

DPW DEDICATION 2013



“CHAOS”
DPW HEAVY EQUIPMENT
AND TRANSP0 MANAGER

The cool desert breeze was blessed by dust as our tires left the road late on the night of September 2nd, 1999. I was filled with a healthy mix of curiosity, excitement and fear. A friend had told me about this crazy thing happening out in the middle of nowhere. When asked what it was like he said, “you’ll have to see it to believe it!”

I immediately saddled up to my sewing machine and set out to surprise the world with my crazy costume. Little did I know, my giant flying saucer hat would be so cumbersome and barely stand out in a crowd! Two weeks later, a passing wave of dust gave way to a scene straight out of Mad Max, with fire on the horizon, commotion all around and this crazy guy asking if we had any firearms. With only enough money for 2 tickets between 3 of us, I was now sure our friend Eric would suffocate beneath our stuff, or else we’d be found out and left for dead somewhere in the desert. Three days later I awoke in a lawn chair, with the sun bearing down on me and playa caked around my mouth. It was definitely time to make a hasty escape!

A year later I found myself running for the fence across what turned out to be a lot more desert than I had remembered from the year before. The headlights in the distance were just touching down upon my heels as I tumbled over the orange fence & into anonymity. Before it was done, I made two vows: come back here forever, and never run across the desert in the dark again!

Years went by and I returned Eric’s favor by bringing many new faces to the playa. Time and time again, I heard myself saying, “you’ll have to see it to believe it!” In 2003 we built an art project called the Wholly Burger. I stood back one night as my friends looked upon our creation in awe of all they had accomplished. I realized then that the true value for me came from inspiring others to test the limits of their dreams.

Hurricane Katrina blew across the boot in 2005, and sent my life spinning in a new direction. I spent months in the Gulf Coast participating in the inception of Burners Without Borders, and ironically getting to know many interesting people involved in the creation of the thing I cared about so deeply, Black Rock City! I discovered that the place to be is where you’re needed most, and for a good reason.

The DPW call to arms finally rang through my phone during the spring of 2007. As in ‘99, the pavement disappeared, and I was taken once again by fear and excitement. My time had come, to pay it back for a mountain of amazing experiences, and to invest in preserving the same opportunity for others who had yet to find their way to the place that changed my life. Seven years have passed, and each day I awake to the fear of failing under a mountain of our stuff. Then I look into my own reflection as it shimmers across the crew, and stand up to face the world head on!

Change will forever blow across the playa, and with it new challenges are born. But you have heard the call, and now you’re here. May we stand up together each day and remember that we are needed, and it is for a good reason. Be an inspiration, and when others ask what it’s like to be a part of the DPW, tell them, “You’ll have to see it to believe it!”