

From Behind Our White Picket Fence Week 147  
By Freddy and Eddy (www.freddyandeddy.com)

### Thoughts from the Playa, Part 1

Monday, we returned from what turned out to be our best Burning Man trip yet. Here are some quick observations as we re-acclimate to the real world...



*Having an RV makes a huge difference.* Our 27-foot, 1985 Honey made the trip up and back without any mechanical problems, giving us much needed shelter during two huge storms that book-ended the event. On Monday, the entire city was completely shut down as whiteout conditions made movement all but impossible. The organizers closed the gates, meaning some folks had to wait up to eight full hours before being allowed in when the blowing dust finally relented.

The same conditions returned Saturday before the man burned, miraculously calming just in time for the go-ahead at 10:15pm sharp. During both storms, we sat comfortably inside our air-conditioned cocoon, allowing a few kids to join us in its cozy environment. This was certainly a far cry from having to deal with tents being blown to bits and dust finding its way into every nook of our lives for a week.

*Ecstasy is simply the best drug ever.* We took it for the first time in our lives Thursday evening with a few friends and were blown away by its effects. Think rolling waves of love for anyone and everyone in your vicinity and you're pretty close. We took our hits at 11pm and set out across the playa toward a dance dome where our favorite DJ (Bassnectar) was going on at 12:30pm. Along the way the first peak hit, and we began feeling a warm joy washing over us as we stopped at the various art projects lighting the way. Once we arrived at the dance venue, we met up with several friends (all of whom were in the same state), hugging intensely and reveling in the absolute elation of being in each other's company. Once DJ Lorin – aka Bassnectar – hit the stage, we were on our third or fourth “roll” and ready to dance. The facet of ecstasy that we liked the most was that each peak was followed by periods of absolute clarity (in other words, you come out of your high almost completely normal before heading up again, though each subsequent “up” is less than the last). By the time Bassnectar ended his set, we were ready to gear down and walked our way across the vast (and dark) expanse of the playa, mulling over our lives and catching up on a past year of plans, thoughts, and emotions between burns. In the end, we danced our way back to camp as the sun rose above the mountains to the east and fell peacefully asleep for the next four hours before rising to further adventures on Friday.

*Kudos to the Burning Man organizers for making significant changes, resulting in a more relaxed, spacious, and downright mellow mood. Last year's event was craziness defined, with everyone crowded on top of each other, too much angst, weekend partiers ruining the playa with their vomit and lewd behavior, and very little of the true spirit in which Burning Man has come to embody in its 20-plus year evolution. The center of the city was moved 400 feet further back from the Man, stretching the city area by roughly one-third, meaning plenty of space to park our vehicles and/or pitch our tents. Monday evening was once again a low-key period in which to walk the esplanade, and newbies were treated to the sight of the city building slowly to its crescendo Saturday evening.*



*We're sad to say our son is pulling away. This year, we camped in Kidsville, which is a section of the city devoted to families with little ones and plenty of opportunities for them to enjoy Burning Man in the company of their own kind. Kealii, this time around, chose to spend virtually all his time with other kids, declining several opportunities to venture out with us in favor of light saber battles, bunny marches, and trampoline contests. About half way through, we were a bit melancholy that he didn't desire our company more; however, we understand he will one day exercise his complete independence and therefore we feel grateful at each moment we do get to spend with him.*

*Sex is too much darned work. We'd love to say we humped like bunnies, but dust storms, oppressive heat, and an RV turned into a community shelter didn't exactly create the perfect environment for passionate episodes. Alas, we'll have to make up for that one in the coming weeks.*

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