

Black Rock Gazette

The Naked Truth Since 1992

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Photo by Thom Van Os

Welcome to NOWhere

By Kate Forster

"Topographically the country is magnificent -- and terrifying," the author Henry Miller once wrote. "Terrifying because nowhere else in the world is the divorce between man and nature so complete."

What is terrifying to me is that I can identify with this statement. For most of us, it is too easy to lose ourselves in the man-made lifestyle that we have cultivated. Yet it is this very notion of man's isolation from nature that we contradict by our presence here. To prove Miller's statement wrong is part of our charter as citizens of Black Rock City. For this statement cannot be more wrong.

Indeed, man is nature. Nature is a quality from which we cannot be separated. Only this intertwined duality can explain the force that releases us from the tethers of our world -- the world of keyboards and LCD monitors, of ATM cards and drive-throughs -- and quietly pulls us to this Nowhere, this land devoid of all things man-made. We are drawn back to a world of stone and earth, of mountain and wind. Back to the elements from which we were made. For we are the art of the playa, its fruit. This connects us to the desert, to the Earth, and to each other.

The desert reflects the inner calm of the body. If humanity's language, technology, and buildings are an extension of its constructive potential, the desert alone is a reflection of its capacity for absence, the ideal representation of humanity's disappearance. It is here on the playa that we disappear and are reborn. On the clean slate of the playa we build a community on our terms. We incorporate the desert rather than damage it as we construct our camps, our art, and our stages, and this sets the tone for the relationships we create.

You notice that time does not mean what it used to. In the vastness of the playa, we no longer measure the day in seconds and minutes and hours. An hour can seem like days. The geometry of landscape and situation creates a new system of time. We live lifetimes here. Removed from the swinging pendulum, we achieve the ideal of the dynamic community that we seek to create.

Playa time is a headspace in which you must be aware of the rhythms of your body. Here in NoWhere, your endurance will be tested. The desert has no forbearance. Unlike the world to which most of us are accustomed, where our needs are met before it occurs to us to be aware of them, here we are forced to be aware of our bodies and the elements affecting us. NowHere is a place where the difference between life and death is a gallon of water, a sun hat, sunscreen, and a good pair of walking shoes. Do not walk barefoot, for mother is not merciful. Trust yourself; trust your instincts; trust your neighbor; we are all on the same journey.

The more civilized we become, the more we crave the primitive. That is our greatest temptation. Welcome to Nowhere. Welcome Home! ☞

Publisher's Note

This newspaper found its staff. We did not find it. We hope you find it as fun to read as it was to produce.

For 11 years, the Black Rock Gazette has brought you the news of Black Rock City. In 2002, we have our most ambitious publishing schedule yet: in addition to this four-page issue, given to every citizen coming through the Gate and produced in advance of the event, we will produce five on-playa editions.

Gazettes will be distributed on the playa on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. You can also pick up your copy from our vending machines around town or at our world headquarters in Center Camp, alongside Media Mecca. On Sunday, a special Exodus edition will be produced, but there will not be home delivery; pick it up as you leave.

Like what you see? Join the Gazette. We have team meetings Monday through Friday at 11 a.m. We are located adjacent to Media Mecca in Center Camp.

Prospective writers will find blank paper and pens at the City Desk. Our Daily Editor will make the call whether your article will go into production. Even if you don't see your article in print, don't be sad. All submissions will go in a big box and we'll burn 'em at the end of the week.

Have a great Burn! ☞

By Degala

The Burning Man is calling to me, and I feel chills up my back and neck at the prospect of divining a reality in the desert. Since the burning of the Man and Mausoleum in 2001 had marked the end and the beginning of so many things, I've had dreams of Black Rock City spread out before me with colors liquid and vibrating with magic and possibility. I became content in those dreams, as if I had died and gone to heaven.

I dreamed I was standing on one shore looking across a sea to the other. I left all that I had with me behind and jumped in. I swam with beautiful, vibrant creatures of that sea. On the opposite shore, I found an abundance of lights, music, dancing, and entertainment. Later, I held onto the side of a boat and was taken back to the shore whence I came. There, I found I was lost, and all that I had left behind was lost to me as well. I was forced to seek a new way to survive. I was born into an unknown territory of What Now and How?

The dreams left me wary, yet ready for challenge. I was comforted when I discovered there would be a lighthouse underneath the Man, and that a foghorn's blast would identify his location during dust storms. At the base of the lighthouse, a huge compass would divide the city's space, and four laser beams would constantly illuminate the night except when blinking periodically, once for 90 degrees, twice for 180 degrees, thrice for 270 degrees and four times for zero degrees. I must learn to navigate degrees of longitude and feet of latitude. The street signs will teach me structures on the deck of a vessel from stem to stern.

A map could aid me in my calculations, showing such landmarks as a 14-foot morphing, colored, glowing jellyfish, a glowing buoy with hourly explosive flares, smaller video buoys, a 17-foot mermaid, and a ballroom beneath floating water lilies and lily pads with giant cattails towering above.

Burning Man Economics 101

By Durgy

Black Rock City's multi-layered economic systems can be confusing. Four main systems exist: approved fiat money transactions, black-market, barter and gift. Our experimental community is a gift economy. By embracing that concept of gifting, you can help broaden the circle of our community.

Fiat money is the stuff the government prints. It has no actual value (save perhaps as a not very absorbent napkin or fodder for lighting your fire), but represents a promise of value. The only sanctioned places for the use of fiat money at Burning Man are for the purchase of an entrance ticket, a bus ticket to Gerlach, coffee, ice, RV suckage and reimbursement to the helicopter or ambulance company if you get medivaqued from the event. Other than in these transactions, you should keep your cash in a safe place for use outside Black Rock City.

The black-market is defined as the use of fiat money at all other times not sanctioned by the Burning Man organization. By definition, these are illegal transactions. Say you wanted a contraband item, like an elephant ivory chess set, but the holder of the item will not part with it unless he gets fiat money in exchange. If you complete the transaction in Black Rock City on those terms--cash for chess set--then both parties are violating the "no vending" rule of the event. As with all black-market transactions, consequences may be dire if you engage in them: if you are caught selling goods or services in Black Rock City you will be asked to leave the event. Such a transaction violates the express terms of the language on the ticket stub, which represents a contract that you agreed to--to refrain from vending--when you entered through the city gates.

The barter economy and the gift economy look similar. The main difference may be in the expectations of the parties and the timing of the transaction. In a barter situation, an arm's length position is maintained between the parties. The parties have it in their minds that one person gives some item in exchange for something else. An example would be the exchange of a trinket for a frosty beverage. After the transaction is complete, there is no reason for the parties to interact further. Each got what they wanted, and no relationship is created. Barterers don't make friends, they make deals. It's like buying something outside of Black Rock City: after you buy a loaf of bread, there is no connection between you and the

The Floating World

The Game

By LadyBee

In 2002, the Black Rock Desert will become an ocean, a deep and perilous span, filled with the unexpected. At its center is a Lighthouse, upon which stands the Burning Man. Our theme is about finding our way through the world and what we seek and value in it. Prepare for a voyage of discovery. Beyond the bay enclosed by our city, voyagers will encounter the Unknown. Here you may search for treasure in the form of gold doubloons, the possession of which entitles you to enter the Lighthouse and to climb to the top. There is another way to find treasure in the Known World within our Bay. The names and locations of participating theme camps will be italicized on our city's map. A sign and hours will be posted at each of these camps. At each camp travelers will undergo a rite of passage and will receive a special token. Each section of the city contains camps with one of the five colored tokens necessary to complete the game:

300°-255° Pink • 255°-210° Green • 210°-150° Orange • 150°-105° Yellow • 105°-60° Purple

When you have collected five of these tokens, each of a different color, you will be given a secret clue - a location by longitude and latitude and time. When you arrive at this secret nightly coordinate you will be able to exchange your tokens for a doubloon, and you will partake of a marvelous entertainment.

You may use your doubloon to gain entrance to our Lighthouse, you may give it away as a gift, or you may choose to keep the doubloon. Under no circumstances, however, is it permissible to barter or sell this coin, nor is it acceptable to collect more than one. This would be unfair to other voyagers who seek treasure. One coin per person is the rule. Each coin should represent a unique effort by a single individual. All who enter into the Lighthouse must solemnly swear to the Keepers that they have discovered treasure by their own effort or received it as a gift.

Look for Hippocampus, half horse, half water serpent, as well as the 20-foot kelp forest, the 6-foot fish tails, the volcano playland, and the spinning tunnel of fluorescent fish. A Spanish Galleon and an Ark of half-galleon half-mythical aquatic creature will sail across the playa-sea while the random melodies of Sirens carry on the wind to waiting ears.

There is an Unknown World: an area between 300 degrees and 60 degrees. Here one might encounter a giant sea bird adorned with feathers of fiery gold, a 35-foot tall 60-foot wide octopus, giant clams with pearls of great price, and a Leviathan of black head, green, blue, purple, and yellow eyes, complete with long spidery tentacles. Messages in bottles might bounce in the wind. Crawling, reclining and sitting Sirens will beckon as Aphrodite rises 10 feet above the playa-sea to witness our experiences of the white whale, the

Thermo Kraken, the whirlpool, the stained glass iceberg, the flying neon squid, and the Ark from Amsterdam. Far out at zero degrees a grotto light of red and green-blue glass, metal, and mirror will tell us we are at the edge of our Floating World.

Treasure is to be found in the Unknown, the most valuable of which is no less the experience of seeking it. When found, gold doubloons imprinted with a likeness of the Man are to be treated with great respect. They are to be gifted to another, kept as souvenirs, or spent on a trip inside the lighthouse. Bartering, selling, or hoarding is forbidden.

There are theme camps administering rites of passage that will earn each participant a special token. You will be given a clue and instructions on how to obtain a gold doubloon in exchange for four tokens. There are options, and I might do well to spend a little time every day searching for a doubloon and completing rites of passage for tokens. I am getting excited about this game.

I am reflective as I enter into the Temple of Joy in my imagination. It will be located on the Island of Azuera along a common axis, with the Man at 0 degrees and at the exact dividing line between the Known and the Unknown.

I know this coordinate. I am reminded of last year's structure that housed dreams and memories honored with a reverent walk. Thousands waited patiently in clouds of dust for a Sunday night burn magnificent in its energy, emotional dream grief released into hope inferno. The phoenix appeared, and nine days later the world had its own Mausoleum, its own chance to grieve loss horrendous and choose a new future.

I am solemn as I learn that once again we have the opportunity for ritual. We are powerful as a group of individual realities coming together to dream. Through intentional honoring of the gift of life at the Temple we can find that it is worth our grief to know joy.

My eyes are full of the ocean and my heart longs for peace when I realize once again that I love to live and that I live to love. In this way, I believe are we all the same. Beauty, Peace and Joy in the Floating World 2002. ☞

storeowner. In Black Rock City, that does not lead to a broadening of community. No real relationship develops between barterers; the circle of the community does not grow.

In a gift economy, there are no similar expectations, and no restrictions on a gift's timing. Someone's gift can be complete before Black Rock City opens. Your gift can go to someone who has not given directly to you. With a gift economy there is no clear transaction of things and services. One gives freely of oneself, and leaves it to others to also give freely.

Many people spend hundreds or thousands of hours preparing to get to Black Rock City, making art, building infrastructure, volunteering, etc. That effort and the fruits of those efforts are a gift to the rest of the population of Black Rock City. By giving gifts to others in Black Rock City you become part of the ever-widening circle of folks who view Black Rock City as their community, and you meet people, and you become part of the community. Gifts from the heart are freely exchanged without any particular expectation of an immediate return gift.

Each of us takes that leap of faith that others will return the gifts, or pass them on from you. Take a good look around the City, and drink in and share in the gifts people brought.

The first "barter bar" was actually a model for a "gift bar." The idea was if someone provided ice, mixers and a place to hang out, others would come by with other things. This would promote sharing and community. It was giving and sharing, not bartering. It worked. It was not an immediate transaction where someone gave a trinket or performed a humiliating act to quench their thirst. People gave, and shared and the circle of community at Black Rock City broadened.

What if you have no gifts? Everyone has gifts! One can give of oneself to the community through radical self-expression or art, or in some way meaningfully participate in the community. Volunteer. Pull shifts at the Café. Meet your neighbors and help put up their shade structure. Do something to the best of your ability. Participate as fully as you can. Make sure your actions broaden the circle of the community. GIVE!

Nobody said this was easy. "Gifting" is as amorphous as "participate;" both are necessarily left up to subjective interpretation. If a gift comes from the heart, though, it can never be too small or too large. The person with a humble gift may have helped build the Man. Make that leap of faith. Give without expectation. Not only is it better to give than receive, it is better to give THEN receive. ☞



Tinky Winky from Over There asks:

I know there are also names, but these new street numbers are very confusing! It's all just a jumble of math and I'm worried that I'll get lost and won't be able to find the good parties. What should I do?

Oh for the love of Harlan Sanders, are you people back again? Is it really time for my 51 weeks of peace and solitude to be shattered by the infestation of you smelly, featherless carbon blobs? Why, oh why did I ever sign that contract with the BLM allowing you ugly bags of water to invade my home?

Okay, I signed it for the money. But let me tell you, the half-mil they pay me doesn't come close to compensating for the stress and anguish. We have a whole week of this left? Could someone please call Dr. Kevorkian right now and tell him that by Friday he'll have one fowl patient ready for the ole machine?

But I digress. It seems Mr. Stinky Winky is having trouble finding his way around, even with all those roads and street signs. You know, I'm starting to think that the notion of a larger brain equating to more intelligence is a total myth, because those couple pounds of gray matter you lug around are about to be left in the dust by my peanut-sized processor.

Pay attention, because we're going to move quickly on this. When you hear an address such as 185 at 2500, immediately multiply the two numbers in your head and divide by 100. You now have 4,625. Round this down to the nearest prime, which is 4,621. Swap the first and third digits to get 2,641. Take this number, go back to your car, get in, and drive this many miles away from here.

When you arrive, get out of your car, kiss the first person you see and tell them you're a pathetic wost wittle baby. They'll straighten you out, fer sure.

Do you have a question for the Playa Chicken? Drop it off at the Gazette City Desk in Center Camp and you might see your silly little problem in print! ☞

Head Games

BY RICK-BOY

"What a pathetic bunch of bullshit," I thought to myself as I saw Doc trying to explain his way out of his latest dumb-ass move.

We were on Easter Island, 2,300 miles off the coast of Chile. What brought me here was that the Black Rock Gazette folks said they wanted a story about the heads of Easter Island.

I could see great parallels between The Man and The Men of Easter Island, and for that matter throughout history. I wasn't doing anything much at the moment and I needed a new adventure, so armed with a printout of my assignment, my press pass from last year's Gazette, I had set out and BS'ed my way down to Santiago, where I found Doc.

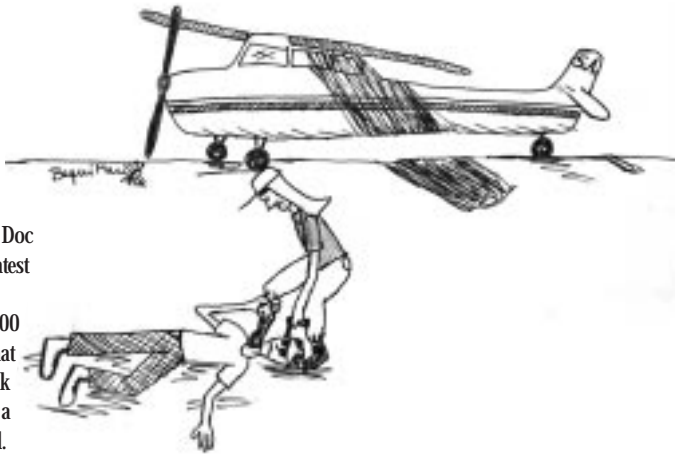
Doc could arrange anything I was told. "Yet," I thought to myself, "If Doc is so good, why is he out on the tarmac with the pilot's boot holding his neck to the runway and a pistol pointed at his head?"

We came from Santiago on what they call a "non-commercial" flight. It cost half the commercial fare and Doc had agreed to buy the fuel for the return trip. Turns out fuel on Easter Island was much more expensive than on the mainland, and Doc hadn't really worked that into his travel budget, accidentally on purpose, it seems.

He got the plane fueled for the return trip and when it came time to pay he tried to give them cash – mainland prices. When it was explained to him that he was short, he tried to wave it off like it wasn't his problem and these people were low-class robbers who didn't need to be dealt with.

He was mostly right. Which explains how Doc found himself kissing the tarmac.

The pilot was a German named Otto who sported one of those goofy desert hats with the white cotton flaps that extended down around the neck. Otto had never actually been to Germany. He was born in Paraguay. I had the feeling his old man fled the Fatherland right after World War II and was still being searched for by various organizations. Nevertheless, Otto had a thick German accent when he spoke in English or Spanish. Everything was answered with "Ja ja ja ja" and then



he did what he wanted -- which in this case was snatching Doc by the throat of his shirt and hurling him onto the tarmac.

Fortunately, Doc did have a credit card, and he came around to the idea that he was going to be paying the full fuel price. After a bit of negotiation, the pilot took the card and let Doc get up.

Their differences resolved and the fuel paid for, Doc and Otto were getting ready to leave. I had to stay to get the story.

Easter Island is famous for its statues; long tall obelisks made in the shape of a man's head. Moa they're called. These statues are all over the shores of the island. They are up to 25 feet high and can weigh 50 tons. The are generally placed on altars called ahu and are positioned so they face inland.

The parallels to Burning Man are just staggering. There are statues of men. They have a mythical proportion to them; it is not know for sure why they are here or what their purpose was. It seems to be a common cultural thread to create larger-than-life man statues: Easter Island, The Olmecs in Mexico, Burning Man.

Perhaps we at Black Rock City are merely carrying on an ancient tradition that is somehow embedded deep within our being. This to me seemed to be the real story. So much so that I didn't pay too close attention to the Gazette's story assignment list and a couple of emails from the editors, or I never would have come to Easter Island.

But here I was.

Doc and Otto departed down the runway. The plane looked like something rejected as a prop for Raiders of the Lost Ark. It took forever to climb and then inexplicably banked left and disappeared around the backside of the island, "What

the hell?" I thought. Shrugging, I headed for the customs and saw a conclave of people waiting just beyond ready to offer me a taxi, cheap imitations of the statues, tee shirts and all the other stuff.

A woman had come on the flight with us. She was a New Yorker, Janice Finkelstien. She seemed to think the world owed her a living and an explanation for whatever was currently running through her brain, and thence directly out her mouth. She had delusions of being an archaeologist but she didn't like the idea of getting dirty; sweaty was out of the question.

She was in her mid 30s and kind of cute, but the constant whining drivel coming out of her mouth killed off any desire. In fact as the flight had worn on and she continued to yammer; the thought of pushing her out the door had probably occurred to each of us.

I grabbed my grip and my backpack and there was Janice, who decided because I was the only person around that she should immediately attach herself to me.

Janice seemed to think that I should be grateful for her noticing my existence, and as a way of expressing my thanks, I should grab her theoretically carry-on luggage and wheel that behemoth hard-shell American Tourister suitcase of hers through Customs. I headed for the entrance and Janice started yammering. "They wait a minute. Aren't you going to help me? I've got a lot of stuff here. I need some help. You're not going to just leave me, are you?"

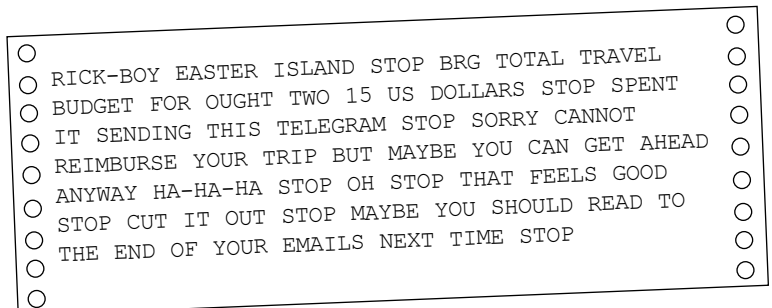
"Sorry sweetheart," I said, doing my best Bogart. "You have to carry your own stuff into Customs."

I turned and kept walking to the Quonset hut with a large sign overhead that said "CUSTOMS".

Inside was a dilapidated wooden desk with peeling veneer on the front. Overhead, a ceiling fan turned lazily. A big man in an open white shirt was sitting behind the desk. He was sweating profusely and smiling, a big broad smile. He took my passport, removed the \$20 bill I had left folded on the photo page and said with an even bigger smile, "No problem Sir. Have a nice time on our island."

I smiled and said, "Thank you."

By this time Janice had lugged her bag up to Customs



and was starting to talk at no one and everyone. "Excuse me? Is this Customs? Can I leave this bag here? Oh God I am exhausted. Wait a minute I'll be right back I have to get the rest of my stuff. Can I leave this bag here? I'll be right back, Okay? Is this Customs? Excuse me, could somebody answer me?"

I saw old Broad Smile just sitting in his chair dumb-founded. The smile was gone from his face. I smiled at him and said,

"Have a nice day"

I picked up my passport, threw my bag over my shoulder and figured I would be comfortably ensconced in my hotel room before Janice got past Customs, if she ever did, and that I never would have to hear her inane cranky prattling again.

As it turned out, I was vastly mistaken.

When I came out of the Customs hut there was a semi-circle of people standing watching me. Several people had signs up saying "Taxi", others said "Hotel", One said "Rick-Boy".

I walked over to the person with the "Rick-Boy" sign and said "Yeah"

"You Rick-Boy?"

"Yeah"

"Telegram, five dollar"

I gave the kid eight bucks and he handed me a crumpled yellow envelope. I looked down at it and it was addressed to "Rick-Boy, Easter Island" I tore it open as I got to the entrance to the airport bar. I stopped to read:

Oh great." I thought I guess I should have waited for someone to respond to my e-mailed request for funding before charging off. I went into the bar and took a stool.

"How could I have been so stupid as to think Burning Man would really pay for this gig?" I wondered. Then I realized that I COULD read to the end of my email from the Gazette

Wired and Wireless on the Playa

Burning Man ... is a compelling physical analog for cyberspace, and, unsurprisingly, we have attracted many people who regard the experience as the equivalent of cyber-based reality. -- Larry Harvey, January 1997

Burning Man may be a manifestation of the Internet, but cyberspace has not been a big part of Black Rock City life in past years. This year is likely to be different, with easier access than in the past to our own municipal intranet and the coming of age of a technology that enables access to the Internet.

If you want to leave the world behind, PlayaNET is for you. It is a Burning Man-only Intranet available via Wi-Fi and at three kiosks, which will be located at the two outposts and at Center Camp. Also, on an experimental basis this year, some of the camps ringing Center Camp will have hard-wired access to the Ethernet network.

So what does a Black Rock City-area network offer? You can search for your friends and register yourself so others can find you. Indeed, this will be the primary method for Playa Information to catalog and search participant information, replacing those quaint 3-inch by 5-inch file cards.

The Black Rock Gazette will be there, as will a method for sending articles and messages to the editors. Events will be

listed and the system can be used to list your event.

PlayaNET also offers ways to interact with other citizens. There may be an Internet Relay Chat program for talking to virtual rooms full of people and a matchmaking service. Voice Over Internet Protocol means you can talk to other users by telephone -- all of a sudden playa phone booths are not necessarily absurd, they might really be connected to something.

The system is not really set up to take additional content, but if you have something you feel you must share, there will be a general questionnaire on the system and the PlayaNET team will try to get back to you during the event.

The white PlayaNET kiosks will be distinguished by massive arrows pointing to the doors. Inside each will be four terminals, a server and a wireless router. Access is free, and if you have a portable computer with an Ethernet jack, you can tap into the network. Or look for the PlayaNET flag located in many participant camps, and ask if you can try it out on their equipment.

Current plans call for thin-client terminals that will not accommodate storage media, so you will have to use your own computer if you want to save data or upload any materials. For people submitting materials to the Gazette, please don't hog the terminals to compose text; upload from your own computer or write it out by long hand and then type it in.

PlayaNET will be available to anybody in the city with a

Wi-Fi card, though you may have to elevate your computer, especially if you are trying to connect from the suburban areas away from Center Camp.

For those connecting wirelessly, set your SSID/network name to "PlayaNET" and select DHCP/dynamic assigned IP settings. If you think this is cool, PlayaNET can use some volunteers. They get plenty of offers from network geeks, but 95 percent of what they need is manual labor: Building the kiosks, painting, dusting, bolting and tying things take much more time than configuring the network, and the booths could use some decoration. People with ideas for applications also are welcome, PlayaNET mainly builds the network but content is king.

Wi-Fi technology has been growing by leaps and bounds, and if you have it, you can also get out to Internet. The PlayaNET staff wonders why you would want to, but just in case you have to check an auction or do some day trading, you can link to the rest of the world via Wi-Fi if you have it. This service is provided by the Oregon Country Fair Embassy and has been available on the playa since 1999. The Black Rock Gazette uses this satellite link to send newspaper pages to a commercial printer in Reno.

What is new this year is that Wi-Fi, the over-the-air communications standard more formally known as 802.11b, has become increasingly common, so a fair number of citizens

who lugged their laptops are likely to have it. Widespread use of the Internet has interesting implications for Black Rock City, which has historically reveled in its isolation, but you can't stop progress.

The Oregon Country Fair folks say their network is available throughout the playa. If you want to wire an entire camp and you have a base station, that can be done as well if you brought a wireless bridge and an Ethernet hub. Log on to the website at www.eugeneweb.com/%7Ebm/ibm.html with a portable or visit the embassy's camp for more information.

To connect from your own Wi-Fi enabled computer, you need only set one parameter: This is the "SSID", or Network Name. Set it to "internet", all in lower case. The network is unencrypted, so you do not have to set any keys.

Configure your machine to "Get IP Address Automatically" or "Use DHCP" or "Use BOOTP". The server will automatically assign you an IP address when you boot your machine and connect to the net. In Windows, find this under Control Panel/Network, highlight a protocol and click Properties, then the tabs will be available to configure your IP Address. This address might change from time to time; if you need a fixed address (say because you are running a server), email the Oregon Country Fair Embassy at ibm@toad.com.

By the way, they may be big, but they are not blue: ibm stands for Internet at Burning Man. ☞



Well, its time to git my sand-blastid butt back to Black Rock City! Howdy y'all -- its yer old pal Uncle Tio here! Welcome home! As y'all can see, we did a fine job o' pickin' up after areselves after last year! Why ya kin hardly tell we wuz here, 'cept fer all them leftover vibes.

Old Uncle Tio weren't sure he'd be back this year... what with all the nasty stuff happenin' in the world, I figgered I might just as well stay put up in my cave in them mountains north o here. But then I figgered that my family is what's important, and dad-blast-it, I weren't gonna let some fellers in funny hats scare me off. And, if funny hats scare ya, then Black Rock City ain't fer you anyhow!

This ole playa ain't changed much in years, a millin or two at least -- but this here Black Rock City, now that's changed! Back when we started callin' this place a "city" we wuz kiddin'... cuz there wuz only a couple 'a hundred of us mangy ole playa rats. Well, if it didn't turn around an' bite us in the butt, cause we really is a city now! And now that we're a real live city we all gotta take speshul care to live different than back in the day.

When I first saw them big plastic poopers, them "Port-O-Lets", I was skeptickle. Now I don't mind 'em at all -- if ya catch 'em at the right time 'o day, they smell sort-o fresh, kinda like flowers. Back in double-nought, we had all kinds o' problems with corn-fused folk puttin' all manner o' crazy things in them poopers. Glad to see y'all finally figgered out that they're just fer depositin' what comes out of yer innards!

Now Uncle Tio ain't so sure about them new-fangled "Port-O-Bidets" they got for this year! Anyhow, glad yer all back -- and a big ole howdy to all you new folks. A lil tip from ole Uncle Tio: git them hugs early in the week afore them tomatoes git ripe, if n ya know whut I mean! ☞



The Living Playa

The playa seems like a sterile place, a large flat expanse of lake bed with a nearly regular arrangement of cracks. The Earth Guardians would like to show you that life thrives here year round. After leading two nature walks to the nearby hot springs in 2001, this year the group is offering eight trips throughout the week, from Tuesday through Sunday, for participants who want to experience the nature of the Black Rock Desert. Some of the trips will explore Frog Pond for possible restoration and enhancement of its eight artesian springs. Black Rock City LLC is leasing this private ranch to provide water for the event, and the Earth Guardians are hoping to rally the technical expertise and artistic inspiration of the Burning Man community to improve this site. Natural scientists, environmental professionals and landscape artists are particularly welcome to contribute.

Six of the trips include visits to Frog Pond, and there will

Jumpin' Java

Black Rock City may be the place in the world most unlike Alaska, but you can find anchorage in each. Our bustling port is Café Island, and this year it will be offering a lot more than just beans.

There are two performance stages, one for music, the other for spoken word. From the wee early morning through the heat of each afternoon, music-stage participants give the gift of jazz-influenced and globally-inspired instrumental performances to help ease into a new day or chill during the hottest hours. The spoken-word stage sets sail each afternoon, with poetry readings, spoken-word, and small-scale theatrical productions.

New this year, as the sun goes down and the evening

editors, I had printed out the message and stashed it in my backpack, along with the original assignment.

I had stapled them together. The assignment read:

014a Head Games. An article about the Easter Island heads that will be seen around BRC this year. It's a project by John Barry, he did Azteca last year, kind of a miniature-golf-course-cum-Aztec-temple-in-a-theme-camp. This year, he is making replicas of Easter Island heads to decorate the potties; assume it's not just coincidence that there are heads on the heads. OPEN.

Then there was the email:

To: rickboy@rickboy.com
From: brgazette@burningman.com

Hey Rickboy,

Sure you can do the Easter Island story, thanks. Remember, it's due June 30.

We actually got a long email from John Barry that has most of the info you need, so you can just contact him to check it over. The gist is that at Azteca last year the kids had a kind of Easter Sunday party, and he was thinking about this when he found out about the Floating World Theme. So he kind of had "Easter" in his head, and that morphed to "Easter Island" and that led to the famous moai or Easter Island heads and THAT led to the potties by the path you might imagine.

Here's some factoids he gave us: the heads are 8 feet tall, 4 feet wide and 3 feet deep, and they weigh 25 to 30 pounds. The medium is paper mache and its made using wireframe molds. He is planning to do 15 to 20 of them, about half going out by the man, the rest in his camp and in center camp. I think some of them have names, see if you can find out what you say to a naked head.

A cool thing: in real life, John is the print director for a big movie studio, so he does outdoor advertising, including billboards. Usually, the studios just paste new posters on top of old ones, but eventually they become really thick and the old posters need to be scraped off.

He convinced the company that actually goes around and pastes these things up to save the scrapings, and he got a pickup truck full. When they soaked the scrapings in water they found it revitalized the glue so that the stuff made really good paper mache, though they had to add some wallpaper paste after they made the forms for extra support. Then they doused it in some kind of nontoxic superglue that dries clear and makes it waterproof.

So it's kind of a hoot, finally somebody gets to hang movie posters at Burning Man. The organization liked it because it makes the potties look more distinguished and artful then they do normally.

There it is, not to much work for this year's Gate. Thanks again.

"May I get you a drink, sir?" said a startlingly beautiful girl in a sarong.

"You may get me anything you like." I was in love. She blushed, I think. "What's good here?" I asked.

"The Pisco Sour"

Silly-sounding drink, I thought, but I would have taken anything she recommended. "Uh, sure. Since you suggested it, I'll have a double."

She was even prettier when she smiled. "I think one will be enough." she said, turning gracefully toward the service station on the bar. With a bit of jet-lag, I was beginning to slip into a reverie when I was brought back to reality by a screeching

"What do they have to drink here anyway? I wonder if they have any Tanqueray. I could use a really good Martini."

My island goddess returned with my Pisco Sour.

"Oh shit, my nail." said Janice, "Hey what's that? It looks disgusting. I was afraid I had lost you and I really don't know where I'm going. What do you have to do around here to get a drink anyway?"

I smiled weakly at my island goddess waitress and gave her a nod to say "Bring her one too." The waitress closed her eyes half way and bowed her head slightly as if to say "Okay, but I can't believe you are letting that cow henpeck you." She turned and was gone.

I took a sip. It was like a fruity whisky sour made with wood alcohol. I figured one of these would put anyone down for the count.

Janice was still yammering when the waitress dropped off the Pisco Sour and turned on her heel and left us.

"Hey I didn't order this." She exclaimed. "How can I drink this when I don't even know what it is. You know my allergist..."

"Your allergist is 4,000 miles away" I interrupted, "and anyway he would tell you to drink the local indigenous foods to acclimate your body to the allergens in the current locale so you could build up antigens to fight any possible infection. Isn't that right?"

"Well yes something like that."

"Yes of course, well this drink is made from the natural fruits and honeys of the island and has many anti-oxidants as well, so it not only helps your immune system acclimatize to the environment it helps prevent cancer."

"Really?"

"Yes" (I am constantly amazed at my ability to say the most outrageous things in a calm voice. It's as if I'm having an out-of-body experience when I do.)

It really did taste good. Or maybe the alcohol anesthetized my taste buds. Anyway, I had a few minutes of blessed silence as she slurped.

Janice finished her first drink. "Ya know," she said, she was starting to slur her words. "I'm not sure why I came here."

I was starting to get antsy. "Where are you staying?"

"I don't know? The Hyatt?"

"The Hyatt? Didn't you make reservations before you came out here?"

"Nah, Why?"

"Because this is a little island and you can't just assume that there will be someplace that you want to stay with a room available just because you showed up."

Janice seemed flabbergasted by this idea. She leaned toward me and her whole body started to fall off the seat. I grabbed her right shoulder as the rest of her body hit my chest. "I think I'm drunk." she said.

My waitress smiled wanly, and I got the idea that she had maybe put a little extra high-octane into Janice's drink. I should have just left her in the bar, and I started to leave, but I couldn't bring myself. Maybe because I'm a gentleman. More likely because Easter Island is a small place, and she would eventually wake up and find me anyway.

I got our stuff and staged it near the front door. Pretty soon a beat up rusted jalopy pulled up and a little man jumped out and yelled "You want Taxi?" "Yeah", I said and poured Janice in the back seat. The cabbie and I put the stuff in the trunk and took off.

To be continued... ☞

Photo by John Barry



Leftover Roundup

By Ginger Petunia

Welcome! So glad you got here. It may seem strange to plan for your departure so soon. It isn't strange at all. Keep in mind right from the start what you are going to do with your leftover food. Only a small number of people has brought exactly what they are going to use. Some bring less, this is for the rest.

This year, two places that will take donations have shared their needs. We heard from the hard-working staff at the Department of Public Works. They begin building Black Rock City's infrastructure months before the event begins and will be here for months after it ends. The Food Bank of Northern Nevada in Sparks also will accept donations.

If you think that working for DPW is like spending five months at Burning Man, think again. The work ranch is a four-hour round trip from the variety of the Reno supermarkets, and after a 12-hour day of clean-up in the desert sun, those noodle-in-a-cup soups are not much to come home to.

Will Roger, the DPW chief of staff, said donations of food, water and beer are a helpful addition to his departmental budget. Your gift of food now may help ticket prices into the future.

also be a Tuesday night visit to the Trego hot springs for a sunset picnic and stargazing. The eighth trip is a plant identification walk, and there also will be bird watching and wildlife habitat sections on some of the Frog Pond trips.

The Earth Guardians are inviting biologists, naturalists and desert lovers to co-lead these trips. In the do-it-yourself spirit of Black Rock City, transportation across the playa is to be provided by trip participants. If you can lend a vehicle and drive at least five people a few miles off road, you will have priority for one of the 15 places available on a trip.

To get a spot, sign up at the Earth Guardian pavillion in Center Camp. If you can provide assistance, ask for Dr. Dune; there will be trip leader meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday at 5 P.M. For the trips themselves, bring sturdy shoes, water, a hat and desert-worthy clothes. Leave bathing suits behind — you will not be going into the springs. Consult *What, Where, When* for times and itineraries. ☞

cools, things will be heating up at Café Island. The Café music stage goes cabaret as performers emerge from the sea and beyond to entertain with Floating World themes. On several nights, the Café will feature regionally organized events, celebrating the growth in our year-round community and sharing diverse performances from a number of Burning Man inspired happenings around the globe.

Check *What, Where, When* on the playa for specific events and times. ☞



sound:

"Hey, I thought I'd lost you."

It was Janice, lugging her suit case and other crap.

Is It Art or Is It Stationary?

As in any bustling metropolis, Black Rock City has its share of traffic problems. The twist is that here the autos are part of the art. As you probably know, only art cars licensed by the Department of Mutant Vehicles can cruise around town, and they are subject to strict rules. As you will likely find out, this year traffic regulations will be vigorously enforced by the DMV and the Rangers, so it pays to know the rules.

Many of us arrive in conventional motor vehicles. They are fine as far as they go, and they go as far as your campsite. There they stay until you leave. Feel free to cover your clunker up with a tarp or otherwise hide it from view.

Yes, you may leave the event and come back, but only for a fee of \$20, and really, why would you come all this way and then leave? If you need something, you can probably find

it right here, or you can take a \$5 bus ride to downtown Empire for any vital shopping needs.

The phrase "motor vehicles" includes cars, of course, but also motorcycles and other powered conveyances, whether they have internal combustion engines, batteries, sails or whatever. Motorcycles must meet the same stringent restrictions as cars. Most other non-traditional vehicles, including those powered by wind and those designed for off-road use cannot be used in the city.

Wind-powered skate boards that do not have fixed sail and do have braking systems can be licensed for in-town use by the DMV Wind Division. Other wind-powered vehicles can be used on the playa outside the perimeter fence.

Penalties this year will be stiff. If you get caught violating the driving rules, you may get off with a stern warning — once. In this case, your car will be tagged with a virtual boot, a placard that explains the vehicle has been given a first strike and is not to be driven again. Two strikes, and the game is over: your vehicle will be impounded for the duration of the event. Removal of a virtual tag — by anyone — constitutes a second strike.

Even driving your car to your campsite should be done with thought. Once you reach the city, try to keep to the back roads until you get to your homestead. If you are looking for other people, all bank of toilets have parking zones around them, you can leave your car at the toilets you think are nearest, and find your friends on foot instead of trying to locate them while cruising.

You may not drive on the Esplanade.

Black Rock City is really a place for pedestrians and cyclists. The key exception is art cars, those rolling oeuvres of radical self expression. This year, they will be especially radical — the DMV is tightening its standards, and only those vehicles that are substantially altered from the showroom will be registered.

For authorized art cars there are a lot of rules to follow. Yes, this is Black Rock City, but even here your freedom ends

when it begins to impinge on the rights of others. A motor vehicle, artistically modified or not, versus a pedestrian or cyclist is not an equal proposition. The speed limit is 5 miles per hour, and even at that pace, art cars must not kick-up dust. Also, federal and state rules apply, so it could be curtains for your vacation if you are caught driving an art car or anything else while under the influence of a controlled substance. Art cars must yield to pedestrians and bicycles and obey instructions from Rangers, Black Rock City staff and Nevada and federal law-enforcement officers. During those wonderful white out sandstorms, Art Cars cannot be operated.

Just because you did not bring an art car, does not mean you will not interact with them. If an art car can accept passengers — not all of them do — you might be able to hop a ride if the vehicle seems safe to you. If it does not, get off, you are responsible for your own safety.

While some drivers are happy to ferry you about, remember that the purpose of art cars is to provide ART. Not all of them are able to offer limo services, and you should remember that driving an art car on the playa is a tough job, there are obstacles, speed limits and many distractions.

Other than art cars, there are a few categories of vehicles that you may see in the city.

These include staff cars and golf carts, the Department of Public Works fuel truck, handicapped transport, art deliverers licensed by the ARTery and emergency vehicles.

Art cars may not be made to look like ambulance, fire or police vehicles, so if you see one of those, it is real. Staff vehicles will not be decorated but will have a sticker on the door identifying their department.

The increased focus on driving rules comes after several unfortunate incidents last year, especially on Sunday night. During a vicious dust storm, vehicles of every description were driving around as if the event were over and traffic rules did not apply. Large recreational vehicles were driven out to art burns. One driver rammed his vehicle into a spire he did not see directly in front of him.

Much of the sensitivity to motor vehicles dates to 1996, when a tent set up on the playa but outside the city was struck by a departing car. An occupant was seriously injured, and although he settled out of court with the Burning Man organization after receiving a \$1 million insurance payment, he sued the United States, saying the Bureau of Land Management should not have permitted the event to take place. He lost, but any kind of vehicle accident would complicate the annual process of obtaining government permission for Black Rock City.

Regular cars were banned in Black Rock City in 1997, when the art-car policy was put in place. Since then, the rules have been increasingly flouted, leading to a potentially disastrous situation which the DMV and Rangers will be strenuously combatting this year. ☞

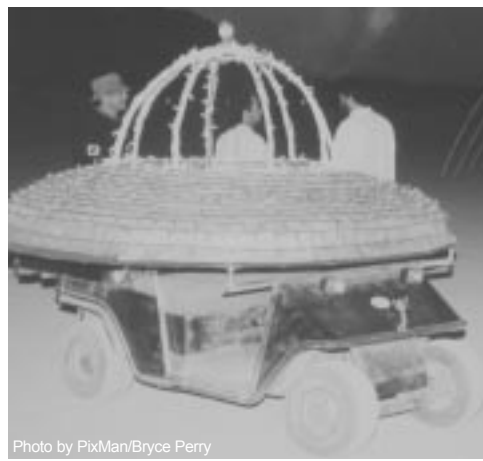


Photo by PixMan/Bryce Perry

Leave No Trace

Tips from Earth Guardians

- **No burning on the unprotected playa.**
- **Any holes you dig must be less than six inches in diameter. All holes must be refilled and packed before you leave.**
- **No burning of synthetic materials (including couches, rugs, plastic and PVC). They release particularly toxic fumes and create hard-to-clean residue.**
- **If you burn art, attach all the pieces securely so that nothing flies off in the wind and becomes MDOP.**
- **Everything you bring to live, create & burn MUST BE REMOVED - sweep your area before you leave.**

What's Wrong with this Picture?



That's right, boys and girls! The Black Rock City Fashion Police are on the beat! Feathers, sequins, or any item than can come loose from your caboose are OUT! Not only that, but they clog up the playa, and your friendly Earth Guardians have to clean up after your bric-a-brac. So let's keep the party polite: dress responsibly, or don't dress at all! ☞

Bernie's Index

Number of cans recycled at BM in 2001: More than 75,000

Number of cans that, when recycled, save the energy equivalent of one gallon of gas: 30
Number of gallons of gas saved, in these terms: 2,500

Average gas mileage, per gallon, for a 2002 Honda Accord: 17.1

Number of miles a 2002 Honda Accord can go on 2,500 gallons of gas: 42,750
Distance from San Francisco to Black Rock City: 335 miles

Number of Honda Accords (or similar) vehicles that could drive to BM and back using the gas saved from recycling if the energy saved could be directly converted: 64

Cost of one gallon of gas in San Francisco: \$1.79

Amount of money that could be saved on gas if the energy saved from recycling cans could be directly converted: \$4,475

(Sources: Burning Man web site, Honda)

-- Suzanne Zalev

Change Is Good

Burning Man Information Radio is changing its frequency to 94.5 this year due to interference with a commercial radio station last year. The 105.7 listed in the Survival Guide is incorrect. ☞

Gonna burn yer' art?
USE A PLATFORM WHEN YOU START!

One's duty to accept a gift horse is directly proportional to the amount of space you have to keep one in your apartment.

Illustration by Dadara



The Lily Pond

By Sean Savage

After sundown, lucky voyagers will discover a hidden treasure in the Floating World: a shimmering Lily Pond that surrounds visitors with ripples of ghostly light.

About 300 electronic lily pads make up the heart of the Lily Pond. Each knee-high pad is completely self-contained, a plastic leaf with:

- Infrared beam generators, like those found in TV remote controls.
- Infrared sensors that see beams from neighboring pads.
- A white diode on the underside that shines bright light onto the playa.
- A microprocessor.
- Solar cells on top and two rechargeable batteries on the bottom

This pond is designed to respond to visitors. Step into it and you interrupt some of the infrared beams. The affected pads react by shining bright white onto the playa and passing the infrared word to their neighbors. The nearby pads shine with slightly dimmer light and pass the message along. So your foot triggers a ripple of light that glides across the playa.

Stroll through the pond. A light-wake follows you and gently fades as the waves



spread, reflect from the pond's banks, and form chaotic patterns with other waves. Dragonflies hover above some of the pads, their fiber-optic wings shimmering in response to nearby movement. Huge shy goldfish blend in with the playa when you approach; hold still long enough and they begin to glow.

The Lily Pond is wireless and decentralized. Each pad acts on its own, using little energy. But together they create a sublime community of electronic light providing 1.2 gigahertz of combined computing power.

"It will be the first parallel supercomputer on the Playa," said Jeremy Lutes, father of the Lily Pond. He dreamed up the Lily Pond nine months ago and has been working on it full-time since January.

The playa is harsh on electronics and it threatens the Lily Pond's motion sensing capabilities. Lutes expects this to happen temporarily during dust storms, which fill the pond with virtual whitecaps. (The storms block all the infrared beams, causing the entire pond to glow.) If longer-term motion-blindness prevails, Lutes can reprogram the pond to ignore motion and generate automatic light-show patterns.

Lutes and more than 20 volunteers built the system at his home in Oakland. They hope to upgrade the pads next year with more advanced software and hardware that will make the pond even more beautiful, intelligent and playa-hardy. ☞

Photo by Uncle Mikey • www.jumbobrian.com

Love Your Mother (Your Mother Should Know)

Recycling aluminum is good. Recycling music is good.

If you agree with either or both of these statements, you will want to visit Recycle Camp 2002, located in Center Camp at 180 degrees. Not only can you bring them your aluminum cans and lend a hand in crushing them, but the Recyclers have a new lounge for chilling with a(n aluminum) can of your favorite beverage and enjoying the Recycled Music Series of classic audio programs. Liquid refreshments in the form of water, soda electrolyte-enhanced sports drinks and perhaps a brewski or two will be provided to volunteers.

Showtimes are noon, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. every day from Monday through Sunday. The schedule is a Dead Head's delight, with a Grateful Dead broadcast each day at 2, and projects by band members prominent at other times. Non-Dead shows during the week include the Allman Brothers Band, the Indigo Girls, the Dave Matthews Band and others.

The schedule starts Monday at noon with "A Talk with Jerry Garcia," Berkeley, CA, 1982, followed by Mickey & the Hartbeats at the Matrix Coffee House, San Francisco, 1968. At 2, it's the Dead at the Fillmore East in New York from February 1970, and 4 brings the recently recycled String Cheese Incident at the Warfield in San Francisco from March 9 of this year.

There will be all kinds of special guests playing between the shows. Consult *What, Where, When* for the rest of the schedule, and check Burning Man Information Radio and the Black Rock Gazette for late-night showtimes.

Recycle Camp recycles aluminum cans. Last year, more than 70,000 cans were crushed and donated to Gerlach High School, bringing in \$650.

The camp only deals with aluminum cans and members would be pleased if you did not bring them anything else, aluminum or not. ☞

The i Has it!

Black Rock City is unique as municipalities go, but it has some things in common with other burgs. Like if you are new in town, or looking for somebody, or you lost something important, you might head downtown and look for a big blue I for Information.

That works here too.

Playa Info, located in Center Camp, is dedicated to giving you the knowledge you need. Just look for the blue "I" at 180 degrees, behind the Cafe, and there you will find it. They are open every day of the event from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and there is self-service assistance at all other times.

What can they do for you? General information, of course, and directories of camps, with a cross-reference by citizens' names. The Burning Bell is a message center, with missives filed by name.

Other communications functions include the central bulletin board, maps and event guides.

Maybe you have a dark secret, something that you feel you need to purge. Playa Info is the place to go to arrange for RV pumping

If you just can't get started, say because you lost your car key Playa Info can set you up with a locksmith.

Before you ask for Dr. Smith, you can check the found items turned into Playa Info to see if anybody brought it in.

Rather take the bus? This is the place to get tickets for the Empire/Gerlach express. \$5 gets you back to civilization. Be sure to take your Burning Man ticket with you, or you won't be able to get back into the city.

So, sweetie, baby, cookie, you want to make movies? That's fine, but you have to register your video camera at Playa Info. Really bad things will happen to you if you get caught filming without a tag.

It's a wrap at 6, Ed Wood. After that, Playa Info shuts down, but you can still use the digital directory of campsites, leave and get messages at the Burning Bell, and post or read things on the Bulletin Boards. ☞

The Playa Gourmet

By Susan Kurr

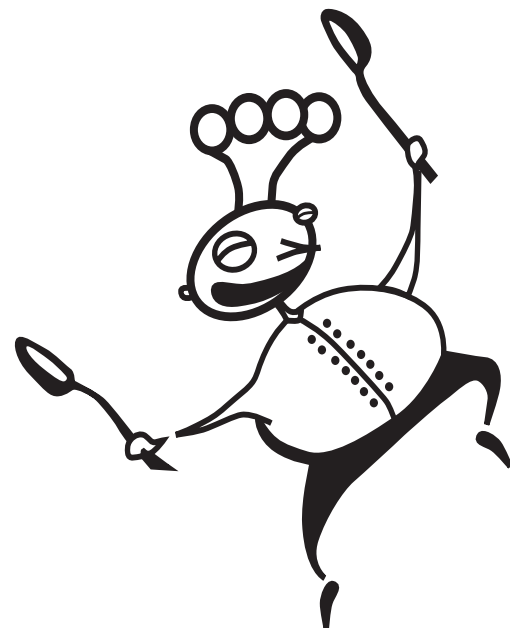
I know, I know. You don't feel hungry. You don't feel like eating, much less cooking. The desert has snatched away your appetite like a ravenous beast. But you still have to drink when you are not thirsty, piss clear, and eat even, when you are not hungry.

It is called survival. The beauty of food is that, even if you are not hungry, preparing and eating food can be a great communal experience that nourishes the mind and the body, especially when the food itself elevates one right out of this mortal coil. Borrow ingredients, share what you make, drag your neighbors out of their playa stupor and into your communal table.

Here is a recipe that follows all the principles of good Italian cooking: simple, fresh, transcendent. While purists would use imported tuna, extra virgin olive oil, and cannellini beans, there are, of course, no rules in the desert, and no food police to come raining down when you substitute Great Northern beans. Adapt to your needs, and if you do not have certain ingredients, take a long walk, drop in on your neighbors, — who knows what could happen before dinnertime?

- Cannellini Bean Salad
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped sweet onion (Vidalia or Walla Walla)
 - 3 fresh, chopped sage leaves
 - 1 tablespoon fresh, chopped mint
 - 2 to 3 flat anchovy fillets
 - 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
 - 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
 - Salt
 - Freshly ground black pepper
 - 1 can cannellini beans
 - 1 can imported tuna packed in olive oil
 - 1 freshly squeezed lemon

Chop and combine all ingredients except the beans and tuna, blending thoroughly. Add beans and tuna, tossing to coat with the oil and seasonings. Let rest for one hour at room temperature, then serve.



I Lost the Man, But I Found the Playa

By Garwood Nichol

When I left Black Rock City in 2000, I didn't want to wait 51 weeks to see the desert again. I decided to return home to the playa in December. Everyone tells you there is an inch of water covering the Black Rock desert in the winter. That year, it wasn't true.

In late December, everything is different, even though the geography is the same. In my city life, the geography is defined by straight lines, so many that I might go mad from the regularity of it all. Here in the desert there is only one straight line, the horizon. We came onto the playa right at sunset. It was six days after Winter Solstice, and it was getting dark quickly. I was careful leaving the road; clay can be deceptive. It may look stable, but it is a longish walk back to Gerlach -- and I would feel pretty dumb explaining to someone that I drove onto a lakebed in the middle of winter with out checking to see if I would get stuck. With no Burning Man, there is very little support structure out here. You get to screw up on your own time.

The playa is different in the winter. Loftier. My boots break through a thin crust like snow or a hard sugar coat over a meringue. Within seconds I slip back into playa time. I start pulling things from the truck, desperately searching for one more canister of film -- then I stop what I am doing mid-toss-over-the-shoulder and think, "just enjoy the moment before it is gone." So I leave the truck and sit on the playa. I dig my hands down into that gritty crust of a pie that is a mile deep. I search around this plane looking for a clue of Burning Man. There is none. The Earth Guardians have worked hard to make sure of that. But the magic is still there. That feeling: I am home, yet somehow, I don't belong to this place. This home that I pass through and carry with me more than I brought.

The mysticism that I have built around the playa over the past year wasn't difficult to capture as we approached. Going through Empire, NV, I was greeted to NOWhere by several signs. I started to wonder at the hardy folk who live here. The 70 mph dust storms that bang on us during the short time that we're here are a fact of life for the year around citizens. If seven days on the playa changed the direction of my life, what does daily life in its presence do? These men and women must be Gods. ☞



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• The views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the views of the Burning Man or its principals. We try; but afterall, we're volunteers. We make mistakes. And this is a camping trip. A high gloss, trussed up, kick-ass camping trip in the middle of the desert. Don't take this too seriously, just enjoy the ride...