



**San Diego Collaborative Arts Project (“SDCAP”)  
YOUtopia 2019: BOOtopia, A Spectacular Spooky Spectacle!  
Afterburn Report  
December 27, 2019**

© Heather Ann Scott Photography

Overview.....	1
Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes.....	1
What Went Well.....	3
Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes.....	4
2019 Financials.....	5
Production Leadership Team - 2019 Afterburn Report.....	7
What Went Well.....	7
Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes.....	11
Department Management Team - 2019 Afterburn Report.....	15
Dept. of Art.....	15
Dept. of Administration & Contracts.....	17
Dept. of Commerce.....	21
Dept. of YOUtopia Environment.....	24
Dept. of People.....	29
Dept. of Propaganda.....	31
Dept. of Vehicle Management.....	33
Emergency Services Department & Rangers/Security.....	36



**San Diego Collaborative Arts Project (“SDCAP”)  
YOUtopia 2019: The Little Regional That Could**

**Afterburn Report**

**Overview**

Despite many obstacles, some of which seemed insurmountable, we did it. YOUtopia 2019 happened! This year, 1,277 people attended YOUtopia, including our Production Team, On-Site Volunteers, and Participants. In addition, YOUtopia also had approximately 25 persons working for YOUtopia’s Emergency Services Department, approximately 15 persons working the event from Kern County Sheriff Department and Kern County Fire Department, and 14 visitors from other organizations. During the event, Participants and Volunteers alike were happy and having fun. The Production team heard from many, many people, including volunteers and other Production staff and managers, that this event was one of the best, if not THE best they’d ever attended. Kudos were abundant during and after the event.

**Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes...**

Burning Man 2019 had nothing on YOUtopia’s 2019 metamorphosis. About the only thing that didn’t change for us this year was the name!

**Production Model/Structure**

In late 2018, SDCAP publicly shared with the San Diego and surrounding regional communities that the SDCAP Board had a transition plan to flatten the YOUtopia production team. In doing so, YOUtopia production leadership would move from a Co-Producer led event to a team led event over the course of two years, which would also include eliminating previous “Hub Level” positions. As the time to plan for 2019 was upon us, SDCAP intended on keeping the same Co-Producer structure as previous years but use 2019 as a transition year to prepare for the new structure in 2020. What ultimately turned out to be the theme for 2019, those well laid plans were a bust!

When the call went out for the 2019 Co-Producer applications, no one applied for the job. When we realized we had no applicants for the Co-Producer roles, SDCAP held an open meeting to talk about the path forward. We invited everyone who’d previously expressed interest in YOUtopia 2019 leadership as well as prior Hub & Department Leads. The meeting was comprised of the SDCAP Board plus people who’ve been in various YOUtopia leadership roles. In the course of that meeting, we decided to forge ahead with the team model for 2019, a full year ahead of schedule. At that time, no one knew what this team would look like or how it would operate. In the end, SDCAP considered it a collaborative endeavor and up to the team to design itself: its culture, its policies & procedures, and its methods for accountability. At the meeting, the new team was named the “Production Leadership Team” (“PLT”) and a role description and application were created and disseminated to the community. Lo and behold, SDCAP received several applications and conducted interviews.

And, just like that a new team was created! The PLT was comprised of people with overall leadership ability and experienced in Emergency Services (fire/medical), Rangers/Security, People (volunteers, enculturation) and Admin (admin, ticketing, social media, contracts, & insurance).

**Volunteer Numbers**

Typically, YOUtopia is organized and staffed by nearly 500 volunteers. Historically, we’ve had 2 Co-Producers, approximately 10-12 Hub Leads, approximately 45-50 Department Leads, and 400+ on-

site volunteers. In 2019, we had 37 members on the Production Team (and this included the PLT). Prior to the event, we had 211 volunteers scheduled. After the event, we totaled 158 volunteers. We also had approximately 30 Rangers that worked the event.

## **Venue**

For the past 9 years, YOUtopia's home has been the La Jolla Indian Campground. We've enjoyed a good relationship with the Tribe and took pride in our additional donations as well as our Leave No Trace efforts, always leaving the campground in better condition than we found it. As one would expect, the cost to rent the campground has gone up significantly over the years, but it's always been a relatively predictable increase. This year, when we contacted the Tribe to begin our annual contract negotiation, they informed us they wanted more than double the amount we paid them last year. We attempted to negotiate, and they then informed us that they are considering no longer hosting any festivals at all due to sound complaints from residents, but if we were willing to pay their asking price, they would still have us back in 2019. We reviewed our financials and determined we could not pay that amount without dramatically raising ticket prices, so we exited the negotiation and immediately commenced working on finding a new location.

We shared the situation with the community and solicited their help to find a location. We are so grateful to the community for their outpouring of thoughts, support and suggestions! Due to the community's suggestions and our own diligence, we explored all manner of other options for rental venues. Among numerous other locations and venues in San Diego County, we reached out to another local tribe that has been known to host festivals and we also reached out to our regional neighbors to the north. We were not successful in securing either of those locations. The process took months and we hit roadblock after roadblock. As time was ticking away, SDCAP set a hard date of August 1st deadline. SDCAP decided that if we did not have a venue secured by August 1st, YOUtopia 2019 would not happen. As it turned out, in late June/early July, due to the suggestion of several community members, we contacted a property owner in Kern County (approximately 3.5 hours north of San Diego) to inquire about renting their venue (they hold an annual post-apocalyptic festival on their property). Much to our surprise (and joy!), the property owner said yes! We then spent the remainder of July feverishly working through contract negotiations and updating our new website to remove all references to La Jolla Indian Campground (yes, we designed a new website this year too!). We signed the contract for the venue on August 1st, the same date we released tickets for sale.

## **Permits**

YOUtopia has never faced the task of having to permit the event but with the new venue came new challenges. One of the challenges was permitting and working with public agencies and law enforcement. The PLT worked with the property owner to wind through the permitting process in order to get the event properly approved. There were several last-minute issues that came up but the PLT managed to pull it off through sheer determination and teamwork.

## **Website**

We created a new website in 2017 as our previous website was hacked. The 2017 website was beautiful but proved too difficult for unskilled or semi-skilled volunteers to manage. In some sections, it was impossible for even skilled web designers to edit. Therefore, in early 2019, SDCAP engaged the services of a 2018 Communications Lead to design and create a new YOUtopia website that would be easier for volunteers to manage going forward. The timeline to deliver the website was April and it was ready as promised. That said, our previous venue was all over the website. Unfortunately, until a new venue was found the site couldn't be scrubbed of the former venue

information. The PLT came through and managed to get the website ready for the August 1st ticket launch.

### **Date & Event Length Change**

For as long as we can remember, the event has always taken place the 3rd weekend in October, starting on the Thursday (making the event approximately 3.5 days). Given the time crunch and the distance of the location from San Diego, the PLT suggested (and the Board agreed) to move the event out by a week and to add another day to the event. Coincidentally, the event dates ended up being observed Halloween weekend. The proximation to Halloween created a fun holiday atmosphere full of haunted houses and trick or treating at the event!

### **What Went Well**

After all those changes, it would seem like there would be little to brag about. Au contraire, but there is!

### **PLT & DMT**

To address concerns and with the hope of improving community relations, SDCAP chose PLT members that are generally respected members of the community. As so many previous leads had burned out and the impression from previous teams were that the Co-Producer model created too many layers, SDCAP's decision to flatten the structure to remove the Hub Lead level seemed to help the 2019 team flourish. With the PLT and the production team, named the Department Management Team ("DMT") by the PLT, came new ideas about how to build a better mousetrap. Some ideas worked and some didn't, but overall very positive results came about from the decision to change things up. Especially given the challenges the team faced this year, the inaugural PLT did very well. The PLT faced very tough odds, but they came through.

### **Venue**

Being forced to change venues was very difficult. However, when it all came together the 2019 venue was great. For the first time in YOUtopian history, there was an effigy burn! The San Diego Regional has never been able to have an effigy burn or much fire art due to the fire risk at previous locations. The ability to create and burn an effigy resulted in some very collaborative community efforts. When the burn happened, the energy of the crowd was electric as almost everyone knew that this burn was YOUtopia's first. It was an absolutely wonderful experience and everyone that attended the burn enjoyed it very much.

Being able to burn was not the only positive outcome of the new venue. The terrain was flat and very playa like. Repeatedly people were heard saying that this event was just like being at Burning Man. Participants and volunteers alike were able to reach all points of the city with little effort. The flat terrain also allowed YOUtopia to have several art cars, some of which would've never been able to navigate the terrain of the previous venue. It was such a delight seeing participants having fun riding around on the various art cars that were able to make it.

### **Volunteers**

The changes made by the PLT (and approved by SDCAP) to enhance the volunteer experience were well received. As far as we can tell, these changes were overwhelmingly positive.

## Website

Hindsight being what it is, if we'd know all the challenges the Production team would face this year, SDCAP might not have decided to have a new website created. However, in the end, we have a beautiful new site that's easily managed and includes several upgrades to other systems that the previous site did not include.

## **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

### PLT

The SDCAP Board is very pleased with the PLT and the decisions they made. The fortitude and grit of this team is unparalleled. The PLT experienced more challenges and obstacles than any other YOUtopia producer (or decom producer) has ever faced. The SDCAP Board is very fortunate that the 4 individuals on the PLT worked so well together. However, we already know for sure that 1 member of the PLT will most likely not return. One PLTr has said yes. This means we must coax the remaining PLTr's from maybe to yes and then find 2 or 3 more like minded and tempered people to add to the PLT. Based upon feedback from the PLT, there are certain areas of expertise that we will need to look for when creating the 2020 PLT team. This task may be very challenging.

### Venue

YOUtopia will still need to find a location for 2020. Since we just went through the process of finding a suitable venue for the 2019 event, we know what we're up against. The SDCAP Board has already begun discussions about 2020. Although the 2019 was great in many ways, it is located quite a distance from San Diego which makes it a hindrance for many people that reside in San Diego County. Additionally, nearly all locations in San Diego County will be subject to fire restrictions. Now that YOUtopia has an effigy burn under its belt, it will be difficult to return to hosting an event in a little to no burn zone. Given that fire isn't a problem in the desert, it's really something to consider. All of these factors will go into the decision for the 2020 event.

### Planning & Permits

**Planning:** The contract for the 2019 venue was signed on 8/1/19. As we now realize that August is just too late to allow our team to do the job without inflicting even more stress, the SDCAP Board has agreed that June 1st is the deadline. Meaning, if a venue is not secured by June 1st, then the event will not happen.

**Permits/Approvals:** Due to the timing (there was none left), SDCAP had to agree to contract terms regarding permitting and the requirement that the host's team were used to process permitting with Kern County (they didn't want us to do anything to screw up their Conditional Use Permit). It made sense at the time. The host's team did their best to assist us but, in hindsight, we should not have agreed to put the fate of our event in the hands of the property owner. We won't do that again. We will control our own fate.

### Event Size

For the past few years, YOUtopia grew exponentially. Over the past few years, we've heard that YOUtopia had become diluted. That it was just a rave in the forest, not a Burning Man regional. We could and have argued against these claims. That said, there was something very special and

unique about the 2019 event. Everyone that was there really wanted to be there. People travelled the distance from San Diego and even further (Las Vegas, Arizona, etc.) to bring their art and their camps. It was intimate and it felt like there were less tourists and much more art and participation. Seeing and participating in the event made us sit back and think that maybe YOUtopia really needs to limit its population for the immediate future. This is something we're seriously considering for 2020 and beyond. Bigger is not always better.

### **Ticketing**

When we did the budget for 2019, we really didn't know what we were getting into with permitting and the venue challenges. We have a lot to work on for 2020 and we believe there will be ticketing changes to either eradicate ticketing types leftover from the previous venue or just a revamp of how we approach ticketing.

### **Internet**

Due to issues with the site, we didn't have internet access to scan tickets in and it was very difficult for gate. We need to find solutions to this problem.

### **Regional Contacts**

YOUtopia 2019 seemed to have little support from the San Diego Regional Contact team ("RCs"). SDCAP understands that the San Diego RC team went through some changes this year but there were a multitude of items that the RCs are generally responsible for that simply either didn't happen or SDCAP was led to believe was a non-issue. For example:

- In April prior to securing the venue, SDCAP reached out to the RCs about status of approval of regional status. SDCAP was informed that regional status had been granted in January. It wasn't until SDCAP was contacted on October 3rd by BMorg that we realized that this was not the case.
- On August 4th an RC sent out an 'Events Announce' email blast and social media blast that didn't mention that YOUtopia tickets were on sale (tickets went on sale on 8/1/19).
- In late September the PLT discovered that YOUtopia was not listed on the Regional Events calendar.
- In early October, the PLT discovered that the RC newsletter didn't include YOUtopia.

SDCAP and the San Diego Burning Man community had a rough year and we understand it was similar for the RCs in 2019. Going forward, SDCAP would appreciate more involvement from the RCs, especially with any enculturation pre-event on social media or a town hall. Meaning, it's the Board's position that the San Diego RCs need to be more involved with ensuring YOUtopia's event gets posted to the Burning Man website, and other regionals' social media groups, newsletters (i.e. Regional Scoop) and email lists (RC networking). Additionally, San Diego has a fairly constant flow of new people to our community and/or Burners relocating from other areas. Although San Diego has a robust Burner community, there really isn't much RC involvement, at least publicly. SDCAP believes it will benefit YOUtopia and the San Diego community as a whole if there was overall more RC involvement.

## **2019 Financials**

For the past two years ticket sales have been good and allowed SDCAP to fund large art projects and continue to fund CoLab (the San Diego Burning Man build space). In 2018, YOUtopia nearly

sold out and had a population of nearly 3,500 people (participants and volunteers). However, after the 2018 event, there was a significant community outcry over several issues that created general unrest and bitterness towards SDCAP and YOUtopia. As we shared in our 2018 Afterburn Report (and mentioned above), the 2018 volunteer experience was not great. In addition to overall volunteer unhappiness and production lead burnout, there were several large long-standing camps that were not happy with how 2018 turned out. Therefore, even without the venue issue, SDCAP expected a population contraction for 2019, we just didn't know how much it would contract and were uncertain how 2019 would fare. It was for these reasons and the venue change (located several hours drive away from San Diego) that YOUtopia 2019 was a much smaller event. Even though we expected contraction, we planned site and infrastructure for a population of approximately 2,000-2,500 participants and volunteers. In the end, however, the event was much smaller than our projections.

Fortunately, our surplus from last year allowed us the opportunity to show our appreciation to volunteers, Theme Camps and artists this year. We made a commitment early on to show a commitment to our community. Even after we realized that 2019 was going to be a red year, we chose to support our participants and let them make YOUtopia 2019 their own. While some may view this as problematic and may have chosen to cancel the event, SDCAP takes another viewpoint. A successful event should be measured by more than ticket sales. We were successful monetarily last year but it cost us more than it did this year. In 2018 we sacrificed collective happiness for fundamental stability. For 2019, basically what we're saying is...community happiness > than monetary success. Notwithstanding, for 2020, now that our team has experience and knowledge under their belts relating to venue specific requirements (i.e. event size, permitting costs, agency costs, ticket types, etc.), we will adjust how we plan the event to hopefully avoid a monetary loss so that we can continue to fund art and support CoLab.

As of this report, we have accounted for nearly all budgeted costs for YOUtopia 2019. Fortunately, the event came in under budget in nearly every controllable category and also in some uncontrollable (aka unknown but projected expenses at time of budget creation). All in all, the event came in under budget in 8 of 9 categories. While these numbers are mostly accurate, there may be some small changes once all costs are in.

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$178,041.98</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$308,024.26</b>
Art Grants	\$59,025.71
Land Contracts; Permits	\$76,685.18
Equipment: Contracted Services (Power, Heavy Equip, Tents, Portos, etc.)	\$47,711.66
Equipment: Owned/Replaced	\$3,707.54
Equipment: Transportation (Kubotas, Box Truck, Fuel, etc.)	\$28,698.56
Commissary; Coffee/Ice	\$31,161.58
Security; Law Enforcement; Fire Dept.; Medical	\$34,365.34
Overhead (Ins., Training, Schwag, Wristbands, Printing)	\$23,627.74
Contingency	\$3,040.95
Total Proceeds	-\$129,982.28

## Production Leadership Team - 2019 Afterburn Report

**Production Leadership Team's Mission & Goals:** The PLT is tasked with the selection of the DMT for the event, with providing guidance and oversight to the DMT, coordinating with the SDCAP Board of Directors, being the point of contact for interactions and negotiations with the property owner and staff, signing contracts, create and maintain the budget in order to provide a stable platform for the community to create YOUtopia. At the onset of planning the PLT created several goals for itself: (a) address the volunteer concerns from 2018 (and previous years); (b) community building; (c) create a self-managed production team to do the job with minimal oversight; (d) work harmoniously/collaboratively within the PLT and SDCAP Board; and, (e) produce a profitable event.

**PLT Members:** Dave Bever (51), Ken Klausen (Mystic), Alicia Bishop-Smith (Ali) and Cassy Haynes (Cassa Frass).

**Production Team Structure:** In 2019, there were 8 Production divisions/sections (Depts of: Art, Admin & Contracts, Commerce, YOUtopia Environment, Emergency Services, Vehicle Management, Propaganda, and People). The DMT was comprised of 28 people, 11 of which were returning YOUtopia leads encompassing 21 sub-departments (under each main section/division). The duties of each department are outlined in the individual DMT Afterburn Reports to follow.

### What Went Well

#### PLT

The PLT was comprised of people with experience in Emergency Services, Rangers/Security, People and Admin/Contracts.

The PLT knit the parachute as we fell. At times it was smooth and at others it was very difficult (but not because of the team—more so the situation). We were put up against very tough odds, but we came through. For the most part, there was little to no conflict within the PLT. We worked together in harmony and collaboratively before and during the event to address issues head-on as they arose. Working through things was the constant thread that bound us together. When we didn't have a venue, we kept meeting and working on trying to find one. When we were experiencing a lack of people to put on the team, we put out the call and kept at it until we had a full team (albeit lean). When we ran into lack of experience issues, we learned or took on tasks ourselves. When we encountered the bureaucracy that threatened to shut down the event, the PLT pulled together and made phone calls to county officials and Theme Camps, filled out forms, and drove hours to obtain the appropriate approvals. We all pulled together, and each contributed in some manner to overcome the obstacle. If we didn't know something, one of us would learn and share with the others. There were no egos to manage. We were/are just hard workers and we gelled as a team. Onsite during the event, the PLT also worked well together to deal with real-time stressful matters that arose.

We were of the mindset that we succeed as a team or failed as a team. Overall, we think this team succeeded.

#### DMT

Over the past couple of years, the YOUtopia production leads team simply burned out for one reason or the other. In 2018, YOUtopia had several returning production leads. However, many refused to return for 2019. Accordingly, there was fairly an underwhelming response when the 2019 applications went public. The PLT reached out to those that had timely applied and interviewed several people to fill positions. There were also 2 people that were recruited by the PLT for key roles that needed to be filled (Volunteer Coordination and Placement). As a result, the 2019 team the PLT

put together was largely comprised of people that had neither led volunteer teams or were generally new to leading a YOUtopia department. All of them had volunteered for YOUtopia or other regionals in some capacity or the other, but more than half were new to the YOUtopia production team. Even so, 99% of the team performed well in their roles.

Flattening the leadership structure helped build direct interaction between the PLT and the DMT. Decisions were made efficiently and with minimal conflict. The flattened management style coupled with the approach by the PLT to empower the DMT, allowed for inspired leadership opportunities. Choosing managers with leadership focus provided a greater volunteer satisfaction. Additionally, there was greater intra-departmental and interdepartmental satisfaction and performance.

The 2019 DMT truly was a team and we didn't need team building games to build a team. Keeping many lines of communication open (emails, calls, in-person meetings, messenger and texts) helped department managers ("DM" or "DMs") know they were being heard and that we were working on their issues. Onsite they kicked ass and it was glorious to see them all working together collaboratively.

As mentioned, the entire team did a fantastic job dealing with ambiguity and an incredibly compressed timeline. We feel it's necessary to give shout outs to a few DMs that really went above and beyond:

- **Yeah Tom, Grid Manager.** Tom jumped in throughout the planning process to help in areas that weren't in his purview. He saved the YOUtopia equipment trailer from kidnapers. He helped load and unload the YOUtopia box truck. He jumped in halfway through equipment procurement process and used his expertise in this arena to negotiate reduced fees for heavy equipment. Onsite, he was constantly working and moving things around to try to help not only production but also Theme Camps/participants. He loaned his personal equipment to the event. He helped doing roles that weren't within his scope (i.e. placing traffic signage). He was instrumental in helping to reach creative solutions for the fueling of equipment onsite. He saved a Theme Camp from an exploding generator.
- **Trixy, Theme Camp Liaison.** We don't know what we would have done without Trixy's help. Her role was intended to just be the person to communicate with Theme Camps, keep them updated, provide assistance, etc. She did all that and more. Trixy created a Facebook page for Theme Camps and kept in constant communication with the camps with information about the event and venue. She helped create/update applications. She ran the art grant committee meetings. She communicated with art grant recipients (in addition to Theme Camps). She jumped in and helped with getting ticketing codes out to Theme Camps and artists. If not for her, our jobs would've been even more difficult. She rockstarred her face off!
- **Split, Perimeter Manager.** YOUtopia has never had a perimeter. Split came on the team late because of 51's request and he killed it. He jumped in and worked very closely with Brenda to get his team staffed. He communicated with his team before and during the event. He worked the event like a champ. So grateful he joined the team as we don't know where we would've been without him and his expertise.
- **Brendizzle, Volunteer Coordinator.** There is practically no one that came to YOUtopia or volunteered for YOUtopia that doesn't know Brenda. Her enthusiasm is infectious, and she made sure that she was in constant contact with volunteers and the DMT before, during and after the event. When certain DMs were struggling, she jumped in and helped them secure volunteers, communicated with their volunteers and also made their schedules for them. Onsite she spent most

of her time at gate handling ticketing. She is a gem and this event is so much better for having her on the team.

- **Jamie Rage, Greeters.** Jamie not only nearly single handedly managed her own department, she jumped in and helped others when/where needed. She made all of the signage for the YOUtopian city. She helped Professor with inventory. She helped Dispensary onsite. She helped load and unload the YOUtopia truck, including doing the post-load sort. Jamie was positive, energetic and her help was invaluable to this team and event. We're very grateful to all of the extra work that Jamie put in to help create the 2019 event.
- **MoMo, LNT.** MoMo rocked it as a first year LNT Lead. She knew she had a lot to learn and completely embraced the job. MoMo had a great attitude and pitched in where needed. MoMo was also great **support** to others when most needed.
- **Sabella, Gate.** Sabella lost her co-manager halfway through planning but still managed to crush it. Sabella has one of the best attitudes, if not THE best of anyone on the team. Sabella worked hard and worked long hours and was NEVER without a smile on her face.

### Volunteer Experience

One of the PLT's most important goals was to address volunteer experience complaints head-on.

The volunteer requirements for years 2017 and 2018 ultimately created problems with recruitment. When the changes were initiated in 2017/2018, event producers were attempting to circumvent the 'flake factor' of volunteers being granted a volunteer ticket then not showing up. Ultimately, it backfired and YOUtopia ended up having issues filling volunteer teams. In 2018, YOUtopia was short about 100 people and the volunteers that did show up had a difficult time as they were often overworked. Additionally, the volunteer requirements of the 2017/2018 events left many people with poor opinions of the event. One of the biggest complaints from 2018 was that the 16-hour (or 18 in some cases) requirement to qualify for a discounted volunteer ticket was ludicrous given the event is only 3.5 days.

Moreover, the PLT decided to revamp the volunteer requirements and attempt to find better ways to encourage volunteers to participate and complete their shifts. For 2019, we reduced the required volunteer working hours to 12 hours to qualify for a discounted ticket (considered a Level 2 volunteer—see below). We were willing to risk the 'flake factor' as we figured we'd be more likely to attract dedicated volunteers to work fewer hours and have more time enjoying the event than we did with the longer hours. The 12 hours could be worked pre-event (such as organizing equipment, loading the box truck, unloading and building the city), during the event (which was now 4.5 days) or post-event (re-organizing equipment, re-loading/unloading the box-truck and returning equipment to storage). We also allowed a combination of the 3 ways to earn a discounted volunteer ticket. In addition, we not only had some universal schwag (t-shirts for volunteers) we also gave each DM a budget so that they could choose something for their team.

In addition to flattening the team structure, the PLT proposed and the SDCAP Board approved that certain categories of volunteers be granted a gratis ticket for the work they performed for the event. Therefore, we categorized volunteers as either Level 1 or Level 2. A Level 1 volunteer qualified to receive a gratis ticket and it was someone that either worked year-round (i.e. SDCAP Board), worked a minimum of 30 hours for the event (before, during or after) or had a specialized skill (i.e. certified forklift operator, electrician, etc.). A Level 2 volunteer was only required to work 12 hours and no specialized skills were necessary.

The volunteer online chatter before the event was positive and the post-event chatter was even better. Almost without exception, post-event the volunteers raved about the experience and their DMs. The Volunteer Coordination Manager also sent out a volunteer experience survey and the results were very positive. It was very refreshing to have happy volunteers that want to come back. That's what it's all about!

### **Artists, Participants, and Theme Camps**

Communication: The PLT recognized the fall out that happened with participants and camps from previous years. There were various reasons for the fallout, but one of the reasons was communications between production and the artists and camps. Over the past few years, consistent communications with YOUtopia camps and artists has, frankly, been lacking. The PLT worked together to try to address this head on. One of the decisions we made was to create positions called "Theme Camp Liaison" and "Art Grant Administrator". The purpose of these roles was to effectuate better communication with artists, participants and Theme Camps throughout the process. We realized much success with creating these roles. Unfortunately, the person we put in the Art Grant Administrator position experienced some personal issues and was unable to fulfill the role as originally intended. In the end, the majority of the tasks for both roles ended up being managed by one person (Trixy) and she did an **OUTSTANDING** job. She constantly communicated with artists and Theme Camps throughout the process. The response by artists and Theme Camps was very positive and you could really feel the collaboration between production and the artists and camps.

Ticketing: For the past several years, the trend at YOUtopia has been to steadily decrease the discounted tickets for artists and Theme Camps. While the rationale at the time made sense, over time it became clear that the issue needed to be revisited. As with the decision to create specific roles to work directly with artists and Theme Camps, the PLT made the decision to create discounted ticket types for art leads, Theme Camp leads and build teams. The reason for creating these discounted ticket categories were to (a) help ease the burden of the change of venue; and, (b) recognize that these people are the ones putting in the effort to build the city and perform for participants. We wanted to recognize those efforts and assist by granting a limited number of discounted tickets to artists and Theme Camps. As with the increased communications with artists and Theme Camps, the decision to recognize the efforts with discounted tickets went over swimmingly.

We believe the combination of increased communication and recognizing the efforts of our YOUtopian citizens created much good will. People were happy and that made us happy.

### **Placement**

In addition to ESD/Ops being well placed, overall the city was thoughtfully designed. As with any event, there were a few things that looked better on paper but had to be adjusted on site. That's to be expected. However, the design and layout of camps and art was generally well done. Given the compressed timeline, it makes it even more impressive that the Placement Manager (Di) gave us a well mapped city and our Communications Manager (Zack) designed a fun printed map for YOUtopians to navigate their way around the city.

### **Emergency Services Department/Operations**

**ESD:** Over the past 2 years YOUtopia's Safety Team, renamed ESD for 2019, has improved incrementally. YOUtopia's 2019 ESD team was outstanding. The venue for 2019 had no existing resources (just like Burning Man). This year YOUtopia offered the following services at this location: (a) fire suppression and prevention w/ a type VI engine and water tender, plus Fire Chief; (b) Medical

tent plus two roving medical rescue teams; (c) Crisis Intervention team (for Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and 5150s); (d) Fire Art Safety Team (FAST) and, (e) Dispatch services. As a direct result of 51's direct leadership of the ESD team, YOUtopia established very positive relationships with Kern County EMS and positive relationships with Kern County Fire Department and the Kern County Sheriff's Office (Sergeant on scene).

**Safety Row/Ops Row:** The placement of the city included placing the ESD teams and Operations in the same area. The line-up of tents, vehicles and personnel sent a message to local agencies and participants that the safety of the event was covered and easily accessible. The practicality of close proximity of departments and separate camping provided efficient practices and a level of security for the volunteers to best perform their duties.

**Security:** The use of the Guardian Team as security was a wise choice for the following reasons: (a) they provided YOUtopia the lowest bid (by 50%); (b) instead of being a separate entity with redundancy with the Rangers, they ultimately were a force multiplier through communications and support, but still able to provide unique services delegated to licensed security guards and beyond the purview of Rangers; and, (c) during a potential security threat, two agents worked additional hours, at their own expense, to ensure the safety of the community by their own ethical choices and love of the community.

## **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

**Venue:** The loss of venue put significant pressure on the PLT. At the beginning of the production cycle, the Board took the position that the Board would take the lead on venue contract negotiations. However, when the negotiations with the Tribe broke down, it was left to the PLT to pick up the pieces and do the work to find a venue. We believe this was somewhat due to a 'blurring the lines' as there were two Board members on the PLT. As such, it seemed like the remainder of the Board left it to the PLT to figure it out. That being said, when the PLT reached out to the Board requesting assistance, the Board acted. For 2020, there needs to be clearly defined roles between the PLT and SDCAP Board relating to (a) venue search; and, (b) contract negotiation.

### **Permitting, Approvals, Etc.**

- **Planning:** The contract for the venue was signed on 8/1/19. Until a venue was secured, the PLT did not want to put the DMT through the paces to plan an event that might not happen. The PLT kept in constant communication with the DMT as things evolved, including conducting all-hands meetings in May and July. As a result of the venue issue, the timeline for everything was significantly compressed and both the PLT and the DMT had to scramble. Among others, planning for the following areas were considerably impacted: finishing the website, setting up Eventbrite, marketing, performing equipment needs analysis (venue specific) & procurement, insurance, and volunteer recruitment. For 2020, if a venue has not been secured by June 1st, then the decision must be made to forego the event.

- **Permits and Approvals:** When we signed the venue contract, our venue host/property owner was already in high preparation and focused on their event, which was to happen in late September. Due to the timing (there was none left), SDCAP had to agree to contract terms regarding permitting and the requirement that the property owner's personnel were used to process permitting with Kern County. Although the property owner's team had been thoroughly briefed on the type of event we are (and some of them are long-term Burners and familiar with Burning Man type of events), their inexperience in hosting another event on their land impacted our event (we were the first event other than their own held on their property). We had concerns regarding food and alcohol from day one and had several conversations with the host about how it was handled at their event and how

we should handle it. Each time we were reassured that it was no issue and they explained how their participants also gift food and drinks with no problem (and no permits). Our relationship and interactions with the host's team was great. We never had a problem with them, and our exchanges were always pleasant. That said, their lack of experience coupled with compressed timing created significant problems regarding permitting. It was only after things appeared to be unraveling regarding the Health permit issues just days before gates open that they admitted their oversight on how they processed our event with the county and how they worked with us regarding answering express questions regarding food and alcohol. Speaking of alcohol, we also had ABC contact us less than 24 hours before gates open to discuss permitting (yes, we obtained ABC permits in 5 hours—a world record!). This was also another herculean task the PLT had to overcome. In hindsight, we should've taken a more proactive role in the permitting with the county and not agreed to put the fate of our event in their hands. Accordingly, for 2020, we need to ensure that we are responsible for processing permitting and approvals for our event.

## Experience

The PLT members have great experience within their respective areas. However, there were significant experience gaps in both the PLT and the DMT in key areas needed to run a successful event. Although we learned as we went, it is really necessary to have people on the team that has experience in areas such as logistics and communications. For example:

- **Event Logistics:** One of the PLT members worked with the Grid Manager and the Purchasing DM to grind out what equipment we thought we needed. However, the inexperience in equipment procurement and overall logistics showed at times. Additionally, we had a Site Ops Manager, but she wasn't involved in anything pre-event regarding logistics. This was probably an oversight on the part of the PLT and the Site Ops Manager should've been right in the middle of all of things logistics so that she could manage equipment procurement, delivery and return. Mostly due to inexperience, we had some equipment failures (ESD pre-approved ac/heater for medical didn't work) or goof-ups (missed the tent walls for commissary). Going forward the PLT should have some experience in all mission critical areas and the DMT roster needs to be deep enough to manage key areas. The PLT doesn't have to be a pro in the given areas but having more than just minimal knowledge goes a long way.
- **Post Event/Exodus:** Rangers and Security cleared 98% of Participants. The Participants that remained onsite required a higher level of extraction. It was too much for the one authority that was left on site. Additional Ranger resources, an extended security contract and/or additional authority personnel might be helpful to address stragglers.

## Ticketing

- **RV & Car Camping Tickets:** When we were planning the event, we knew we'd have population contraction due to distance and other reasons (community uproar, etc.) but we weren't really sure how it would turn out. We visited the venue and knew we could fit quite a large population, but we were just not certain how it would all fit as the property owner's event isn't quite like ours. So, we took a similar approach to planning for this venue as we had the past venue. Although we charged half the amount of the previous year's tickets for RVs and car camping, we charged for RVs, car camping and parking. When we created those ticket types, we were really just trying to control vehicles onsite as we weren't sure how we'd all fit. This approach didn't go over well with many participants as they felt they were being penalized for wanting to have their RVs or wanting to car camp. Depending on where we end up in 2020, we should revisit the issue and have a healthy discussion as to whether or not we'll charge for RVs and car camping.

- **Multiple Discounted Tickets:** The PLT's intent with creating discounting ticket categories for artists, Theme Camps and build teams was a good idea. As originally intended, the discounted tickets would be granted to a few members of artists, Theme Camps and build teams. The discounted ticket categories were created with certain allotments based upon overall admission tickets of 3,470. Once ticket sales indicated that YOUtopia was going to be a much smaller event, the number of discounted tickets for artists and theme camps should've been adjusted accordingly. The situation being what it was (we were moving so fast and under such pressure), we didn't consider the impact until the event was concluded. Meaning, we probably took it a little too far given the population contraction we had this year. As it turned out, entire camps and art projects were granted discounted tickets. Going forward, there should be a policy that is flexible depending on population and/or a strict limit on the number of tickets granted for size of camps (i.e. camp of 10 gets 2 tickets, camps of 30 get 6, etc.).

## DMT

The decision to flatten the team was a good one. However, it had an unintended consequence of over burdening some on the PLT. Additionally, over the past few years some of us have noticed a trend that there are people who either have great admin skills or great onsite skills. It's not often, however, that a person has both skills. There also seems to be a lack of consistency and transfer of institutional knowledge. We've given all of this some thought and offer the following suggestions:

- **Communication:** Communication can always be better. At times it was good, at times it wasn't. No one should assume that someone else knows their respective job or area and what's required to perform that job (especially given the team's inexperience in certain areas). Some DMs were not very good at communicating—at all. They didn't respond to multiple emails or messages at times. We can work on communicating better with DMs about expectations and preferred communication methods with the PLT and each other when information is needed.

- **Time Commitment:** When selecting the DMT, the PLT needs to do its best to ensure that DMs know they're obligated to make meetings and phone calls, even if they have alternative living situations, live far away, or have work commitments. If a person cannot commit to the required meetings, etc. then the PLT really needs to take that into consideration when filling the role, especially if the person is applying to fill any mission critical areas.

- **DMT Numbers:** Although the team did a great job overall, the fact remains that the team was lean. It's become clear that certain departments must have 2 leads, if not for anything else but to help manage departments onsite. Additionally, though not an onsite role, the Communications/Marketing team really needs to have at least 2 people (if not more) to manage the graphics/art/mapping, etc. and one to do social media/communication management. Simply put, there are several departments that can't function well without a two-person team. Since the team was so lean this year, often PLT members had to perform multiple DM roles. This was incredibly stressful at times. We really need to do some outreach and do our best to make sure to support the PLT in getting the DMT fully staffed.

- **Experience, Manual & Training:** Often there is turnover in the DMT, some years are less, others more. Although returning DMs will bring institutional knowledge with them, new DMs need more encouragement and direction (naturally!). In most processes, consistency is key. YOUtopia has suffered from a lack of consistency for a while. YOUtopia also suffers from a lack of process manual or 'how to'. Each year (or couple of years) when there is turnover, institutional knowledge is lost. We really need to work on creating some sort of basic framework for each job/role that we have so that someone stepping in can at least have some idea of how to do their job.

- **Admin:** As managed today, Admin really supports just the PLT (and previously event producers) and does other admin work that doesn't fall under anyone else's purview. We think by centralizing "Admin" by having the Admin doing all event admin work (including helping DMs), then it would help create some consistencies with practices, processes and forms. It's possible this could be managed by two people as well (unless one person was a super organized admin type of person and not a busy day job). Additionally, the event Admin could create forms for consistency purposes (i.e. roster, logistics needs, hoodies, badge names, photos, etc.).

For art related admin work, we were on to something this year when we had an Art Grant Administrator. For us it didn't work out as theorized due to the person, but the role worked.

- **Volunteer Management:** We suggest that the Volunteer Coordination ("VC") position be led by two people with significant administration and people skills. Furthermore, VC should manage ALL aspects of the volunteer experience. Meaning, VC should (a) recruit; (b) assign; (c) communication; (d) do scheduling (with collaboration with respective DMs); and, (d) manage the schweg for each volunteer group (with collaboration with DMs). Post event, the VC should do the volunteer survey, an Afterburn Report and maintain the volunteer database. Also, post event the VC should obtain information and communicate swiftly and accurately to a volunteer of their status (if they'll not be allowed to volunteer again).

- **DM Removal:** If a DM has a history of poor performance and applies for the job again, have the courageous conversations. Afterwards, if hired and they fail again, we cannot be afraid to fire the volunteer mid-cycle. However, it is of utmost importance that if this DM is the lead of a mission critical department, that you take swift action to obtain pertinent information and have a backup plan before inviting them to leave.

### **Regional Contacts**

San Diego's RCs seemed largely absent this year. It's entirely possible that this was a result of the venue issue and compressed timeline. However, we would like to see more community engagement and activity out of the RCs, especially when it comes to the promotion of YOUtopia. It would be great to have RC hosted pre-event enculturation activities such as a town hall or meet-ups. In the future, the RCs need to be more involved with ensuring YOUtopia is posted and announced, especially areas that the production team cannot reach (i.e. BMorg calendar, regional events calendar, etc.)

### **Website**

Due to the timing of securing the venue, the team was unable to really get to work on the website until late July. It was a real scramble as we had a hard date of August 1st for tickets to go on sale. We made the date, but it was incredibly stressful to get it all managed. For 2020, the Communications team should have at least 30 days lead-time to get the website updated before launching ticket sales.

# Department Management Team - 2019 Afterburn Report

## Dept. of Art (Placement, Sound & Center Camp)

### Placement (city, art, camps)

**Placement Team's Mission & Goals:** The Placement team is responsible for placing infrastructure, grid layout and naming streets, and placement of Theme Camps and art. Placement maps the city in a manner that allows for the most flow. My goal this year was to have a reasonably interesting and walkable city, reduce neighbor conflicts, put interesting neighbors next to each other.

**Department Manager:** Di Ionescu ("Do or Di")

### Thoughts on PLT Structure

It worked for me! It was nice having multiple people to go to if we needed anything. I felt supported and appreciated. I was sometimes a little confused just because this was a new event for me, but people were always responsive to my questions and it was almost always easy to get answers or information when I needed it.

### What Went Well

**Volunteer Shout Outs:** Ryan and Keith were both amazing. Keith directed people from the gate and MOOP'd (including picking up the survey flags) all week long. Ryan escorted camps to their places and helped out for longer than his assigned shifts. Both are rock stars for sure.

**City Design/Placement:** Everything looked great! I kept getting compliments for some reason all week, even though it's the artists and Theme Camps that made it happen. I was so happy to see the "playa" look so much like Black Rock City with art and the effigy.

### Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes

**RV Placement/Separate RV Area:** I'm not opposed to having an RV area and/or an RV camping fee, but the placement applications created what I believe was unnecessary admin work for multiple people. Participants could have the option to purchase an RV pass when they buy their tickets without having to go through an application process. This would still give us a count of RVs in case space is an issue, and the number of RV passes sold can be capped as needed.

### Forms:

- We should make sure the Google forms are set up to always send form confirmations; we had a lot of doubled-up RV applications, possibly because people didn't get a confirmation, so they thought they didn't go through.
- Too many applications make it difficult to keep track of things - e.g. we had the volunteer RV pass mix-up; we should consider consolidating applications and also creating a master spreadsheet with formulas that collects everything in one place and can be used year to year. I'm willing to work on this in the "off-season."
- Going along with the above, Theme Camp/Art Placement and Theme Camp/Art Grant applications shouldn't be separate apps; they ask for a lot of the same info and people got confused, and it made it harder for us. There should just be an additional optional section at the end of the

placement application for them to attach the info we need for grants (“Yes I want to apply for a grant,” budget doc, whatever other documentation is extra for the grant). EVERYONE needs to apply for placement if they want to be on the map or get directed tickets or early arrival, and then they can choose to also apply for a grant if they want money.

**Early Arrivals and Holding Space:** Theme Camp spaces become open camping when Gate opens to all participants. We can’t promise them Thursday if the event starts on Wednesday. If a Theme Camp arrives on Thursday, by the time they’re set up, they hardly have any time to do their activity or whatever at the event. If they’re that relaxed about it, they can set up their Theme Camp in open camping like many others do.

**Sound Placement:** We definitely need to coordinate this a little earlier.

- I should’ve discussed the sound layout more with the Grid Manager (and the Sound Manager if/when we have one) before even making my first pass at placement. I think we figured out some good principles that will apply to any venue.
- I would recommend NOT allowing camps to categorize themselves as sound camps/primary/secondary. We should just ask specific questions about the size/power demands/volume of their sound system as well as their planned music/noise schedule so we can decide where they fit in best. This is what we ended up doing anyway, and it was only stressful because we were rushing to do it on a tight deadline.

**Power Grid:** I very much support having a power grid that camps can plug into; I think this has advantages regarding safety, efficiency, cost, noise, and other factors. I think most camps would be willing to pay for it if needed. One thing that made me uncomfortable was telling camps and artists that there is no power, then providing power to sound camps and others who requested it. It would be fairer to have clarity and tell everyone if they can request power, then we can say yes or no before the event so they can make alternate plans.

**Overall Admin:** We need a visual timeline with all deadlines (e.g. when the map needs to go to the printer), so that when we shuffle deadlines or other dates, we can easily see if they conflict or get too close to something else. It was silly that we had so many errors on the map just because we made so many last-minute changes. I would love to have a more macro view of deadlines and milestones throughout the planning process. Maybe something as simple as a shared calendar so it’s easier to keep track of deadlines that affect each other across departments.

---

## **Sound & Center Camp**

**Sound:** Due to personal issues the Sound Manager had to quit the team in August. Di and the Grid Manager, Tom, worked together to place the sound camps in a manner that would create flow and harmony of sound. A few days prior to the event, we had someone join the team that wanted to help onsite dealing with sound issues, etc. Unfortunately, again due to personal issues, he was unable to make it to the event as the camps were setting up, so Tom stepped in and helped the sound camps position their equipment.

**Center Camp:** A concentrated effort to have a Center Camp really happened this year. Ultimately, we had to remove the person put in charge of the department as they were not performing. In connection with removing the person, the PLT elected to remove Center Camp from the event this year.

**Dept. of Administration & Contracts**  
**(Admin, Art Grant Administrator, Theme Camp Liaison, Scholarship Ticketing  
Administrator & Equipment Contract Procurement & Insurance Manager)**

**Admin**

**Admin Role Mission & Goals:** Provide administrative support for the PLT and DMT

**YOUtopia Admin:** Rachele Quiogue

**What Went Well**

I came into the role in late July before the venue was secured. I didn't have much work to do up to that point and, actually, for much of the event. I really just came on to help and fill in gaps that were needed. It was fun and I just rolled with it. The team was really easy to work with and I was happy to help wherever I could

**Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

If I did this role again, I would want to be involved earlier. Also, it would be helpful to have some more training and not have to be so reactionary. I know the PLT really tried to support me, but they were so slammed doing so many other things that they did the best they could with the time they had. Being that as it was, it wasn't that stressful for me and I was able to support them in areas that they really needed.

---

**Art Grant Administrator**

**Art Grant Administrator Mission & Goals:** Improve the communication and general perception of artists wanting to attend YOUtopia and seeking art grant support.

**YOUtopia Art Grant Administrator:** Heather Fisher

**Thoughts on PLT Structure**

- The PLT lead I worked with closely was supportive and always available. She let her team have the autonomy to decide the direction and process of our departments.
- This year was set apart from previous mainly because of the PLT. Again, their only goal seemed to truly be to help create and facilitate an event by the community and for the community.
- This was truly the best year ever. I am sure there are tweaks to be made BUT compared to previous years, I'd say the PLT has clearly identified past areas that needed improvement and they brought those improvements this year - big time.
- I felt 100% supported, our department had the freedom to run as the team decided with wisdom and guidance from the PLT lead I worked the closest with.

**What Went Well**

**Cohesive Team:** My role was the administrative side of processing art grants. So, even though I wasn't in the Department of Art, I worked closely with Placement and the Theme Camp Liaison. The whole Admin team and Art team were rock stars. The cross collaboration was great and the was

team very cohesive. There were no egos or agendas, just the singular goal of creating an event by the community for the community. Our team had the freedom to run as the team decided with wisdom and guidance from the PLT member that worked with us.

**Goals Achieved:** Based on speaking with many artists on site, this year was one of the best as far as the process of art grant applications, ease of communicating with the team and overall support, including on site with HEaT, Wolfpack, and logistical support. The energy this year was one of positive excitement and true group effort. It was palpable during YOUtopia and reflected in the feedback from artists, theme camps and participants on site.

**Teamwork:** Really everyone who made YOUtopia happened was awesome. There was so much cross department support, and everyone just pitched in wherever there was a need. I had personal issues arise and the team was more than generous with support, pitching in and doing whatever it took to make sure our community was well served. It was a true pleasure to be part of a team who seemed so focused on making the event one of camaraderie and excellence.

**Event Support:** This year - infrastructure seemed completely on point! From Commissary to Wolf Pack to HEaT....the infrastructure was one that supported and energized the volunteers. Most artists were blown away by the helpful and responsive nature of the site support they received

### **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

**Communication:** There probably could be more communication pre-event about the support teams, their roles and contact info - both to the community and within the DMT.

**Availability:** I personally over committed myself. I think the team, the artists and the community would be better served next year by a more active Art Grant Administrator.

---

### **Theme Camp Liaison**

**Theme Camp Liaison Mission & Goals:** Create a communication path and flow of information between the production team and the camp leads throughout the event planning process.

**Theme Camp Liaison:** Trish Kaufmann (Trixy)

### **Thoughts on PLT Structure**

- Division of decision-making duties between more people makes more sense to me than the 2-person model. That being said I never even met or knew who was the 4th member of the team.
- The PLT handled the last-minute change in permitting really well. The event did not get shut down and the camps were amazing with their ability to roll with the very last-minute changes.
- I only worked with Cassy and she was great. I have no idea how the other PLT members performed, but I think there were no major disasters onsite so that's saying something!
- Thank you for the free parking and reduced-price tickets for everyone. That was super helpful in creating goodwill with the camps/artists/volunteers.

## What Went Well

**New Role:** The position of Theme Camp Liaison was a new one for YOUtopia and the initial purpose was to be available to the community to answer questions and share information about the event/rules/policies etc. I created the YOUtopia Theme Camp Alliance page on Facebook towards this goal and communicated constantly with Theme Camps. It wasn't perfect but it was a definite improvement over previous years and helped promote a sense of camaraderie between camps going in to the event that was super rewarding to see play out

**Cross Collaboration:** My official role was within the Dept of Admin & Contracts (DOAC), but for the role I worked solely with the DOA team (Dept. of Art). There is a convergence of information between these departments which make it necessary to work together throughout the planning stages of the event. Additionally, although my role was to be the liaison between production and Theme Camps, I spent a good deal of time helping to do other administrative jobs such as administering art grants, responding to emails from Theme Camps and artists throughout the process. I also jumped in to help with ticketing and setting up Google application forms & spreadsheets. Our department was overseen by Cassy.

### Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes

**Time Constraints:** I wanted to do pre-YOUtopia outreach events for Theme Camps but due to the accelerated timeline for the event it wasn't feasible.

**Communication:** Getting specific and reliable information ahead of time is always an issue but especially this year with the new venue.

**Team Structure:** While not technically my department, Art Grants should consist of at least 2 leads due to the amount of admin work involved.

**More Collaboration:** More collaboration ahead of time between the other department leads to share information.

**Less Bureaucracy:** I'd also like less bureaucracy / more autonomy regarding community outreach social media posts.

**More Meetings:** 100% would bring back the monthly leads meetings because it is a big part of the team building and community creating experiences. When the event started, I was only acquainted with maybe half of the leads team and that was not ideal.

**Meeting Location & SAFETopia:** I didn't like the enforced out of town meetings. I would have rather had the meetings at CoLab and learned about the safety measures in smaller segments per month, not in one all-day seminar.

**New Event:** It would be fun to do a SoCal/Vegas Pre-compression event that invites all the camps and communities to get together ahead of time.

---

### **Scholarship Ticketing Administrator**

**Scholarship Ticketing Administrator Mission & Goals:** The Scholarship Ticketing Administrator role was a new one this year. The purpose was to help alleviate some of the admin work that comes

about with having to perform analysis regarding Scholarship applications. It's a support role that mainly supports Ticketing. The main goal this year was to create a system to analyze applications and to timely respond to applications.

**Scholarship Ticketing Administrator:** Fin Turner

### **What Went Well**

At the initial meeting, the Ticketing Manager, Cassy and Fin worked collaboratively to create a system to judge the work that applicants submitted along with their application. The collaboration went well, and we came up with a decent system to analyze Scholarship application requests.

### **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

For some reason, as well as we thought our system was, nearly all applicants didn't 'get' that they had to submit something for us to review. They would just include something on their application that they were doing something at the event such as MOOPing or gifting. So, if Scholarships are given next year, then this process needs to be revamped.

---

**Equipment Contract Procurement & Insurance Manager:** There was no one put in this position. Cassy worked with the team to procure equipment. She also reviewed the contracts and obtained insurance for the event.



**Dept. of Commerce**  
**(Ticketing, Purchasing, Dispensary, Coffee/Ice)**

**Ticketing**

**Ticketing Department Mission & Goals:** Ticketing ensures you have adulated properly by acquiring a ticket and parking pass. Ticketing troubleshoots ticketing problems pre-event and answers questions from participants about ticketing troubles.

**Ticketing Manager:** Shannon Tunks

**What Went Well**

**Eventbrite:** 2019 was the third and final contractually obligated year with the ticket/event vendor, Eventbrite. Eventbrite does a great job with ease of use and integration with social media platforms and the new website.

**Trixy & Brenda:** The department really suffered this year from lack of engagement by the Ticketing Manager. If not for Trixy helping out pre-event getting out ticketing codes, etc. and Brenda manning the gate for a decent portion of the event, we would've been up that creek without a paddle. Trixy and Brenda stepped in and rocked it with their organizational and their 'get it done' skills.

**Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

As mentioned, Ticketing really struggled this year. So much so that other people had to step in and help getting ticketing codes out, answer participant questions and step-up onsite. As this is the second year that the department didn't have a co-manager and the second year of struggles, it's clear that in 2020 Ticketing must have a second person staff the department both for pre-event work and onsite tasks. Under no circumstances should this department be allowed to not have at least 2 people managing it.

---

**Purchasing**

**Purchasing Department Mission & Goals:** The Purchasing Department oversees identifying vendors to provide equipment, goods and services for the event. Once vendor is chosen, the Purchasing Manager obtains proposals/quotes together for PLT approval and then tracks invoicing and makes sure the SDCAP Treasurer receives all payment terms, dates, and contact information. The main department goals this year was to create a list all purchasing timelines.

**Purchasing Manager:** Karallyn Kruse

**Thoughts on PLT Structure**

- I feel like the structure overall is a vast improvement compared to past years. At the same time, I feel like there is room to grow and improve. The structure is still so young that I don't feel that this year's PLT had room to spread their wings and fly.

- The PLT did a fantastic job this year. They truly knocked it out of the park. As SDCAP Treasurer, I felt at ease, knowing if there was an emergency decision, they could make that call and I would never have to question it (i.e. ABC surprise permit). As Purchasing Manager, I never had to question a purchase. Things that were accounted for in the budget came in at or below cost. As a participant, I would talk to a PLT member and they were always willing to go out of their way to make sure my experience was the best that it could be.

## What Went Well

**The Centralized System Works:** As with last year, having the general equipment and supply purchasing centralized greatly improved communications and teamwork that is really needed in order to procure equipment (contract review) and insure it.

**Learning Opportunities:** Purchasing was an interesting department with several learning opportunities

## Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes

**Point Person:** Going forward, there should be a point person for each department or key service member to coordinate with the Purchasing Department/Manager. Each DM should know what they do and be the best equipped to describe what they will need. Communication should start early to coordinate department needs. For future years I would recommend that each DM have a meeting with the Purchasing DM to detail needs early on (especially before the contract portion of the process takes place).

**Job Requirements:** Future Purchasing DMs should note that most of the work must be performed during business hours, so if the Purchasing DM has a day job, that job should be flexible. I would highly discourage a Purchasing DM that cannot operate during 9-5, M-F.

**Checks & Balances:** This year I had the unique position of being both the SDCAP Treasurer and the Purchasing DM. I would recommend against this in the future because one person in both roles lack checks and balances. As the Purchasing DM I made sure to get approval from one or more of the PLT. However, if there was an oversight with obtaining approval, there wouldn't be a third party to catch it. I would discourage future events from having the Purchasing DM be the SDCAP Treasurer at the same time. A third-party check is needed.

**Experience Needed:** Last year (first year of this department), the Purchasing DM had enough knowledge of all the departments to know what people need. This year that was not the case and I felt that I missed details that caused hiccups elsewhere. Someone in this position should have a good handle on event needs.

**Centralize Schwag & Deadlines:** This year was a great improvement to volunteer morale. My one suggestion is to centralize shwag one more time unless a DM requests otherwise. Additionally, make an earlier cutoff date for shwag. DMs were getting their purchases in the week before the event. While it was possible it was very taxing because no one wants to leave their volunteers in the dust.

---

## Dispensary

**Dispensary Department Mission & Goals:** Dispensary is responsible for inventory organization, deployment, and then return of equipment and infrastructure for all the departments that help build

YOUtopia. We manage checking the inventory, coordinating department needs, and working with Purchasing to get those items. Dispensary also coordinates load up of the inventory from our site at CoLab pre-event as well as the load out of the inventory after the event. Goals this year included getting all the radios back! Additionally, the goal was to make sure that we had a better system for carports and deployment.

**Dispensary Manager:** Dan Smith (Professor)

### Thoughts on PLT Structure

- I felt it worked pretty well! I still think we could have used some more 'Hub' style leads but the flattened structure definitely worked better than I had expected.
- I always felt supported and they were very responsive!

### What Went Well

**Teamwork:** Yeah Tom, Jamie Rage, King and I pretty much emptied the entire loading truck ourselves after the event! Couldn't wait and we had too much to do so we got it done!

**Rockstar Volunteers:** Ian 'Eco' Cohen and Kristen 'Sapphire' Woo were amazing rock stars and covered almost every morning shift while I went to all-hands meetings (despite not being assigned to those shifts). Andy 'Shit Wizard' and Andrea 'Star Child' killed it on Saturday night when I wanted to take some much-needed time off comms to spend with my camp. John 'Headless' Perkins stuck out some hellish winds on Sunday night to help with load up on Monday, and Dave Hubbard also stuck it out to Monday even though he wasn't scheduled.

### Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes

**Need a Partner:** I would say that pre- and post-event time commitments met my expectations, though not having enough volunteers and no co-lead (which was my choice) led to probably over-commitment during the event.

**Volunteer Shortfall:** For some reasons, volunteers fell out at the last minute, so I had to lean pretty heavily on a core group that really went above and beyond.

**Stuff Reduction:** Reduce inventory even more! We got it down by quite a bit this year, but I want to cut extraneous things even more. The less we take up, the less we must pack in, pack out and inventory.

**Kubota Key Management:** A big opportunity for improvement managing Kubota keys. I like the idea of a white board where you can sign keys in and out after showing your ID maybe? I dunno, going to have to give this one some thought.

**YOUtopia Land:** We need our own space! I know it's what we're looking for but seeing how other events are creating their own spaces that meet their needs, I'm excited to have an opportunity to do that for ourselves. We just need to keep an eye on the prize of getting our own space, and part of that means recognizing that if we're a desert location, we might not ever get back to the nearly 3000-person event of yesteryear. It's okay to get a space for 1500 and consistently sell out every year if it means that we get to continue funding CoLab and the artists in our community. We don't need sustained growth year over year, we just need stability to keep a consistent funding source for these opportunities.

---

## **Coffee/Ice**

**Coffee & Ice Dept. Mission & Goals:** Coffee and ice are the only things sold inside the event. Coffee/Ice Sales manages this, including interfacing with outside vendors, managing the cafe, record keeping, cash handling, and making seriously tasty coffee.

**Coffee/Ice Dept. Managers:** Emily Effner (Leaf) & Sean

### **What Went Well**

Kudos from Fellow DM: Pursuant to the Purchasing DM's (aka the SDCAP Treasurer) Afterburn Report:

- “The best part by far this year was the smoothness at YOUtopia with ice/coffee. The DMs for this department were absolute rock stars when it came to tracking sales and petty cash.
- “The DMs from this department partner with the SDCAP Treasurer to handle petty cash. This year Emily and Sean truly rose above and beyond. They created their own tracking sheets and were very diligent about reporting sales. While we had a lot of work to do regarding tallying every day, their effectiveness made the process smooth and efficient.”

**Ice Vendor:** The ice vendor we used this year was fine and their representative went the extra mile for us when we were getting low on ice.

### **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

**Ice Management:** Suggest monitor ice sales on Thursday and Friday of event, to ensure ice inventory for Saturday-Sunday. If more ice is needed, then plan for it pre-event so there isn't a last-minute scramble to obtain ice (especially difficult in semi-remote locations).

#### **Dept. of YOUtopia Environment (Grid, Wolfpack and LNT)**

### **Grid Department**

**Grid Department Mission & Goals:** Grid was a new department this year and is an offshoot from Wolfpack, but still under the DPW umbrella. This department is responsible for the electrical infrastructure for the event. Our biggest goal and accomplishment were to change the thought process on how the grid is designed.

**Grid Manager:** Tom Solmes (Yeah Tom)

### **Thoughts on the PLT Structure**

- Loved the structure, Loved the Team.
- I felt the Love from PLT!

## What Went Well

**Coordination:** Pre-event responsibilities included working with Theme Camps regarding power needs and the Placement team to collaborate on camp placement. I also had to coordinate with PLT to determine power needs of event, including ESD and Ops. This process went fairly well.

**Onsite Coordination:** Onsite, the “grid” was received, installed, and tested before granting access to power. I performed routine twice-daily check-ups on all equipment to ensure operating properly.

**Teamwork:** Every time I struggled, Wolfpack had my back.

**Goal Achieved:** Our biggest goal and accomplishment was to change the thought process on how the grid is designed. I decided to use smaller generators (and more of them) in lieu of (less) larger generators. This worked out great.

## Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes

**Timeline Impacts:** Things went pretty smooth but the compressed timeline it impacted the timeline of securing the contract for equipment.

**Delivery & Return of Equipment:** Herc delivered all the equipment that we ordered but the timeliness of delivery and pick up of their equipment needs improvement.

**PLT Conflict:** There was one situation that put me in the middle of a couple of the PLT members. One PLT member wanted a larger generator for ESD RVs and the other PLT member was fixated on staying under budget for varying reasons (event size, ticket sales, etc.). This put me in an awkward position. In the end, we (myself and the budget conscious PLT member) attempted to placate the other PLT member by adding another smaller generator to assist with power needs for ESD RVs. It helped but didn't quite work out as intended. Next year the PLT should have a more thorough conversation for situations such as this so that their DM isn't put in the middle.

## Wolfpack

**Wolfpack Mission & Goals:** Abiding by their motto, “First to Come, Last to Pull Out,” the Wolfpack are a die-hard crew. Literally building the event from the ground up, this crew sees to it that the infrastructure for our fair YOUtopian city is in place for the event. They are also responsible for disassembling everything at the conclusion of the event, so our city leaves no trace.

**Wolfpack Department Managers:** Aaron Ward (Man Candy) and King

## What Went Well

**Load In/Load Out/Deployment:** The Wolfpack team crushed it with loading the YOUtopia truck and unloading it on site. The truck was loaded within 2 hours at CoLab, arrived on Sunday at the venue and was unloaded within a couple of hours. On Monday, the city was 85% built by late Monday afternoon. On top of that, there were other tasks that the team took on such as putting up additional signage along the dirt road into the event for participants.

**HEaT:** Our HEaT department was flawless. Having Will on standby allowed us to prevent getting backlogged and allowed our participants to stay on track with their setups/breakdowns. We must have a two-person team like this next year as well.

**Equipment:** Overall our equipment worked and got the job done. The forklift was necessary. The earth auger was necessary. The trencher was also necessary and effective.

**Power:** Our generators worked out well. For the community, sound stages and other high-power demand camps, we did a series of smaller generators which everyone seemed satisfied with their needs being fulfilled. From an energy standpoint, that worked out and might be the best solution overall.

**Adapt & Overcome:** I was honestly blown away with every department's ability to adjust to this new environment and to their different roles.

### **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

**Vendors:** We should make sure to have vendors that are local to the event location as much as possible (although this location didn't allow for very many local vendors). To the extent possible, we should also have a list of secondary vendors if the vendor is unable to meet our demands. We should use as many Burner vendors as possible,

**Experienced Volunteers:** It is crucial we have volunteers we can count on to successfully get what's needed sent on supply runs. For example, for the run to get the commissary tent walls, the vendor originally gave the volunteers we sent components that weren't fire resistant and luckily the hand-picked volunteer on hand for this situation, Pants (playa name), caught that crucial difference and corrected it before they came back. When we had to do the ice run, the other hand-picked volunteer, Boots (playa name), suggested using the pallets for insulation between the ice and the metal truck bed. Volunteers are great but making sure we're sending the right person for the job is critical.

**Onsite Deliveries:** Deliveries need to be scheduled for civilized hours – 7am delivery is a stretch at any time, but most especially the morning after the burn. We also need a dedicated volunteer, one who has a radio, to sign for/direct a scheduled delivery when it arrives. Accidents/mistakes happen and having a clear chain of command for them makes them less impactful.

**Street Signage:** The street signs were beautiful, and Jamie Rage did a fantastic job. However, making the signs double sided so they easily visible from both directions and to add reflective tape to the first letter of each street name would be an improvement for next year.

**Gennies:** There was some concern that we had to count our milliamps in Ops. For production we need to have a generator with higher capabilities than we would need. Lastly on generators, we need to have padlocks for each one of them as we had a participant open up the panels and look inside. As far as I know nothing became of this incident, but it potentially could be with the wrong person doing the same and going further, potentially damaging the generator or hurting themselves or someone else.

**Equipment:** The trencher was fine, but we need a fast mode of transporting it. Also, the auger was helpful but if we're going to be in a location like this in the future, we recommend we purchase a more powerful one as we had difficulty digging to a reasonable depth before the auger would cease to bore downward. This led to us having shallow holes for our street signs and ultimately that was a nonissue, but we cannot expect to be that lucky every time.

**Training:** We have an amazing team of people that need some extra training and guidance so we can continue to improve and grow this event. We know radio training was given to the team and most

people showed up for it, but there was some confusion for some of our DMs. Another training session would benefit everyone and calm their nerves about using a radio. I know we have an overly qualified medical staff and odds are our participants will use CPR outside of YOUtopia than at it, but the training would be beneficial to our DMs and camp leads. We heard of 3 flat Kubota tires which occurred. It is incredibly easy to apply a flat tire patch to the Kubotas. We should train whoever on our team wants to learn how to fix a flat to do so and have flat tire kits on hand.

### **Volunteer Scheduling**

- The way that we have volunteer scheduling currently set up causes numerous issues. Requiring each department to locate and schedule their own volunteers is impossible to do for some of the larger departments.
- We don't allow our volunteers to sign up for multiple departments. When we force volunteers to only work for one department it hinders their possibilities to explore other departments which they may have a passion and/or heightened ability to perform the requested tasks. It makes it harder for leads to fulfill their required shifts because now you can only use people who are among your select volunteers.
- Our DMs do not all know their number of required volunteers and shifts because they have not been trained in how to break down their duties.
- Volunteer Coordination needs to be the primary location that volunteers check-in onsite and should be managed by 2 to 3 core team members. It helps with confusion as having multiple areas to meet for each department, makes it near impossible to tell if all your volunteers have arrived, especially if you have a large team checking in as is the case with Wolfpack.
- We need to do some serious rehauling on how our volunteers sign up and what information we request. Starting from the initial interaction, volunteers need to have the possibility to sign up for shifts rather than departments. This will allow our volunteers to schedule themselves in a manner that allows them to have the maximum amount of fun. Some volunteers like to front load their YOUtopia experience with shifts and enjoy not being tied to anything from there on. Some like to backload and some like to spread their shifts throughout for their own decided reasons. One of the most beneficial returns that production gets when we do this is volunteers that find a specific position they excel at and have a passion for which makes our jobs so much easier.

---

### **Leave No Trace (LNT)**

**LNT Dept. Mission & Goals:** LNT oversees a diverse set of techniques to make sure we leave the site cleaner than we found it. This includes promoting public awareness, managing MOOP during the event, MOOP sweeping post event, and assisting with the MOOP map. The LNT crew makes sure participants leave a pristine location when the event is over. They help educate participants on minimizing ecological impact and "Pack It In, Pack It Out" principles.

**LNT Dept. Manager:** Melissa Vilencia (MoMo)

### **Thoughts on the PLT Structure**

- I was just constantly impressed by the PLT. Crying now thinking of the tireless work they put into making this magic happen so well and quickly. Unbelievable!!!! I love you guys!!!!

- I felt 100% supported at all times
- Just keep up the good work & we will continue to be successful

### What Went Well

**MOAR!** We should do more events like this one!!!!!! Community unite!!! So impressed with the love, work, willingness, & ability to kick ass and take names! I'd work with any & all of you all over again!!!!

**Volunteer Shout Out:** Les (Brobare) was the biggest rockstar of them all- he MOOP'd his heart out throughout the entire event. I would work with him anytime.

**Volunteers:** I had 13 volunteers scheduled but 2 were no-show's (and I didn't get the notice until after the event). I think we were fine though- definitely didn't need 2 people in the booth- so we put them out on MOOP duty.

**Support:** Wolfpack had my back every step of the way and I am so grateful to them. Anything that was too heavy or anytime I couldn't make a trash run, they did it for me. I love them so much! No questions asked and they never made me feel like I was asking too much. Actually, all departments really had each other's backs though and it was a beautiful thing to see. I was overly impressed and grateful constantly throughout the event. So much gratitude.

**Collaboration & Organized:** Commissary kicked butt too!!!! They were super organized with trash and made it easy.

**Oops!** I used the vendor for printing pocket ashtrays and even with their time constraints, they did an exceptional job. Howevverrrrrrr, they left a principle off the pouch. I mean...really what were we to do with a 9 Principled pouch? So, we came up with a game called "Name the Missing Principle" and people loved it!!!! Woosh, embarrassment averted!!!!!!

### Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes

**Volunteer Coordination:** I think Volunteer Coordination (VC) can handle volunteer check ins and lost/found if they are put together. Also, I think if we coordinate with the VC better, we can make sure to keep better track of volunteers. But that's something we would have to discuss with VC if they are willing to help. Honestly, though, everyone was so willing & supportive through the whole event I was humbled.

**Recycling:** If I had more people, we could have organized recycling/trash pirates but there wasn't enough time to get all that in order. If we want to make an environmental impact, then I would need more help

**Communication:** I think communication I key. Being available and able to help the volunteers is important. A can-do attitude and always having a smile are how successful managers create teams of beasts!!!!!!

**Dept. of People**  
**(Volunteer Coordination, Please Dept., Greeters, Commissary)**

**Volunteer Coordination**

**Volunteer Coordination Mission & Goals:** The mission of the Volunteer Coordination Department (VC) is to recruit, manage and allocate YOUtopia volunteers. VC helps ensure every department is staffed, communicates with volunteers, track volunteer attendance, hours and performance. VC also collaborates with the Ticketing Department to issue volunteer tickets.

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Brenda De La Cruz (Brendizzle)

**Thoughts on the PLT Structure**

- I felt extremely supported this year and also well taken care of. My concerns were never dismissed and my interactions with Ali and Cassy left me feeling valued every step of the way.
- The PLT ensured the volunteers would be well taken care of and I thank you for standing by your word.

**What Went Well**

**Thank You:** Without volunteers, we couldn't make this wonderful event happen!

**Volunteer Experience:** The new volunteer policies were beneficial in attracting new volunteers as well as signing up those that had volunteered in the past. Without the change, I doubt we would have been as successful as we were. Overall, the volunteers were extremely happy this year and felt not only appreciated but valued. The responses to the Volunteer Experience Survey were extremely positive.

**New DMs:** Please Department did a great job. Champagne handled all communication and scheduling for Please Department while Kuddlz was responsible for everything on site. Both of these two new DMs were eager and willing to take direction from me during the volunteer selection process. They also kept in constant contact with their volunteers up to and throughout the entire event. Split was great pre-event and on site. His volunteers were actively engaged, and he kept a close eye on his schedule and contacting his volunteers. His volunteers also knew where to check in and at what time on site.

**Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

**Two People Needed:** Yin (Commissary) didn't have a co-lead so I took over communication and scheduling for Commissary. It's absolutely crucial that each department has two leads. It's too much for one to handle on their own and especially when we expect them to keep their volunteers engaged for months before the event occurs.

**Interaction with VC:** Interaction with various DMs ran the gamut of no problems to some personality conflicts. I think that some of the new DMs just weren't used to having so much oversight from the VC. There were times asked the PLT to intervene when I was being sidestepped and/or ignored. This conflict didn't exist once we were on site.

**Communication:** Communication is really important to keep volunteers engaged. The Wolfpack and Ticketing DMs did not communicate with their volunteers until it came to scheduling and even

then, it was minimal. I was continuously fielding emails from Wolfpack and Ticketing volunteers, assuring them that they were on the schedule and to remain patient.

---

### **Please Department**

**Please Dept. Mission & Goals:** The primary objective of the Please Dept. is to take care of the hard-working department leads and volunteers during the event. The Please Dept. is the bringer of good news and smiles!

**Please Dept. DMs:** Michelle Lecours (Champagne) and Ladonna Alequin (Kuddlz)

### **What Went Well**

The event as a whole went exceptionally well. Even with the small snags, like the missing commissary walls or last min health permits, we worked quickly and efficiently to handle everything.

### **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

**Strategic Adjustments:** We will probably need some strategic adjustments if we are remaining in that location or any location similar to it. Overnight crews were adjusted at the last min which did lead to some confusion for volunteers. The department ran efficiently with many of our volunteers assisting other departments when they needed some extra hands on duty.

**Infrastructure:** Strongly suggest buying at least two more propane fire pits if we remain at that location. Personal fire pits provided much needed comfort on late night shifts. Would also recommend stronger straps, and structures for high winds. We nearly lost the commissary on Sunday night due to extraordinary high winds. Thankfully Wolfpack held it down like they always do.

---

### **Greeters**

**Greeter Dept. Mission:** Greeters are the folks who welcome participants with open arms into YOUtopia, while making sure you know where you're going, answering your questions, and getting you to your place of party as fast as possible! Greeters work with Gate and Placement to make entry nice and smooth.

**Greeter DMs:** Jamie Rage and Xena

**PLT Thoughts on Greeters:** Jamie did a great job this year and so did her volunteers. Jamie nearly single-handedly managed her volunteer teams like a champ before and during the event. Due to Jamie's efforts, the Greeter station had a flow area so that Participants coming into the City were welcomed by smiling faces and people performing for them. Greeters did an excellent job of informing Participants where they needed to go.

## Dept. of Propaganda (Communications/Marketing and Media)

### Communications/Marketing

**Communications/Marketing Dept. Mission & Goals:** The primary mission of the Communications team is to spread the word about YOUtopia as an official regional Burning Man event by promoting and encouraging Burning Man culture in the form of the 10 principles of Burning Man. The Communications/Media team accomplishes this task by utilizing various social media outlets and e-mail list blasts to promote YOUtopia, the 10 principles, YOUtopia art grants, ticket sales, and much more.

**Communications/Marketing Manager:** Zack Rieger

### What Went Well

**New Website:** Zack created a brand-new website this year and it looks great! It took a bunch of effort but once we got the venue secured, Zack crushed it by getting everything updated to reflect the new venue and make sure all the bells and whistles were working right. We had a hard date of 8/1/19 to get the website launched and ticket sales going, and Zack met that deadline.

**Event Graphics:** As with 2018, the 2019 event graphics were **AWESOME**, which were created by Zack who lent his extensive experience, artistic talents and time to the event.

**Marketing/Social Media:** Zack and Cassy worked really well together to keep social media posts moving along and keeping YOUtopians updated about deadlines and information. Zack created several email blasts that went out to supplement the social media posts.

### Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes

**The Burn, It Hurts!** There HAS/MUST be at least two people managing this department. Zack was technically the only DM for Comms/Marketing and he did a fantastic job doing all the things, coming up with art and ideas for social media posts, creating the map etc. However, Cassy had to act as the second DM for this department and it was simply too much. It got to the point of intense stress and near burn out. Add in the suppressed timeline and it was a Christmas miracle we got as much done as we did.

### Media

**Media Dept. Mission & Goals:** Media is the visual documentation department for YOUtopia and captures the magic of the event through photography and/or videography. The Media Department also has the responsibility to archive media shared by the community and to address and educate the community about photo consent matters.

**Media DMs:** Jules Frazier and Heather Scott

### Thoughts on PLT Structure

No strong feelings either way. It seemed to work well from my perspective. I felt appreciated.

## What Went Well

**Effigy Burn:** We captured 360 (high angle) and regular video of YOUtopia's first ever effigy burn, including the fire conclave and general video of the event.

### Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes

**Infrastructure:** Based on location, it would be good to set up some infrastructure, such as a small tower to get some time lapse video and serve as a base for the camera for effigy burn. Also hoping to fly drones next year.



**Dept. of Vehicle Management  
(Gate, Traffic/Parking/DMV, Perimeter)**

**Gate**

**Gate Dept. Mission & Goals:** This crew ensures you have adulated properly by acquiring a ticket, parking pass, and have left your dog, cat, or iguana at home. This team works with Greeters, Ticketing, and Placement to help you reach your desired destination. Critical thinking and communication skills are a must.

**Gate DM:** Sabella Lichtman (Bella)

**Thoughts on PLT**

I was insanely happy to witness four people working so well together. No clashing control freaks, no visual drama or stress working with each other. I did not see a division in authority (compared to previous years). I loved having Cassa Frass, Ali, 51, and Mystic as the four head honchos. I felt that everyone was able to take charge at the challenges. While being silly and loving and playful. All light-hearted energy with these four.

**What Went Well**

**Alone, but Not:** This year I was leading the Gate solo, after my co-lead backed out 2 months prior to the event. Turns out I didn't do anything alone as I had the best volunteer crew, all solid workers. Brenda was my wing woman all week during the event. I did a lot of work leading up to the event, but I loved not having to coordinate and answer to another person regarding the big decisions. I enjoy being in control! I felt like everyone stepped up to help me, all having full respect that I was juggling a lot.

**Crushed It:** During the event, I opened on time, ran the Ticketing for a bit while Shannon was absent, transported volunteers and ran errands for people, trained and managed, held down the fort after hours. I had a few nerve-wracking situations with some people at the gate and I handled it professionally yet having a smile on my face. Gave information as a greeter would. Worked my butt off. Almost every night I ended up closing gate ranging from 1-4am and waiting for people to get on the grounds without an actual gate.\*

**Ops/Production:** I loved the way commissary was set up. Bathrooms with handwashing stations= PRISTINE. Cleanest event I've been to. We should step it up.... have an adopt-a-porto and dress it up and make it like a fun and pleasant bathroom experience while on playa. I loved that our "center camp" was like its own downtown- the busiest street and intersection. I loved how spread out the whole Ops & Production area was.

**Theme Camps:** Much less drama and different camps got to shine. Having the flat grid to display the camps, we saw YOUtopia in its entirety of magical...such a fabulous layout and venue space. It's just so far from SD! But having YOUtopia on open flat desert should be FOREVERRR!! Burn night was just fabulous.

**DM Shout Outs:** Placement was AMAZING and so spacious. Well done Di!!! Commissary: Using these guys was the best idea yet. Continue the good work with feeding us extra well!!!! Please Dept: Kuddlz ROCKED IT! She gave us NOURISHMENT and nutrition. Teas and nuts, heaters and hand warmers, Advil when the med tent didn't have any. Another MVP volunteer was Keith Split. He

ensured the gate had safety and support all week. He was awesome and helped me with so much. Love him.

**Volunteer Shout Outs:** I was allotted 20 volunteers and only 14 ended up showing up. This turned out to be a perfect amount. During the busy times, we had a perfect amount to handle the cars. At no point we had backup or waiting for over 5 minutes. A constant flow the whole time!! All of our people were freaking AWESOME. All characters and bringing something beautiful and hilarious in themselves. All worked hard. Everyone got along and worked hard in their own ways. I give it all to them for running the show!

### **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

**Need a Partner:** I liked doing my own thing, but I DO need a co-lead for the event. I opened & closed the long hours on time, with only a few breaks in between. Next year I will definitely need to have more help during the event.

**Gotta Do Better:** What we lacked this year was thorough checking. I justified this leniency because this year we did not prohibit our past years' list. (glass, lighter fluid, etc.) We didn't check the cars actually and for that safety concern I regret that. I tend to think of the worst and Goddess forbid someone got in with weapons. Anyway, I plan to add a car search to the volunteer protocol. I did not get to "train" every single volunteer- and especially the ticketing volunteers that joined gate. It was great having them, but a quick 5-minute training spiel is necessary for all new volunteers on schedule. Everyone should have the same checklist & protocol.

**Scanners:** WE NEED THOSE. The tracking got so hectic with having to use PAPER waivers to count all the attendees. Never again!

**Training:** Improvements for next year: training every volunteer so we have the same protocol with every vehicle that comes in the gate. Too many people doing their own thing = convoluted information to newcomers.

**Key Volunteer:** Next year, I will choose my key volunteer upon how hard they showed up to kick ass this year.

**Pretty 'Em Up:** Medical tents could be better- more comforting and feminine. So maybe some tapestries or cozier things.

**Barrier:** We have to have a gate, LIKE A PHYSICAL GATE for when we are open & closed. We need this so everyone driving in will know it. This year we had no barrier, no 24-hour patrolling, no way of knowing who is coming in our gate after hours. Not cool to do that ever again. Maybe we can construct a cool YOUtopia gate/welcome archway...it can be inviting yet also a way to keep people out before/after closing.

## **Traffic/Parking/DMV & Perimeter**

**Dept. Mission & Goals:** Traffic is responsible for controlling the flow of traffic, address issues as they arise. The Department of Mutant Vehicles approves and licenses art cars to help cruise participants around YOUtopia in style. Perimeter was a brand-new part of the department this year as YOUtopia has never had a perimeter before. Perimeter goals were to keep unticketed people out and ticketed people in!

**Traffic/Perimeter DMs:** Keith Macgregor (Split) and Aaron Perez (Klutch)

### **What Went Well**

**Success:** The event was a success on many levels. Feedback received over the course of the event from community in attendance was nothing but positive. A number of people went so far as to say “Best YOUtopia ever” and “Feels like Wednesday of build week” and we all know build week is like the Burning Man of yore.

**VC Crushed It:** Volunteer Coordinator was on point providing the requested 40 plus volunteers for the department. Creating a new department can be challenging in a number of ways. Brenda and I (Split) worked well together. The department would not have been a success without her assigning people.

**Pre-Event Site Visit:** The site visit prior to the event was critical. It allowed us to liaison with the landowner as well as get eyes on the property. The landowner was kind enough to give Split an hour-long tour of the property. He highlighted the do and don'ts as well as some of the challenges he has encountered with the local population.

**Team Work Makes the Dream Work:** Interdepartmental collaboration was great. Due to time constraints, it became necessary to rely on Wolfpack to deploy the County mandated road traffic signs. Dispensary and Wolfpack supported the department without error or delay. When it became clear that additional Kubota's were needed for the department, Dispensary shifted its resources and supplied as needed. When additional radios were requested, the request was fulfilled in minutes. Twice during the event Kubota's had flat tires. Wolfpack came through strong and got them back on patrol within an hour. The “can do” spirit supported the department immensely in its time of need.

**Volunteers:** Volunteers were outstanding! Everybody who signed up for shifts showed up and enjoyed the work. This is a win not only for the event but also for the Perimeter Department as a whole.

**Made Me A Believer:** Despite initial trepidations on my behalf, the department was a success due to stand up senior leadership (Cassy and Brenda) amazing Inter-Departmental collaboration (Wolfpack and Dispensary) and a committed community of volunteers. I hope that I was able to create a system and impart knowledge to an up and coming leader in the San Diego community (Klutch). I had an amazing time supporting the San Diego Region and the Southwest Regional Burning Man Community.

## **Emergency Services Department & Rangers/Security (FAST, Rangers, Staff & Vendors)**

**Department Mission:** ESD monitors most aspects of physical and environmental safety pre, during and post-event. ESD also creates and delivers training for YOUtopia leads in emergency and radio protocols throughout the year and at our annual on-site safety training event – SAFETopia.

**\*\*Note,** except for Rangers there were no designated Department Managers for this area. However, 51 led the fire/medical teams and Mystic was the Ranger and Security team's point of contact.

The ESD of YOUtopia offered the following services at this location:

1. Fire suppression and prevention w/ a type VI engine and water tender, plus Fire Chief
2. Medical tent plus two roving medical rescue teams
3. Crisis Intervention team (for Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and 5150s)
4. Fire Art Safety Team (FAST)
5. Dispatch services

### **What Went Well**

**Fire Suppression:** Fire Suppression services were a part of YOUtopia again this year, including SDCAP's type VI Engine skid unit (mounted on a Ford F350) and the hiring of 7 professional firefighters. Water was sourced through a fire-hydrant in California City pumped into a 1,500-gallon water tender. A professional fire crew was hired and paid per 24-hour shift. Chief Frank Padilla Jr. took command of the fire crew with Captain Doug Kilpatrick, Lt Joey Villasista, Lt. Tim Harris, and firefighters Kieth Huff, Lawrence Green and Wendy Sorber supporting.

**Managed Incidents:** Among others, some of ESD's well-coordinated responses were:

- **Vehicle Stuck in Sand:** Friday October 25 at approximately 1705hrs, Fire personnel responded to a reported 18-wheeler stuck in the sand 4th Street and F. Upon arrival, Engine 1 noted the cab of a semi-truck was stuck in the sand and unable to move under its own power. HEaT was called, and a large fork lift was moved into place to gently dislodge the large vehicle. No vehicle damage was noted post removal. The area was closed to vehicles with caution tape.
- **Diesel Spill:** Wednesday October 23 at approximately 1359hrs, Fire responded to a report of a diesel fuel spill at Scrabble Camp (4th Street and E). On arrival, Eng 1 noted a small area of what appears to be approximately 1 gallon of diesel fuel already absorbed into the sand. The sand was removed by shovel into a plastic bag and later placed at the base of the Effigy to be part of the planned burn.
- **Unauthorized Fire Art Flame Effect:** Saturday October 25 at approximately 2300hrs, Kern County Fire Safety Officers requested to meet regarding the active use of an unauthorized fire art flame effect. On arrival Fire Duty Chief Bever met with KCoFD personnel and the artist. Artist has been counseled on the impact of this decision (post event).

**Effigy Burn:** YOUtopia has always been held in an area where an effigy burn was not possible. This year however, the new location is clear desert with limited fire risk. An artist was commissioned, and an effigy was built and installed. Following our very strict fire burn plan, the effigy was fueled and ignited without incident within 4 minutes of the planned timeline (delayed while clearing fire lanes on the east side of the burn).

## **Emergency Services Statistics:**

- 48 patient contacts, 8 requiring a Patient Care Report be generated
- 1 patient ambulance transport(s)
- Notable incidents:
  - Medical – Stage 4 cancer patient with severe abdominal pain requiring transport
  - Moderate winds on Saturday evening required shutdown of all wood fires
  - CoLab flame effect used without authorization
- 17 Fire dispatches (burn barrels, snake relocations, illegal flame effects)
- ~30 generator and fuel storage inspections / relocations (fire prevention)
- 2 Crisis intervention patient contacts and 4 patient consults
- Harm Reduction (not part of ESD) – 2 patients

## **Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement, and Possible Changes**

**Updated SOPs/New Policies:** A review of SOPs should happen and update as needed. Should work on that for 2020. Create written participant policies/agreements for flame/fire effects (somewhat new issue for YOUtopia due to previous location).

**Ranger DM & Volunteer Coordination:** All volunteers should feed through general YOUtopia volunteer database, but be approved by certain departments (Medical, Fire, Rangers) for obvious and less obvious purposes. This event had two challenges. One volunteer, approved by YOUtopia, had been banned by BRC Rangers. Another volunteer Ranger had been approved by Rangers but was flagged by YOUtopia. Going forward, all volunteers should be vetted through YOUtopia's Volunteer Coordinator so that no one is missed.

**Ticketing:** A flagged Ranger volunteer abused the ticket codes (didn't use code to enter the event but used code several times in different names). Exposed YOUtopia to potential fraud. Must find alternate to ticketing codes.

