



Post Event 2003 Volume 2, #3

Welcome to Decompression

TEXT PLAYA QUEST

Every first Tuesday of September, I see you... hunkered down in your cube farm, wearing a thousand-mile stare, jaw hanging down to your keyboard, tongue lolling on the keys. You're fried, you're exhausted, you're emotionally and physically wrecked, and you most likely still have playa dust caked in places only your doctor will ever see. You wander aimlessly out into the daylight for lunch, clothes feeling strange on your skin, and you attempt in vain to make eye contact with the joyless strangers on the street. Everybody looks boring. You realize with a tired, self-satisfied grin that they have no concept just how fucking weird you really are.

It's Burning Man Decompression time. Why it's called "decompression" is still a mystery to me. I mean, did I miss something? Were we "compressed"? If anything, we were enlightened and enchanted. But I guess it's too depressing to call it "delightenment" or "disenchantment". So decompression is as good a term as any for the daunting effort of re-assimilating ourselves back into what we are now compelled to call the "default world".

Why are there decompression parties after Burning Man? I can think of two reasons. First off, they extend us a helping hand as we descend from the lofty emotional heights of the burn, back to the relative drudgery of daily life. Second, they help to sustain the flame of the Burning Man spirit... to give us a little reminder that it's still there inside all of us. And if somebody were to force me to pick a third, I'd have to say... well... it's a great excuse to throw another kick-ass party with thousands of our closest friends.

The decompression process can be really tough for people. Especially for those who are deeply into the experience, particularly sensitive, or prone to emotional fragility, the shift from our utopia back into the harsh reality of the default world can be downright brutal. I have heard numerous stories over the years - some tragic - of people taking it very very hard. So, in the truest spirit of the Burning Man community, please take care of your friends. Watch out for them, and give them the support they need.

Bask in the San Francisco Decompression, folks. Go out there and take a playa dust shower at Playa Dust Camp, dance your feet off at the Space Cowboy's Unimog, and get a good spanking from Ouchie the Clown. You deserve it. Trust me on this. Most importantly, connect with your fellow burners again and rekindle the spirit. And when you do, enjoy that little tingle in your stomach. Bottle that up and take it with you.

A word of caution - if you're prone to consuming copious amounts of your favorite mind-altering substance, please make sure you have a reasonable way home after the party. As much as we'd like it to be, this ain't the playa, and this time you can't just aim yourself towards your tent before giving up and passing out in somebody's chill dome. We want you to get home safely. Your real home, that is.

See you on the playa next year.

Danger Ranger, BRC Director of Genetic Engineering

TEXT CALEB SCHABER

He appeared out of the darkness, with a bottle of whiskey, dressed in a black robe with his similarly dressed adjutant, Dusty. Danger talked with me while I worked gate duty one starry night at Black Rock Station, the Burning Man Work Ranch in the Hualapai Valley, north of Black Rock City.

"We are pushing the boundaries of what a city is," Danger said, passing me the bottle. "Burning Man is an advanced global society. People spend a week together in the desert, but, more often than not, maintain contact through out the year via internet, travel and regional gatherings. The community is whole even when it is apart physically."

Genetic Engineering is not the first job that comes to mind when one thinks of Burning Man, and its behind-the-scenes production. There is possibly a theme camp in Black Rock City with test tubes, jars and wires. However, Danger Ranger (also known as Michael Michael, or M2) is the OFFICIAL Director of Genetic Engineering for Black Rock City LLC.

"Experiences are what bring people back," Danger said.

These experiences are one of Danger's major interests. Many people work while on the Playa, and their experiences are framed by providing the infrastructure for BRC, entertainment, and public safety. "During the event, my primary function is to recognize emerging patterns and to remember subtle occurrences that push the boundaries of our reality," Danger said. He records the event in myriad journals filled with copious notes taken during the event.

Danger Ranger eschews the trappings of "First Camp", preferring to establish residence among the other participants where he can take the temperature of the city without bias. During the rest of the year, he provides insight and often comes up with unusual solutions to problems.

"The mechanism involved has parallels

to computer programming." He said. "A definite pattern surrounds the Burning Man event. The DPW sets the golden stake the first part of August. From that point, streets are laid out, signs are posted, power grids established and structures erected. The participants arrive when the gate opens during the last week of August. The Man Burns, the Temple Burns and everyone leaves. The city is removed, the playa cleaned of debris, and the process starts again."

"The physical realm of Black Rock City exists for one week a year. After that, nothing remains but information and memory of the experience. We use that information to rebuild and improve the city each year. The memory of the experience is what brings people back. It's a feedback loop that creates a rapidly evolving community," Danger said

"We create a community in the desert and it ends with nothing," Danger said. "The only thing left is information. Genetics is information, too. Deoxyribonucleic acid contains the information for most life forms to replicate." The genetics that Danger examines and experiments with are kept largely in his journals. The data is used between the end of one burn and the beginning of the next to shape and replicate Black Rock City.

Cacophony Society activities brought Larry Harvey and Danger together when Burning Man was a small gathering on the beach. From the first flames on the beach in 1986, Danger has played a role in nurturing a

small gathering into the self-sufficient city that rises from the dust.

Danger's major goal is self-sufficiency. Like a mad scientist trying to create a life form, this is achieved by breathing life into something, then watching it grow, mature.

The first issue of the Black Rock Gazette was put out by Danger. He also started the Black Rock Rangers. Initially, the Ranger's "biggest job was helping people find Black Rock City." The remote location of BRC often confused citizens, who would get lost looking for it. The first art car in Black Rock City was delivered to the desert by Danger as well.

Happenings within and without BRC are changing, as the internet and other technologies have been introduced. Unlike many critics of modern culture, Danger is enthusiastic that these technologies can be employed on and off playa. Recorded in Danger's journal are a number of happenings this year that were spontaneous gatherings brought on by email lists within BRC. "We are now witnessing flash communities come together for an event or activity at Burning Man. This is now possible with on-playa Internet access."

Danger noted that the slight increase in numbers made 2003 the largest BRC ever. But Danger remembers when the population doubled annually. "A million people could easily fit in the desert," he said. "The problems are the resources and the environment; egress, access and how organized the system is."

BRC is an ever expanding and evolving community, once set in motion, that will come together in the desert and it will grow and evolve.

We're looking forward to the next installment.



DPW hard at work buiding BRC 2003.

Goats Rights and Wrong

TEXT ANONYMOUS

On Tuesday of Black Rock City 2003, the Black Rock Gazette featured a piece covering the claims of the Goats rights advocacy group, the Chupacabra Policia (the CP). The CP declared martial law in BRC until a list of demands, regarding the rights of a giant goat were met. Claiming to protect the goat from neglect and abuse by Larry Harvey, the CP has retained the goat at their base at Black Rock Ranch since 2001. But some question the sincerity of the CP.

A group of BRC Citizens, identifying themselves as the Great Goat Liberation Army (GGLA) sent an anonymous member, known only as X, to speak with the BRG. "The Chupacabra Policia are nothing more than vigilante thugs bent on looting, drinking, and exploiting animals," claims X. According to X, the Goat has indeed been subject to abuse and neglect, not at the hands of Larry Harvey, but by the CP themselves. X, herself has made several visits to the Black Rock Work Ranch to verify that the CP has been properly caring for the Goat. "The Goat has been living in indescribably inhumane conditions. What I saw there will haunt my nightmares forever. We have done our best to continue returning to visit and care for the Goat, but the abuse only gets worse."

X spoke with one unwitting member of CP leadership. "The arrogance of these men is unnerving. (Name withheld) drunkenly sat on the steps to the Man bragging that he had removed the velvet anus of the Goat and displayed it in his living room." X has strong opinions as to who is really responsible for abusing the Goat. In the past, the GGLA has advocated only peaceful means of dealing with the CP, however, in light of this week's ghastly display, the GGLA says they will take any measures necessary to rescue the Goat from the CP. "The Chupacabra Policia is holding the Goat as a political prisoner and misrepresenting its plight to gain popularity with BRC Citizens," says X. When asked how the GGLA feel about Larry Harvey's advocacy of the Goat's rights, X told us, "Harvey is saying all the right things, but what has he really done in terms of protecting the Goat? Harvey has the power and authority to take the Goat from the hands of the CP but refuses to act. This is unacceptable."

As to claims that John Law is cloning Chupacabrae in Mexico, the GGLA insists that the Chupacabra Policia is secretly funding this operation in order to create panic in BRC. "However, this is only another instance of animal abuse perpetuated by Chupacabra Policia," say X. "It's tragic and unbearable. They must be stopped. If Larry Harvey will not free the Goat and disband the CP, we will be forced to take matters in to our own hands."

Where is this all leading? Stay tuned for the next livestock report in the BRG and on playa in 2004.



Goatie! Goatie! Speak to me!

TEXT KATHERINE CHEN

For years, members have voiced the fears that growth, formal organization, or the increasing application of business principles will ruin Burning Man. Based on my research of the organization and event, I offer analytic suggestions that may help you, a member of this community, reconsider these issues.

Q: Is growth desirable?

A: Some people view growth as a desirable challenge and a sign of success, while others worry that growth will irrevocably change the event in undesired ways. Yes, we should take a hard look at our reasons for growth – growth for growth's sake may not be a sufficient reason. However, if by expanding Burning Man, we educate more people on alternative ways to self-organize non-commercial art events, then we may have appropriate reasons for growth.

Q: What are the issues associated with growth?

A: Like any growing organization, Burning Man deals with issues like acculturating large numbers of newbies, motivating returning members to contribute, and dealing with the demands of other actors, such as governmental agencies and locals, who control needed resources, which include the event site and services. In managing such issues, organizers realized that they could no longer organize the event a few months before the event, but they had to organize year-round and establish formal organizing structures that could work with institutions like banks and governmental agencies and coordinate the efforts of volunteers.

Q: How can we deal with growth?

A: The short answer is, get involved. A perennial concern is that the hordes of newcomers won't "get it" and ruin it all for the rest of us smug returnees. Creating a community that integrates new members into the Burning Man experience is a group-level responsibility, rather than something that happens independently. Some newbies (and even returnees) act on stereotypes or misconceptions of appropriate behaviors, while others pull off projects that belie their newbie status. By stepping in to share, help, or even intervene through a friendly setting of example, conversation, or referral to appropriate resources, you can contribute towards creating the kind of community you desire. And who knows? Maybe that newbie will teach YOU something special.

Q: How can we deal with changes?

A: A related concern, especially among some returning members and even those newbies who have heard stories about the event's colorful past, is "Burning Man isn't what it used to be... [insert lament here about alienated community/increasing rules/perceived burdensome organization]." Lucky for you, Burning Man organizers don't deal with nostalgia by shooting offenders, as one Russian officer reportedly "cured" his homesick troops (and besides, as many of you repeatedly remind us, loaded guns are no longer allowed at Burning Man). Certainly, members remember the past as an important part of constructing an individual and community experience.

But, nostalgia becomes problematic when people become trapped in an idealized past and are less able to appreciate the present or imagine a future. At worst, those nostalgic for a past that may not have even existed feel that they no longer have the wherewithal to participate in the present. What people often fail to realize is that memory is selective. For example, some event attendees cite how they miss the days in which guns and driving were not formally prohibited, although many express relief that these prohibitions introduce greater safety. In contrast, I have yet to hear anyone protest the "no vending" rule, which a few entrepreneurs briefly practiced around the mid-1990s. Organizers codified the "no vending" rule around the same time as the "no guns" and "no driving" rule. Furthermore, this one change constitutes a fundamental shift towards what many today believe has always been central to the Burning Man experience. For instance, many of the members I interviewed ranked non-commercialism as the number one thing they hoped didn't change about Burning Man. These folks are the types that also hoped that Burning Man would always change, introducing a variety of experiences and persons with whom to interact.

Growth at Burning Man An Anthropological View



Burning Man is a learning environment where persons can experiment with change and in doing so, experience greater possibilities for gratification and less severe penalties than available elsewhere. For instance, a number of services that we now take for granted as an essential part of Burning Man, such as Camp Arctica, Recycling, Directory, and the Bulletin Board, were proposed and initiated by participants who labored over several years to hone these projects to what they are today. Many of these volunteers note that during this process, they gained skills and experiences, such as the ability to connect with other people, that they couldn't have obtained otherwise.

So, see something you don't like or feel that something is lacking? Think about how you can help change the experience, and give it a go. More likely than not, other members will appreciate your efforts, and you'll have the pleasure of sharing your creation with others. And, unlike your work place, you won't be fired or deeply penalized for not quite pulling off a project right away – organizers and members understand that developing projects take time, and that the uncertainties of the desert can often thwart the best of plans. You, like the Burning Man organization, have repeated opportunities to contribute towards what ultimately might become a success – and then, it's time for a rest and perhaps, the next challenge.

Q: Are art and a formally organized business an incompatible, Faustian bargain?

A: The practical realities of operating within a larger market economy require the Burning Man organization to attend to financial and organizational matters. A number of people view these increased formal organizing efforts with suspicion. In particular, those who borrow from anarchist, libertarian, or free market philosophies argue that no (or few) organizations should exist, and that unregulated individual actions will automatically accumulate towards the desired ends. Past experiments indicate that such philosophies are difficult to sustain over the long-term, and, at worst, benefit a few individuals at the majority's expense.

For these and other reasons, the Burning Man organizers have chosen to formally organize. A number of organizers and volunteers have had to develop business and administrative skills, or welcome those with professional backgrounds to carry out large-scale tasks of budgeting, negotiating, and managing personnel. Certain operational areas have benefited from introducing accepted business practices, such as standardized buying of supplies and services, competitive vendor bidding, accurate ticket forecasts, and so forth. But, can the complex and unusual output of a temporary arts community operate with the same organizational efficiency of say, an automobile manufacturing plant? Given the event's unstable conditions, such as unanticipated political situations and the uncertainties of depending upon volunteers, Burning Man cannot as closely pinch pennies as conventional businesses that operate under conditions of greater stability. And perhaps, as others point out, efficiently creating an output is not the main goal for Burning Man. For example, a few interviewees explained that they are willing to accept some organizational and financial inefficiencies in return for greater artistic experimentation. In other words, they are willing to tolerate greater variability in the possibilities for both failure and success, rather than privilege a financial budget over accomplishing the organizational mission of art. Even with this greater tolerance in the name of art, you can enable Burning Man to more efficiently and effectively meet goals. Uphold your responsibilities so that the organization does not have to unexpectedly expend resources to pick up the slack – don't dispose of anything besides bodily waste into the portapotties, haul ALL of your trash out and then some, and volunteer your time.

In summary, an organization and community can only operate on the basis of its members' best efforts. We may find it easy to blame an organization for various perceived ills and wallow in inaction. Instead, we should remember that we can and should exert agency by participating in the collaborative, on-going process of creating Burning Man.

Katherine Chen has volunteered with Media Mecca and is currently defending her Ph.D dissertation at Harvard University on how the Burning Man organization has handled growth.

The Artery: Kicking Ass, Taking Names, Giving Tours

TEXT WILL CHASE

With a new sign featuring the artwork of renowned meta-spiritual artist Alex Grey, a more artist -and participant- friendly Artery layout, and a rollicking new party bus for art tours, the Burning Man Artery Team took its role to new heights at Burning Man 2003.



The BRG team embarks on a three hour tour. A three hour tour.

The Artery Team registers artists, places artwork, supports art installation, conducts art tours and provides information about art to the public. This year, the Artery team placed a record 300+ pieces of art on the playa, a large number of them featuring fire effects.

"The 'Beyond Belief' theme opened up the creative playing field this year, and the artists really rose to the occasion. We were busier than ever before," said LadyBee, Burning Man's Art Curator. "I was really impressed with the quality of the art this year, especially the smaller installations."

The art tours, new this year, proved to be a big hit with the people who took the daily cruise. Every afternoon, participants crammed onto the Mystic Beat Lounge's 1974 International bus, with its 5 dance floors, stocked bar, full DJ setup, an ear-bending 6,000 watt sound system, two stripper poles, and room for 80. Other art cars were also enlisted to help bring the people to the art of Black Rock City.

During the tours, Artery staffers Glyph and Mango regaled participants with background and insights about key art installations including David Best's Temple of Honor, The Man, The Hand of God, The Temple of Gravity, and Cleavage in Space. "We got an outstanding response from people on the tours," said Zodiack of the Mystic Beat Lounge. "They were given details about the art that you wouldn't know unless you pored through the Burning Man website. They really loved it."

Given its success, expect to see expanded and improved art tours in the coming years, including night tours focusing on fire installations.

To volunteer for the Artery Team, aim your browser to www.burningman.com/participate/volunteer.html.

ARTWORK EXTINGUISHED

TEXT JOHN DEE & BUNNY



The messy aftermath of the Tear Drop burn. Intact Temple in background.

As winds picked up in the night, sparks rolled over the playa and so did the boys and girls from the BRC Emergency Services. This year, throughout BRC, fires were put out as a safety measure. On one evening, six burn barrels and two art pieces, "God Gives Up" and "Tear Drop", had to be extinguished.

The priorities of BRC ES are to protect life, safety, property and the environment. After protecting the safety of BRC citizens, "We are to protect the Man and the Temple at all costs." These are orders handed to ES by the Art Department of BRC.

Between the Man and the Temple; the "Tear Drop" cried large burning tears of sparks that traveled toward the Temple causing considerable concern for ES chief Joseph Pred and his workers. Believing the Temple to be at risk Pred made the decision to put out the fire. The Artist was contacted and present when the piece was doused with water. The same fate befell "God Gives Up" on the 9 o'clock flank of the Man. This 'God' however seemed not to have totally given up, and continued to burn for the rest of the week. The same could not be said for the Tear Drop which was completely soaked to the point of being unburnable during the event.

"It's very unusual to have to extinguish art pieces. Art is valuable and we are extremely sensitive to that." The "Tear Drop" was the largest piece of art extinguished in the history of Burning Man. "I hate to be putting out art, it should be burning", but safety is first as is protecting the Man and Temple."

BIKING TO BURNING MAN

TEXT CAILLONIUS MAXIMUS

All you really need to do to get your story in the Blacktop Gazette is to do something truly outstanding. Our writer rode his bike from Seattle Washington to Black Rock City and took the scenic route. Here's what he had to say.

My pilgrimage was anything but easy. This was my fifth year in a row to the playa, and third, by bicycle, from Seattle. In 2002, I rode directly to Black Rock City in 6 and a half days, and more than 700 miles. Grueling at best, and challenging in ways I had never known. That is, of course, up until this summer, when I would eventually ride more than 3,000 miles to tell this tale.

June 21, 2003, fueled by nothing less than pure ambition and the uncontrollable urge to be me, I began a most unbelievable quest. I set forth, through the North Cascades (a.k.a. the American Alps), up and over five mountain passes, to the Canadian border. From there, South through Eastern Washington and its seemingly endless wheat fields, into northeast Oregon (y'all ever heard of Hell's Canyon?).

Along the high desert, I prevailed, and eventually made my way west to the Oregon coast. From Florence, Oregon, I continued south along Highway 101 to San Francisco. Much to my good fortune, I met Katarina, a German yoga instructor with a similar urge to trek by bike. She joined me for more than 400 miles, through the

most spectacular coastline of Big Sur all the way down to Santa Barbara. Believe me, yoga was never so sweet.

Hollywood was Hollywood, and barely escaping death, over-population, and an intense dose of pollution, I rallied along Historic Route 66 towards the Eastern Sierras. Soon enough, and once again, I found myself in the high desert. Unfortunately, so did the San Bernardino County sheriff. He took me into custody upon an outstanding warrant - something about "driving with a suspended license, failure to appear."

He didn't even allow me to lock up my bike, which awaited its uncertain future outside the local grocery store in Phelan, California. Four days later, I was released upon credit for time served. It took me 10 painstaking

hours to hitchhike from the county jail, 65 miles to the store where my bike miraculously awaited my return. Yee-haw, free as a bird again! I headed north 600 miles through the high desert, and up and over four mountain passes averaging around 8,000 feet. I continued upon my glorious adventure to the man.

Around 3 pm on August 26, with tales beyond belief and a smile upon my face, I arrived at the Black Rock Desert. After riding my bicycle for over 3,000 miles, I finally arrived at Burning Man. It felt great to be home.



Bikes await riders at Johnny on the Spot

PHOTO ALIBABA

MAN. SKY. BECOME. ONE.

(Ma Jian)

TEXT HOWEIRD

How did we get here? How many 55 year old, hard of hearing, cub reporters with dramatic limps does the Gazette have anyway? Being born the same year as Larry Harvey doesn't automatically qualify you for much beyond AARP membership and a discount at Goodwill, these days.

As ever, it came down to timing. I sent in a BM volunteer questionnaire over the Internet, checked off a few interests - Rangers, Greeters, Ice sales etc and two days later got an invite to the monthly Gazette meeting on the following Wednesday at BM HQ. Now that is what I call an inclusive society.

How weird is that? How Weird is that you? Yes Mum - and I finally got to be a journalist

Mum, just like I always wanted to be.

End of intro.

Hi folks, How Weird here - hard of hearing, 55 years old, cub reporter for the Gazette, summing up BM 2003 in 600 words or less, for those who might have missed something.

Since my first Burn in 1995, I have experienced some amazing things: A midnight call to my RV in 2000 from a couple of Afghans who needed to borrow a bike, which was dutifully returned at 3am, over the expectations of my virgin crew, along with a little silver tin of finest Afghani smoking material.

An early morning naked photo shoot for Spencer Tunick in 1997, which would eventually immortalize my 50 year old body - at 41 minutes and 50 seconds - in the documentary, 'Naked States' (released 2001), but more importantly, placed me at the exact point Crimson Rose was training that year's Fire Circle Conclave, for which I immediately volunteered. Crimson was the first of a handful of Burners I have 'worked' for, who I would follow to the ends of the earth. Not only did I get to carry a six foot flaming torch wearing a jock strap and a lot of body paint, I witnessed probably the best open field tackle ever performed by a guy wearing full fire suit and helmet, on some dumb twit who decided hiding in a hay bale under the Man would be a 'lark.'

And this year? Well it is so hard to decide:

- delivering a News Stand and 500 Gazettes to 2:00 and Authority in a whiteout?
- Maid Marian's retort of 'Steady as you go - NO SHIT' to my

- bumping into Raines at midnight and being shown an enormous size 14W black slipper that had been handed into Lost and Found: "Now here's a Cinderella story someone should write?"
- cycling rapidly into an Esplanade disco in the wee hours (with gray crewcut, and wearing twin flashing red lights under my shirt, I realized), seeing a well dressed guy in the center of the floor immediately shoot out at high speed, then finding myself caught in a 'pincer' maneuver by a couple of silent 'heavies' who came from nowhere, remained at my sides for thirty seconds then disappeared just as silently - Jehovah's Witnesses? I will just have to wear a sign "Not A Real Cop!"
- weeping at hearing the dawn recital of McCartney's 'Blackbird'.
- laughing with Builder Dan at the City Desk - that here I was, interviewing him for an article and I didn't even have my glasses, and him saying Dan? No that's BEN. B-E-N. BEN!
- wishing my old friend and first time Burner 'Good Morning' as he exited his 35 foot RV and then finding out his first timer girlfriend had not returned from her midnight trip to the Thunderdome yet. (though why he kept looking in my van I don't know?)
- "I'm too drunk to edit." "No - you're fine!"
- and as always - ALWAYS - the camaraderie of the sitting down in a circle, with tens of thousands of my closest friends, to witness the Man's yearly graduation. If I could remember just one of the many witticisms I heard that night - well - I wouldn't have been there, would I?
- Burn on you bright and shining beauties.
- Burn on you magnificent bastards.
- Burn on forever.

PHOTO LK

Life Is Funny, Ain't It?

TEXT MARK STILL

I didn't make the Burn this year, but I feel more connected to it than ever. It's not an exaggeration to claim the Burn itself is indirectly responsible for my current situation: married, with family, living in Warsaw, Poland. Everywhere I go, every way I turn, I try to reconnect with the energy that I discovered on the Playa in 2001.

This past July, I returned to my small, blue-collar New Jersey hometown with my very pregnant wife, Gosia, to bathe in the enduring warmth of family. I also looked up some East Coast Burners to toast memories and forge new bonds. I had been in communication with Taco Boy via e-mail since before the 2001 Burn, but we had never actually met. Taco Boy, aka Ken, is the New Jersey regional rep.

We were immediately old friends. He brought wine, we brought food. I expect he will actually take me up on my standing invitation to visit us in Poland that I have extended to my Burning family.

Next Gosia and I hit the shore points, did



Baby Z expresses displeasure over missing this year's Burn.

PHOTO MARK STILL

some other family touristy stuff, and flew back to Poland. Wouldn't you know it? Tuesday the 26th of August, just as Black Rock City was in full-throttle, we had a baby boy! Little Zbyszek (ZBI-jek) Royal Still. Never have I been happier! Man, I just LOVE being a daddy! It was the Burn that brought me out

through Nevada and then, by linear extension, to Lake Tahoe, where I bumped into my Polish Queen - and now we're helping to create the next generation of Burners.

My life changed that summer of 2001, the year of my first Burn and my bike trip from the East Coast to Black Rock City. Profoundly, irrevocably. As a reborn man I made new friends, experienced new depths, scaled new heights, and eventually found a new family and homeland. For a moment, not too long ago I wished that we could have been there with you on the Playa. But, for now, I realize that I need to be a dad, and I relish that role. Come on over and I'll pour you a glass of local vodka - then WE can toast memories and forge new bonds. Burn on, effendi!

A Setback for the Nasally Challenged

TEXT LIANIMAL

Did it take longer than expected to get your art project up and running this year? Don't fret -- others, like Green Nugget and his Boogermobile, are worse off.

Meant to be not only participatory but also cleansing, healthy, and informative, Booger Art Project was to treat visitors to nose drops and invite them to sneeze nasal matter onto a large canvas. There a chemical reaction would change the color to one indicating the donor's mood. For example, happy phlegm radiates bright and shimmer, while the woeful snot retains a dull and lack-luster sheen.

Green Nugget brought with him several gallons of "starter" substance to get things flowing, but the Nevada Highway Patrol stopped him on his way here and seized his Boogermobile after finding in it several gallons of unidentifiable slimy substance. "It was totally bunk," remarked a dejected, yet determined Green Nugget. "We're going to make this project come alive next year!" We wish him better luck, and hope citizens found appropriate means of clearing their nasal passages in the absence of a centralized nasal repository.

For those interested in getting on board with this project, we suggest you start early. Several prominent BRC staffers have been sighted storing their nose prizes in booger tins (for art's and leave no trace's sake). Mint containers are great for this purpose, and promise to be all the rage at BRC '04.



It's never too early to get ready for next year.

PHOTO HOWEIRD

Man & Temple Factoids

TEXT HOWEIRD

MAN

- Man weighed 2,275 pounds
- Head lined with silk
- Body was finished in wax
- the heart is normally wood, adorned with the crew's spilt blood and signed by each worker - this year it is an electro-flashing heart so they signed the spine

TEMPLE

- two miles of 2 x 4 and two miles of 2 x 6 were used.
- clad with Muslin
- The Great Temple is sometimes known as The Pedestal and Man Base
- The locked red door inside the Manbase hides Larry's liquor stash - or the laser depending on who you believe.

TIMETABLE:

- Man was finished a week before it burned
- Great Temple finished Wednesday before the burn
- Laser removed between 3am and 6am on Burn Day
- Pyrotechnics installation started at 7am.
- Arms moved sometime around sunset. One arm moved for itself soon thereafter.



PHOTO LK

The Playa is an Alkaliar

TEXT GOTHALOT

I arranged to meet some friends down in Hollywood the day after Burning Man for a few drinks and to banter over the week's events. My typically dark clad group of Goth / alternative friends at the table looked up to greet me with warm smiles that instantly turned to grimaces. "What!" I exclaimed. Upon further examination and comparison to the shades of black clad Goth friends I realized I was still coated in the dreaded ALKALI saturated Playa dust - a Goth's worst enemy! Wear black and suffer my friends because you WILL turn grey. And black is so easy to love and easy to match clothes after that evening's blurry libation of Vodka and red bull. However, it wasn't just my clothes that were coated with this white residue, but even



The LPV helps to clean those hard to reach places.

after rinsing my car a white layer of residue remained on the shiny surface. In addition I had this strange cough as if someone blew talc in my lungs. And there was lingering playa in every other orifice exposed to the playa's environment. I set myself out to discover how to remove the white substance from my body, my stuff, and my car.

It made no sense to wash myself too well until I solved the riddle of how to get into some clean clothes in the first place. I needed to unload my car to get to my clothes (no need to hurry because I was rather enjoying my Playastenchen). My first step was to isolate my belongings. Cross contamination is thy

enemy. Clear a place in the garage, a balcony, somewhere preferably by a sink. I used the 5 dollar plastic storage boxes to put all the stuff in then bring it in a little at a time, wipe down the items I couldn't launder, rinse off in the sink what I could. For the most part I found that water dilutes most of it. For any remaining residue I filled a spray bottle with half vinegar and water and sprayed then wiped it off and re-wiped with a clean wet rag.

Now the car... Gasp. Okay it's easier than it looks. I first went to a do-it-yourself car wash and gave it a good rinse with a high-pressure hose - mostly on top working my way down. Also, a brief rinse underneath the carriage will subdue some of the corrosion as well since the playa juice is all draining around there anyway. Earlier I spoke to an automotive expert on whether or not I should wash the engine too. The advice to me was to stay away from the distributor and spark plug areas and any sensitive electrical parts.

After rinsing the car off good I let it dry just to see what appeared. Just as I suspected, a filmy substance - The dreaded Playa Alkali - appeared. No fear, the bottle of vinegar is here. Fill a spray bottle up with vinegar. I used full strength since I bought a cheap two gallon bottle of it anyway. This may seem to take a while, but spray it all over your car, in the cracks and on the racks, and then wipe the surface areas where you can to loosen the residue.

Follow with a good rinse all over as soon as possible (it is vinegar and still corrosive, after all). Then proceed to wash your car with soap and water and dry. Stop what you're doing! You need a beer now. You can wax the car later.

Lastly, I had to get the dust out of my body. And for the full clean effect, I recommend the amazing Lung & Proboscis Vacuum (LPV) by Playa Co. I highly recommend this product for not only sucking out those dreaded Playa bogies, but also the handy Lung Leacher attachment was amazingly effective and I could breathe so much easier after. We thank Lisa for testing this product before turning it on ourselves. Letters to her can be sent to Shady Acres Asylum c/o Dr. Suchem. She's getting better now. The LPV is available at fine stores near you.



Dude, you wrecked my sign!

Burning Man: Imagi-Nation

BY IMAGIKA

Techno-pagan warrior peacemakers
laser-light wizard intelli-translators
glitter goddesses descending from canvas
childlike wanderers dancing in trances...

This is the world of truths and of moments
an intense journey of continual presents
while living together in experimental tenure
we're creating a chain of progress leading to
the future
to open-minded universes of beautiful new
realities
spectrums of incredulous mind-boggling
properties
of individuals inter-creating webs of
intricate patterns
of art, thought, sound, and spirituality
reaching the divine through global
risk-taking
transforming energy into massive spirit
symphonies

Fellow vagabond angels
tribe uniting, realigning
Imagi-nation manifestation
rising, re-a-lizing...

In a kaleidoscope color ritualistic flavor
we are dream voyagers on the edge of
new chapters
we pay homage with productive destruction
and give birth to change and growth in
evolution
we raise the vibrational pull
we open the doors to all times
we unlock barricades
of limitations and stagnation
and raise the banners high
of freedom and expression
we throw our hands to the skies
calling all nations
and planets besides

... Yeah, some say we're insane
but it feels just right
to come to the desert
to die and be reborn in one night.



PHOTO MONICA

FELINE FAUX PAS

Skippy the Cat escaped into Hushville, where he was found and cared for. Evidently the cat was brought into BRC to be kept in a tent, on a leash. Its owner insisted the cat would be cool with life on Playa, having visited previously in July, so it would have been "acclimated." He takes Skippy everywhere. Rather than securing the cat and reporting it to PlayaFrog at Playa Info, it was returned to its owner.

The DUSTY PUZZLER by Smaze

1	2	3	4		5		6	7	8	9	10
11							12				
13				14			15				
		16					17				
18	19			20		21			22	23	
24					25		26	27			
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30			31						32		33
		34			35	36		37			
38	39		40	41			42				
43		44					45				46
	47						48				

ACROSS

- 1 Dogma rendering
- 11 So it is!
- 12 Leaf of a corolla
- 13 Survey chain creator
- 15 Aegean Island (var)
- 16 Finished
- 17 Rebs country
- 18 Cousin of down that's a no-no
- 20 Appearing to have depth, thickness, height and width?
- 22 Taxi
- 24 ___ bin ein Berliner!
- 25 Placate
- 28 Word of Surprise
- 29 Lost
- 30 Not any
- 32 Average
- 34 md
- 35 Not out

DOWN

- 1 Stuff Sack
- 2 Flightless bird
- 3 Be helpful
- 4 involved with
- 5 Flames doing the Tango
- 6 Super
- 7 Electronic displays
- 8 Cayuga Lake Town
- 9 4AM plug holder
- 10 Burning Lounge
- 14 Finish Line

- 18 Smutty late night fun
- 19 Jose's eight
- 21 city builders
- 23 home for Norse Gods
- 26 Taro root dish
- 27 After em
- 31 Another mistake!
- 32 Jewel of great price
- 33 Short nurse
- 36 Bad abbreviation
- 37 1776 Crown Loyalist
- 39 Pop
- 41 It puts the words on the page
- 42 Latin legal thing
- 44 Sun god
- 46 2000 or first BRC paper pusher

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

At 7:00 AM, Thursday morning of BRC a large vehicle, possibly a Suburban, plowed across the Playa from the Man straight into Turnip Head Cult's neon green sign, destroying everything but the Turnip. Rebar was what eventually stopped the truck. Seems the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel. There were conflicting accounts: that the driver had just arrived at BRC, and that the driver was a Ranger.

From the town of Gerlach:
Thanks for promoting our
Car Wash Fundraiser.
We earned \$6,740.00.
Unreal.
Sincerely, Bobbie B.

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