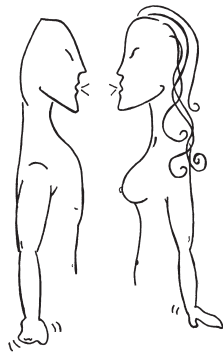




## Playa Pshycology

### Know your Campmates 101: Histrionic Personality Disorder

These socially successful prima donnas become bored easily and resort to sexually provocative and flirtatious behavior to gain the attention and approval they crave.



THEATREMUSE

They make good first dates but should be dumped immediately after consummation; their low tolerance for delayed gratification can be a ball-buster on day two.

Because the concept of 'inappropriate' behavior is unknown on the Playa, these poor creatures go from conquest to conquest before eventually imploding as their circuits overload and go into meltdown.

They often seek treatment for depression when relationships end and others to blame for their failures.

Medication does little to alleviate the condition but might be a good choice for the poor bastards that have to deal with these types. Take two shots of absinthe and see me in your dreams. — **Howeird**

## Burned

The 2005 year began on an ominous note, with two Playa icons experiencing severe setbacks. Because of damage to their ship, which necessitated a 39-hour trip to port in reverse gear, the Tuna Guys' ability to distribute fresh fish on the Playa will be significantly constrained.

Meanwhile, closer to home, The Black Rock International Burner Hostel in Sparks was hit with a double wammy of bad fortune this week. First the camp, which helps Burners from all over the world get to Black Rock City from Reno, lost its main 30-foot-by-60-foot shade structure when the vehicle and trailer holding it were stolen.

As Hagey, the theme camp leader, scrambled to find a replacement, his operation came under intense pressure from local authorities, who were responding to complaints by neighbors. It seems that over the years, the hundreds of Burners who have passed through Chateau Hagey have occasionally let their inner party animals manifest themselves in ways that breached local custom.

Hagey said on Monday that he had limited the operation and enforced strict conditions on his guests and the volunteers that stop off to pick up riders to the Playa. While he has managed to send at least 250 citizens to Black Rock, he said the future of his operation is in doubt.

— **The Muse & WeeGee**

## Horrorscope

### Aries (Mar 21-Apr 19):

Disillusionment is toughest on a Tuesday. Everyone knows that. Stay in the shade and hydrate today.

### Taurus (Apr 20-May 20):

Remember, every silver lining has a cloud. Your lucky polygon is RHOMBUS.

### Gemini (May 21-June 20):

No, penological studies are not what you think they are. I'm sorry.

Other Zodiac signs will appear later this week.

## Black Rock City Population 11,938 as of noon Monday.

# Welcome to NOWhere

BY SMAZE

Welcome to Black Rock City, an oasis playground on the edge of nowhere. This is the year of "Psyche".

Is it a year of the mind, or of mindless pranks? That is for you to decide.

Whether this is your first trip to BRC or your 20th, hopefully you will find something memorable to take home. I'm not talking about a trinket or STD (though those are widely available), but of a powerful life experience.

People to want big, beautiful art when they come here, there are big beautiful pieces this year. People also seem to want interesting conversation and performance art. That is mostly up to you.

It can be intimidating coming to BRC. Most of us think that we are cool and/or smart, but sometimes it seems like we've assembled 40,000 people who are all cooler and/or smarter than you all in the same place. The truth is that some are and some are not.

The trick is to just stay one step ahead. Start by being uber-prepared to camp, and have an interesting project. From there know where you are going and what you are trying to accomplish. If you are already two steps behind, you will not catch up this year. At

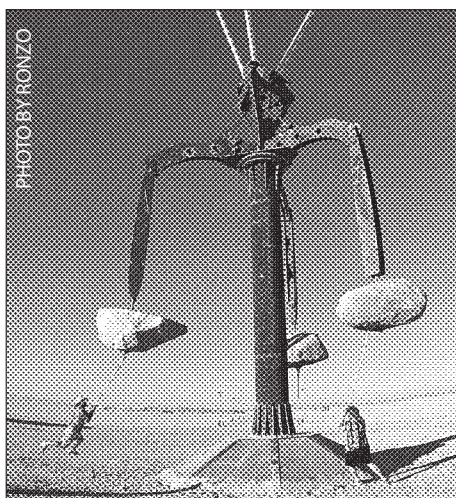


PHOTO BY RONZO

A flying stone gathers no moss.

this point you should probably volunteer to help with an interesting art project, listen more than talk, and just have fun.

As you can see from the banner of this paper, we espouse "Lux, Veritas, Lardum." Loosely translated from Latin, this is light, truth and bacon. All of these are important.

Light can have many meanings. It can be the headlamp you wear so that drunken BORG do not run you over in their golf carts. It can be a cigarette lighter that provides

flame, which I believe is the first tool that everyone should have on their person at all times. It can be a beacon of light guiding you home each night as you stagger across the playa after too much radical self-expression. Find that point on the horizon and steer yourself towards it.

Truth is a little dicier, but still important. There are absolute truths, half truths, convenient truths . . . hell, there are a lot of truths. Some people may view the exact same set of facts and glean different truths from them. At the Black Rock Beacon, we endeavor to tell you the truth as we see it.

And, of course, the cornerstone to a well-rounded playa experience is bacon. If you're a vegetarian, get over it. There is nothing better in the dust than the sweet smoked belly meat of fattened swine. Oh sure there is vegetarian bacon, but that's just not right. I mean that's like getting a hand job from a tranny.

At the end of the week, take with you your trinkets and experiences, but leave nothing behind. If you do it right, you will have great memories, a bit of swag, new friends, and new dreams to dream. As we need to have the end in mind even as we embark on this trip, one piece of advice: NEVER BRAKE FOR JACKRABBITS! Not only could you lose control of your vehicle, but there is something oddly gratifying in the thump-thump of that Darwinian moment. Sure carpe diem, but memento mortem. Du-uh. **Burn on!** 🐰

# A City Illuminated by Creative Sparks

BY LIANIMAL

As you step out onto the Playa this year, you enter a realm of fire, not just in the physical sense, but in another less tangible though equally real sense.

Every piece of art, however tiny or monumentally large, began as a creative spark, an invisible germ of an idea that lit up its inventor's mind.

Sparks flew as the inventor shared the idea with fellow Burners, passing the torch, so to speak. Together they became consumed, perhaps willing to dedicate weeks or months of effort to it, until what was once an invisible flash of insight became real and solid and tangible, able to withstand the ravaging forces not just of nature but of human nature that put our city's incredible art to the test.

In this year of Psyche it seems timely to ask: how does this creative process actually work? Creativity has to do with the unique way human memory is constructed. Memories are spread across lots of little locations in the brain, and each one of them participates in the encoding of lots of different memories. So memories are smooshed into one another, and the more smooshed together they are, the greater the tendency not only for one thing to remind us of another, but also for us to come up with new ideas that blend or entangle our memories and concepts in interesting ways.

The ability to think creatively depends not just on how memory is constructed, but also on how it gets used. The reason one thought transforms into another is that we bombard a small bundle of these memory locations with not just the contents of our previous thought, but also new information from our senses (for example, about what we are seeing or hearing or touching). The mind puts this all together to form a new idea, and it does this again and again to generate a sensible stream of thought.

But when this kind of sensible thought process gets stuck, or does not solve a

problem, or satisfy an intuition, or let you express what needs to be expressed, all this happens a little differently. Your attention becomes defocused, which allows you to take more sensory information or more elements of previous thoughts or experiences into account. This makes the bundle of bombarded memory locations bigger, and it can get even bigger as the activation process repeats. The quality of your thought becomes less analytic and more associative. When you are in this associative mode, memories and concepts that are only related to your current situation in strange or unusual ways stumble in through back alleyways of your mind and appear in your stream of thought.

Sometimes this associative process leads to ideas like a light harp, or a ferris-wheel-powered bicycle, or a flaming pod that emerges from the earth after falling from the heavens 12,000 years ago (all of which can be found on the Playa this year). However, in order to really manifest a creative idea, sooner or later you have to return to the analytic mode. It is the state of mind you are in when you are figuring out where exactly to attach that rebar, or how many fire extinguishers you will need. In other words, analytic and associative thought are both important to the creative process. Make sure to trek out to Inner Space, the giant brain at the edge of the playa, and see what these different kinds of though processes look like from the inside."

What makes us want to invent things in the first place? It has to do with what is called conceptual closure, which is the desire to have the elements of your internal model of the world somehow relate to one another, fit in with one another in whatever way they can. When there is a gap in this integrated web of ideas and attitudes and feelings, you experience a kind of dissatisfaction, a yearning. You crave to relate things in new ways, to play or explore or experiment; what about a robot that zips



around the desert pushing a lawnmower? Particularly satisfying is when you manage to weave in items that lie at the edge of conscious thought, or verboten material that is generally off-limits.

This year there is a machine, called (somewhat unimaginatively) The Machine, where you can collaboratively explore how this works. In collaborative creative processes, each person has the contents of not just their own mind, but of each others' minds to serve as the ingredients which with to activate those bundles of memory locations. This kind of creative interaction does not have to be face to face. It is enough to see (or hear or feel) the fruits of someone else's creative thought process to be affected by it. The result is that together they can come up with ideas that no one person could have generated on their own.

Whether you travel on a pedal-powered ferris wheel or your humble two feet, think of the creative sparks in fellow Burners that set so many minds afire and collectively gave birth to our radiant city.

For more information see [www.vub.ac.be/CLEAlliane](http://www.vub.ac.be/CLEAlliane) or drop Lianimal, a psychology professor at the University of British Columbia, a line at [liane.gabora@ubc.ca](mailto:liane.gabora@ubc.ca). 🐰

Award Winning Beacon Haiku:  
*Black Rock Beacon Needs  
 Your Ancient Apple Hardware  
 Paper Blooms in Dust*

Thanks to Haiku Gary who donated computer hardware to The Beacon in exchange for this poem.

# Black Rock Beacon

**Black Rock Beacon Publication Schedule**

**Tuesday — *Histrionics***  
**Wednesday — *Narcissism***  
**Thursday — *Delirium***  
**Friday — *Schizophrenia***  
**Sunday — *Pyromania***

## Borg vs. Borg

BY SUZANNE

The Battle of the Borgs ended like the War of 1812 — with no clear winner.

The founders of Borg2 — a pair of Burning Man artists who want to wrest control of the art funding at the event from the Burning Man organization (known, less than lovingly, as the Borg) — vowed to raise \$250,000 and bring mind-blowing art to the playa. They fell far short of their goal, coming up with less than \$25,000, but they helped fund eight art projects, one of which literally blows participants' minds by aiming a blowtorch at their heads.

"The experiment was a success because it was engineered in a way that no one can say if it was a success or not," said Chicken John, co-founder of Borg2.

Chicken John had challenged Burning Man founder Larry Harvey to an "art duel." The challenge: If Borg2's art was better — and if it raised the money — Harvey would consider changes for funding Burning Man art. If not, Chicken John would spend Decompression (the San Francisco afterparty for Burning Man) in a dunk tank.

Borg2 began last fall with Chicken John and artist Jim Mason's "We Have a Dream" petition and proposal to "make the art spectacular again" by "radically democratiz[ing] the funding of art." The petition called for a public vote on projects to be funded, elected guest curators, 10 percent of ticket sales dedicated to art, and dropping requirements that funded art be interactive and conform to the event's annual theme.

If their demands were not met, the signatories would stop bringing their art to Burning Man.

Harvey said no. He cited potential problems with the proposed art selection process, such as logistics of voting and the large amount of information Burners would have to read and digest to make an informed decision.

After many back-and-forth communications -- some polite, some not so much — Harvey accepted Chicken John's challenge. A Borg2 art council was elected by a vote among those who signed up for the group's newsletter.

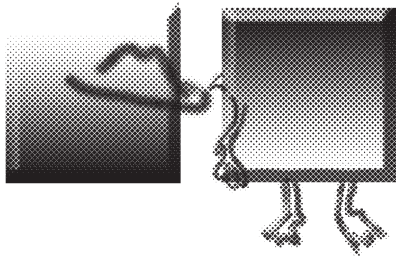
At that point, Chicken John left his fate — at least for Decompression — in the hands of the nine-member council. Neither he nor Mason ran for the body. The council coordinated grant awards for the seven projects ranked highest by voters. Voters also awarded \$1,000 in pennies to the blowtorch project, known as Dance Dance Immolation.

Despite missing its fundraising target by a mile, said The Network Girl, a Borg2 council member also known as Jeanavive, she is happy with the effort. It was, she noted, the founders -- not the council -- that set the \$250,000 goal. Her aim was to bring together artists and resources, and Borg2 was successful with that, she said.

But Burning Man's art curator, LadyBee, said she was not convinced Borg2 has led more people to bring more art. Burning Man previously had decided to increase its art budget to \$400,000 from \$275,000 in 2004.

"Borg2 cannot take credit for that because that was already in the works," she said, noting that Burning Man funded 32 projects, four times as many as Borg2. One success the Borg2 can claim is convincing Burning Man to drop the requirement that funded art be related to the theme, LadyBee said. She added that the debate helped publicize the workings of the art grant process and showed that for many Burners, the art is not as big a focus as the Borg2 had seemed to believe.

*Borg2's artwalk is at 2:00 between Delirium and Ego.* 🐷



Artwork by Francis Wenderlich

## Because Everything Is Better With Fire

BY TONY TONOH

Fire! Art! Bacon! Combining the finest elements of Burning Man culture, the first fundraising exercise by the renegades at Borg2 was called the Flying Pig Sex Disaster, an event that culminated with the sacrificial burning of a giant airborne swine filled with pocket change. The result was a massive pile of coins, nearly \$7,000 worth, covered with bacon grease and a variety of other substances. After weeks of cleaning the coins, volunteers were left with 100,000 pennies. These unwashed coins became the Pile 'o Pennies art grant, which the Borg2 voted to give to Dance Dance Immolation.

"Once we got the \$1,000 of lard-and-gasoline-encrusted pennies, we were committed," said Matt Blackwell, a creator of Dance Dance Immolation. The project is a Burneresque mix of celebration, sacrifice and fire — with a beat.

Last December, Dance Dance Immolation was conceived by Morley John and Ian Baker. They were discussing fire control panels from

other pieces of fire-related art, and started making comparisons to video games. The arcade game Dance Dance Revolution, one of Morley's favorites came up, and inevitably they thought of mixing it with fire, "Because everybody knows that everything is better with fire." Shortly thereafter Blackwell and Jonathan Shekter were recruited and a project was born.

In Dance Dance Revolution, a player dances on a touch pad in time with increasingly intricate moves that flash on the video screen, while an extremely techno version of some user selected pop smash keeps time. While the regular game showers the player with praise, or insults, depending on the performance, the Immolation version is a bit different. Yes, it will also shower you with praise, but that is where the similarity ends. If you make a mistake, your shower comes from flame throwers.

To keep Burners from actually burning, a fireproof proximity suit is provided. Suitably

attired, contestants can strut their stuff, though the weight of the suit and the ventilation tubes tethering it, make free movement something of a challenge, let alone trying to get a groove on.

It doesn't take long for the average bystander to realize that the less talented the dancer, the better the performance! Anticipation builds as the contestant continues to land steps, and when the first mistake is made a roar of cheers goes up with the spewing of flames.

The silver proximity suit is equipped with headphones, a breathing mask and a ventilation system, as well as interlocks and failsafe switches that shut down the system rather than allow something too unsafe to occur. The work the group has put into their project should provide an element of participation unlike anything previously seen on the Playa. 🐷

At the team meeting later that evening, attended by some Borg staffers, it became clear that one of the reasons there would no longer be a BRG was because of a personality conflict between me and one or more LLC members. I did what I could to protect the team and give them a chance. I resigned.

I fully expected someone to step in and run the BRG as I had done when I took over as publisher. Instead the reaction from the team was quite different: shocked indignation that its efforts of past years were of so little account to the organization that the plug could be summarily pulled and a lack of desire to go through the motions of a Gate edition.

By the next day we were all communicating on the Tribe.net bulletin board system about how to make a newspaper at Black Rock City. There is an article on our website at [www.blackrockbeacon.org](http://www.blackrockbeacon.org) that explains how we created a not-for-profit corporation to publish this newspaper.

Looking at the history of the BRG, it went from announcement flyer, to vaguely artsy, to newspaper/propaganda source, and finally what was handed to you at the . Maybe that's how it always needed to end up. With this paper we'll get to talk about all the drugs people do at Burning Man and have people rant about law enforcement. Why do I say such things? Just to make sure there is enough repugnant content herein that the Org will not try to link to this paper on their site and try to claim it as its own. 🐷

## Paper Lost, Paper Found

BY DURGY

You may have noticed that there is not much to notice about the Black Rock Gazette on the Playa this year. This is because the Burning Man organization decided to drop its on-Playa funding for the official newspaper of Black Rock City to zero.

Between 2002 and 2004, I was the publisher of the Black Rock Gazette. My term began at the end of the event in 2001, when the BRG was faced with an uncertain future. I published the paper as a volunteer at first. In my last two years I took a modest stipend, which averaged out over the year would have worked out to a little less than minimum wage. But I was happy doing it. I thought I was doing something important, and I got to publish the occasional joke or insight or aside that made it worthwhile. We were under-budget in 2002-2004, and our requested budget for 2005 was not one dime more than the \$24,225 we asked for in 2004. So publishing the Gazette cost each Burner about 70 cents.

This spring, on a Wednesday night right before the first BRG first team meeting, Larry Harvey, Marian Goodell, and Action Girl scheduled a conference with me. There, they told me that there would not be a BRG on the Playa. The organization was still willing to fund a Gate Edition, the pre-event version of the paper that is given to Burners as they arrive in Black Rock City. Shocked, and not wanting to disappoint the team, at first I accepted the task.

**Those who should be held directly responsible for The Black Rock Beacon...**

**Mitchell Martin**, managing editor. **Michael Durgavich**, major general counsel. **Lancelot Smith**, photo editor and camp manager. **Francis Wenderlich**, masthead creator, graphics. **Angie Zmijewski** and **Carry Tveit**, production goddesses. **John Lam**, news editor. **Larry Breed**, chef copy editor. **Edge**, Webmaster. **Armadillo**, goddess of the underworld and circulation manager. **Saffron Lee**, associate editor. **Jason P**, volunteer coordinator and professional kitten herder. **Anthony Peterson**, LNT manager. **Howard Jones**, shack wrangler and minister without portfolio. **Bob Lyle**, a.k.a. Bellboy, minister of transportation, division of flying meat products. **WeeGee**, minister of photography. **Billie**, fundraiser.

**Editors:** Editrix Abby, Michael Durgavich, Emmy Love, John Lam, Suzanne Zalev.

**Writers:** Ed Carter, Owen Curtis, Michael Durgavich, Liane Gabora, Chris Gattman, Howard Jones, John Lam, The Muse, David Peterman, Anthony Peterson, Lancelot Smith, Brian Train, Suzanne Zalev.

**Photographers:** Russ Atkinson, Babesodelicious, Richard Gilmore, Ron Lewis, Anthony Peterson.

**Illustrations:** Diana Acosta.

## Cosmic Report

-BY CITIZEN X-

**Tuesday, August 30**

| Celestial Body Rise | Set      |
|---------------------|----------|
| Sun 7:26 am         | 8:33 pm  |
| Moon 3:10 am        | 6:56 pm  |
| Venus 10:40 am      | 10:04 pm |
| Mars 11:31 pm       | 1:14 pm  |

## Playa Math

-BY CITIZEN X-

- Being a Compendium of Useful Information, Including Divers Formulae, for use on the Playa -

How many feet of tarp does it take to cover a dome of a given size?

The formula for the surface area of a dome (that is, half a sphere) is:  $(4 * \pi * r^2) / 2$ . If you are reading this aloud to an audience, that is pronounced "four times pi-r-squared, divided by two". So, for a dome with a radius of 20 feet you would need:

$$(4 * 3.14 * (20 * 20)) / 2 = (12.5 * 400) / 2 = 2,512 \text{ square feet}$$

(Use pi = 3 if you are working this in your head or are from the State of Indiana, where a bill resetting the famous mathematical constant to this value was almost made law in 1897.)

## Listings

**Tuesday**

**10 a.m. Volunteer Meeting for the Black Rock Beacon.**

We are looking for a few good writers, photographers, editors, illustrators, and logistic professionals to round out our elite corps of Bernalists. Coffee and bacon may be served.

**9:00 and Amnesia**

Camp Carp needs porn magazines for an art project. No COD. **4:20 and Esplanade**

**Wednesday**

**10 a.m. Volunteer Meeting for the Black Rock Beacon.**

We are looking for a few good writers, photographers, editors, illustrators, and logistic professionals to round out our elite corps of Bernalists. If we're still sleeping, please be quiet.

**9:00 and Amnesia**

**The Black Rock Beacon provides details of upcoming events in Black Rock City that were not listed in the materials handed out at the Gate. For consideration, please visit us at 9:00 and Amnesia. We require a piece of real world identification - so driver's licenses preferred - from anybody requesting a listing.**

**Semi-Legal Mumbo Jumbo**

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