

Burner Killed In Art Car Accident

By Suzanne

A 21-year-old woman died in an art car accident early Saturday morning, Pershing County Sheriff Ron Skinner said.

Katharine Lampman, who was part of the camp operating the art car, was getting off the vehicle towing the flatbed trailer when she tripped, fell and was run over by the trailer, Skinner said. He could not specify the camp nor the art car. Lampman was from Belmont, Calif.

The platform on the towing vehicle was probably 18 to 20 inches high, he said, and the trailer, which contained a couch, was probably about 12 to 16 feet long.

The cause of death has yet to be determined, but Skinner said being run over likely contributed. "Typically, people don't die from falling over," he said.

The accident occurred around 2:30 a.m. just southeast of the Temple of Honor.

The car was moving when she fell, but speed wasn't a factor in Lampman's death, Skinner said. It's not likely she died instantly, since medical staff attempted to revive her, he said.

"It was a tragic accident. Accidents are avoidable, though," Skinner said.

Jewelz of the Department of Mutant Vehicles said there are 549 licensed art cars this year. Not all are approved for night use.

The Man's Home Is His Temple

By How Weird

What would you expect the construction supervisor of the Man to be doing five days before the Burn? Building a carport, of course.

When I caught up with Spiral, he was kneeling toward the Man on top of his camp carport. "Yeah, we came up and built him the week of July 4th, so after we put him up last weekend, we were pretty much done." His crew is one part of the well-oiled machine that readies the Man for the Burn.

Spiral first helped build the Man in 1996, when it was still constructed in South San Francisco, and didn't even get out to Black Rock. This year Spiral will have an almost clear view of the burn from his brand new carport.

Working with Spiral were Builder Ben, who did the Torso, and She-Batt, lead assistants for the Man's construction. According to Ben, the Man weighs 2,275 pounds; his body is coated with wax and his head is lined with silk. Each year the crew signs the Man's wooden heart, but this year the Man has an electro-flashing heart, so they signed the spine. By tradition, crew who injure themselves drip their blood onto the wood.

Filled with praise for the entire crew, Ben



Photo by Punkski

Explosives for the Matchstick Man

emphasizes this was a team effort: She-Batt, Marco, Dr Glowire, Pogo, Fireman Dale, Quiet Girl and others. "We did a test pull of the arms on Saturday and it all went well." Unlike the old days, The Man is no longer lowered before the event to add the sparklers. That would stress the Great Temple base too much.

"My job is nothing compared with what Rave Boy Walter is doing out their on the Playa. That guy rules."


Construction Manager for the Man's Great Temple, Rave Boy Walter, aka Andy, appeared

from near-whiteout conditions at the base with a thick coat of playa dust in his moustache and hair. After putting some volunteers to work, we talked in the Temple's underbelly near the mysterious locked red door which contains either Larry's secret stash or the laser, depending on who's talking.

Andy, who co-managed construction of the lighthouse last year, has a core crew of 15 plus 10 to 15 volunteers. "It was hard figuring out the manpower needed for the pedestal this year. Our initial estimate, of twice last year's, was a little under." They finished Tuesday night.

He and assistant manager Big Daddy, who also looks after the neon, used two miles of 2x4's and two miles of 2x6's for the base plus rolls of muslin for the exterior.

"My crew think I am really serious, so they try to lighten things up with practical jokes, but it works both ways. I tell them it burned too fast last year and so we need to put up dry-wall to hold it back for an hour."

Few see the details of their work, but Andy tells the crew nothing is impossible. "Whenever anyone asks what is critical, I tell them: the crew. They built it. They are phenomenal. So are the entire DPW." 

Avert the Breath of Death

By Ember

Last year, on Sunday, Desirée from Reno knew she was facing doom in the fumes: two young men had unloaded a couch from their truck and were hauling it to a burn platform just upwind of her.


Burning furniture (other than plain wood) in the Black Rock desert is unacceptable and illegal. Desirée, an air quality specialist, knew there would soon be a poisonous plume of formaldehyde, dioxins, and carbon monoxide heading across the playa, causing breathing distress and possible permanent injury to anyone breathing nearby. She decided to talk with them, and eventually persuaded them to haul the couch away, either back home or to a landfill.

She did a big favor for people downwind, and maybe also for the two guys. The BLM takes toxic burning seriously — a ban is written into Burning Man's permit — and the guys

could have faced a \$500 fine, an inconvenient trip to a federal court, and in extreme cases a criminal record.

The community burn platforms are there for burns of clean wood, not for dumping trash into. This year, volunteers will be monitoring platforms through the departure period, deflecting or reporting dump burning. The Rangers will be doing the same, and BLM vehicles will be cruising the playa

You can report dumpers to Rangers or the BLM, if you don't care to confront a dumper directly. Desirée had a camera, and used it; if you have a photo or just a license plate, that's enough to get BLM law officers started.


The gnarly crew at DPW don't like extra cleanup work, and they've confirmed that they'll be creatively pissed at anyone they catch burning couches or overloading the burn platforms. 

Share a Ride to Reno

By Bayou

As you exodus Sunday, you'll see a crowd of Burners near the Greeters' station. They're among the 300-odd citizens who got here last weekend through the Reno Burning Man Hostel ride-share program: a steady stream of BRC-bound vehicles stopping to offer a lift from the Sparks home of Fred Hageymon. "Hageymon."

Now Hageymon asks your help in returning these Burners to his house or the Reno-Sparks airport. Many are international, and at least one is an American soldier returning to his post in Korea.

So, as you pack, see if you can make seating for one more Burner with not much luggage, and give the gift of transportation from the Greeters outpost. 



Walter from Portland asks:

I usually stay in pretty good shape, but on the playa I tend to sit around, eat and get fat. Do you have any tips?

The Playa Chicken responds:

Walter (or should I call your Walnut, in reference to your walnut-sized brain?), I want you to do a little experiment for me. First, find a piece of rebar. This shouldn't be difficult, even for a lunkhead like yourself; just go over to your neighbor's camp and yank a piece out of the ground. Next, I want you to firmly grasp the rebar and plunge into your left eye. Then do it again, and again and again! If the pain becomes unbearable, switch to your right eye, but by all means keep plunging!

Next, I want you to stumble over to the Med Tent and tell the Docs that it really hurts when you stick the rebar in your eye. Do you think they're going to just give you some eye drops and send you on your way? No, they're going to tell you to STOP DOING IT. They'll probably also kick you in the groin, but that's just because your ignorance will be so damned insulting to them.

Are you listening to me, Walnut? If sitting around eating makes you feel like you're getting fat, then STOP DOING IT. Just because you're here in this Techo Smelly Hippie Freak Zone doesn't mean you have to turn into a mushy, lethargic blob. If you want a stellar example of what can be accomplished out here, cast your gouged-out eyes no further than upon me, the finest fowl specimen ever to grace the playa. My svelte figure has been the talk of the hen-house for over six decades and my wing bicep packs enough punch to flatten a line of lamplighters with a single wallop.

Electric Kool-Aid Burning Man

By harpo

If the Electric Kool-Aid Acid Tests - the multimedia, LSD-inspired events of the mid-1960s - hadn't eventually been packaged by rock promoters into a for-profit product, they would have evolved into Burning Man. That's the opinion of Carolyn Garcia a.k.a. Mountain Girl (CG/MG), a friend of Merry Prankster leader Ken Kesey, sound engineer for the acid tests, and widow of Jerry Garcia. The late Grateful Dead guitarist described the acid tests as "a chance to be completely free-form on every level," not a far cry from the idea of radical self expression.

CG/MG brings unique insight to this subject. We talked Friday afternoon at Otter Oasis Camp.

h: How were you reminded of the acid tests when you first came out to Burning Man?

CG/MG: My joy at coming to Burning Man was about rediscovering the energy field we created at the acid tests. I'd forgotten how it felt and had thought that feeling had passed from view, with the new millennium and all. The acid tests were the precursors to Burning Man.

h: What was your initial visit here like?


CG/MG: This is my third. At my first descent onto the playa in 2001 I recall my absolute exhilaration, gratitude, and excitement. It was like experiencing the best birthday present ever, to be feeling this in a creative space out of the commerce zone. Commerce is not the rationale for this place and space. This is something else, a creation of space for self-discovery, expression, and creativity. It's a powerful thread of the counterculture, from the 1960s to the present.

h: For the younger Burners reading the Black Rock Gazette, describe the Acid Tests.

CG/MG: The Acid Tests were about possibilities and opening the doors in people's hearts and souls to different ways of being, and different ways of being together. The early 1960s were a time of intense pressure to conform. The purpose of the acid tests was to get LSD out to the people, making deep and rich cracks in the social cement that passed for culture during that time. We were heavily influenced by people like the beat writer William Burroughs, Neal Cassady, Alan Ginsberg, and [Whole Earth Catalog founder] Stewart Brand. We were producing them in a fly-

by-night sort of way, with no advertising, just word of mouth, and they cost \$1 to get into. They were a psychedelic free-for-all, lasting from 1965 until the middle of 1966, when we fled over the border to Mexico to escape federal prosecution, what we thought was an impending federal dragnet. They attracted only 200-300 people, and were a brief but glorious series of events in the LA and SF Bay Areas.

h: And their impact?

CG/MG: They begat the San Francisco happening scene and the Summer of Love, and many people's careers as psychedelic rangers. It was more about getting the psychedelic experience out into the public, a way to get acid out of the hands of the academics and the CIA and into the hands of the general public and the hands of artists and creative types. We had faith that we were doing the right thing. It was about creating temporary autonomous zones. We planned them in secret, not letting the location be known until the day before or the day of the event. They were sort of like the flash mobs of today. The bus still goes out to events, but not so much since Ken [Kesey] died. 

Black Rock City, 2003



Photo by Punkski

Plane crashes on the Playa



Photo by WeeGee



Photo by Alexandra

The Megavolt



PhotoGartho



Photo by Monica



Photo by WeeGee



Photo by Monica

Tim Orpheus' Lyre



Photo by WeeGee

Fire Dancers before the Burn.

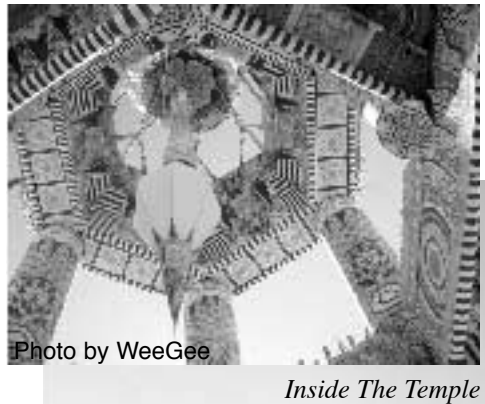


Photo by WeeGee

Inside The Temple



Photo by WeeGee

The Temple of Honor



Photo by WeeGee



PhotoGartho

Aerial view from the north, Gerlach in the background.

We hope you enjoyed the Black Rock Gazette as much as we enjoyed producing it for you. See you in 2004!

-The Black Rock Gazette staff