Burning Myths Star in the Night Sky

By Caleb Clark

In A.D 140, Ptolemy named the original 48 constellations we see today. Brad Templeton and Kathryn Myronuk redrew these constellations to the myths of Burning Man in 2004 and displayed them on a beautiful backlit star map at 4/4 Mercury. "We looked for the icons of Burning Man," Brad explained. "What has always been, has not always been taught," added Kathryn with a knowing smile. "This is the myths of Burning Man, up to The Vault Heaven. The Dust Devil uplifted the representation and placed them in The Vault," Brad continued. "In the begginer, the Dust Devil Way. There has always been the Dusty Way which stretched across the roof of heaven," Kathryn added with a solemn look. Thus the mythology of the Burning Man Constellations began. Now we as a people can always look to the night sky to remember who we are, our ancestors, and everything in between.

Go out on a clear night around 9:30pm and you can see the foggy Dusty Way stretching across the sky. (The Dusty Way is what non-burners call the Milky Way.) "The Shocket Rocket Shower at Blast Off To The Ocean Beach Burn, Mapless City and Drive By Shooting Range. Stop by the back streets 4-45 & Mercury around 9:30pm and grock our new mythology. Then spread the myths so we can all look to the stars throughout the year to remember those naked runs behind the water truck.

Gadgets and Gizmos

By Matt Mullin

If necessity is the mother of invention, where better than Black Rock City to explore the wonderful world of gadgets and gizmos? From the giant lizard at Exploratorium Camp to the Shocket Rocket Shower at Blast Off To The Ocean Beach Burn, Mapless City and Drive By Shooting Range, thousands of high- and low-tech inventions to improve our quality of life on the playa.

"It is an art but I want to create something that would improve the evacuation process for my gray water," explained PropellerHead of 8POD Camp. "Using solar energy to turn a roller-bar, I'm able to drag a sheet of black shade fabric through my gray water catch basin, and lift it up into the air where the water evaporates with greater efficiency." PropellerHead estimated his contraption was evaporating an average 2.5 gallons of water per hour. Way stretching across the sky. (The Dusty Way is what non-burners call the Milky Way.) "The Shocket Rocket Shower at Blast Off To The Ocean Beach Burn, Mapless City and Drive By Shooting Range. Stop by the back streets 4-45 & Mercury around 9:30pm and grock our new mythology. Then spread the myths so we can all look to the stars throughout the year to remember those naked runs behind the water truck.

Gate Crashers Can’t Beat Border Patrol

Admit it. You’ve thought about it. Non-conformist by nature, nearly every Burner has wondered how hard it might be to sneak into the event. Be afraid. Be very afraid. Black Rock City’s border patrol gets on gate crashers faster than playa dust coats a peanut butter sandwich. It operates nonstop, 24 hours a day, including during the Burn.

The cost of failure is high. "With the money I lost from trying to sneak in, I could have paid for my friends to get in, too," admitted an intern. On Tuesday night, a reporter tagged along with Perimeter Ranger Mobius. Mobius moves with the grace of a panther and an effective combination of black leather multi-pocketed pants and flowing black trench coat. "Be ready to move quickly," was his terse advice as I climbed up into his black sports-utility vehicle and headed off to that mysterious area known as the Outer Perimeter Fence. This orange, four-foot-high, plastic enclosure is a pentagon that stretches almost eight miles around the city.

When we arrived at the outer playa, the radio is crackling an alert for Mobius. "Two just jumped out of a car and are heading directly toward Point One," Point One, one of the angles of the pentagon, is a popular infiltration attempt area, located near the main gate.

Headlights off, Mobius scans the inky black horizon with night-vision goggles, spotting the pair dashing across the playa in the direction of the Glowing Blue Man. Then he used the SUV’s lights to reveal a fashionably dressed 20-something couple, contrite, but a little excited to have been caught.

"Their excuse of 'We have friends bringing our tickets and we just didn't want to wait,' didn't cut me much ice with Mobius. The couple probably did not know that they had committed a federal Class A misdemeanor by entering a restricted area. But rather than summoning nearly federal agents from the Bureau of Land Management, Mobius decided to firmly encourage the duo to buy tickets at the gate. "We don't want to have to catch people," said Mobius. "We want people to spread the word that evading the Gate isn't worth it. They'll save themselves a lot of time and trouble by just buying a ticket." Mobius escorted the giddy couple to the main gate, where they paid the going ticket price and entered legitimately. The couple had committed a federal Class A misdemeanor by entering a restricted area. But rather than summoning nearly federal agents from the Bureau of Land Management, Mobius decided to firmly encourage the duo to buy tickets at the gate. "We don't want to have to catch people," said Mobius. "We want people to spread the word that evading the Gate isn't worth it. They'll save themselves a lot of time and trouble by just buying a ticket." Mobius escorted the giddy couple to the main gate, where they paid the going ticket price and entered legitimately. The price can be raised in cases where people stall or stick to excuses for sneaking in — in a situation called ‘the mobius effect.’ It pays to plan your attendance and buy tickets early as prices are raised each night of the event. Midnight tonight is the last night that potential attendees can purchase tickets at the gate.
Give Beer to the DPW!

Publisher's Note

Have you ever seen one of those space movies where the ship is getting blasted all over space? The people rock back and forth with each blast. Finally the engines go off and they seem dead in space. That was kinda like last night at the Black Rock Gazette.

We had three forced shutdowns of our computer system with the power going out. Our living Mac museum started to show its age. My trusty Mac Classic "Text 4" took a major hit and refused to reboot, its fan still working, still trying to give whatever it had left, but with no sign of life on the screen. We were carrying computers out in digital body bags, our original force of 15 older generation Macs down to a mere eight.

The call came over the radio that the satellite was knocked out. "When will it be back online?" we pleaded over the radio.

"One, maybe two days," was the reply.

"We need to get a new satellite!"

"Damn man, we don't have the time! We need to upload the paper!"

Taz grabbed some cables and started up the tower. He was going to start replacing the connection on the burned out satellite.

Within our deadline, the satellite team created a workaround. John Graham came into our trailer and reset the TCP/IP numbers minutes before we cranked out the proof. We uploaded just about on schedule.

Needless to say, without all of our resources available we did what we could, but may have fallen a little short on fact checking. Like the 2002 Floating World, really was a nautical theme, but the theme is up to the interpretation of the individual. We hope that any confusion caused by what we wrote would have been caused by something entirely different.

Part of the fun out here is actually trying to figure out how to make do with what we have, and to learn. What we learned that night is the importance of having a back-up power source to buy time to do a proper shutdown of the computers. What we also learned was that it takes a variety of folks in a community to pull together to make this whole thing happen.

Back from Iraq

By Mary Jane

They were wonderful for a lost soul in the wrong desert. That’s what it was, a man, and veteran burner, Johnny Jet has to say about the hundred plus letters he received from Black Rock citizens during his tour in Iraq. Letters from his burner buddies were slow the first month he was over there. But then, a couple weeks before the 2003 burn, his name and military mailing info hit Jacob Rabbit Speaks.

Jet says he answered anything that included a return address, "I became a letter writing machine," he says. The tenacity of some Burnig Man correspondents even rivaled that of his own father. "And Dad," claims Jet, “almost answers them before he opens the envelope.”

The word from the playa offered Jet a contrast. Alcohol was prohibited, but the Iraqis sold beer. When the convoys stopped for the night, they’d line the trucks up to create a private party space. Hmm, perhaps not so different from our fair city.

You can find Jet on 5:30 near Saturn in the Alternative Energy Zone. He’s got a new solar panel this year. “I bought it out your finest evening gowns and get yourself invited to participate in the Miss Black Rock City Pageant. The preliminaries are at 3:30 today at Asylum. Then the main event is Friday afternoon at 2:30 in the Disoriented dome. Brush up on your great humanitarian speeches, whip out your finest evening gowns and get ready to make your walk down the runway.

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Living the Desert Life Year-Round

By Babedolicious

As a long-time desert lover, dweller and conservationist, Rommel knows the desert is “a beautiful space.”

“When I mention I live in the desert, people tell me that it is lifeless and like hell. But the desert has abundant life. And I love it. How can you not?” he says.

Rommel, 39, is a mellow, black-Stetson-wearing Burner (since ’94) who grew up helping his geologist parents conserve deserts throughout California, Arizona and New Mexico. He lives the desert life year-round in Llano, CA, in the Mojave Desert.

Desert living, whether on the playa or in the Mojave, is “very easy,” he says, “because all you have to do is stay cool.”

The only real difference between the two is human. For him, that people would steal from or injure one another on the playa is unfathomable.

How could anybody love living in a hot, dry environment? For Rommel, it’s like trying to explain why anyone would love chocolate: he just does. The desert offers him cactus, and jackrabbits, as well as valley ground squirrels, woodpeckers, and up to 35 other birds to enjoy.

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By Jax and Johnny Jet

Our kind of desert storm!

No MOOP in the pooh!!

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Miss Black Rock City

Everyone in Black Rock City is a beauty queen, but if you’d like to experience the thrill of competition and receive an official imprimatur—sashes, sash, tiara and all—you’re invited to participate in the Miss Black Rock City Pageant. The preliminaries are at 3:30 today at Asylum. Then the main event is Friday afternoon at 2:30 in the Disoriented dome. Brush up on your great humanitarian speeches, whip out your finest evening gowns and get ready to make your walk down the runway.

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Leave no trace! Never let it hit the ground!