



LUX • VERITAS • LARDUM

BLACK ROCK BEACON

rites of passage ■ settling down edition ■ wed aug 31, 2011 ■ vol VII, number III

1:30 @ center camp ■ www.blackrockbeacon.org

ART ATTACKS

BY OCEAN

A number of art pieces on the Playa have been vandalized this year. According to Bettie June, manager of the Art Department for Burning Man, here are a few that have been harmed:

Nit Whips by Vincent Leclerc. This series of light structures with long tendrils were designed to be played with, however four of them have already been so badly broken by vandals that they had to be removed from the Playa.

Another Door by Calen Barca-Hall. Calen was present while the piece was being vandalized, but his requests to stop harming the piece were ignored.

Aurora by Charlie Gadeken. This 30-foot tall tree with 4,100 handmade metal leaves is being damaged by people climbing it, ignoring requests to stop harming the piece.

A Light Hazing by Matt Gilio-Tenan. The centerpiece of this installation, a screen emitting beautiful light, was destroyed by vandals who used paint to graffiti it. It cannot be repaired and will likely have to be removed.

The artists create these pieces for our community to enjoy and they need our help protecting them. If you see someone harming an art piece in any way please ask them to stop. Tell others about this issue so that more people in Black Rock City can be on the lookout for vandals.

You can check with the Artery to see which pieces can be climbed without being harmed.

If you want to volunteer to help repair broken pieces stop by the Artery and ask if they need help. 🐉

Police Station Zebra

BY SPACE HOOKIER

I was able to make it out to law enforcement camp yesterday to interview Rollo, a Burner like any other: dusty, wearing bright colors and calmly musing on the nature of the universe while keeping a diligent eye out for moop. Except this Burner's universe is law enforcement for Black Rock City.

Rollo Mendez heads the Bureau of Land Management team tasked with patrolling the Playa, coordinating law enforcement and emergency services.

Mendez said he likes to think of himself as a zebra: a metaphor for the tension between the social expectations undergirding outside law enforcement and the purposefully "atypical" environment in Black Rock City. "I come wanting to believe I'm a zebra, and though I'm not, when you recognize me as a zebra, I'm excited. At the end of the week, I hope it's no longer necessary to dress as a zebra."

(For the record, Mendez does not actually dress as a zebra: he wears a typical park ranger-like uniform, covered by an orange vest.)

A city of Black Rock's scale and diversity comes with the same problems as any other metropolis, but Mendez insisted that the natural tension between law enforcement and participants is not insurmountable. "My role is to facilitate this environment so that nobody is purposefully harmed," he says. "We all have individual choices to make, and my default is that each decision is independent, and that the individual is simply trying to be a zebra."

The burning question of course: what can you get arrested for? "I tell my staff to focus on education and promoting de-escalation to solve things at the smallest, most local level possible," said Mendez. "This is an atypical environment, but we all come knowing that some choices count as real crimes that will carry consequences." 🐉

Sheriff Storyteller

BY DURGY

The Black Rock Beacon ran into Richard Machado, the new sheriff of Pershing County, in Wadsworth on Saturday. Sheriff Storyteller, to use his Playa name, seemed upbeat about the event.

He wished for Black Rock citizens to have fun this week, but to be safe. He also hoped that people would remember the reality of their situations, even in this unreal place.

It also would be good if Burners were reasonable in any interactions that they may have with law enforcement, he said.

Machado, a former Lovelock Police sergeant, defeated long-serving Sheriff Ron Skinner in a close election last year, according to the Burning Man website. 🐉

A Square Horse in a Round City

photo by Feymar



BY DARCY DOODLE

As mischief and the Playa go hand in hand, the rumors flying around Trojan Horse are as consuming and intriguing as the dust. Composer Douglas Bevin was inspired

to create a piece for Burning Man after his previous art installation, an electronic piece, called Horus the Agressor. The idea of a horse emerged, "seeded from random casual banter: Horus, sounded hoarse." The approach stuck, and the form's concept was so-

lified once the first drawing was submitted by Jay of the Banft Center in Alberta, Canada. "It was a drawing of a bird-like creature, dainty," tall and done in a cubist style, said Bevin. The style was adopted and it gave an old story a modern shape: the polygram cubist form.

From the project's inception, it attracted "incredible talent, diverse, eclectic mix; young, old, young at heart," said Bevin's partner Alaya. Merely a year later, she coordinated the installation's arrival by connecting minds, bodies and passions across borders, cities, and the desert.

There were many players involved in this instillation. Erik, aka Homer, was responsible for much of the theatrics and Dan Swain was the architect who made an astounding first contribution to the Playa. Dan Fox, the construction coordinator, keeper of the beast's facts, shared the logistics of the stairs of the behemoth. "It's 48 feet from the foot of the Playa to the tip of the head, weighs 28 tons, each wheel weighs 2,600 pounds and the wheels are 14-inch diameter tube steel at \$5,000 apiece."

Can you get inside the horse? Yes, as a matter of fact you can! You can enter through the rear to enjoy absinthe in a lounge inside the belly of the beast every night from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. until Friday, when it burns.

This leads us to the burn: The horse will be pulled by more than 300 volunteers, followed by "players" dressed in togas, all proceeding to Bevin's conduction from the base's rear steps. The ceremony will occur on Friday at 6 p.m. when the horse is dragged by ropes about 100 yards to its frey destination.

Alaya beautifully explained the one-time adaptation of the Trojan Horse story. "The human power is true to the original story, the myth. It's not an art car, it's an installation. It's a blend of old and new, never meant to be a reenactment of the story, there are no rules with it. It's a blend of everyone's interests and passions and hopes of finding fulfillment in their role. Everyone contributes." 🐉

You Can Walk to an Oasis of Calm

BY AZALEA

Deep Walk-in Camping is the new Deep Playa: Otic Oasis provides calm amidst the chaos.

In the walk-in camping area at 2:30 far beyond L, there is a new Black Rock City experience waiting. It almost did not happen this year, yet through happenstance, luck, and a timely connection, Syn, the conceptual, joined with Greg, the artist, to create Otic Oasis.

The name 'otic' (pronounced Oh-tik) is an anatomical term referring to the ear. It is certainly an art piece, yet it is also a civic structure.

Syn conceived of the idea a year ago, with the intent to create something akin to a silent version of Center Camp. Born of her own need for a quiet meditative space, and tired of being repeatedly forced back into the city side of the trash fence by policing types, she originally thought of placing a simple community tent out in walk-in camping.

Yet the stars aligned this year for much more. The structure aims to increase auditory diversity in the city by offering an environment to regroup in a quiet, meditative state, a need not currently filled by existing civic structures.

The oasis was built entirely within the rules of walk-in camping, specifically, without the use of motorized vehicles. Resisting the urge to go rogue in the night, 12 people hauled in 1,400 individual pieces cumulatively weighing approximately 20,000 pounds. The structure itself depends solely on geometry, and is

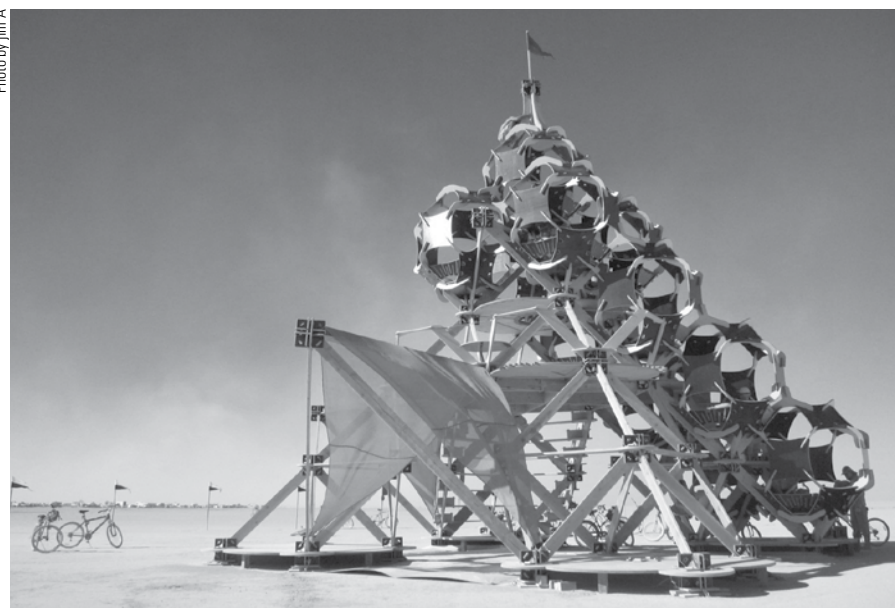
built completely without nails, glue or metal fasteners.

It is impossible to fully understand the mathematical design and concept without spending time with Greg. His own house on the Playa is art in and of itself, and provides a window into the sheer intellect, creativity, and functionality of his design ideas. His personal sleeping area runs diagonal to the city grid, and the oasis he and Syn have created truly runs on a diagonal between our tradi-

tional definitions of art and infrastructure. The artists are not burning the structure this week, and if all goes well, will be back again next year. Thus far travel to the oasis has not seemed to disturb the campers in the walk-in area — yet if the structure receives the popularity it deserves, it will be interesting to witness whether such art projects change the dynamic and feel of deep Walk-in Camping.

Opening ceremony: Wednesday @ 6pm — sunset
Meditations: daily at sunrise, sunset and possibly midnight 🐉

Photo by Jim A



The Power of Rock and Roll

BY NATHANIEL PAGE

An artwork called Rock Inferno comes to Black Rock City in 2011 by way of Danbury, Connecticut. "This is Rock Band with flame throwers," said Jeff, one of five pyromaniacs who designed and built the piece over the past 15 months. "We've had surprisingly few mishaps. No burns, no explosions."

For legal reasons, the team usually calls the flame throwers "poofers." The poofers form a line atop a spandex screen onto which is projected Frets on Fire, an open-source knock-off of the video game Rock Band. The player stands underneath the projector in another frame that flashes multicolored lights as he plays. Every time the player hits the right note in the game, a colored light goes on and a blast of flame shoots from the corresponding poofer.

The Rock Inferno team consists of Jen "Jen-Swan" Swanson, Chris "Smoky" Lavelle, Dennis "Zoo Money" Lambe, Jeff "Valence" Sweetman, Ray "Neutral" Somers, and a pit bull mix named Lizzy. All team members — save Jeff and Lizzy — are heavy in the poi dancing scene.

All members of Rock Inferno helped bring the piece to fruition. Jen, who is also a handbag

designer, did the website (www.arsoniccreations.com) and provided inspirational pyromania. Chris works at a shop making road signs, and he just finished welding school. He came up with the Rock Inferno concept and built parts of the piece, including the climate-controlled, dust-proof electronics box. Dennis and Jeff are the programmers. Away from Rock Inferno Jeff runs computerized boilers, and his expertise parlayed into making flames blast out of chimney pipes at the tap of a button. He smokes a lot and speaks concisely. The electrician Ray included his participation in Rock Inferno on his resume, which got him a job from an employer who was understanding enough to grant time off to attend Burning Man. Lizzy is able to hold onto a chew toy while being swung in circles through the air.

This year is Jen and Chris' first at Burning Man, and Rock Inferno's second. The 2011 model improves vastly upon the previous, though, thanks to a Black Rock City honorarium grant. Though the team funded the Rock Inferno prototype themselves, the grant helped to get expensive parts like the propane solenoids and 15,000-volt transformers in the poofers, and the hundreds of gallons of propane they expect to 'pooft.'

The Beacon visited the Rock Inferno crew on test night before the piece was loaded into the

Boston Burningtruck, but testing was canceled because of weather. Instead the Beacon was treated to a video of a guy in a Winnie-the-Pooh costume shredding the hell out of Foreigner's "Juke Box Hero."

Rock Inferno's huge sound system can belt out hundreds of decibels of liquid metal and the team expected their neighbors to fear and loathe the rock-blasting, fire-breathing device — but they were wrong. "Everyone has been very supportive," Jeff said. The Pooh costume came from one neighbor, a hard-drinking Vietnam veteran and garbage man who came over one day to play. "He's a better Burner than any of us," Dennis said of the man. Perhaps he got the

costume out of someone's garbage. When he gave it to them he insisted that in exchange for it they videotape someone playing the game while wearing it. Eventually the team got a video of Camp Here campmate NotKnox in the Pooh suit, playing the guitar behind his head and doing Angus Young stage gymnastics with a wall of flame in his face.

Amongst his Playstation games, Dennis has Rock Band, Guitar Heroes I, II, and III, and Guitar Hero Aerosmith. "Dennis plays Dance Dance Revolution in expert mode," Jen said. But not everyone in the team is even into Rock Band. "I don't even really like it," Chris said as he drilled a hole in Rock Inferno's projector box. 🐷



Best Brews for Black Rock City

BY RED NIKKI

Playa dust affects the palate. Beers that are refreshing in the Default World can be syrupy in Black Rock City, while brews that seem too intense at your corner bar are the perfect antidote to Playa heat.

Here is an analysis of how each beer style performs in Black Rock. Keep this list on hand as you pack for next year.

THAT BEER YOU BOUGHT FOR \$5 A CASE: Take water and mix in a little piss, and you get these. Try harder.

STOUT: The beer that drinks like a meal. In the Default World, a rich stout seems like it would be the perfect Playa beer. But no plan survives contact with the Playa. The dust damps down the flavor and amps up the richness, leaving the stout-drinking Burner feeling bloated after half a can.

I.P.A.: IPA stands for India Pale Ale. In the 1700s, this beer style was developed so casks of beer could be shipped in a dank, dirty hold for six months from England to India and still be drinkable at the end of the trip. If it could withstand that journey, it can survive nine hours in a car trunk on the way from Reno, and if it was good enough for British soldiers languishing in India, it is good enough for the Playa. The hoppiness cuts through the dust, leaving a crisp,

somewhat floral refreshing aftertaste. The perfect Playa beer.

LAGER: In the worst case, lager is inoffensive and provides a welcome change. In the best case, however, it provides the sense of refreshment of an IPA without the bitter intensity. Great after a hot afternoon stalking the Man between dust storms. For best results, seek out a double-hopped lager.

HEFEWEIZEN: Its pale color may make it seem like a perfect Playa companion, but don't be fooled. This beer features all of the downsides of a stout, filling you up in half a bottle, yet tastes pallid and unsatisfying.

PORTER: Heavier porters have all the flaws of a stout, but the lighter versions capture all of the charm of a Default-World stout without the weight.

AMBER: Much like porter to stout, a good amber ale takes on all the features of a lager and cranks them to 11, its deliciousness penetrating even the thickest deposits of Playa dust on your tongue. Slightly weightier than a lager, amber is perfect for hanging out in camp, although it might be a bit heavy for deep playa roaming.



Rangers Beauty and Rat Bastard have been coming to Black Rock City for a long time, and they're still smiling about it. Beauty is an 11-year Burner with 10 years of Rangering experience and 9 years as a minister in the Universal Life Church, so she can officiate at Playa weddings. Rat Bastard is a 9 year Burner, 8 year Ranger, and Zebra 5 on the Leal Team.

Help the Beacon

Hey BRC, hope you've been enjoying our seventh year of Playa newspapering. We could use some help in two disparate ways:

Sunday distribution. If you are sticking around on Sunday, we need some people to distribute our Exodus edition. We have routes inside the city, and you can also say goodbye to Burners waiting patiently to be pulsed out of the city. It's a great chance to rock your favorite daytime costume (or lack thereof) one last time.

Mac Magician. We produce the Beacon on a fleet of venerable G3 Blackbirds. If Lombard and Pismo mean something to you, you could help us rejuvenate our electronic pals with new PRAM batteries and some part replacement from non-functioning models.

To give us a hand with either of these tasks, please drop by to see us in Center Camp at the 1:30 position. Mac types could also email us after the event at questions@blackrockbeacon.org.

The Black Rock Gazette 10 Years Ago

Thursday, August 30

"Art Vandals" chronicled a wave of defacings of Playa projects. "It happens every year," said Ranger Beavis. "In a crowd like this, you will have 5 percent who are assholes. This year it seems to be more like 7.5 percent."

Western Fetishists pervade Black Rock City. "The Wild Wild West" found camps like Dismal, Nevada, a half-dead mining town; The Laughing Stock, purveyors of a herd of motorized horses; Naughty Cowgirl Ranch, more or less what you'd think; Spaghetti Western Camp, Asian Princess Ranch, and the Space Cowboys, helped round out the posse.

"Freckles" will not form on skin that has not been exposed to sunlight. On the other hand, ultraviolet radiation from sunlight, plentiful on the Playa, brings them out.

Hands Around The Man

On Saturday, at 11:11 a.m., Phil Osophical will attempt to create a semi-spontaneous circle of hands around the Man. He and several other organizers will aim to gather approximately 400 people and have all join hands.

Why? "We will be celebrating our own personal and collective Rites of Passage," Osophical said. "Come join us."

"No man should be allowed to be president who does not understand hogs."

—President Harry Truman

BRAINTEASERS BY DURGY

N	E	T	R	A	G	R	E	D	N	I	K
O	E	N	O	I	T	A	U	D	A	R	G
I	D	C	G	Y	A	D	H	T	R	I	B
T	A	Y	R	A	U	T	I	B	O	D	R
A	N	T	U	O	G	N	I	M	O	C	I
I	A	N	N	I	V	E	R	S	A	R	Y
T	L	H	L	A	N	I	M	I	L	V	I
I	P	A	I	M	P	U	D	E	N	C	E
N	S	J	A	N	L	A	R	E	N	U	F
I	E	J	J	O	U	R	N	E	Y	T	G

These words are in the grid:

ANNIVERSARY, BIRTHDAY, COMING OUT, DIVORCE, ENGAGEMENT, ESPLANADE, FUNERAL, GRADUATION, HAJJ, IMPUDENCE, INITIATION, JAIL, JOURNEY, KINDERGARTEN, LIMINAL, OBITUARY

The leftover letters form another word related to a rite of passage.



ALMANAC



WEDNESDAY

First light: 5:54 A.M.
Sunrise: 6:22 A.M..
Sunset: 7:33 P.M.
Twilight ends: 8:01 P.M..
Moonset: 8:45 P.M.

THURSDAY

First light: 5:55 A.M.
Sunrise: 6:23 A.M..
Sunset: 7:31 P.M..
Twilight ends: 8:00 P.M..
Moonset: 9:22 P.M.

Space Station Fly-Over:
9:47 p.m., North by Northwest

Burns: All 23 CORE projects, 9:00 P.M.
Space Station Fly-Over:
8:50 P.M., North

FRIDAY

First light: 5:56 A.M.
Friday sunrise: 6:24 A.M.

The moon rises after the sun on Wednesday and Thursday.

Source for astronomical information:
www.sunrisesunset.com



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PERPETRATORS OF THE BLACK ROCK BEACON... Mitchell Martin, editor emeritus in training. Mike Durgavich, doer of stuff. Angie Zmijewski, stunt double. Susan Williamson, Riso master. Larry Breed, coping editor. Taymar, webmeister. Ron Garmon, co-camp manager in absentia. Suzanne Zalev, hot mama. Carry Tveit and Deb Prothero, gone ice fishing. WeeGee, overseas minister of photography. Rod Allen and Brian Train, sunset prevention editors. Edge, eminence grise. | Design goddess/bitch wrangler: Lena Kartzov. Beacon bitch/illustrator: Shado. Illustrator: Diana Acosta. Monkeyshines: Zaius. Photographer: Jim A. Transpo: Bellboy. City Desk: Red Nikki. DisReps: Duane, Gordo, Sharona, Jim, Jeremy, Angie, George, Tara Maki, Ocean, Cat, Rumor, Mrs. Lucky, Little Jack, Brigit, Evelyn, Paul, Jane and Camp Grrr. Copy Editors: Sepia, Pam, Puss and Sister Crystal. Writers: Aleeza, Andrew, Genie Gratto, Mary Jane, Red Nikki.