

2015 Los Angeles Annual Regional Recap Report

2015 was the year of new leadership and growth. As a cohesive unit the LALA board and the LA Regional Contacts work together building a stronger LA Burning Man community.

TOWNHALL MEETING: Our 7th Annual Town Hall Meeting and Ice Cream Social was again a huge hit. Our main topic was LALA Board of Director elections. Each nominee received 3 minutes to speak. There were 16 passionate and well qualified nominees. Once we got through all the statements, the biggest topic was once again what to do about LA Decom. The park where we hold the event is delayed and will not be ready for Oct 2015 as promised. We needed to know from the community what they wanted to do. We were offered a possible warehouse location. Everyone seemed to like that idea. We also announced the 3 Newbie Orientation dates, the success of our neighborhood monthly burner meet-ups, the Midway project, the Santee Aquaponic Garden, and BEquinox theme. There were approximately 120 people in attendance.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARK: In December 2014, we received a call from State Parks letting us know they were behind schedule and would not be available for Decom 2015. They assured us that they want us back in the park once it is complete. They love partnering with us and look forward to many years of collaboration in the future. We have set a gold standard for event production.

LA LEAGUE OF ARTS: We continued holding monthly board meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. We created a combined board to include the RCs in all meetings. Each meeting is held at a different person's home where we have a pot luck dinner, then get down to business. In 2015, the community elected 3 additional board members to LALA for a total of 7 board members. In 2016, they will be electing two more for a total of 9.

BEQUINOX: "Imagine"... the theme for BEquinox 2015. BEquinox 2015 was our third successful year creating the Los Angeles Regional camping event. Our continuing motto of "Just Like Burning Man" facilitates high levels of participation. BEquinox had 38 placed theme camps, 22 placed art installations, 15 art cars and a sold out population of 1,000. BEquinox was held near Joshua Tree National Park at the end of March. The event was closed with the successful burn of EarthStar on Saturday night. BEquinox asks participants who they would like to BE, what they would like to BE, and allows them to BE. The planning is well under for BEquinox 2016 "Animalia" March 17-20, 2016

NEWBIE ORIENTATIONS: This year we again hosted 3 Newbie Orientations due to the large amount of Newbie's going to Burning Man and also the geographic size of Los Angeles. The first one was in May, then June, and July. Each one was in a different part of Los Angeles and each one had about 30 people in attendance. Our July Orientation was hosted by California State Parks at the Baldwin Hills Overlook (one of the most beautiful places in LA). We covered an amazing amount of information then opened it up to the veterans to add their best practices tips and tricks for making your playa stay more enjoyable. Even the old dogs learned new tricks.

MIDWAY PROJECT: "Infinite Community " was a perfect fit for the Carnival of Mirror's. Super interactive fun mirrored infinity boxes. The boxes are artistically experienced on many levels. The artist "Matt Elson " has spent a lot of time on the research and design to create the amazing series of the infinity boxes we brought to the midway project. Each box is unique and provides a different experience for 2 to 4 people per box. We did not want to just drop the boxes on the plays in the midway. We paired Matt Elson up with David Knudsen who builds 3D immersive environments. We decided to build a Mylar Box to house all the boxes. We sourced a large amount of

mylar that was not used in a movie. That helped a lot with cost. We built the ceiling out of the sacred geometry flower of life pattern. It was a multi layered black light experience. All 4 interior walls were made of Mylar with built in light up sconces. We had 12 people on pre build. We had around 30 volunteers that manned the project 24/7 during the festival. The boxes also made for great photographic experiences. The feedback we experienced was extremely positive and joyful. The Burning Man Org thought it was a great experience. The support was spot on. Thankyou. We got a grant from the Org and raised over 10,000 in Online fundraisers.

LA DECOM: This year was Athena's last year to produce the event. We are set with a warehouse complex in Downtown LA called Imperial Art Studios, but in June the owners of the property decided they did not want to sign any contracts this far out and pulled the venue from us. We looked at many other venues that were either too small or way to expensive. Then in September, we were again offered Imperial Art Studios. So with a contract in hand, we hit the ground running on the permitting process with only 40 days till gates open. It's a very time consuming process. While permitting was underway, the organizing of 5 stages, theme camps and art installations began to take share. With just 3 days till the event and only 5 of the 7 permits needed to legally sell tickets and host Decom, the combined board decided to pull the plug on the event. It was a heartwrenching decision to make but the best one for the community. Here is the statement we published to the community.

<http://www.ladecom.com/about-decoms-cancellation/>

AQUAPONICS AT SANTEE HIGH SCHOOL: The final garden design is nearing completion. Over this past year we have added to our team a Construction Project Manager/Owner's Rep, Architectural firm with much experience building LAUSD structures and working with DSA, a partner engineering firm, and cistern specialists. The design has been translated from conceptual design to construction drawings. Along the way we have had two preliminary meetings with DSA to clarify what codes the garden structures will fall under, and identifying ADA concerns. All information from the DSA meetings was used to adjust the layout of pathways and structures to meet code requirements.

Currently we are in the last phase of the construction drawings, where we will finalize the shade structure engineering, ADA issues, and electrical and mechanical layouts. The architects anticipate the shade structure will be ready for review by mid January, and final drawings complete by mid February, ready for DSA submittal.

Of particular note for our project- Our two meetings with DSA is highly unusual. And each time we have met with DSA, the project head has brought in senior level members and commented that "This project has to be built- we all want to see this constructed."

We continue to move forward with much support for a project that captivates all who see it.

<http://laleagueofarts.org/what-we-do/school-gardens/>

MONTHLY BURNER MEETUPS: Seeking a way for our region to get to know each other between major events, we followed San Diego's successful lead and created meetups at a local burner-owned bar, The Other Door. Our first meetup was in July of 2013, and we've seen a steady increase in attendance as word gets out about their existence. The demand was high enough for multiple LA Meetups, so we have expanded to 3 regular meetup locations plus multiple irregularly-scheduled meetups around the region (and growing!). They are spearheaded by our regional representatives and LALA board members who have claimed the meetup nearest their homes and actively welcome all who come. We seek out Burning Man related photos, video, and music to show and play at the meetups to help add to the playa vibe, and the local burners are taking on larger roles to keep up with the popularity. Our West Side meetup outgrew its first location and thanks to enthusiastic burner DJs (who act as liaisons to the venue and recruit musical talent) it's become The Place To Be on the second Sunday of the month (it has now outgrown its second venue and is looking for a third to start using in 2016). The Downtown meetup on the First Friday of the month has it's own unique vibe, as it's hosted at burner-filled

loft; chatting around the fire, clothing swaps, and project brainstorming are common activities there. All locations bring videos and visuals to liven things up (several nights we've broken out the VCR to play video filmed on the playa in 1997-98!). We have found a delightful mix of virgin and veteran attendees; all seem to enjoy the new connections they make at the meetups, as they cross the usual friend/camp/BM Organizational boundaries. Future plans for additional meetup locations throughout the LA region are in the works.

WHITE BLISSMAS CHARITY BALL: With too much going on in December, we moved this event to January 9, 2016.

NEWSLETTER: Regional representatives Plaid and Gloria took over and revamped the sporadically-sent newsletter in January of 2013. The newsletter is now a weekly resource for the LA burner community, giving the Los Angeles area both an outlet and a resource much as the JRS has done for Burning Man community. The weekly newsletter, modeled in part from the old text JRS, serves both local and playa-centric burner news, entertainment, participatory opportunities, projects to support, event listings and even a fun tips, tricks and wisdom section. We encourage community members to submit their news, projects, writing/videos, events (and more!) with a handy-dandy submission form. Thanks to community input, we've taken a special effort to include more than just thump-thump dance nights in the newsletter, and are proud to share our community's wide variety of events that reflect the variety that is L.A. Now that our website is revamped, we load our content and events in the website first, and post summaries in the newsletter, shortening the length of the email from 30+ pages to nearly half, and driving readers to the website to read more information. Our goal is to follow the BM Org's lead and send an HTML-based newsletter that is automatically populated from the submission form, rather than hand-made from our form-populated spreadsheet; we're in the process of making this a reality.

WEBSITE: We have redesigned laburningman.com to become a central location for all things LA Burning Man. Gloria & Plaid and enthusiastic burner/programmer Avi Davis developed the new site from the ground up (the old site will still remain as an archive/time machine), and we recruited information architects, designers, and programmers to help make their ideas into reality. Next step is to run the newsletter through the website itself, and to expand each of the sections with content culled from the vast pool of LA burner talent. The new site is a learning tool for those new to Burning Man AND those new to the Los Angeles Burning Man region. The site was created to be a hub of connection, with links to theme camps, art projects, performers, all social media connections, and official events such as Decom, "BEquinox", "LA Meetups", and "Newbie Orientations". LA Decom.com and BEquinox.com have also been created and are being updated as information becomes solidified about the events. We have reached out to editors, blog contributors, and more to help create an informational hub for both the Los Angeles community and beyond.

SOCIAL MEDIA: Burning Man's main social media outlet is our rapidly growing Facebook page, with more than 19,100+ likes. The LA regionals, with the help of two very enthusiastic burners (CuriousJosh and Media Mecca maven Cathleen Cotter), update the page frequently with content from the weekly newsletter and topics to spark conversation. There is also a lively LA Burners discussion group on Facebook: LA Burners, which, thanks to being rescued from spammers and maintained by CuriousJosh and a team of caring burners, has grown to by 2,500 members since last year to almost 7,500 members. Last year we set up several neighborhood-based burner pages that are ever-expanding and have proven very successful, which we promote in the footer of every newsletter that goes out. Because Los Angeles is so spread out it is helpful to organize burners based on where they spend most of their time. We also utilize several other social media outlets, such as Twitter, Flickr, and Instagram which are gaining popularity.

Here's the footer from our weekly e-newsletter, to give you an idea of how much social media there is going on in our region:

CONNECT WITH LOS ANGELES:

-LA REGIONAL PAGE @ BURNING MAN DOT COM :

<http://regionals.burningman.com/regionals/north-america/los-angeles/>

-**WEBSITE** : <http://www.laburningman.com>

-OFFICIAL LA BM FACEBOOK PAGE : <https://www.facebook.com/laburningman>

-LA BM DISCUSSION GROUP : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/laburners/>

-LA MIDWAY GROUP FOR BM 2015, INFINITE COMMUNITY:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1393792710929288/>

-LA BM on INSTAGRAM : <http://instagram.com/laburningman>

-TWITTER : <https://twitter.com/laburningman>

-FLICKER : <http://www.flickr.com/photos/laburningman/>

NEARBY BURNER GROUPS:

-LA BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/laburners/>

-LA BURNERS MUSIC ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/878462162193692/>

-LA WESTSIDE BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/257235737806589/>

-MARINA DEL REY BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mdrburners/>

-MID-LA BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/821130194646902/>

-LA EASTSIDE BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/585233488252295/>

-SHERMAN OAKS BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/424135387705289/>

-VENTURA BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/213251618712595/>

-CENTRAL COAST BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/centralcoastburners/>

-SFV BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1427582770841884/>

-SGV BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/737952119603850/>

-SHADOW HILLS BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/737734156266217/>

-INLAND EMPIRE BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/504880352976923/>

-LONG BEACH BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1375456069381889/>

-LA BURNERS OVER 60 ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/694995190616079/>

-OC BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ocburners/>

-SAN DIEGO BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SanDiegoBurners/>

-G.I. BURNERS ~ <https://www.facebook.com/pages/GI-Burner/1587336631556000>

BUSINESS-RELATED GROUPS FOR BURNERS :

-LINKEDIN : <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/JfB-Networking-7450317>

-JOBS FOR BURNERS ON FACEBOOK : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/JobsForBurners>

-LA BURNERS IN BUSINESS ON FACEBOOK :

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/346991222005850/>

-JOBS FOR BURNERS - CAREER & JOB FORUM :

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/JobsForBurners.CareerAndJobForum/>

CLASSIFIEDS ON FACEBOOK :

-BURNING MAN CAMP CLASSIFIEDS : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/332969393506501/>

-LA BURNER CLASSIFIEDS : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/laburnersclassifieds/>

-BURNING MAN CLASSIFIEDS : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/burnerads/>

MORE INFORMATION and worldwide BM links:

For questions : la at burningman.com

-WEBSITE: <http://www.burningman.com>

-BM on INSTAGRAM: <http://instagram.com/burningman>

MORE INFORMATION:

For questions: la@burningman.com

Now to look towards 2016 and all that we can accomplish together as one.

Respectfully Submitted,

LA RCs: Athena Demos, David Wedeen, Jenn Ramsey, Gloria Lamb, John Simmons

LALA Board of Directors: Athena Demos, Deb Stiers, David Wedeen, Esquire Jauchem, Al Gelbard, Cathleen Cotter, and Marc Rosenthal