

## Pershing Sheriff Crosses Rural/Radical Divide

### BY CURIOUS

Pershing County's top law enforcement officer, Jerry Allen, 42, is a big man in a small county. He polices a rural population of 6,500, nearly one in four of whom are incarcerated at Nevada's Lovelock Correctional Center. Once a year, in the remotest corner of his jurisdiction, an international city pops up for a week, swelling with 80,000 revelers and personnel, blowing his resources and, he claimed, local crime stats off the charts.

Elected in 2014, Allen pledged to "crack down on Burning Man crime." On his watch, there's been an increased law-enforcement presence on the Playa and an uptick in searches, citations, and arrests. In 2015, he made 43 arrests, compared with his predecessor's seven.

His 2015 synopsis of the event includes 1,197 reports of assisting the public, six missing or lost children (all found), one death, 143 citations, 175 verbal warnings, three cases of trespassing, one assault with a deadly weapon, narcotics violations, and drug trafficking.

In 2016 Allen reported 46 arrests (37 were drug-related, according to a Reno Gazette Journal article). In 2017, he clocked 57 arrests.

"I wouldn't say we're doing anything more aggressively," Allen explained in a telephone interview. "I am not one of those guys that like to sit back and let things happen and go deal with the chaos afterwards. I like my deputies to go out and actively patrol, actively be out there for the citizens."

Newcomers have misperceptions, Allen said. "It's radical this, radical that. When somebody like a law enforcement officer comes up and says 'you're being a little too radical,' obviously that's going to cause a rift.

"They expect they're coming out to the desert where no rules apply and it's just not true. The rules and the law are supposed to be applied evenly and fairly across the board," he says. "So that means that whatever's illegal here in Lovelock or Grass Valley is illegal out at Burning Man."

In reality, what's legal in Lovelock can get you locked up in Black Rock. Nevada legalized possession of 1 ounce of weed, or 1/8 ounce concentrate (vapes, edibles), as well as medical marijuana with a prescription. That can still get you arrested at Burning Man, which is subject to the more restrictive federal drug laws that also prohibit possession of drug paraphernalia.

Before he became sheriff, Allen spent more than a decade patrolling the Playa as a deputy. Asked to describe the event, he said: "When one of the most liberal cities in the United States, San Francisco, kicks them out and says you can't do that crazy stuff here anymore, you guys are too crazy for us, that's what Burning Man is to me."

Allen was affable and open as he sat down in May for an interview with the Beacon. His office is in a low modern building across from Lovelock's vintage courthouse square. The invasion was three months off.

The sheriff said work for the event far exceeds the two weeks for which he's compensated. He wants more

money and more officers (and has even asked for upwards of 200, considering the growing population). BMorg contends his staff of 20, combined with 30 federal Bureau of Land Management officers per 24-hour shift, is enough, along with the 700 Black Rock City Rangers dispersed over the event.

If you're prosecuted for a crime in Pershing you'll report to the elegant 1919 Classic Revival round courthouse, where a stone tablet of the Ten Commandments adorns the lawn, and chairs in the courtroom have their original cowboy hat racks anchored underneath the wooden seats. In the criminal division, knowledgeable and cordial clerks informed us they've seen a total of three cases from Burning Man in their court in the past 11 years: two for rape and one for drug trafficking. They approximate that 98% of the drug charges are gross misdemeanors.

Allen crosses a vast cultural gulf, leaving his conservative rural community to police Black Rock City. But the sheriff conceded it has earned his respect. "I don't know how there is such a group of creative people — it is from a thought within their brain to something tangible for so many people to interact with. There are some phenomenal artists, there are some phenomenal thinkers out there." 🐞

## Reno/Sparks Area Faces Increased Urban Sprawl

### BY THE FRIDGE

If a proposed federal law passes, you may see a lot more urban sprawl on your drive through Nevada from the west to Black Rock City.

At a recent Google event in Reno, Sen. Dean Heller (R-NV) explained that urban development would be permitted under a proposal to reclassify two-thirds of the 600,000 acres of federally protected land north of I-80 between the Reno-Sparks area and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Indian Reservation. Heller said this is necessary to solve infrastructure problems, including housing needs.

A spike in rental prices in the Reno-Sparks area has been pointed at by county officials as a reason to reduce the federal government's ownership of the bulk of Nevada's land, which they see as a barrier to development. This includes Washoe County, where 83 percent of the land is federally owned. The bill has new legs because of Heller's dead-heat race with Democratic challenger Jacky Rosen in this year's election. Heller is campaigning on a platform of increased access to public federal lands for development.

The Washoe County Economic Development and Conservation Act, as the proposed law is known, would release 400,000 acres of land that is currently

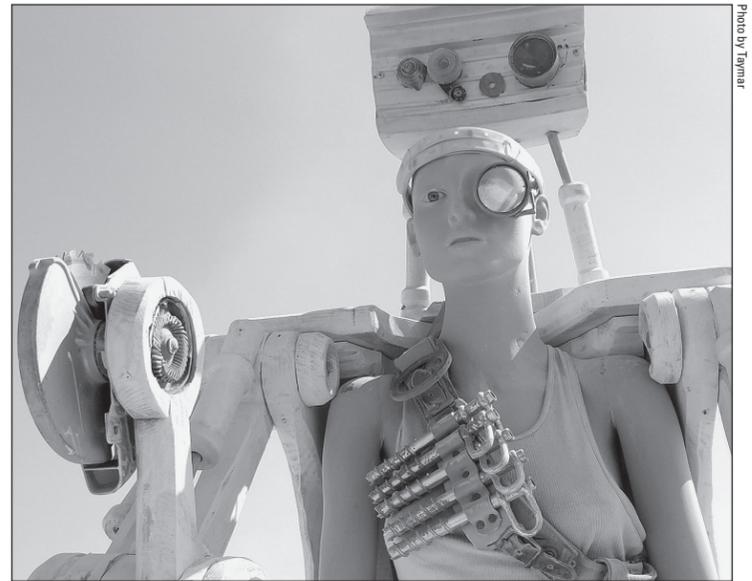


Photo by Teymar

## WHAT'S IN A STREET NAME?

**Algorithm** - A step-by-step procedure for solving a problem; all computer programs are algorithms; some allow for artificial intelligence. The word is a Latinization of the name of Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, a Persian mathematician who wrote a treatise on Hindu-Arabic numerals.

**Bender** - An alcoholic, whore-mongering, chain-smoking gambler of a robot whose motto is "kill all humans." Bender is a character on the animated television show "Futurama."

**Cylon** - The robots from the original and reimagined "Battlestar Galactica" television series. The old ones were cooler than the new ones, which came in toaster and humanoid (skin-job) formats. In both series, Cylons aim to

destroy humanity. The reimagined ship Galactica avoids the destruction of the rest of its fleet because its commander refused to allow it to be networked to outside computers.

**Dewey** - One of three drone robots in the movie "Silent Running" and the only one to survive. After the original Battlestar Galactica appeared, Twentieth Century-Fox and Lucasfilm sued Battlestar producer Universal Studios, claiming it had stolen ideas from "Star Wars." Universal countersued, claiming "Star Wars" had used its intellectual property, including the drones from "Silent Running," which seem to have inspired R2D2.

**Elektro** - A robot built by Westinghouse Electric Corp. that appeared at the New York World's Fair in 1939 and 1940. With a boxy humanoid form, it stood seven feet tall and weighed 265 pounds. It could walk, talk (via a record player), and smoke cigarettes. The aluminum-skinned robot appeared as Thinko, a character in the 1960 film "Sex Kittens Go to College," starring Mamie Van Doren, Tuesday Weld, and Mijanou Bardot (Brigitte's sister). The robot survives and can be viewed at the Mansfield Memorial Museum in Mansfield, Ohio.

**Fribo** - A Social Networking Robot for Increasing Social Connectedness Through Sharing Daily Home Activities From Living Noise Data. That was the title of a paper presented by South Korean researchers at a conference on Human Robot Interaction in Chicago in March that introduced the device. Fribo, which looks like a decorative black Halloween cat, snoops your personal life with sound and other sensors and then sends your friends alerts about what you are doing, without identifying you. So if it hears you go into the kitchen and grab a snack bag, it would tell your pals something like "I wonder which one of you gluttons is going to eat a whole bag of potato chips" and then you can send emojis to each other, and this is supposed to compensate for living alone and not having any 3D friends or imagination.

**Gort** - The robot from "The Day the Earth Stood Still," one of a race created by a confederation of alien humanoids to

continued on other side

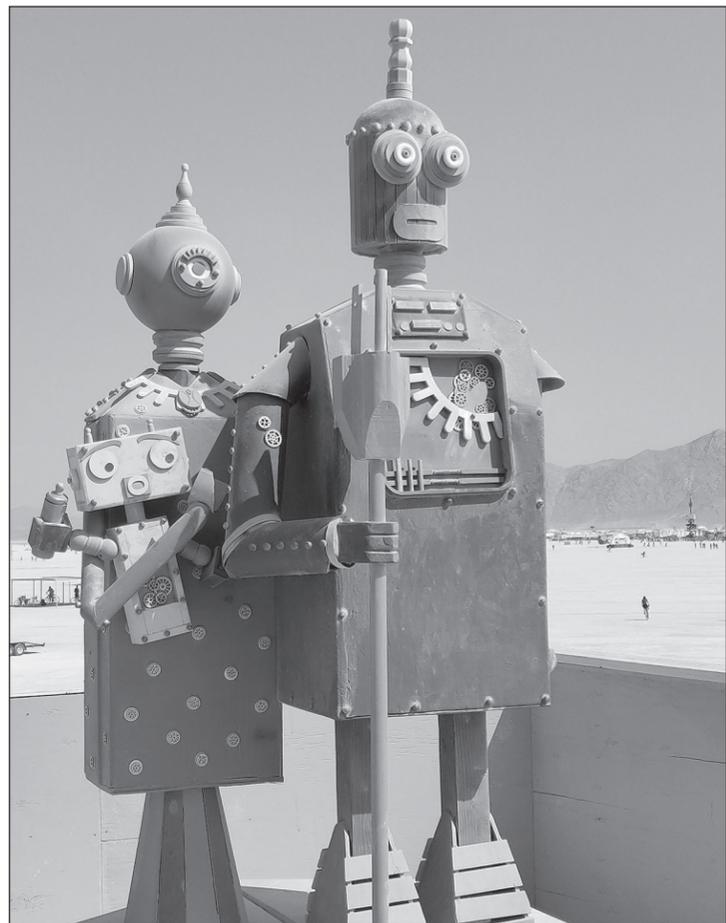


Photo by Teymar

In Orwell's Animal House, when it was declared that "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others," it was a message from the pigs that they were superior to their barnyard peers. Which is evident.

# BLACK ROCK BEACON

"People just want to stick wieners in my face." — A long-time burner and DPW volunteer, on this year's burn.

## OOPS:

The (solemn) Larry Harvey Temple Burn will take place **WEDNESDAY** evening at 9 p.m.

### What's In A Street Name? Continued

prevent aggression by destroying aggressors. In the original 1951 movie, Gort is eight feet tall and made out of a seamless metal. A 2008 remake made the robot much taller.

**HAL** - Friendly crewmate-turned-homicidal maniac computer from "2001, a Space Odyssey." Read lips sink ships.

**Iron Giant** - Finally, a robot that does not want to destroy humanity. The Iron Giant was the American name for the 1968 novel "The Iron Man: A Children's Story in Five Nights" written by Ted Hughes, the British poet laureate. The name was changed in the United States to avoid confusion with the comic-book character. Pete Townshend adapted the novel for a musical in 1989 and it was made into a Warner Brothers movie in 1999, directed by Brad Bird. In the book, a giant metal creature appears in England and starts eating farm equipment. Later, it defends the earth from a continent-sized Space-Bat-Angel-Dragon that wants to eat the entire world, farm equipment and everything.

**Johnny 5** - Robot from the movie "Short Circuit," it is struck by lightning and becomes sentient.

**Kinoshita** - Robert Kinoshita was an artist who worked in Hollywood and created Robby the Robot from the movie "Forbidden Planet" and the Robot from the television show "Lost in Space." A Japanese American, he and his wife were interred by U.S. authorities during World War II. He died at 100 in 2014.

**Leon** - Probably refers to Leon Kowalski, one of the replicants in the original "Blade Runner" movie. Really strong, not so bright. In the film, he was activated in April 1947, so he'd be alive today if movies were real. He's shot while trying to kill Harrison Ford's character. 🐜

## BRAINTEASERS BY DURGY

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25J	26B		27M	28D	29H	30a	31N	32B	33T	34K	35Y	36W		37Q	38U	39C	40a	41J	42L		43A	44G	45P	46K		47J	48N
	49E	50H	51Q		52L	53M	54C	55P	56B	57E	58Q	59a		60F	61I	62S	63B	64Z	65X		66O	67L		68R	69a	70T	71J
72M	73S	74Q		75N	76I	77O	78S	79A		80G	81F		82a	83T	84B	85E	86Q	87A	88V	89G		90Q	91U	92a	93X	94M	95K
96F	97I		98U	99a	100Q		101D	102H		103Y	104A	105H	106Q		107V	108C	109S		110L	111B	112M	113P	114I	115V		116W	117C
118M	119R	120G	121O	122N		123E	124S	125C	126X	127N	128D		129P	130J	131N	132H		133M	134H	135I	136E	137K	138J	139Q		140O	141L
142M		143E	144K	145F	146P		147K	148I	149P		150R	151L	152G	153P	154C		155F	156X		157B	158O		159A	160N	161Y		162T
163X	164D		165Z	166I	167S	168Q	169L		170V	171R		172B	173O		174E	175D	176Y	177I		178D	179Y						

A. Domestic patterned cat 43 104 87159 79	H. Parroted 102 134 50 132 29 105	O. This one loves to be in the buff 140 121 77 66 158 173	V. Popular font 170 115 3 107 88
B. An aim or plan 157 56 63 26 84 32 172 111 13	I. Fashion icon (2 words) 5 166 135 76 11 148 61 97 114 177	P. Affability 113 149 19 129 45 153 55 2 146	W. Hearty meat and vegetable dish 4 14 36 116
C. All the people 54 39 108125 117 24 154	J. A jointed device a door moves on 6 47 130 41 71 138 25	Q. In a vulgar way 86 58 90 51 37 106 100 139 168 74	X. Relating to Ireland 126 65 93 156 163
D. Receding like the tide 164 178 101175 28 128	K. Next to 7 34 137 147 46 95 144 20	R. Nothing but net! 68 150 15 171 119	Y. Croquet ball striker 103 23 35 176 179 161
E. Having serrations 85 57 174 123136 143 49 22	L. Improvised on a musical instrument 67 151141169110 42 52	S. An insurance statistician 78 62 73 17 124167 109	Z. Possess 64 165 8
F. Cool and distant 155 145 81 96 60	M. Pregnancy 9 72 94 118133 142 27 53 112	T. A distinctive mode of pronunciation 33 21 70 83 16 162	aa. Jobs 30 12 92 99 59 1 69 40 82
G. European river with Alps headwaters 152 44 120 80 89	N. Set in motion 18 127 48 122 31 131 160 75 10	U. Mr. Guevera 98 38 91	

Hint: First letters of each answer read "Times are changing. Isaac Asimov" which relates to the theme of the quote.

## Won't You Be My Centipede? asks Myriapoda Robota

BY MICHAEL MOORE AND JIMMY OLSEN

Myriapoda Robota, a 30-foot mechanical centipede (12:56/2860'), wants to be your friend, even if she doesn't know it. Perhaps like you, Myriapoda might be a little shy and modest the first time you meet her on the Playa. But as the week progresses, the futuristic arthropod will start to light up — emotionally and physically — at the sights and sounds of fellow burners. She will welcome you to come closer and bask in her natural glow that pulses as she increasingly enjoys the company of the other creatures who have learned to inhabit and celebrate the dystopian wasteland of Black Rock City.

Artist David Date, of La Selva, Ca., received an art grant to bring Myriapoda Robota to this year's burn. The timing of the "I, Robot" theme is a coincidence for Date, who has been working on the piece since 2016, when he first presented the concept at Burning Man. That piece was smaller and not as capable of expressing itself, he said.

This time, Date has drastically improved his centipede, with the help of friend and sculptor/designer David Han and the Santa Cruz-based Art To Be Continued collective.

Myriapoda Robota's eight body segments and 16 legs are made of reclaimed aluminum, repurposed wheelchair motors, and a spine of gearboxes, crank-

shafts and other parts. These moving parts are geared and timed to create the same "cascading" effect that a real centipede's legs make when it ambles, explained Date, a freelance metal fabricator by trade.

Motion sensors are positioned along Myriapoda's body. The "sight" of an approaching burner on a bicycle, for example, will be registered by a programmed arduino on Myriapoda's exoskeleton, triggering her to react with a movement of her own — if the playa dust doesn't block the sensors.

Myriapoda's LED display, consisting of hundreds of lights, is the center of her emotional response system. Designed and programmed by Stanford graduate student Abhay Agarwal, the LED array will react to the sounds around Myriapoda Robota (such as a bass-thumping art car) with any of 250 cues directed through an on-board Madrix controller and MIDI signals. "We have five different emotional states" depicted by the LEDs, changing with the variety of external stimuli, Date explained.

Myriapoda's movements will become more frequent, and her light shows increasingly intense, as the centipede continues to interact with burners throughout the week.

Han, a Burning Man virgin, was asked by Date shortly after the 2016 burn to help improve the centipede's design and make her look "pretty." The duo replaced Myriapoda's previous steel construction with aluminum, Han's medium of choice as a full-time independent artist. Aluminum is lighter than steel and thus more responsive to Myriapoda's motors and gears, Han explained.

Myriapoda Robota might be the prototype of insects from the future, when species become extinct.

Emotionally, she is already human. Her experience is similar to that of Date, who said Burning Man has helped him confront his own anxiety and depression.

"Before you get [to BRC], you see these pictures and videos of people participating. As an outsider, you think that's a weird place, and you have to dress or act like that," Date said. "Then you get out there and feel the generosity and compassion and realize, I can be myself."

Whatever metaphors can be limned from Myriapoda Robota, Date is likely not the only one who predicts burners will find the art piece "pretty fucking cool." 🐜

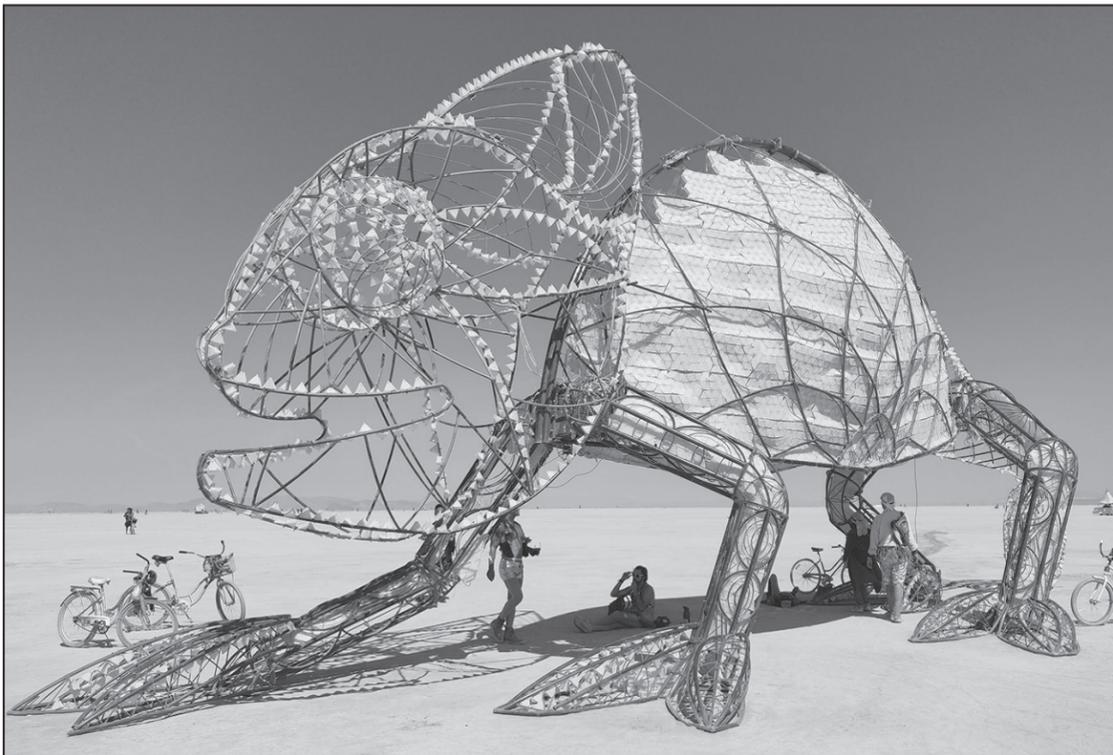


Photo by Taymar

## ALMANAC

**Wednesday • August 29**  
Sunset: 7:35 p.m.  
Twilight ends: 8:04 p.m.  
Moonrise: 9:32 p.m.

**Thursday • August 30**  
The Moon is in the sky at dawn  
First light: 5:53 a.m.  
Sunrise: 6:21 a.m.  
Sunset: 7:34 p.m.  
Twilight ends: 8:02 p.m.  
Moonrise: 10:02 p.m.

**Friday • August 31**  
The Moon is in the sky at dawn  
First light: 5:54 a.m.  
Sunrise: 6:22 a.m.  
Friday Black Rock Beacon appears

Sun/Moon data courtesy of SunriseSunset.com

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