

DPW DEDICATION 2012

photo by MIKE GARLINGTON



BACK IN 2000 I finally succumbed to the heavy peer pressure laid on me by my friends Ada, Dove and Lizzy to come out to this Burning Man thing. These girls were all DPW so every day they'd disappear and go do...stuff... mysterious stuff that I wanted in on. Then early in 2001, Fortune smiled on me in the form of a pink slip so I figured I'd come out and volunteer with DPW if they'd have me. My friend Ada said that I'd be given a place to pitch my tent and probably some food so I decided that I'd ride my bicycle out to Gerlach from Reno after flying in from Austin. How hard could it be?

I was in pretty good shape in those days – I'd been a 'cyle commuter for more than 15 years in Austin, legs thicker than a baby's torso and lung capacity like a...whale or something. I took my dwindling funds and bought a recumbent bike and a slick little single wheel trailer. I was going to fly down the highway laughing the whole way.

I certainly learned a lot about physics on that ride. Like, if you only have one wheel on your trailer, you have to expend energy to keep the thing upright and it turns out that if you overload a trailer it'll tend to want to jack-knife, who knew? So there was no flying down the highway, there was creeping

up the hills and riding the brakes on downhills, the whole time contemplating the lack of shoulders on the road. Also I forgot to put sun block on that first day. In all, I'm amazed I made it but finally I arrived in Empire, spent my last \$1.00 on a popsicle and a phone call to the Gerlach office begging to be picked up. So yeah, that's how I got here.

That first year there was a small crew of us cleaning out what was probably one of the only shipping containers we had on the ranch. I think some artist had used it the previous year. We were having a smoke break while our boss Flynn continued to haul stuff out (he was like that). He comes out with this five-gallon bucket and pops the top off. We see him reeling away from it and go running – turns out it was full of 10-month-old shit. Considerate I know. Being a gung-ho first year volunteer I took the poo bullet and went and capped that shit then threw it in the dumpster. That's how I came to be known as HazMatt and it's ironic because I now manage the Port-a-potty contract. I also handle several other infrastructure contracts, oversee the Purchasing department and sit on the Dark Council. I couldn't survive without an awesome team and even though we're clipboard-carrying list-checkers, we bleed black and orange. This is going to be a great year for DPW. We've got an awesome crew and we know what we're doing. Have fun out there, stay hydrated and don't throw trash in the potties! Only you can stop the horror.

— Hazmatt aka Matt Morgan