Playa Phone Pleases Participants

BY PLAYA BOY

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BY LINDA WENG

Take it from JX BELL, a veteran burner from Philadelphia. After four years of burns, he and his friends discussed how to extend the Burning Man experience to the default world off playa. He noticed that his friends voiced strong opinions regarding politics, yet took no action to change their community. “I wanted to bring some of the great Participation and collaboration energy from the Burning Man community into our year-round communities.” Thus, he founded the Real World Greeters. The concept of the Real World Greeters is to remember to Participate and yes, that is with a capital “P”. The five key elements to remember are as follows:

1. Vote, and get others to vote
2. Volunteer in your community
3. Learn about complex issues
4. Organize other people
5. Advocate and inform

In order to promote these concepts, JX Bell developed a user-friendly website www.particip1.org. So, for instance, maybe you want to volunteer for a non-profit agency, but you don’t know how or where. The site explains clearly how to search and even provides a direct link to sites.

Entering into Black Rock City you are greeted by the Black Rock City Greeters so the Real World Greeters helped great people back to the default world during Exodus. Thanks to all who came out to help! Participation is crucial in making any community work. JX Bell is a really enthusiastic guy who believes in what he does, so definitely check out his site. It already worked for this reporter when JX helped me to register to vote, even though I was embarrassed to admit I had never been registered. Now I feel great about it!

The words of JX Bell ring true: “Be your best self every day, Participate.”

Decompression is Still Burning Man

By CLAY GUEST

Around the country this time of year, Decompression festivities abound, helping Burners ease the inevitable shock of re-entry into the default world. When we do, it’s important to remember that we’re representing Burning Man in our communities.

As you enjoy a slice of Black Rock City in your home town, please remember to:

1. leave no trace in your venue and on the streets surrounding it;
2. be respectful of neighbors, and keep the noise down at night;
3. use discretion when making costume changes in public (no everybody wants to see your naked ass);
4. not park in people’s driveways, or otherwise illegally;
5. be courteous to folks around you, our they don’t know fraks like we know fraks, and
generously make sure your fellow participants are aware of these suggestions.

The Family that Flays Together, Stays Together

By CHRIS FENNY

Would you bring your Dad to Burning Man? Would you bring him if he’s 84 years old? Would you have him stay with you at a B&D, S&M camp? Madame Morgan did all three when she invited her Dad, Curious, to join her at the Temple of Atonement this year.

Madame Morgan has been to Burning Man four times. After the last one, Curious asked her what she did out there on the playa. “We have an open relationship and he’s one of my best friends,” said Morgan. “So I talked, among other things, about Burning Man as well as B&D, S&M.”

“When she was done I told her that it was one of the most fascinating conversations I’d had in my life,” Curious said. “We had a couple more conversations and finally Morgan asked if I would like to come to Burning Man this year. I had said I’d love to.”

Curious lives in Bremson, MO – home of wholesome family entertainment. That’s not exactly what they offer at the Temple of Atonement. “We tantalize flesh to have people experience things they wouldn’t normally experience,” said Morgan. “Our camp has no heavy masochism, just light play.”

Curious had yet to get pilloried, as of the filing of this report, but the week was young and full of promise.

Although he is three times the age of the average burner, Curious acclimated well to the playa. “I had a horse ranch in the Antelope Valley for years,” he said. “I’m used to the desert, it doesn’t faze me.” Curious seemed to enjoy his time at BRC. “I love the atmosphere,” he said. “I enjoy the way the people feel and give love and emotions. It’s been a really elegant experience. When asked if he would return next year, Curious smiled and said, “It depends. I haven’t been invited yet.”

Real World Greeters

Whether you’ve come to Black Rock City for the energy, art, free expression, one thing that makes Black Rock City unique is the ethos of participation. Take it from JX BELL, a veteran burner from Philadelphia. After four years of burns, he and his friends discussed how to extend the Burning Man experience to the default world off playa. He noticed that his friends voiced strong opinions regarding politics, yet took no action to change their community. “I wanted to bring some of the great Participation and collaboration energy from the Burning Man community into our year-round communities.” Thus, he founded the Real World Greeters. The concept of the Real World Greeters is to remember to Participate and yes, that is with a capital “P”. The five key elements to remember are as follows:

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My campmates and I came to the playa this year determined to provide some small reprieve from what some playa denizens have not-so-affectionately dubbed “boot in a dryer,” “booms boomas” and “launder appliance” music. Our concept was to spin brittepop, soul and indie records. Music with – check it out – me! We were spinning and drinking G&T’s at “Rule Britannia” in Gigsville.

We thought we’d be hailed as heroes. But upon hitting the playa, we discovered we weren’t alone. The relative emphasis on “rela-” (sarcasm) variety of trance this year seemed almost eerie. Art cars blasted funk, R&B, punk, disco and Bowie. The familiar trance thud, inescapable in years past, contrary to placement of the Burn. Visit www.antaris-project.de.

Global festival culture has evolved into an international network of localised events, allowing for greater accessibility and exploration of diverse music and cultural experiences. Burning Man, a unique and transformative event held in the Nevada desert each August, is renowned for its community-building atmosphere and experimental art installations. The festival encourages participants to embrace creativity, self-expression, and a non-hierarchical social structure.

The participation of artists from around the world enriches the festival experience, contributing to the diverse range of music and performances. From minimalist techno to pulsating psytrance, the music at Burning Man offers a platform for artists to push boundaries and create immersive experiences. The festival attracts a diverse audience, including music lovers, artists, and individuals seeking a break from daily life.

Burning Man’s unique atmosphere fosters a sense of community and encourages social connections, transcending cultural and geographical barriers. The festival is celebrated for its inclusive environment, where participants are encouraged to express themselves freely without judgment. This sense of unity and shared purpose is a defining characteristic of Burning Man, making it a destination for those seeking a transformative and unforgettable experience.

In conclusion, Burning Man exemplifies the power of music and art to bring people together. The festival is a testament to the human capacity for creativity, expression, and connection, offering a space where boundaries are blurred and the soul is free to explore. Through music, art, and community, Burning Man continues to inspire and empower individuals to find their own paths of self-discovery and renewal.
Sports Wrap-up

There were so many ways to participate with fellow burners in sports this year! Vault of Heaven Sports offered an outside common ground that allowed the community easy ways to meet and participate together. From slow to fast all offered ways to commune with each other.

On the full conditioning tip, Pink Pleasure Palace’s Brandy & Jessica’s Pink Cherry Cool-Aid Astroglide Oil Wrestling ensured tip sliding tasty friendly hellos. All corners were welcome!

Ngon camp offered a kegging gracious communal trampoline, horseshoes, badminton, & clothing optional volleyball at dusk. Biff said “it brings out their inner kid.”

Across the street an ongoing street bocce ball bash and optional volleyball at dusk. Biff said “it brings out their inner kid.”

As the sun was setting, Sprocket from F-U-F-ing F’s camp claims the world “Holding down the Sofa” title. Winners got complimentary happy butts, but most BRC folks got that one down, already. Brother Ductor’s Silent Football at Camp Image mode actually required no contact, passing an imaginary football replete with signals, puns, and “social conditioning.”

In their 10th year of sporting underachievement, community Camp “Lawn Games” was open 24/7, and offered frisbee discounts, croquet, rubber ducky Egyptian mini golf, horseshoes and bocce. Jennifer claimed that they had big balls and that “every shot’s a gutter shot.”

So many ways to commune in BRC!

Sports helped to bring our community together while keeping them thinking and healthy. It was a great year for playsports, and we’ll see you back working it next year.
FLYING HIGH OVER BLACK ROCK CITY

A two-seater Cessna 150 rumbles down the runway at the Black Rock International Airport. Headphones strapped to the heads of this reporter and my pilot Jonnica mute the roar of the engine. A voice cracks into our ears:

“Cute Little Cessna,” says the controller, “you are cleared for take-off.”

Jonnica pulls up on the control wheel, and the front end of the plane lifts into the air. We're about to leave the ground and I'm terrified, but as the back wheels follow the front one into the air, an indescribably tingy sense of elation rises that’s unmatched until we see our city from the air.

The perimiter fences show a baseball-diamond event-space with perfectly formed (and jam-packed) crescent at the west end of the diamond. From the air, we observe the perfectly laid-out streets, thousands of vehicles and tents, and in the center of it all stands The Man, who looks surprisingly smaller than you'd expect, and is dwarfed by all the other spectacles around him.

The flight is made possible by the crew over at the Black Rock International Airport, who each year manage to create the only known airport just-for-an-arts-festival in North America, if not the world. Though private airplanes have been flying into Black Rock City since 1992, it wasn't until 1999 that an airport and an official landing strip were created under the able guidance of BRI Airport Manager Lisa Shoun.

“Prior to that time,” said Shoun, “planes just landed wherever, which created safety concerns that needed to be addressed.”

At the 2003 event, Black Rock City experienced two plane crashes, the latter of which resulted in the death of the pilot and three critically injured passengers. Since then, safety issues have become a major concern for BRI, resulting in new rules and restrictions for pilots, as well as pilot briefings to advise them of the unique conditions of flying in and out of BRI. For a pilot used to flying at sea level, the Black Rock Desert imposes special conditions that include higher altitudes, as well as differing atmospheric conditions due to heat, dust, wind, and dryness, all of which can create variables that could contribute to pilot error.

“As a general rule, the Black Rock Desert is uncontrolled airspace and planes can fly in and land anywhere they like,” said Shoun. “During the event, however, with over 100 planes flying in and out of here, pilots are restricted from landing anywhere but here.”

Many participants might not even be aware of the existence of the airport (located in 2004 off 5 o'clock beyond Sedna), since the idea of “flying into Burning Man” seems as remote as possibly taking the Concorde to Paris. Indeed, the aircraft on the runway this year ranged from a $2 million plane flown in by the founder of Askerves to the cute lil’ Cessna that could. Shoun is quick to point out that many of the pilots who fly into BRI are hobbyists or pro pilots who fly Cessnas or Piper Cubes with a market value below $100K.

“Owning a plane is a lot like owning a boat,” said Shoun. “It’s luxury, sure, but it’s not totally out of reach. I hate the idea that people who fly a plane into Burning Man are just rich people trying to avoid traffic. In fact, most of the pilots who bring their aircraft to Burning Man end up flying in ways that help them use their skills — they share aviation with others while they’re here.”

Examples of practical sharing include giving media people (like me!) a chance to fly over the city, facilitating the initiation ritual for new members of the Mile High Club, and flying couples who plan to get married on the playa to nearby Lovelock, Nevada for their marriage license.

And what a view! A four-year participant felt it felt like a dream come true to see the cohesion of our little world down on the ground, not from a picture but actually above it. Truly an amazing experience!

HOW TO SEDUCE AN ALIEN

It’s hard enough to figure out how to flirt with someone from a different country, let alone a different universe. Given the deluge of aliens upon Black Rock City, we thought we’d try to answer the question: How do you seduce a life form that has not just different expectations but different body parts?

With my trusted assistant, I went out on the playa and asked some of these life forms what would turn them on, with demonstrations, if necessary. Words fail to express the lessons learned, and I don’t guarantee anything you read here will land you in an alien love nest. But if nothing else, it may alert you to the range of sexual opportunities for exploring your prowess on the playa.

First thing to remember were we told by a sweet pink fuzzy thing encountered at 6:30 and Mars, “Erogenous zones may exist in places you would never expect.”

She assigned my assistant to try and find them. He ran to the occasion, so to speak, and the next day struggled back to camp raving about how he had been seen in ways he’d never been seen before, touched in ways he’d never been touched before.

At Mystic Beat Lounge a shiny blue monster-like alien explained to me that each of the different body parts?

Macrame sex, huh? Well, haven’t you heard about that before? That’s the name I came up with for after going to the Rope Bondage Class. As a virgin burner I just wanted to get involved and play around so I checked it out.

I wasn’t sure what to expect. Was I to wear my tinted goggles to this event? Images of naked men and women and whatever else — in-between tied up in rope, licking each other and touching each other, was what I was expecting to see. I brought my goggles anyway.

No one seemed to know the whereabouts of Camp Arachnid. One man I stopped to ask was wearing a swede carwash skirt. He gave me directions and said, “You’re a virgin and you’re already volunteering for the paper. You rock. Let me whip your ass!” So, he took his leather skirt dreadslocks and whipped my ass.

After my ass-whipping, I got good directions to the bondage session, and off I went. I caught the last 20 minutes. There were no naked people there. Everyone was fully clothed sitting down listening to instructor Lynx’s show-and-tell. He basically demonstrated several simple techniques then the latter half of class was devoted to wrapping your partner. There were some interesting, very ornate wraps that looked like human marmalade. What’s the purpose of doing such a fancy job, I thought? By the time, I finished knitting your body I’m not horny anymore. I’ll be like, “Honey, I’m too tired. I’ll unite you tomorrow night. I need to take a Burning Man nap. Besides, I already mummified you!”

Everyone looked normal and was wrapping their partner. I could not participate because I showed up alone. I asked the next guy if he wanted to tie me up. He said okay, but never did. It was embarrassing enough for me to come to this class, then to ask a complete stranger to tie you up and get rejected? I should have brought a partner! Because I missed most of the class instruction, I did not know the proper technique for tying, so I asked the nice, quiet guy in front of me to tie me up. I don’t remember what happened, but he just kept tying me up either.

I approached the Lynx’s shy assistant for a bit of history. He believed that everyone has a kinky side and this is one type of release. Being in bondage promotes a helpless state such that you are giving yourself to the other person, so he said sexual arousal is not necessary a part of the process. A roper can use rope to tie his submissive to the bed or use rope to articulate a particular sexual position. Some people use rope to tie a person to a spanking bench or to a St. Andrew’s cross.

The assistant mentioned that there is social stigma associated with this practice, as with most fetishes. He noted an elementary schoolteacher who was caught with a picture of being bound. She was almost fired.

As I was interviewing Lynx’s assistant, this European propulsion guy was taking notes. I asked him if he was writing a story. He said that his wife has this fetish of being tied up. “Did you tie her up ever?” I asked. He hadn’t and said it’s “don’t do anything” for him. I asked if he was going to try this rope technique with her. He said that he is going to surprise her and try it when he gets home.

Well the rope bondage looked like a blast, and it was a shame I didn’t get to take part. Note to self, if you want to practice bondage, bring a partner!

FUN WITH ROPE!

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