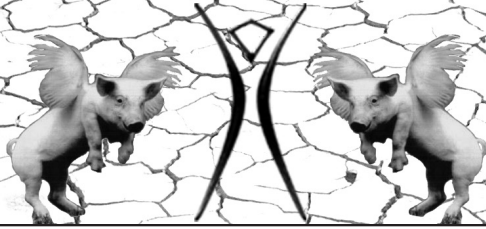


# BLACK ROCK BEACON



MUTATION EDITION TUESDAY

WWW.BLACKROCKBEACON.ORG

5:30 & EVOLUTION

VOLUME V, NUMBER II. SEPTEMBER 1, 2009

## Cell Service Rings In New Year

By Deb Prothero

Yes, your cell phone works on the Playa this year. Sort of. An art project meant to aid Third World telephony and a commercial incursion are bringing bars to Black Rock City.

An experiment by Papa Legba will provide text messaging and limited voice service within Black Rock City. The system can handle some voice over Internet traffic to and from the Default World.

Papa Legba is named for a voodoo diety who monitors traffic at the convergence of the spiritual and physical worlds – and who also is linked to the legendary blues guitarist Robert Johnson.

The project, by David Burgess and Harvind S. Samra, is a second attempt to bring cellular to Black Rock City, with the goal being to develop a technology that would provide people in less-developed countries with \$1-a-month service.

The service was expected to start Monday evening but was not apparent at press time. Once it begins, Burners with their phones turned on will receive a message asking if they'd like to use this service. A response with a phone number will set up a connection. The system will then respond that setup was successful and you can text your friends on the Playa.

Separately, over the last month, Department of Public Works employees have been able to phone home on occasion. A new cellular phone tower on leased land near Frog Pond has provided intermittent service for AT&T, Sprint and Verizon customers on the Playa, though it is like to degrade, said Burgess, as the arrival of Black Rock City — especially metal boxes on the ground — creates interference.



Home at last!

## The Road to BRC

By Igneouss

It's 4 A.M. Thursday. Quick visits to the bank and gas station and I'm off from Virginia.

Next stop, Detroit. One exit past 8 Mile Road wait three other Virgins. We've never met. This is where the adventure really begins. Twenty-four hours later finds us deep in Nebraska. We've drawn a Burning Man symbol on the roof rack in hopes of recognition. So far, two women with Jack Sparrow braids and a few random facial piercings have not commented. The Midwest is like that.

My Detroit adoptees are much younger. They barely recognize Hunter Thompson. After explaining the significance of Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas they proceed to tutor me on the finer points of the band Tool.

2 a.m. at a rest area populated by sleeping semi trucks. The girls frolic in the dew-covered grass under a waxing moon. Several truckers dream of fairies and sprites.

We're all up and crammed into the cab of the truck. Two in seats, one in the jump seat, one on the floor. I teach the girls a few key lines. Politely: "Am I under arrest or am I free to go?", "My name is \_\_\_\_\_," "I do not consent to any search." As a parent who has had a few 'talks' with the spawn, this is new for me.

The world gets noticeably arid. Crops give way to range land. The girls have never been on a road trip. Their wonder charms me close to tears. Cottonwoods. Prairie-dog villages. A rural gas station with an unpaved lot. Wonder abounds. The Burning Man logo is pasted in the rear window. Our first excited, waving, honking contact happens just east of Salt Lake City. Within a few minutes we are three Burner vehicles. A bit later we separate, all smiles.

The sun sets over the Great Salt Lake at Saltaire. My fellow travelers do cartwheels on the salt flats. Every view drops jaws. Later, in a rest area near Bonneville, we meet more Burners: A group from New York, single vehicles from other points East. An instant social circle forms and fades with the last of the warm light.

We drive through the night. Dawn finds us at Wal-Mart in Fernley, final supplies, final defaultia, gas, cigarettes for the smoker. North on 447. Our adrenaline, four days sustained, has brought us to the rabbit hole 18 hours early. So I treat the critters to breakfast at Bruno's. Bacon consumed, we find our way to the 3-mile Playa entrance, drive out into the void and promptly fall asleep in the shade of the truck.

## Welcome Home With a (Traffic) Snarl

By Rockstar

Viewed as accidental art, the miles-long line at the gate for Black Rock City 2009's kickoff is a significant success.

The party at the Greeter's Station was memorably off-the-hook, with the first official arrivals greeted by naked revelers and blasts from water cannon. Efforts by the Burning Man organization to contain last year's open abuse of early-arrival privileges meant fewer Burners carrying a heavier load of pre-opening setup than ever.



Photo by WeeGee

### What if they gave a Burning Man and nobody came?

Meanwhile, with an unprecedented 130 theme camps denied placement and thus early arrivals, incoming traffic for the official city opening was heavy. Unusually brutal weather left this year's handful of pre-Playans in a mood to throw down hard.

For the less-favored, things were considerably worse. Igneouss, a Virgin from Virginia incautiously arrived at

11:30 p.m. Sunday night and did a seven-hour stretch in D Lot, where a group of Australians were allegedly handing out illicit substances to fellow miscreants. Igneouss, who is on the *Black Rock Beacon* staff, said the lot was emptied on a first-in, first-out basis, meaning those who flagrantly ignored the do-not-arrive-before-midnight regulation entered the city relatively close to opening time, while those who prudently sought to arrive only a few minutes early spent long hours in purgatory.

By Monday afternoon, Sunday evening's decorative ribbon of headlights had become a sweat-sodden, monoxide-choked horror. As of 1 p.m. Monday, the line at entry was reported to stretch past Gerlach. Kudra, who is coordinating the *Alternate What Where When* guide, reported the Wadsworth gas station was closed, putting enormous pressure on its rivals in Fernley, Empire and Gerlach, lines at the last two contributing to a 10-hour wait for those who had planned to arrive Monday morning.

Radical self-control was called for on the final approach to Black Rock City. The two miles before Will Call were not equipped with porta-potties, and arriving citizens were forbidden to leave their cars. Some clandestine lending of RV facilities occurred as generous Burners helped the less-well-accommodated relieve the strain.

Officially, the Burning Man organization was unperturbed. "Our concern," said spokeswoman Andie Grace, "is that traffic not back up to the two-lane freeway," a concern among the least of the worries of car-bound Burners.

## Snow Koan Lights Up the Playa

By Rod Allen

Snow Koan Solar has been bringing solar arrays to the Playa for four years — but this year, the camp has brought enough equipment to power a whole village at Black Rock City, or five to 10 Californian energy-guzzling homes.

Will Power, Snow Koan Solar's camp leader, said that if the number of gasoline-powered generators on the Playa could be reduced, Burning Man would not only be a cleaner event but Burners might save some money, too. "They care about the earth with their 'leave no trace' policy,"

he said, "but they don't seem to give a shit about the air."

This year's Snow Koan camp has an array of 144 solar panels, generating 24.5 kilowatts of electricity at full power (less if it is cloudy, and a little less if the panels get dusty.) This, Snow Koan is supplying all of Nectar Village and some outlying camps as well.

Some of the users are supplied direct by means of a microgrid, while others get their electricity delivered in the form of heavy-duty batteries, of the kind used in

fork lift trucks, which are recharged by the solar array.

Power's associate, Still Marc, said anyone, whether a hobbyist, homeowner, or business, can save money using solar power. The panels, which cost \$600 each, supply 175 watts, and in California you get paid by the state for all the surplus electricity you pump back into the system.

Power has been interested in electricity "since he was three years old", he said, and he is frustrated by the way in which

people fail to understand the potential of solar-powered systems.

He was critical of the Burning Man organization for using gas-powered vehicles at Black Rock City, and says that his main objective, prior to taking over the world, would be to see the Bmorg banning two-stroke scooters on the Playa and then to adopt electric-powered vehicles overall.

Snow Koan Solar can be found at DNA and 8:30.

you a swig from their ubiquitous bottles and spreading gossip.

If you have an accent they will imitate you, badly and relentlessly, until you look around for help, and finding none you scuttle off in a panic mumbling 'lil dog.' And the names! Drill Bit, Nipples, Whippet, Beefy, and Blushy. What's

next: Grumpy, Sleepy, Dopey, Sneazy, Curly, Moe and That Other One? The titles are rich too: Volunteer Coordinator, Co-camp Manager, Minister of Magic, and the all important Bar Manager. Kinda like the banking industry where they hand out VP titles instead of raises.

Being Day Two, 40 percent of your camp isn't here yet, including your Camp Manager — which doesn't really matter

because the Placer had his prepositioned trailer towed. There's decadence for you.

Some dude in Gerlach will totally set you up for the week: air conditioned pre-Playarized pleasure palace, fully stocked refrigerator, hot and cold running drips — all for the price of a couple of BLM marijuana citations! Any color you like, as long as it's beige. And the best thing of all? Being able to smoke in bed again.



Day Two: Burning Man is a truth serum. These people—don't call them Freaks—walk right up to you and start telling their life stories, while offering

Black Rock City Population, as of 12:00 P.M. Monday: 16,456

# BLACK ROCK BEACON



## Black Rock Beacon Mega Event Mega Cache Day One

**Cache: Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate!**

Location: N 40.45.788 W 119.12.135

**Cache: People are dying to get in here.**

Location: N 40.46.558 W 119.13.470



**FOUNDER QUILTS:** Larry Harvey, founder of Burning Man, has shocked friends, colleagues and critics alike by giving up smoking. Harvey, 61, was renowned as an enthusiastic supporter of smoking tobacco. But he went cold turkey in December and has not soiled his lips with the wicked weed since then. "He's much grumpier now," said an aide.

~ Professor Emeritus Nod Miller

## The Watch

By ChillyJilly

If you were walking along the Playa and came upon a 10-foot-wide pocket watch embedded in the earth, you might for a second think it was an enormous hallucination; perhaps you were out in the sun too long and you didn't drink enough water. But in fact, this watch is real, constructed from raw wood and aged ornate metal, surrounded by faux gears, and able to tell time.

"The Watch" is the brainchild of Brooklyn-based Chassy Cleland. Cleland made an appearance last year at Black Rock City with "The Cave," an installation inspired by Plato's famous allegory and centered around American folk tales, and this year returns to further investigate another series of American legends: creation myths. "I like producing art that is about the stories people tell, and how those stories define the way we see the world," she says.

For "The Watch," she started with a famous passage written in 1802 by the Reverend William Paley, which has become the precursor to the modern Intelligent Design creation movement. The statement analogizes that just as a watch must have a maker, so must the Earth.

Cleland's summary of the text is a bit more open-ended: "If you were walking across a barren landscape



Photo by WeeGee

[200 years ago] and found a pocket watch on the ground, how did it come to be there, and in this context, is it any different than an animal or plant?" For Paley, the answer is God. For Cleland, not so much, but she still finds it "a beautiful way of framing the question about the origin of life on this planet."

So she decided to build that pocket watch as a jumping-off point for exploring the myths and the scientific explanations that human beings have used over the years to explain creation. The timepiece is filled with and surrounded by what look like gears but are actually zoetropes — slitted drums with drawings inside them that, when spun around, give the illusion of moving pictures — two to four feet in diameter, each tells a different story of human creation in a quick 16 to 32 frames, with accompanying sound.

(The zoetropes are made of plywood and covered in brass for gear effect.)

The zoetropes inside the watch tell the most accurate tales, reflecting current scientific theories of evolution, while the older, more outlandish ones are scattered nearby. There raindrops turn into frogs, spoiled meat becomes flies, and people interpret a mastodon tooth as evidence of giants. If those still don't satisfy you, you can add your own version of the creation story by drawing on the interiors of the zoetropes with supplied chalk. Just don't expect to get your name in the history books: "The Watch" is set for a "slow and peaceful" burn at the end of the week, and with it, all of those stories.

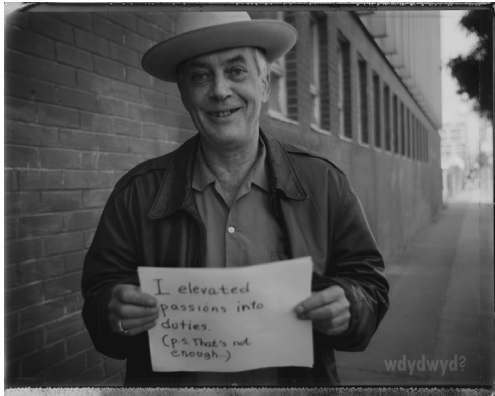
Find "The Watch" at 8:45, 1,000 feet from the Man.



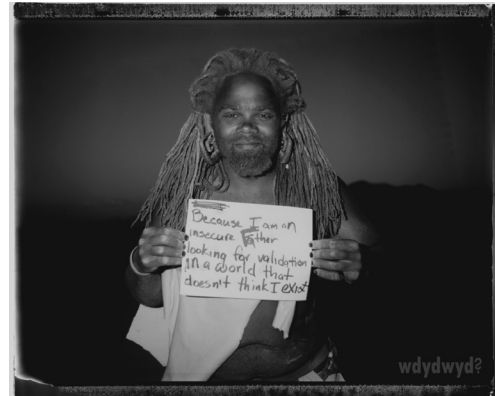
## Events

Call for Collaborative Artists & Photographers. The "wdydyd?" project started on the Playa in 2004. Nearly 1,000 Burners have answered the question, "Why do you do what you do?" for a portrait. Many have replicated the project in their communities post-

Burn. If you want to be a Collaborating Artist and shoot photos or videos of Burners for this project, come to the installation (on Playa near Esplanade & 4:30) around 2 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, and ask for one of the organizers.



Larry Harvey, co-founder, Burning Man, San Francisco: I elevated passions into duties (p.s. That's not enough...)



Delandus Clark, machinist, Portland, Oregon: Because I am an insecure father looking for validation in a world that doesn't think I exist.

### Rolling and Stoned Party @ Zanzibar

Tarzan bailed this year, oh what shall we do? Hmm, Steal his iPod and press play, Mother Fucker! Pleased to meet you, HOPE you guess my name. At their Satanic Majesty's Request, Camp Zanzibar is going

to step up and Rock the Playa with real nonelectronic music. Zanzibar Lounge & Bar, Chaos and 7:30. Thursday, 3 p.m.-5 p.m.

## Almanac

By Igneous



Tuesday 9/1  
Wednesday 9/2

**Sunrise**

6:27am

**Sunset**

7:31pm

**Moonrise**

5:33pm

**Moonset**

3:32am (Tue)

4:33am (Wed)



### Gemini (May 21-June 20):

No, penological studies are not what you think they are. I'm sorry.

**Horoscope**  
by Citizen X



### Cancer (June 21-July 22):

Remember, every silver lining has a cloud. Your lucky polygon is RHOMBUS.

## PERPETRATORS OF THE BLACK ROCK BEACON...

Mitchell Martin, managing editor. Mike Durgavich, Mod. Maj. General Counsel. Angie Zmijewski and Lena Kartzov, production goddesses. Ali Baba, co-camp manager and copy editor. Brian Train, remote editor. Dave the Intern, laurel burnisher. Deb Prothero, firefighter. Edge, eminence grise. Larry Breed, chief wordsmith. Francis Wenderlich, masthead creator and co-camp manager. Howard Jones and Rod Allen, British accents. Saint, saint. Susan Williamson, pre-pressure. Suzanne Zalev, baby wrangler. Taymar, webmaster and photographer. WeeGee, minister of photography. John Lam, news editor. Saffron Lee, associate editor. Diana Acosta, illustrator. Writers: Anna Skaya, Nick Byrnes, Rick Kinnaird, OMYG Mark, Ron Garmon, Jillian Steinhauer. AWWW: Kudra, Goddess Lena.

## SEMI-LEGAL MUMBO JUMBO

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## Branteasers ?

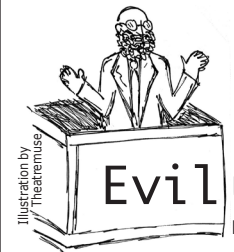
by Smaze

### Substitution Puzzle

This is a standard 26-letter cypher puzzle.

O VQL Q NGXFU DQF VOZI  
XFOFYGKPTR ORTQL O ZIKTV  
GXZ JUTKOTL, LXUUTLZOGFL,  
VGFRTKOFU QSS ZIT ZODT  
GCTK TCTKNZIOFU; QFR ZG DN  
QLZGFOLIDTFZ ZIT ORTQL ZGGA  
SOAT VOSRYOKT. HTGHST DQRT  
Q KTSOUOGF GY ZITD. - EIQKSTL  
RQKVOF

Answer to Monday's word search puzzle: *The unused letters spell "Evolution."*



By Rick-Boy

"You better explain yourself, McCready," said Prosecutor Hobbins. "You've got a bunch of people out there at your ranch or laboratory, whatever you call it, and the evidence indicates you've been cutting out pieces of them, organs, for sale. The sheriff said it looked like they were turkeys waiting for slaughter. We've turned them over to Social Services. They won't talk. It's a heck of a problem. So if you've got an explanation, I'm all ears."

"As you know people have been perfecting robots for years. Different models do all kinds of different tasks."

"What does that have to do with anything?" asked the prosecutor.

"I thought that on a biological level a human could be engineered to be more specialized, more adaptive to a particular environment."

"So what did you do?" asked the prosecutor. "Well, before I answer that let me ask you a question. You claim to be human?"

"As a prosecutor for many years, some might disagree; but yes, I am human."

"But really you are part human, part mechanical and part bio-engineered."

"Yes, we all are today. I don't see what this has to do with anything," said the prosecutor. "We allow parents to integrate the latest technology into their kids so they'd be bigger, stronger, faster, and smarter."

"It's a parents' rights issue," said the prosecutor. "That's all been settled. Everyone does it. They need to, or their kids would fall behind."

"So we aren't purely human anymore."

"We call ourselves human, but you are correct in that most everyone is 'enhanced.' You have to be to keep up."

*Tomorrow: The organist.*