

*the intergalactic*

# *obSERUER*

"Are you seeing this shit?"

MAY ISSUE 07

BLACK  
ROCK  
CITY  
2020

**CANCELLED!**

# Letter From The Editor

So it happened; Black Rock City 2020 is cancelled. Next year actually was better. We knew it would be, and it stings just the same. The bad news is that we won't be returning to the playa this year, but you already knew that. I'd like to take these pages to focus on the good news.

The good news is that you get to take a year off. If you're like me, this is something you may have considered doing already, but not yet followed through on due to a sense of obligation to your camp, a fear of missing out, or whatever other excuses we make for ourselves. You can do that now. You will do that now.

The good news is that "taking a year off Burning Man" doesn't have to mean taking a year off Burning Man if you don't want it to. Black Rock City won't be built this year, but Burning Man is more than just a temporary city in the middle of the desert. If you feel so inclined, I would encourage you to find an activity that allows you to feel involved with Burning Man in the absence of the event itself. For me, that activity is the production of this magazine. For you, it may be creating art for BRC 2021, learning a new skill to take to the playa next year, or making a concerted effort to uphold the Ten Principles at a time when your community needs it most.

Like building Black Rock City, the work is hard but rewarding, and it gives me a sense that I'm giving back to Black Rock's citizens, even though we're apart. I hope the same is true for you.

The good news is that every day is Burning Man now. Filtered masks are a common sight, and I'm seeing more and more cyclists enjoying the outdoors in the absence of gyms and public entertainment. Communal effort and civic responsibility are no longer niceties; they are an essential component in derisking our society of the threats posed by a global pandemic. Consider Burning Man 2020: The Multiverse to be Schrodinger's Burn: simultaneously happening and not happening. Whether or not you open the box is up to you.

**What this means for Burning Man.** It's a rocky road forward for Burning Man project in 2020. Even as the refund portal is rolled out, the project may completely deplete their cash reserve and *still* face a budget deficit of around \$10 million. (Read Burning Man Project's full article on their 2020 financials at [journal.burningman.org/2020/04/news/global-news/2020-financials](https://journal.burningman.org/2020/04/news/global-news/2020-financials).)

Marian Goodell recently appealed to burners to donate a portion (or totality) of ticket costs back to Burning Man Project, so that they can continue to operate throughout 2020 and into the future. In the absence of gifting on playa this year, I intend to give the full value of my ticket back to Burning Man. While I understand that many are out a source of income at the moment, I urge those of you who are in a position to do so to do the same.

**What this means for The Intergalactic Observer.** As a volunteer-operated, non-profit publication, The Intergalactic Observer is not reliant on revenues to continue its operation. We are, however, heavily reliant on the event itself. Our stories, our humor, the images we publish, and the people we interview are all sourced from the playa.

The absence of Black Rock City in 2020 puts us in a somewhat precarious position in that we are soon to run short on content to publish. If you have images from Burning Man, an art project you're involved with, or a story to tell, please, please, reach out to us at [observer@intergalactic.camp](mailto:observer@intergalactic.camp). We'd love to meet you.

The Man burns in 486 days. I'll see you then.

Yours in dust,

Casey Sparks

*Editor-in-chief*

**The Intergalactic Observer**

# Three O'Clock Plaza & The Esplanade

Katie Swalm

## "So Why Am I Writing This, Again?"

An interesting position in which to be placed: the writer of an events column with nowhere to go. I cannot, in good conscience, recommend to you any events outside the comfort of your own home, nor are such events happening, but here are some suggestions that you may find fun or helpful. Remember, staying home is not only a responsibility, but a privilege, and we're doing it to protect vulnerable members of society and healthcare workers. I love you all.

## Get Your Computer Hacked by Zoom

What: If you, like me, did not heed the earlier warnings when you were choosing a video conferencing software for your company, this has probably already happened. Zoom has notoriously terrible security settings, lies about being end-to-end encrypted, and can apparently read other files and programs on your precious laptop. Now's a great time to delete and/or export your nudes to a hard drive, I guess. Fortunately, the FTC is checking them out, so we should be secure in approximately 4 years.

When: Every weekday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Where: Mr. Worldwide

More Information

## Change from your Day Pajamas into your Night Pajamas

What: For me, this is my leggings into my black sweatpants. So what if it's been about 10 days without washing them? It's not like I'm sweating at all in them.

When: 4:55 p.m. daily

Where: Couch to bed

More Information

## "It's Totally Happening, Guys!"

In Burning Man news, the main sale was delayed, a harbinger for the cancellation to come. My entire purpose, wiped away with a single article. Doing drugs in my backyard at the end of August just doesn't hit the same.

So why have I been turning in an article every month? FOR THIS?? I cannot believe I have been duped into spending this much time writing for this dumpster fire. The week that made it worth it has now been annihilated, and no one even fucking reads anymore. Whoever's reading this, your mom's a hoe. It doesn't even matter that I'm writing this, because there are no consequences, no laws. (Honestly, I think laws are now moot at this point. Who cares?)

Anyway, this column is supposed to be about Burning Man news, and here I am, using it to process my grief. Maybe at the end of this I'll drop some irrelevant post by Burning Man Project just to fill some space and also complete a goal. Wait, have I reached my word count? Then never mind! My apologies for the absolute waste of space, and I hope that next month we'll have some better news. I'll see you then.

BRC CLASSIFIEDS  
Curated by Andy MacDonald

**WANTED:** A human-sized mouse trap, a used fleshlight (emphasis on USED), and 3 bowling balls full of cottage cheese to power my deep playa art piece: a Rube Goldberg dialysis machine hooked up to buddy Steve!

**FOR SALE:** The receipt for my unrefunded DGS ticket. It's as close as we're gonna get. Deal with it. Offer will have to be substantial, as this receipt is so precious to me that I taped it over my wife's face.

**LOST:** My bike lock! It was chained to 2 bikes. This guy dressed like Paris Hilton snatched it from me and ate it because he said he needed to unlock the little cage in his tummy so his dead wife could break free and help him light Pink Heart on fire. Seemed like a chill dude.

**LOST:** MY BEAUTIFUL SECOND WIFE CYNTHIA (THE FIRST BEING THE Equally BEAUTIFUL KAREN, LOL!). LAST I SAW HER SHE WAS LEAVING MAYAN WARRIOR WITH A DJ FELLA NAMED ZEDD. TINY LIL' FUCKER. HE'LL FREEZE OUT THERE WITHOUT A JACKET! ANYWAY, DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY ARE??? I HAVE CYNTHIA'S BABY ASPIRIN.

**WANTED:** As much disinfectant as you can spare. We're serving disinfectant based cocktails at our new camp, "JESUS CHRIST. THE PRESIDENT IS TELLING PEOPLE TO FUCKING DRINK BLEACH. JESUSFUCKFUCK WHAT DO WE DO?? MAGNETO WAS RIGHT!" Come try our Cloroxatini!

**FOR SALE:** Shoulder holster pouches! For the burner who wants to look like a private detective trying to solve The Case Of the Instagram Influencer's Stolen Molly! Published by Penguin Books. On sale now, taped to the walls of the 3:30 & C portapotties!

**MISSED CONNECTION:** You were demanding to speak to the manager at Center Camp. I was having a talk with a very nice man named Willeaux about why Reagan was the best president. I'd like to invite you over to my cold, angular, six-bedroom house in Orange County for some mayonnaise salad and #WhiteClaw, and introduce to you my son Joseph. He insists everyone calls him Joseph.

**WANTED:** A playa name. I've been here 2 hours so I deserve one. Give me a playa name now or mother will be very displeased with you! I DESERVE EVERYTHING HERE. You got somewhere I can charge my OneWheel?

**MISSED CONNECTION:** I was CumDoggy69, and you were FionaAppleFan420. It was the orgy dome Zoom chat. I couldn't quite understand you through the 'rona mask but I'm pretty sure you said "YUCK MY ASS!" and I just wanted to follow up and see if you're ok. Was it diarrhea? Did you have diarrhea during the cyber-orgy?

**FOR SALE:** A bike lock locked to two bikes with no key. You can't do anything with them besides, fuckin'... I don't know. Look at 'em. I stole the key from some fuckin' dork at Pink Heart who was talking about how his finally hugged him or something dumb like that and ate it. It just seemed like the right thing to do in the moment. It's what Paris would have wanted.

# Deep Playa with Katie Swalm: Monumental Mammoth

Tahoe Mack is a Las Vegas native and the visionary behind Monumental Mammoth, an 18-foot tall sculpture made of scrap metal littered in the Tule Springs Fossil Bed. The Mammoth was created to raise awareness on the importance of protecting the national monument. She conceived the project to achieve the Girl Scout Gold Award and partnered with local artists Luis Varelo-Rico and Dana Albany to design and build the sculpture. The project has raised over \$250,000 in in-kind donations and cash, and involved over 100 volunteers.

## **In what ways did Girl Scouts influence you and your art?**

Girl Scouts has been an empowering force that really challenged me to make my mark on the world. It allowed me to see a world full of endless possibilities, regardless of sex and age. I can't thank the program enough.

## **What are you studying now?**

I am studying Business and Art at the University of Oregon. I am a freshman.

## **Monumental Mammoth is a sculpture of incredible scale. How long did it take and how did you choose your partner artists?**

The total project has been in the works for three years now. We are still getting her ready for placement, so the timeline is still ongoing!

I had the idea for the project and just started asking people in the community that had connections to artists. I was introduced to Luis Varela-Rico by Pam Stuckey with Renewable Envoy. We had one meeting with him and I just knew he was the perfect fit. At the time, I had no metal-working experience, so I really didn't know the qualifications I was looking for in a partner. I am still blown away with his skill, artistic abilities, precision, talent, and work ethic. We were really lucky to be able to work with him. Dana Albany was introduced to us by Maria Partridge. I had only seen her pieces "The Gatekeeper" and "Tara" for about two seconds and knew that she was the perfect fit for this project. Her unique style is so ornate and complex; she truly knows how to make one's trash into beautiful treasure. She has the most beautiful, giving heart, and it was a true blessing to work with her.

## **Were there any challenges your team had to overcome when creating Monumental Mammoth?**

I think convincing my mom and Sherri that the mammoth was really going to happen, and at life-sized scale, was a huge challenge. We obviously moved past that. Other than that, I can't really pinpoint any huge battles we had to conquer for the project, but it was not easy by any means. I personally grew a lot during these four years and I was able to take on more as I gained more skills. There were hours and hours of endless meetings and emails, as well as laborious days and nights working on the mammoth dusk, even while I was in school.



Photo by Damien Tharp ([instagr.com/fertile.abandon](https://instagr.com/fertile.abandon))



**Tell us about your inspiration for the project.**

The inspiration for the Monumental Mammoth began from a story I heard from my mentor, Sherri Groother, about five women who set out to preserve the Tule Springs National Monument. I felt that the time and passion that they put into preserving the past should be remembered, but not through a plaque somewhere on the monument. Also, a statement about how we are responsible for the trash littered on the monument itself for generations; it's our job to protect it, but the mammoth became so much more than that. It symbolizes a community who have become family to me, one that I was searching for in Vegas. We have had hundreds of volunteers and hands touch the mammoth; they are all a part of that story and, when she is installed, she will share that story with the visitors.

**How did you feel when you found out the piece would make it to Burning Man, Life Is Beautiful, and eventually come to live in Ice Age Fossil State Park?**

The plan to have her placed at the state park was the initial goal for the project; but the festivals just added to the mammoth's "Nevada tour". I am still feeling. I am still taking it all in. It's still a shock.

**How has your own life been changed from the project?**

The mammoth was my life for three years. It really embodies everything that I value. From the time the project began until now, I have transformed tremendously. I feel empowered and capable to enact change through what I create. I know the importance of community now and what it means to be a part of a team.

**Do you have any other art pieces in the works?**

College at the moment. But I am always brewing up ideas and I have high hopes for the future of my artistic endeavors.

# Crystal Gid

Charly Wolney interviews Connor Maggzz of Circadian Riff

## How did you get started in music production?

I actually have very little formal training in music, but I was immediately fascinated with sound design after hearing a Prodigy album my father gave me when I was a kid. Along the same lines, he gave me an Oingo Boingo CD that really super charged my interest in dark, ominous, wavy styles of theatrical music. The moment I figured out how people were creating stuff like this digitally, I went straight down the rabbit hole.

## If someone asked to be your apprentice and learn everything that you know, what would you teach them?

- If you're missing a hand and you have a nub, people will ask you how many people you've fucked with it.
- Music is so much more than theory.
- The journey is just as, if not more, important as the destination.
- Literally no one knows anything about why we're actually here. If they claim to, you're dealing with either a narcissist or a cult leader... same thing I guess?
- Fuck what people think of you.
- Being patient with people is of the utmost importance.
- If it makes you happy, chase the ever-loving fuck out of it.
- Please, for fucks sake, if you like going to shows, wear earplugs.
- Understand that everyone grows at different paces. Keep your eyes forward and not to the left or the right.

## What's the closest thing to real magic?

DMT i'd think. Also anything that you can really determine by a gut feeling. Shit's trippy how that lil' second brain in your belly can sense what the fuck is really happening.

## What first interested you about going to Burning Man? How many Burns have you attended?

My first burn was in 2017. I was dating this amazing girl that was a champ at festival work. She got a gig with Center Camp being a shift leader and they were looking to fill a core crew role for a "Master Brewer". My dumb ass signed up immediately not really knowing what I was in for. Luckily everyone there was super kind and put up with my antics. One thing I learned very quickly: brewing coffee for wooks at 4 a.m. while hungover is something special. Also I think carrying around a mannequin arm everywhere I went really worked well as an ice breaker for new folks. Also throwing it at people.. Folks don't really seem to know what the fuck to do when a guy with one arm throws a mannequin arm at you.

I've attended every burn since 2017 and I anticipate going every year possible. The first year I stayed with Cafe village and I luckily met the whole ISV crew thanks to the amazing Michelle Gargano that allowed me to play! Out of every camp I had visited, ISV was my absolute favorite.

I liked staying with Cafe Village; however, it was incredibly quiet at night and I need me some 3 a.m. shenanigans. The first year I stayed with ISV, I knew I was home.

## You have 5 minutes to explain the most "Burning Man of Burning Man" experience you've ever had. Go!

I have two:

I think the best Burning Man experience was playing Camp Questionmark? at a prime-time slot. There must have been at least 1,000 to 2,000 people listening to my music. I got a real taste of what it's like to play in front of a massive crowd. Hands (and nubs) down the craziest experience of my life. It was like my weiner got hit with a lightning bolt.

The second experience was at the end of the burn in 2019. Everyone was packing up and it was the night before exodus. I was walking back to my ShiftPod and I noticed Kodiak sitting in a lawn chair staring at the camp porto's. Curious, I decided to join him without the context. Shortly thereafter, I saw someone enter the porto we were positioned in front of. Chris immediately started to pay attention. Little did I realize that Chris had placed dildos from the cornhole dick-toss we had next to the bar on the back of the porto doors. So, if and when you entered, the dildo would either smack you in the ass or stare you directly in the face depending on your business. I didn't pack much that night.



**The 2020 Burning Man theme is The Multiverse, so, with respect to the multiverse theme, how do you feel about parallel universes?**

I remember the first time I learned about quantum theory. I was a little kid watching PBS and like most television, it was just to pass the time. However, the moment I started to pay attention to it, the hair on the back of my neck stood up with excitement and feeling like there are so many things that we just cannot comprehend. I firmly believe that there are parallel universes based on the pilot wave theory. There are literally too many probabilities to be contained in one universe.

**What did you have planned for Black Rock City 2020?**

I had quite a few classified shenanigans in the bag but for the most part, I really wanted to bring out the experimental side of my music and those alike this year. I spent a lot of time in 2019 running around and playing every camp I could and I've come to realize that it's stupidly draining. I want to organize a few days for artists to truly display their experimental side and give it a feeling of quality-over-quantity.

**How would your listeners describe your particular DJ sound?**

I'm not really sure at this point. I tend to make music under the umbrella of drum and bass (and specifically Halftime). Most people just call it bass music at this point, but bass heads tend to have one rule: fuck genres. If I could put it in to context, a lot of my music is similar to that of wubs, neurofunk bass, warbles, and transformers fucking.

**Tell us about your upcoming events and shows.**

I'm kind of sad; I had a ton of shows lined up for the year. For starters, I was supposed to play Lost In The Sauce campout with most of the people I call my family: Fuzzy Puddles. These are the folks I collaborate and hold residency with on a show called Bass Waffles. Alongside the four other residents, we also teamed up with some prominent and amazing event crews called Synaptik Events, The Table Productions, Squid Emoji (visuals), Diemt (visuals), The Void (visuals), and of course Synchronistic Sound. This show is my favorite thing of all time. We literally bring out a giant sound rig, hand out free waffles, and pack out this dive bar called The Offbeat in Highland Park. If you're ever in LA, you can visit us on every last Sunday of the every month!

I was going to play Lightning In A Bottle on "The Stacks", The Untz Festival (a Bass Waffles takeover), and Love Long Beach Festival. All of which I was super excited for but everything happens for a reason.

**Do you agree that the global COVID19 pandemic quarantine mandate is just an excuse for the government to place new batteries into all the birds?**

Birds are a lie. However, I do believe that they are solar powered. Geese however. Geese are satan.



**The Intergalactic Observer is on Spotify, and Connor Maggzz is on Spotify!**

Scan the code to the left with your camera to listen to Circadian Riff and the music of Sub Freq Network on SoundCloud, or scan it from the Spotify app to listen to his favorite tracks on Spotify.

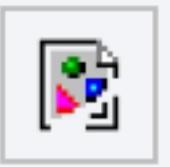
[spoti.fi/2SqaOcS](https://spoti.fi/2SqaOcS)

[soundcloud.com/circadian-riff](https://soundcloud.com/circadian-riff)

Due to the novel coronavirus pandemic, The Intergalactic Observer has been forced to freeze hiring, rescind outstanding offers, and lay off our unpaid intern/photographer. Because of this, we are unable to present you with the magazine's monthly image gallery.

Be advised she will be re-hired once the Org sends us our stimulants package.





# Principle of the Month Civic Responsibility

—Dave Levy

## A word on last month's principle.

Attempts at Communal Effort face difficulties when communities' priorities don't align. It is tough to make progress when it can't be agreed upon where to begin or how to proceed. Communal efforts can be most effective when everyone participates, but this can't always be the case. A multitude of circumstances are factors, especially peoples' abilities and resources. Right now we are witnessing one of the largest communal efforts in history, with people around the world quarantining to make it safer for everyone, including Burning Man doing their part by canceling 2020's burn. This is a real demonstration of the 10 Principles guided by Civic Responsibility.



## This month's principal: Civic Responsibility.

We generally tend to value a civil society. For this reason, community members who organize events should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state, and federal laws.

One does not often think about a burner's civic responsibility, and many outsiders view Burning Man as a lawless festival where anything goes. It's easy to think that way because of how different it is to the default world. Burning Man has come a long way since their unsafe growing pains of the late 90's, but Principles have been a guiding light to help ensure the best version of this event. The most amazing part is that it takes place under a government, and not somewhere remote without restrictions. Burning Man represents what the world can be if everyone shifts their focus. There are countless resources that Burning Man sets up for safety that are taken for granted until such a time as they are required; emergency services being the most recognizable and under appreciated.

The hope is no one needs these resources, but they are fully prepared for worst case scenarios. Most burners' contact with the Rangers are happens when warnings are being issued, but we can benefit from more of a positive outlook as they are yet another line of defense to maintain public welfare on playa. It is safe to assume that some laws are broken during Burning Man—some out of ignorance and some because they are not agreed with—but it's possible for Burning Man to be more than just an escape from traditional social norms, we can also aid with the change of policy in the default world.

What are the ways you have seen civic responsibility upheld?

# Askquatch with Taskwatch



Can you believe it dear reader!? The worst has finally happened! I dropped my toast buttered-side down.

Oh yeah, also Burning Man is cancelled.

Of course, it's not the end of the world, simply a signpost on the way there.

Don't allow yourself to get too negative, however. Think of the silver lining, if the playa has a fallow year, perhaps some of the crops I've been planting each summer will finally sprout.

This month, instead of answering a series of readers' questions, I will devote the entire column to answering the main question on everyone's mind in excruciating detail:

*What are we going to do now?*

Here are the steps I will be taking. I recommend you do the same.

### Step one: Get your money back.

The Org have organized a system that can be accessed through your burner profile to secure money back on tickets already purchased. The Org have asked for donations to help cover running costs throughout the year. If you are the type who can afford to donate some or all of the money you spent on your tickets, then absolutely do that. Also, if you are the type who can afford that, can I have some money please? Come on, please? Please give me some money. I also accept gift cards.

### Step two: In the classic words of Tom Haverford and Donna Meagle, "Treat yo'self!"

This may sound like poor money management, but hear me out. Speaking for myself and many others, the burn is our primary week each year in which we put ourselves first. This has already been an intensely draining year on our mental health. It's only MAY for crying out loud. We haven't even got to the half way mark. Get that money back you may have already spent on tickets, or dip in to the ticket money you had put aside in preparation for the main sale and treat yourself to something nice. Does not have to be fancy objects, keep experiences in mind. Don't forget of course, in a lot of cases, using this money to buy things for the loved ones in your life is one of the most rewarding things to do. Reader love author???

### Step three: Call your burner friends.

Call everyone you were looking forward to seeing at the burn and start planning something fun to do together. I whole-heartedly expect the last week of August to be a collection of some of the world's newest, most creative and

totally wild regionals. Let's take Burning Man 2020 global. Start planning now. Plan like it's real, hold the ten principles strongly in mind, and give yourselves a small and incredible week. We owe it to ourselves! Fuck it, party goes well enough, we're doing Burning Man 2021 at your place!

### Step four: Send nudes.

[taskwatch@intergalactic.camp](mailto:taskwatch@intergalactic.camp)

### Step five: Let your dealers know you will still be putting an order in.

We gotta keep our economy running somehow, amirite? Keep in mind, you got a new regional to plan!

### Step six: This one actually has nothing to do with the burn being cancelled, but it's something I'm thinking about a lot right now and I want to use my public platform to remind you all.

Continue to treat each other with absolutely all the kindness we can muster. Shit is fucking WILD right now. I for one am breathing shallow and afraid of everything. There is no time for any fuckery. Check in with everyone and offer support wherever you can find it.

Stay tuned for next month's column in which you'll see me dismount from my high-horse and maybe write a joke or two.

Much love, Taskwatch



Got questions?  
Ask them here.



**Stuck at home? Bored? Write for us.**

Scan the QR code to submit content to The Intergalactic  
Observer, or reach out via email to  
[observer@intergalactic.camp](mailto:observer@intergalactic.camp).

