Noticed? The camera's dust shield is a sturdy one.

There is also the test bed of ideas-at-play here in Black Rock City. It's like the internet is supposed to be, the guys say. Access is free and reliability is a community responsibility. Keep it simple.

Audio for the webcast comes from a handheld FRS, so you're getting a pretty authentic immersion into the chaotic sound experience. And a combination of blogging (live personal reports) and the unfiltered webcast gives the world a glimpse into what the real experience is about. (Although there are some who say without ever getting into a porta potty you'll never get it.)

Theme Camp Managers: Tips From the Front

By Jeff Eubois

Behind every ingenious art work, astonishing performance, or welcoming hospitality camp, there's a hard core of managers and volunteers who spend months planning logistics, and in most cases putting out large amounts of their own money to produce their camp.

"Burning Man would be much easier if you just put on a furry wig and walked around, but it wouldn't be as much fun for me," says John D of Playa-Go-Round, an Esplanade camp in its third year. "You get people of like mind working together, people who like to build things."

For those contemplating their first theme camp next year, it is worth listening to this year's camp managers before taking on the role. Like a camp's domes and canopies which have evolved via wind, dust, time, and the occasional catastrophic collapse, social structures have evolved by trial and error to create good camps.

It turns out there is a common set of issues most camp managers struggle with: governance, budgeting, logistics, personal conflicts, and inspiring other camp members to make greater contributions.

Governance. Camp authority tends to concentrate in a small group of hard workers. "It really is a meritocracy here," says Joel Dubiner of the Love Project.

But work still needs to be distributed. "You need a core of people willing to take on projects, and one or two generals who are not megalomaniacs, but willing to coordinate everything," says Jennifer of Bliss Abyss. "It works much better if those people are chosen by the community than if someone puts themselves forward and tries to convince his friends to do it his way."

Several camps separate the management of camp infrastructure from the art projects — the camps that build good infrastructure first have an easier time supporting their art works.

Paying for it. Black Rock City may be based on a gift economy, but someone is going to be paying cash for truck rental, building materials, food, tools, and storage space. Camp organizers typically opt for a mix of camp fees, fundraising parties, lotteries, and patrons to pay the bills in the real world.

"I hate talking money out here, but it's just not fair to the people who have put in money and time when others show up and don't contribute," says Pops at Swingers' Camp. "We've got a camp fee of \$30, and people still bitch about that."

"Next year we are going to do what Burning Man does, and have lower camp fees in advance, for the people that will do more of the early work, which will also allow us to start doing stuff sooner," he adds.

Scheduling and logistics. Planning needs to start months in advance. It is easy to get over-committed. Projects invariably take longer and cost more than

anticipated. "Start in January, and get into a panic about June," says Jennifer of Bliss Abyss. "You really want to have a good logistics person who is willing to do a lot of research," she adds. "You need to know things like how many lights you're going to have, and how many amps that will draw, and how that determines the size of your generator."

Off-Playa Community. Camping is an intimate activity. Camps that emerge from a vibrant off-playa community often have an easier time because participants already know and trust each other.

Personal Conflicts. "90% of personal conflicts come down to lack of food, sleep and water, and people getting on edge over dumb stuff," John D says. "No one holds personal grudges."

But sometimes the stress of getting out to the playa create unresolvable conflicts.

Kitchens. "Who does the dishes, and why" may be the defining question for any food collective. While many camps make the kitchen a center of activity, others opt for smaller

groups or personal autonomy. Breaking up into groups of six to eight people who share some common infrastructure (such as water) is a common approach.

Managing a Wasted Workforce. "A lot of the challenges come down to managing a wasted work force," says one camp manager who will remain nameless. "Some people will show up and want to be told what to do because they are wasted."



Photo by Monica

Axes & Spheres

By Technomad

A map of our city shows three keyhole-shaped plazas at 3, 6, and 9 o'clock along the Esplanade. Larger than the others, the Keyhole at Center Camp lies directly on the meridian to the Man and the Temple, and this year LadyBee selected for placement there Dan Cohn and David Kitts' Spheres of Transformation.

Mounted on a tubular framework above stone-like arches, two rings rotate around

independent axes to trace two concentric spheres in light-emitting diodes, electroluminescent arrays, and cold cathode tubes—a new



Photo by Mitch

Spheres of Transformation.

technology invented for flat panel displays. Although not programmed to trace any meaningful pattern, persistence of vision may reveal to you a vision beyond belief.

Beyond the Keyhole along the Promenades lie most of this year's 120 registered theme-related installations. The 80 unrelated installations lie along other radials from the Man and elsewhere on the playa. You can read more on-line about installations at Burning Man in Leonardo: Journal for the International Society of the Arts, Sciences & Technology at <http://mitpress.mit.edu/e-journals/Leonardo/gallery/burningman/>.

Burrowing For Stowaways With the Mole

By Technomad

The Mole climbs up and over a 5-foot-tall pile of carpets, plastic bins, gasoline containers, suitcases, and go-cart frames haphazardly loaded inside a 6 by 12 foot U-haul trailer. She says, "This one's easy." The voids are huge. As she bounces a flashlight beam along the aluminum walls to look for even reflections, she adds, "You can see shadows of objects

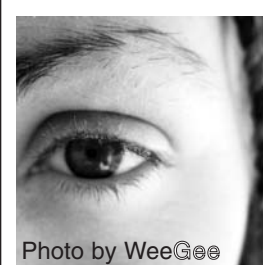


Photo by WeeGee

under other objects." That's just one small trick among many. In one-half minute she verifies that the cargo trailer contains no stowaways. In a

The Eye of the Mole.

friendly tone, she reassures the driver she needs no help climbing down, and we help the driver re-close the door.

For finding stowaways by climbing into tiny spaces, and probing with all her senses even tinier gaps and spaces, her reputation precedes her. In the cold of the desert morning, you can feel body heat inside a void, as she demonstrates holding her hand inches away.

On each Burning Man ticket: "All vehicles including trucks, trailers, and RVs entering and exiting Burning Man are subject to search by Gate staff." Were tickets and entrance not auditable and Gate & Perimeter not trusted by the Bureau of Land Management, that arm of the federal government responsible for the Playa and collecting its daily user fee, they could charge Burning Man a flat fee, making it fiscally risk... or is this a party line?

"This ticket is a revocable license and it may be revoked by Burning Man for any reason." Discovered stowaways find their admission offered at a higher price, if at all. Their accomplices can find their tickets revoked and reoffered with a similar penalty.

I signed up as the junior member of Mole's Thursday team, midnight to six a.m. At "Point," the first contact, my job was to sort the crawling stream of headlights on Rt. 47 into four lanes at the Gate.

By 5am, no more lights appear on the horizon, and the queue has ebbed. Rejoining Mole at the Gate, I learn that Moose, another petit climber, had found a stowaway in the rear footwells of a Toyota Camry. Ignoring a \$200 bribe offer, Moose turns them in. At the Box Office they eventually pay \$400 — \$100 plus the on-site ticket price of \$300.

Mole reminded me again not to write of Gate's "toys" and methods, and asks me to ask for Exodus volunteers. I'll be there, counting and steering departing Burners — and passing out Gazettes.



Dadara

Announcements

A three-foot across alien love nest pendant stolen from empire store last Thursday has been sighted in BRC. Return to gazette. No questions asked.



PULSE OF THE MAN

The Mutaytor, celebrating its fifth anniversary at Burning Man this year, is headlining a major music, fire, drum and percussion event as part of the fire procession to the August 30th burning of the Man.

They are presenting their composition "The Heartbeat of the Man," which follows a Burner's imagined experience, augmented by crowd musical participation.

Mutaytor intends the event to be a Black Rock City thank-you embracing the 30,000 citizens involved in the burn. More info: <http://www.mutaytor.com>

PROJECT AGNI

Project Agni, intended to be the largest Playa art installation composed completely of human beings, will be using participants and fire to create a Burning Man image at sunset on Friday, August 29. Volunteers should register at Burning Sky Camp at Dubious and Theory until 4 p.m. Friday. Volunteers must be at the staging area, 1:20 past the end of Faith, by 6:45 p.m. sharp. Fire performance gear, strobes, mirrors, flashlights, and art cars are all welcome volunteer contributions.

Open Eyes in Iowa

By Kathleen Ellis

Late at night on August 22, 2003, Washington DC-area Earth Guardian Shawn Gillas was arrested while en route to Black Rock. He had driven 900 miles and was sleeping at a rest area near Davenport, Iowa, when a search of his vehicle resulted in his arrest. Shawn is a dedicated Burning Man and Playa del Fuego participant, and the east coast community is devastated by his absence today. Letters, gifts, and photos can be sent to Shawn Gillas, Scott County Jail, 416 W 4th St, Davenport, IA 52801. Envelopes and stamps are available at Camp Videogasm in Snowflake Village.

BOMBLETS

Ehren Tool created Cluster Bombs in the Black Rock Desert to demonstrate how cluster bombs disperse in what is known as "the kill zone." An F-16 can carry four CBU87 cluster bombs. Tool's installation occupies a 200 x 1600 meter space, the kill zone of the 200 bomblets in a single CBU87. He has hand-thrown 200 ceramic cups, decorated them with military toys and insignia, and placed them on the playa. People have already begun interacting with the art pieces, and Tool invites you to take a bomblet home. (You are also encouraged to pick up any of the shards of bomblets that have interacted with art cars) "I'm sharing the burden of knowledge of what cluster bombs are capable of. Each bomblet has a 70-meter casualty radius." His information was gleaned from the Federation of American Scientists web site, www.fas.org. The cups can be found out near the trash fence between noon and 2:00.



Playa Community Policing

By Terry Reid, Winnemucca District Manager, Bureau of Land Management

Just as Black Rock City has evolved as a community, so has the law enforcement activity evolved as a unique application of community policing. Law enforcement supports Black Rock City, the Bureau Land Management, and local law jurisdictions to fulfill several obligations.

The obligations of the BLM, Pershing and Washoe Counties and the Burning Man Organization are threefold:

We strive to make the event safe for everyone: participants and public employees alike.

We're here to ensure that everyone adheres to all of the local, state, and federal laws.

We monitor compliance with the federal permit that's issued to Burning Man each year.

Our agency is sometimes criticized for permitting an unusual and avant-garde event on public land. Some members of the public tell us Burning Man offends them, so effective policing is important to the future of the event.

In order to meet this challenge we have worked with

Burning Man to create a community policing approach. This primarily involves law enforcement officers from Pershing County, as well as many supporting players, including Washoe County Sheriff, Nevada Highway Patrol, Elko County Sheriff, Nevada Department of Health, REMSA, local and federal courts, fire contractors, a special and large role performed by the Black Rock Rangers and the cooperation of the citizens of Black Rock City.

In the early years of the event in Nevada, cooperation was good but the relationships and trust between all of the players was new and anxious, to be expected given the unique nature of the event. But these relationships have matured and evolved, much as the event itself. Today, Burning Man represents a model community policing event, though transient and in a very remote location.

The safety record of the event has been particularly exemplary with very few injuries when compared to a city of 25,000-30,000 over a holiday weekend, especially considering that everyone moves in and out in a week or

two and there are so many varied activities.

The permit we issue to Burning Man is designed to protect the natural and cultural resources of a very special area and minimize conflicts with other public lands users. The Burning Man organization has worked together with the BLM to meet this need.

The players in this remarkable effort have pooled their skills, shared their equipment, reconciled their procedures, combined their communication systems, planned their work, and meet daily during the event to achieve a community policing that is similar to law enforcements goals in any other city.

Bicycles, golf carts, ATV's, patrol vehicles, glo-lites, helicopters, volunteers, camp trailers, generators, dispatchers, computers, and even a couple of dogs are part of this effort. Terry Reid, BLM Field Manager, Ron Skinner, Pershing County Sheriff, and the Board of Directors for Black Rock City LLC encourage you to let us know how well you think it works.

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch

By Rae Richman

There have been a few more twists and turns in the road to finding happy solutions to the permitting challenges the Burning Man organization has been having with the work ranch it owns and uses to prepare for the event. The ranch is located in nearby Washoe County, Nevada, about 10 miles from Black Rock City.

Washoe County has formed a taskforce to coordinate all of the agencies involved in helping the Burning Man organization through this complex permitting and planning

process. The Burning Man staff located in Nevada, the Black Rock City LLC members, and the organization as a whole have been doing all that they can to cooperate with the County to find solutions that work for everyone.

The Black Rock City LLC members also have a meeting planned right after the event is over with a group of its neighbors who appealed the special use permits that the organization was granted for the Ranch. This meeting will be facilitated by Washoe County Commissioners.

"We look forward to trans-

forming this story of conflict to a model of communitarian politics," says Burning Man founder Larry Harvey.

Finally, Burning Man has invited local, state, and national politicians and regulators to come visit and see for themselves the ways that it is contributing to the financial and cultural sustainability of the region.

Burning Man political updates will continue to appear throughout the year in the Jack Rabbit Speaks newsletter and on the News section of www.burningman.com.

Sports: Playa Participation!

By Lord Fluffypanz

Participatory sports unique to Black Rock City are in full swing and some are truly in keeping with this year's theme, "Beyond Belief." Some sports offer great ways to meet fellow Burners while others offer pure amusement or potential enlightenment.

Roller Disco (5:15 and Esplanade) features fine 70's disco music and a large roller rink in which to skate and dance your butt off. From dusk till dawn Friday is Naked Skate Night. Southpark Kenny comments, "A planet without skating is like a planet without a playa".

Captain Kingpin's "First Church of Skee-Bowl" (8:00 & Esplanade) is a combo ski jump and bowling alley with bowling pin targets of contentment and bliss.

At Plaid Allie in Shangri La Village (4:30 & Esplanade) plaid-powered bowling and hopscotch are the hot tartan ticket. In a mix of bowling and street alley, a 3-foot-diameter tetherball takes down 4-foot plaid pins. Plaid, High Priestess of Kilt Cloth, notes, "Plaid is the perfect expression of art, form and function." From 5:00 p.m. until midnight, you can even bowl with your buddies as pins, a fierce competition that offers the first prizewinner a spanking.

Mini-golf and inner reflection have met meet at Seven Deadly Sins Mini-golf at Ubercarnie (8:30 & Esplanade). A seven-hole course, featuring hilarious pars such as 0 for sloth, 69

for lust, and 1 for pride, offers seven sin re-enactments, player cleansing, purge and purification. In the all-night "You are that Pig Camp" (Imagined & Esplanade), a nine-hole course suggests we all are pigs for inane distractions, and may be reborn minus our inner pig.

Serious piggy fun also awaits us at Shambala Mythical Critter Rodeo & Mental State Fair (5:30 & Esplanade). This around-the-clock rodeo offers Pterodactyl riding, Unicorn strutting, Hydra hopping and a 5-person Leviathan. The rodeo centerpiece is Pigasus, a belligerent, female, winged porker. The rider hangs rodeo style until thrown by the snarling sow, watched by an oinking crowd. The record stands at 43 seconds; riders



Delta Rodeo rides the wild, winged Pigasus

get a piggy butt brand and guaranteed bruises.

Turnip Head Cult (4:20 & Esplanade) hosts the Turnilympics, Friday at 4:20pm. Turnip eating, tossing, waxing, croquet and carving contests offer sacramental, and other, prizes. The turnip, a sacred Celtic vegetable, was carved (before the pumpkin) as a talisman to ward off evil spirits.

The most insane and popular participatory playa sport is Fremen Spice Traders "Genital Tug-O-War" (7:15 & Dogma), with nipple, foreskin and scrotum pulls. Opponents square off with clamped clothespins and unbreakable cord until one clothespin detache:



Lucy asks:

I've heard about all the people who get married at Burning Man. I think I'd like to give it a try, but I'm single and like it that way. How can I get a husband without having to have a boyfriend?

The Playa Chicken responds:

Hon, I can totally understand your desire to not have a boyfriend. A boyfriend equals a relationship and quite frankly, relationships are stupid. Peck 'em and leave 'em, that's what I always say. The last time a rooster revealed that he had developed "feelings" for me, I flew into such a tizzy that I woke up three days later with a very empty bottle of Jack under one wing and a bloody pair of poultry shears under the other. And what became of the rooster? Well, since I had already nipped off his comb and beak, he went the rest of the way by getting a full body pluck and eyebrow implants. He now goes by the name Dr. Phil... maybe you've heard of him.

But for cryin' out loud, Hon, if you're smart enough to not want a boyfriend, what on earth do you want a husband for? Do you really want to be one of those annoying married couples that wear matching windbreakers while buying fabric softener at Target? You might think it is cute to have someone to converse in baby talk with, but the mere thought of it makes me want to peck your eyes out just in time for the fountain of bile to exit my beak and flood your sockets.

Now that we have that silly marriage notion out of your head, I'll give you a bit of advice that should keep you happy for at least 24 hours. Forget about being a real bride, just pretend to be one instead. I have it on good word that the weirdos over at the I'm OK You're OK Corral are having a brides party Friday night. Get dressed up in your best bridal wear (and if you didn't bring anything, steal something), hook up with them and live out your stupid little fantasy. Heck, go ahead and marry someone if you feel like, but keep a pair of poultry shears handy... given your state of mind, I think you're going to need them.

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The views expressed herein are not necessarily even ours. Somebody thought it was a good idea, so we ran with it!