

# BLACK ROCK BEACON



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EXODUS

SUNDAY

WWW.BLACKROCKBEACON.ORG

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PHOTO BY WEEGEE

## Burning Man Evolves

BY DEB PROTHERO

After three years of socio-political themes, Black Rock City 2009 will take a scientific turn with Evolution: The Tangled Bank.

Larry Harvey, the Burning Man founder, said, "The theme prompts three related questions: What are we as human beings, where have we come from, and how may we adapt to meet an ever-changing world?"

The Tangled Bank subtitle refers to Charles Darwin's "Origin of Species" and is reflected in the design of the Man. Harvey and Rod Garrett have designed the Man to rise above a tangled bank of irregular wooden triangles. The design is reminiscent of "the Belgian Waffle," formally Uchronia, of 2006 vintage and serves as "a chaotic truss," according to Harvey.

An airy, revealing open plaza under the Man will feature "Strange Ur-creatures crawling out from a pond representing the Gene Pool."

Is it our evolution by nature or by nurture that Harvey wants us to express? At this point in human development, Harvey claims "we have encountered a new phase of evolution — a conscious breed of culture-bearing animals."

The theme seems to correlate with Harvey's plan — discussed in the Saturday issue of the Black Rock Beacon — to create some kind of permanent structure alongside the annual Black Rock City event and the regional burns. Harvey claimed Black Rock City is a kind of Petrie dish, and Burning Man is an experiment in generating culture while our community is a fitting social vessel to sustain culture.

A statement describing the theme in more detail is available on the Burning Man website at [www.burningman.com](http://www.burningman.com).



PHOTO BY TAYMAR



PHOTO BY WEEGEE

BLACK ROCK CITY NOW (ABOVE) AND IN 2006 (BELOW)



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### DRUG DRAG

BY TECHNOMAD

Uncle Sam wants you -- to stay away from drugs. Data from the federal Bureau of Land Management shows that through Saturday morning, BLM rangers made the war on drugs their priority.

From Friday morning to Saturday morning, BLM rangers made three arrests for drug trafficking. That brought the total arrests so far this year to six,

of which five were for trafficking. There were also 10 citations for possession of drugs and nine for possession of drug-related paraphenalia. For the week, there were 46 citations for possession and 39 for paraphenalia, out of a total of 129 citations.

The federal rangers have also been helpful to Burners. They recorded 135 cases of assisting citizens, more than the total citations and also more than the 128 warnings given for various forms of miscreancy.



PHOTO BY TAYMAR



Black Rock City Population: 49,599 as of 8:00 A.M. Saturday.

The fire-related Performance Safety Team lists the following major burns for Sunday after dark:

- 9 p.m. Basura Sagrada, 12:00 at 2,700 feet from the Man
- 3 a.m. Little House on the Playa, Esplanade and Center Camp Promenade
- 4:30 a.m. Temple of Community, 8:15 at 1,100 feet



So long, and thanks for all the pork. We've really enjoyed bringing you the fourth year of the Black Rock Beacon, with our signature mix of news, views and pork-related trivia for the Burning Man community. Please visit us on the web at [www.blackrockbeacon.org](http://www.blackrockbeacon.org) and look for us on the Playa next year.

## Feeding Those Left Behind

BY CALEB "SHOOTER" SCHABER

After the dust settles and citizens of Black Rock City adventure home, the BRC Department of Public Works stoically begins the process of removing the footprint of almost 50,000 people on the Black Rock Desert.

Workers toil well into October restoring the Playa to its original condition and ensuring the event will be permitted by the federal Bureau of Land Management for another year by leaving no trace of Black Rock City.

For those who remain behind, donations of food and other items are extremely helpful. However water and open containers are not accepted.

Referred to as Exodus donations, the items collected as citizens leave Black Rock City provide crucial sustenance for the DPW and Nevada Property crews — as long as it is the right kind of gift.

"We want unopened stuff," said Ranger Jinx, the Black Rock Saloon keeper, who

lives in Gerlach year around and oversees the storage and distribution of donations. "We don't want to deal with people's trash."

Traveling from corners of the world as far as Pakistan and Iran, Drunken Nurse, a charming Irishman, supervises the Exodus collection.

"People who work and live here only bring in a few bags," Drunken Nurse said. The donations of food, tobacco, socks, batteries, sleeping bags and other useful things directly support the workers that volunteer to restore the playa. Any supplies left after Playa restoration support people in need in Gerlach and Empire.

"We make gift boxes for people down in the community," said Ranger Jinx.

Ranger Crow, another year-round resident of Gerlach, said the donations help people that work for DPW and who don't make a lot of money.

"We give them food when they leave,"

he said, and that helps the workers through the winter.

Sometimes donations include unusual items.

Once, Ranger Crow came across a bottle of German pork liquor.

"It was basically fermented pork," he said, a mixture of pork and orange flavors, which Crow added tasted horrible.

Although the DPW contains a diverse and global community of volunteers, Ranger Jinx asked that Burners label foreign-food donations in English. If you have removed food from its original packaging, make sure to identify the contents before you donate these items.

Exodus donations will be accepted from Sunday morning until Tuesday, 24 hours a day, by the greeter station as you leave Black Rock City. Acceptable donations include unopened beer, liquor, nonperishable food, socks, batteries, tents, sleeping bags and other useful Burner items. 🐷



PHOTO BY WEEGEE

## Babylon on the Playa

BY: TECHNOMAD

A 10-story naked steel framework unlike any Black Rock City has ever seen, Babylon took a lot of erecting: four days of work on the Playa, sometimes in adverse weather, plus a crew of four skilled ironworkers and 15 volunteers, a 70-ton, 140-foot boom crane and a man lift. The project began last year when now six-time Burner and construction contractor "Lucky" invited his friend and fellow architect Bob Simmons to Burning Man. Inspired partly by the Burning Man ethos, as they tell it, talk about building something for Black Rock City led to using a new and modular way of building that Simmons invented and patented.

Lucky said he was drawn to the "American Dream" theme because it gave him a way to honor his father, an immigrant from Greece who came to the United States with \$200 and found success.

Over the year, San Francisco-area-based Lucky and Simmons refined their ideas with help from Simmons' 17-year-old son Max, who modeled the project with Google Sketch Up. "No paper drawings" and digital collaboration let five teams work separately, bringing machine-welded parts together on the Playa with confidence everything would fit.

For Lucky and Simmons, the project became a way to test concepts in sustainable architecture and rapid construction before using them in the Default World. Many of the parts came from other projects. After dismantling Babylon, Lucky plans to reuse its parts.

Standing 100 feet tall, at 12:50 and 4,500 feet from the Man, Babylon rises



PHOTO BY TAYMAR

above desert mirages and the sun-baked surface's inversion layer to become the only structure in Black Rock City visible from Black Rock Hot Springs, more than 17 miles away.

For construction geeks, Babylon reveals its modular construction and novel

steel "knuckles." The tallest platform in Black Rock City treats its visitors to a commanding view and reveals how dust carries from the entrance road and speeding vehicles. Unlike the narrow ones in the Man, its wide stairs accommodate many visitors.

Like the independently funded Playa surprise Uchronia in 2006, the "Belgian Waffle," Babylon received no Burning Man art grant. Observers may note Babylon missing from some Artery guides. Though detractors fault Babylon for its unPlaya-esque precision and commercial potential, Larry Harvey said he believes it bridges the worlds of Playa and commercial art. 🐷



PHOTO BY WEEGEE



PHOTO BY WEEGEE



PHOTO BY WEEGEE

Great Dunmow is a town in the Uttlesford district of Essex, England. Originally the site of a Roman settlement on Stane Street, the town thrived during the Middle Ages. Many buildings survive from this period, including a 16th-century town hall.

The town is famous for its four-yearly ritual of the Flich Trials, in which newlywed couples must convince a jury of six local

bachelors and six local maidens that they have not wished themselves un-wed for a year and a day. If successful the couple are paraded through the High Street and receive a flich (side) of bacon.

This is one of those years. On July 12, four couples in the world were sufficiently faithful and happy with each other to claim this prize. Three were from Britain, but the fourth were from Tennessee and are our heroes, though press reports indicate they were not allowed to take their bacon back to Nashville because of import restrictions.

It also appears that a local couple was unable to convince the jury of their joint devotion and won a consolation prize of Canadian bacon.

More information at [www.dunmowflichtrials.co.uk](http://www.dunmowflichtrials.co.uk).

— Some of this information was provided by Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

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