

BLACK ROCK BEACON



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HOME ON THE PLAYA

FRIDAY

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)(Burning Man Forever)(

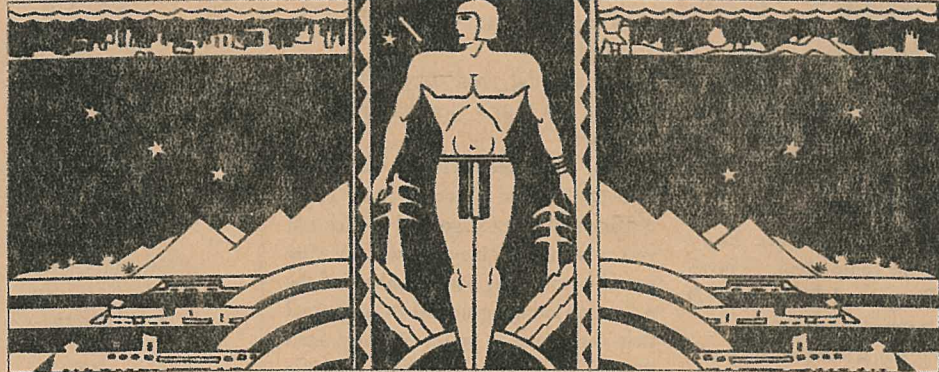
BY: DEB PROTHERO (FIREFIGHTER)

If a week of Black Rock City is good, more would be better. Burning Man aficionados are about to get something better.

Larry Harvey, the Burning Man founder, let a kitten poke its nose out of the bag at the annual Black Rock City news conference on Wednesday.

"There'll be some fanfare next year that will announce some form of permanence for Burning Man," he said, without providing any more information.

Although Harvey has in the past indicated that the annual Black Rock City event is not integral to the evolution of Burning Man culture, his comment seems to point toward a full-time installation in the Playa vicinity, though it is unlikely to be on U.S. government land.



The Burning Man organization already owns an 80-acre work ranch and additional land in the Gerlach area.

Earlier in his presentation, Harvey spoke of the growth of the event. Burning Man has "become more cosmopolitan but against

the odds has also become more interactive," he said "The ethos instilled seems nearly irresistible to the world."

The organization's place in the world is a subject of considerable interest for Harvey. Burning Man is "being embraced" in other

countries, with more than 25 sanctioned regional events, he said.

This year, however, the Burning Man focus is on the United States.

"America is at a point that could be described as the hinge of history. We face a crisis as a nation after 40 years of comatose behavior buying off our problems with our wealth.

"Iraq is our Suez, not our Vietnam - in that, Britain learned that it had to listen to the world. Now it's our turn to learn that lesson," Harvey said.

The Burning Man founder said he knew he was "stirring a hornet's nest" when he chose this year's American Dream theme, but he said that patriotism need not be just about nationalism or a commitment to a specific country.

The Milk Of Human Unkindness

BY ROCKSTAR

Consider the Playa art guide stapled in the middle in your cracked, dusty What Where When. Passively useless when not actively irritating, this series of dots and cryptic names fails to even hint at the existence of the bleak and freakish milk carton shoved upright in the Playa near 4:30.

A mere midway diversion from the harnessed beta males playing monkeys-with-sticks at nearby Thunderdome, Malaleche is a grimly humorous reminder of one of the crueler sucktides of the American Dream.

Staring up at the massive carton, the idle gawker learns of the appalling plight of maquiladoras of Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua in northeast Mexico. Since 1993, 450 young women, ages 12-28, have been found murdered; most of them abducted, raped and disposed of by persons local cops don't seem too keen on catching. An additional 400 are missing, as the handy "Femicide Facts" section informs, drawing one's eyes almost gratefully from the beautiful face of Brisia De los Santos, 20 years old when she was discovered murdered early in 2001.

Most all the victims are female workers making \$4.80 a day at the many farms, dairies and factories set up in the wake of the North American Free Trade Agreement to allow philanthropic U.S. employers to pay sub-U.S. wages in order to uplift the local populace. Needless to say, workers fearing rape and murder don't organize as effectively, and such methods of labor control scarcely elicit comment in the U.S. media.

Malaleche shocks us with its meeting of the monumentally familiar with the completely obscured.

When a Home Is Not a House

BY: ROD ALLEN

The yurt near the 3:00 Promenade, a few hundred yards from the Man, is no ordinary yurt. It's an example of how the principles by which we live on the Playa are reaching out into the real world.

The American Dream Home Version 2 Alpha started as a fusion of ideas for playa living, but the project has blossomed into a product which has enormous implications for disaster relief agencies, nongovernmental agencies, municipal and federal governments, and most importantly, the third world.

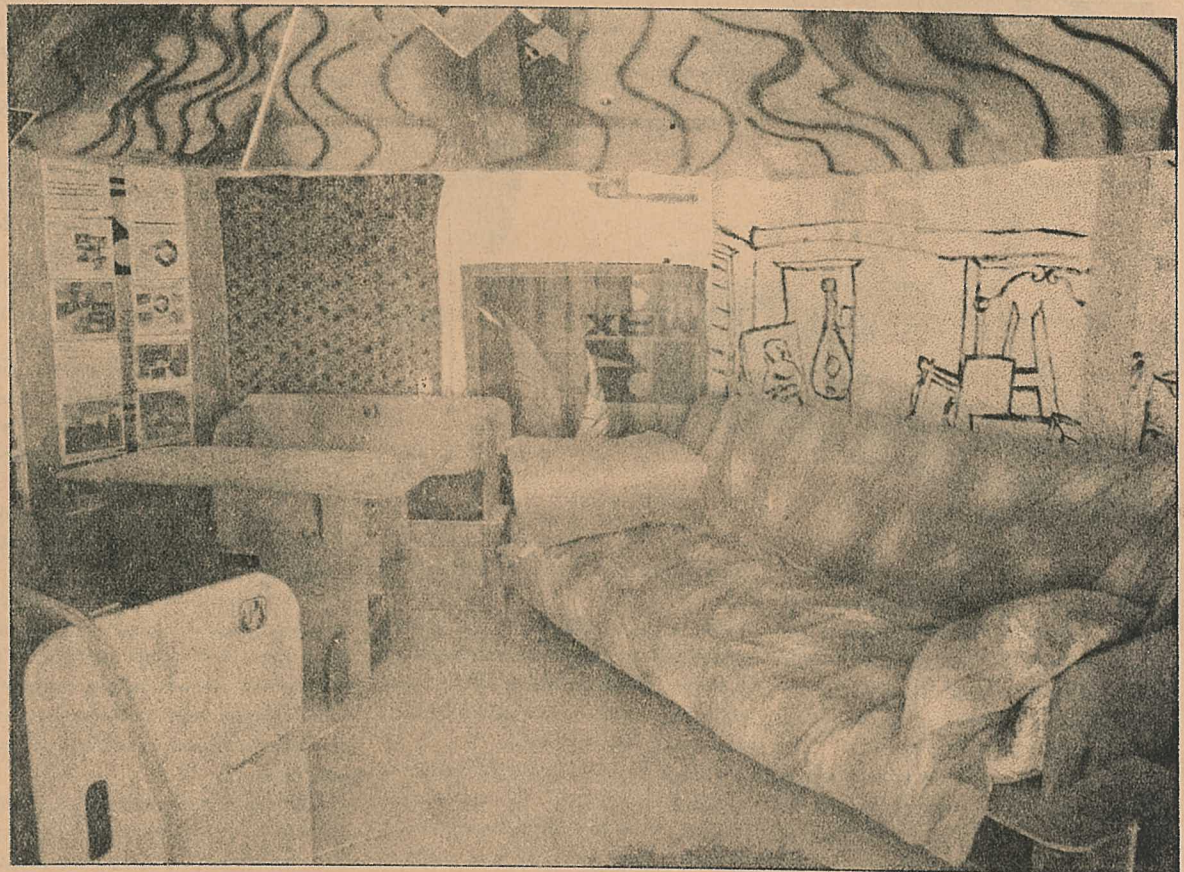
Sunshine Daydream, who is in charge of the yurt, created for Playatech a line of slotted plywood furniture that has become popular among Burners over the years. The furniture is marketed on a gift-economy basis, with royalties going to the Black Rock Arts Foundation.

Last year, Playatech came in second in the Burning Man Treehugger competition, but Sunshine Daydream was fascinated by Vinay Gupta's design for a self-sustaining dwelling called a hexayurt. Sunshine, a physicist, suggested to Gupta that they work together.

The result is a completely self-sufficient, self-sustaining dwelling, rooted in the Playa's Ten Principles, including radical self-reliance, leaving no trace and a sustainable way of life. Made from building insulation materials, the yurt is naturally warm by night and cool by day. The interior is furnished with Playatech items, which are integrated into the structure, and potentially the yurt will use solar power or geothermal energy for heating, lighting, and hot water.

The building will capture rainwater and process it organically for drinking and washing. The yurt, completely independent from local infrastructure, will come with platforms to make it impervious to floods, earthquakes, and rubble. It also comes and goes in a 4-foot-by-8-foot flat pack, stacked four to a pallet (or one to a donkey cart, as the situation dictates).

This makes the yurts ideal for flood or earthquake relief, and it is why default-world organizations like the American Red Cross, municipalities like Ontario,



The Playatech American Dream House, furnished with the organization's slotted furniture. Below: the exterior, located near the 3:00 Promenade. PHOTOS BY SARAH

Calif., and even the U.S. Department of Defense have expressed interest in the product. Ontario wants to stockpile yurts for use in potential disaster relief; the Pentagon wants to evaluate the yurts for use in Iraq. But relief agencies like the Red

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Cross stand to benefit most from the yurts. In any given year, the Red Cross gives out 40 million tents, and by the following year, 20 million of them will have been destroyed. The developed hexayurt will cost, in bulk manufacture, about \$2,500 fully equipped, or twice the price of a

standard Red Cross tent. But the yurt will generally last 10 years, releasing much-needed resources to be used elsewhere. The basic structure, without furniture or plumbing, could go as low as \$200.

Sunshine hopes to have a million families living in hexayurts within five years. They could be American homeless people or third-world refugees. Producing them in quantities of a million or more will, of course, reduce the unit price. He said he envisages people taking out micro mortgages for \$500 to build a basic structure.

Sunshine said the technologies used in the yurt are open source, adding that full instructions on how to build one are already on the Web (at www.hexayurt.com).

So technologies that are rooted on the Playa, and philosophies that are grounded in the Burner way of life, are likely soon to make a

real difference in the default world, where a totally self-sufficient and self-supporting dwelling, drawing on no outside resources or infrastructure, could save hundreds of millions of dollars in housing the homeless, disaster relief and third-world humanitarian operations.

See www.playatech.com for more details, and to contact Sunshine Daydream if you have a default-world application for the hexayurt.



Black Rock City Population: 36,737 as of 12:00 P.M. Wednesday
44,845 as of 12:00 P.M. Thursday