



# TEMPLE GUARDIANS

## 2023 MANUAL



**The Temple Guardians hold the space of the  
Temple of Burning Man, Black Rock City**



**T E M P L E  
G U A R D I A N S**

*The Temple rises yearly at Burning Man,  
a steadfast oasis of calm in the deep playa, ready  
to bear whatever joy and pain participants may carry with them,  
and to provide in return whatever those participants need at that  
moment in their lives.*


*Standing in quiet support of the Temple is a group of individuals  
who have watched over each Temple erected since 2002:  
The Temple Guardians.*

*Our main duty is to hold the space of the Temple, to ensure an  
inviting, inclusive environment that  
allows everyone to experience what they seek without  
interference. We do so by unobtrusively protecting the  
peacefulness and safety of both the structure and the  
participants who visit it.*

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## MISSION STATEMENT



**Temple Guardians hold the space  
of the Temple, and by so doing,  
ensure that all who enter are  
able to experience what they  
need at that moment, and to  
express themselves fully.  
Guardians further keep the  
Temple, as well as the  
participants who visit it, safe.**

## THE 10 PRINCIPLES: A TEMPLE GUARDIAN PRACTICE

Since its inception, the ethos and culture of the Burning Man community has been anchored in its Ten Principles. As participants and as volunteers, Temple Guardians seek to emulate these values both in and outside of their service.

### RADICAL INCLUSION

As Temple Guardians, we welcome all to the Temple, without exception

### GIFTING

We gift to Temple participants a safe place where they can experience transformation. An essential part of this gift is to keep the space free of any individual guardian's personal perspectives

### DECOMMODIFICATION

We create an environment and community free of commercial intent or exchange. Temple Guardians do not volunteer in exchange for any benefit – service is its own reward

### RADICAL SELF-RELIANCE

We proactively rely on our own inner resources to ensure that we arrive on-time and are physically, emotionally, and mentally prepared for our shifts

### RADICAL SELF-EXPRESSION

Our expression is consciously and distinctly different from that of other participants. We make small pushes from a great distance, always carrying in our hearts the space of the Temple and never drawing attention to ourselves

## COMMUNAL EFFORT

Though we frequently work in noble silence during shifts, we cooperate and collaborate with one another to create a place of peace and harmony, a space free of negativity that might pollute our community

## CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

We stay alert for any risks to safety, and always communicate and cooperate with our partners in other Burning Man departments to protect the Temple space and its participants

## LEAVE NO TRACE

While on duty, we leave no sign of our own personal presence; we remain in the background unless called upon and keep the space clear, open, and available to all

## PARTICIPATION

We participate by holding the profound space and witness its miracles. We do not seek to involve ourselves in other people's experiences; instead, we commit to ensuring that all who enter can deeply and personally participate in the Temple on their own terms and in their own way

## IMMEDIACY

We are present and calm, and keenly aware of all around us. We enable miracles and transformation by respecting the need of participants to fully process what they experience in the Temple as well as protecting their space to do so

## WHAT IS THE TEMPLE?

**The Temple is the soul of Burning Man.** Rising from Black Rock City's 12 o'clock, standing by itself, it faces the Man and beckons participants to take a respite within its walls from the revels of the event all around it.

Artist David Best first constructed the Temple in 2000 to commemorate the death of a friend who had passed away in a motorcycle accident en route to Burning Man. The next year and the years that followed, the Temple became larger and embraced all of humanity.

**The Temples have meant different things to different people through the years.** Some people have a strong spiritual connection with it, others use it as a place of contemplation, a place to rest, a place of reflection, a place of rituals, weddings, reunions, etc.

**The Temple has inspired its own tradition.** Many write letters to the departed, themselves, no one, or everyone, or express the otherwise inexpressible by bringing an object or offering to burn on Sunday night of Burning Man.

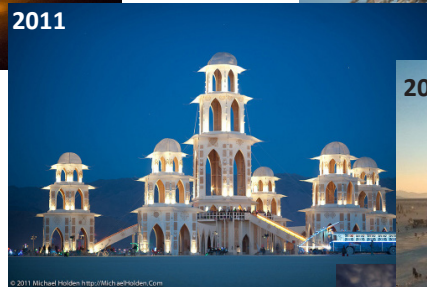
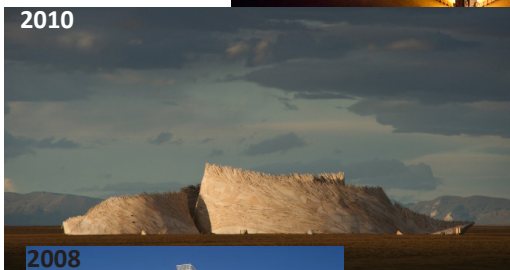
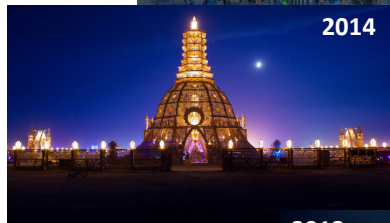
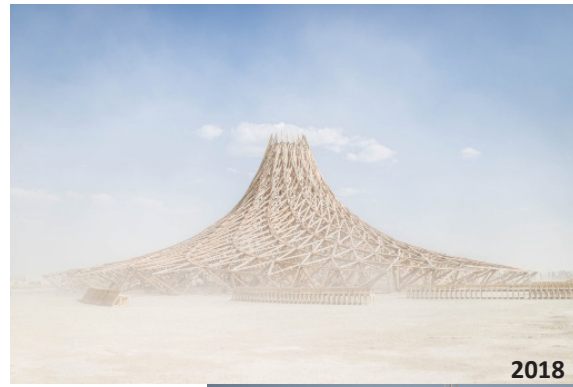


Those who participate in this tradition often find that it works as a spiritual cleansing, a liberator of the mind, and a psychological release. What is for certain is that the Temple always stirs awe and inspiration. Even if you don't connect to it spiritually, it is a magnificent piece of art and highly-revered as such.



*"In order for people to feel safe, to feel and express deep emotion and so they can heal, the temples must be beautiful and delicate while at the same time being strong to provide comforting support."*

– David Best



# OUR ORIGIN & HISTORY

## A NEED ARISES

The 2002 Burn was approaching, and David Best was nearing completion of his third and most elaborate structure, The Temple of Joy. But he wasn't feeling joyful about what might happen to his latest creation.

He was concerned about the potential for damage, inadvertent fires, and injury to Burners who attempted to climb the Temple walls. So, he contacted friend and fellow artist Termeh Yeghiazarian to brainstorm some possible solutions. What they came up with was the idea of volunteers, Guardian Angels, who would unobtrusively monitor activities in the Temple from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily, gently redirecting unsafe behavior and actions that disrupted the contemplative atmosphere that made the Temple so popular with Burners. It was the birth of the Temple Guardians.

## SILENT VOICES

Termeh and David agreed that a staff of four Angels and one lead (who carried the group's only two-way radio and hence was called "The Voice") would provide adequate coverage without intruding on the serenity of the Temple. An additional "Angel in Waiting" stood by in case someone had to drop out during the shift or if something was needed by the team. The earliest Guardian Angels were excited about playing this helper role in the Temple, and wanted to look the part during their shifts by wearing wings. But this idea flew in the face of David and Termeh's agreement to remain unobtrusive, nearly invisible. David told Termeh, "It's our goal to influence the space invisibly while seeming to disappear when not needed." Winged Angels hardly fit into that parameter. Nor did wearing wings or some other type of uniform make the Temple seem "mostly unattended," another of David's goals for the Temple Guardians.

## THE BANDANA & THE BELL

Eventually, Termeh and David agreed to a subtler solution: a simple bandana especially designed to identify Angels. But Termeh had another concern: in the dark, would people be able to locate an Angel visually? And would Guardians be able to find each other? Termeh's solution was a bracelet with a tiny bell, which she made by hand and gave to every Guardian Angel. Despite the fact that the bells were almost impossible to hear in the din of the Playa, both the bracelet and the bandana remain Guardian traditions to this day.

## THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

By the 2003 Burn, Termeh began to feel overwhelmed trying to handle staffing needs for the Temple Guardians using only pencil and paper. She asked one of her volunteers, Tall Tom, for help. Tom applied his expertise in spreadsheets to computerize staffing and assignments, vastly improving administrative efficiency. He would take over as manager in 2005 when Termeh moved on to other work. During this time, the Guardians expanded times that they served, requiring a much larger staff and volunteers.

Meanwhile, the word Angels had disappeared from the organization's nomenclature and volunteers were simply called Guardians.

Leadership of the Temple Guardians changed again in 2006, when Tall Tom was unable to attend the Burn and fellow Guardian Kilika took over the organization. Tom returned for the following two Burns. In 2009, leadership was split between two Burners, Skirblah and Liz. In 2010, Carousel began leading the Temple burn perimeter activity for Guardians, and in 2011, when Liz was expecting a baby and couldn't attend, Carousel became Skirblah's partner.

In 2013, Carousel took over as sole manager of the Guardians, it's 5th and longest-serving manager. Carousel brought more change to the Guardians than anyone since Termeh. In particular, he strengthened and professionalized training, work assignments and the organizational structure.



## THE GUARDIANS' ROLES EXPAND

From the start, there was a recognition for the need to train the Voices (mostly in how to use the radio), but training was optional for the other volunteers until 2011, when Carousel developed a new training regimen and made it a requirement for all Guardians. The original training outline was just one page in length. Today the training guide consists of nearly 50 pages, including specialized versions of training for new Guardians, experienced Guardians, Voices, Offering Carriers, and Guardians who will be working on the burn perimeter the night of the Temple Burn. It's now a requirement for new as well as experienced Guardians to attend training before signing in for a shift.

## THE ORGANIZATION EVOLVES

There were numerous other changes around this same time as the size and importance of the Guardians began to accelerate. The organization became part of the Art Department that year, reporting directly to Bettie June, the department's associate director. As a result of this organizational change and the recognition of their role in maintaining a safe and secure environment in and around the Temple, Guardians garnered additional support as well as added responsibilities.

## RADIOS INTRODUCED

One aspect of the Guardian's increased importance to the ethos of Black Rock City was their heightened role in the Sunday night Temple burn. Carousel had earlier become aware of the lack of structure in the Guardian's burn perimeter activity, and set a goal to change that situation. His new plan, introduced in 2011, laid out specific roles for Guardians during burn night and introduced training and communications guidelines that clarified the crucial burn night activities. Fortunately, 2011 was also the year that the Guardians acquired additional radios. They were also assigned a dedicated radio frequency instead of sharing the emergency frequency with others, which was not only critical to burn perimeter activities but to day-to-day Temple operations as well.

## A RETURN TO THE BASICS: HOLDING THE SPACE

In seeking additional ways to give Guardians clearer direction and greater structure, Carousel followed in Termeh's footsteps by again seeking out the wisdom of David Best, Burning Man's most prolific Temple builder.

He relayed to Bettie June that Best identified the Guardians' role "primarily to look for people who might harm themselves or others, to watch for fire safety issues, and to mostly be an unseen force that appears when needed and mainly leaves people with a sense that they are alone when they need to be and that there is someone who is there when they need that as well."

From this conversation, the leadership team developed the concept of "holding the space of the Temple" as the mission of the Temple Guardians, adding it to Liz's "small pushes from great distances" as the strategy to influence behavior while remaining largely invisible.

## TRAINING & SUPPORT IMPROVEMENTS

Between 2011 and 2017, training numbers increased from about 40 percent of Guardians taking shifts to 100 percent. In 2016 Carousel asked Cherub – a fellow Ranger and a Guardian since 2011– to become Operations Manager of the Temple Guardians. That year also saw the establishment of Temple Guardians staff camp, designed to provide support to Temple Guardian operations and a permanent home for TG training. Meanwhile, the Guardians had changed reporting relationships and were now part of Marcia's community services organization rather than the Art Department.

## THE TORCH PASSES TO CHERUB

Cherub took over as manager of the Temple Guardians in 2018. Among other advances, he was instrumental in implementing Holacracy as the Guardians method of decentralized management, distributing transparent governance among self-organizing teams.

## HOLACRACY

Holacracy is a method of decentralized management and organizational governance. We distribute authority and decision-making through self-organizing and self-governing teams called Circles. The rules of the game (authority, structure, decision making, governance) are defined in a ratified constitution.

Our structure and governance are transparent and always available to view via [link](http://templeguardians.burningman.org) on the Guardians' website at [templeguardians.burningman.org](http://templeguardians.burningman.org).

## CAPTAIN IS NAMED GUARDIANS' LEAD

Following the tenets of the new management structure, in late 2022 following the Waking Dreams event which saw a return to the playa after a three year absence due to Covid, the Guardian Council elected Captain the new Lead.

## THE TEMPLE GUARDIANS TODAY

Currently, more than 400 individuals volunteer as Guardians throughout the event. A dozen Guardians and two Voices patrol the Temple during each four-hour shift, 24 hours a day every day that the Temple is open. Even before the gates open Guardians will stand watches along the Temple perimeter while the Temple crew completes the build, and will do so again after the Temple has been closed on Sunday morning so the building can be prepared for that night's penultimate event of Burning Man, the Temple burn. Yet another group of especially trained Guardians will carry offerings from Burners to the Temple, often in memory of people they have lost. The offerings will be carefully placed in a safe, but visible spot and burned with the rest of the memorials on Sunday night.

Like the original Angels, each Temple Guardian still wears a bandana designed exclusively for this Burn and to honor the Temple. And each will bear on their wrists an inconspicuous bracelet with a tiny bell attached, just as Guardians have done since 2002.





# THE BANDANAS

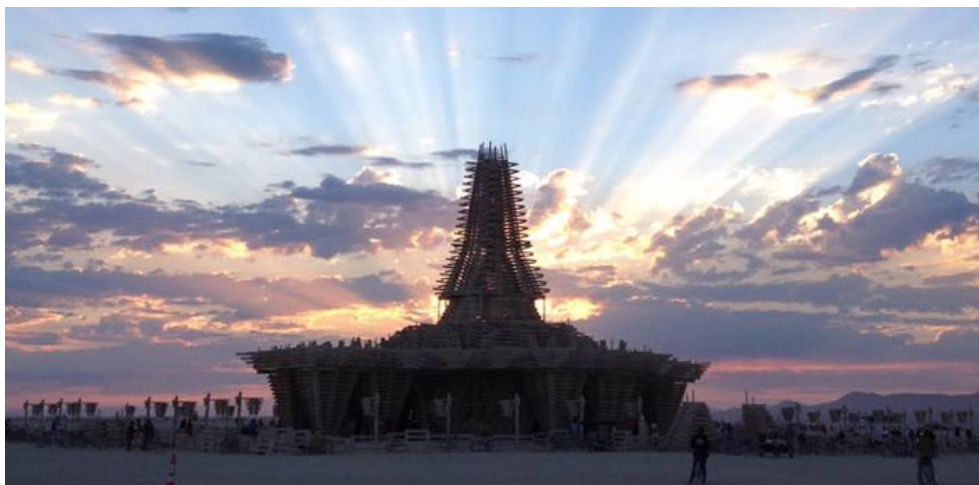
A long standing tradition among Guardians has been to collaborate on a gift project in the form of a bandana to benefit all who serve each year. These decorative pieces serve to subtly but easily identify us to participants and other Guardians without distracting from the atmosphere of the Temple. They reflect the design of the Temple and thus also make a lovely keepsake to remind us of our commitment and experiences.

Every year, Guardians who feel the calling express themselves through a gift of art that is submitted so that all team members get an opportunity to vote on their favorite design.

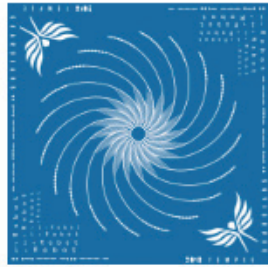
Our bandanas are a strictly volunteer effort that we raise funds for so that each and every Guardian serving gets one. Honestly that is what makes them special — they are a gift from the community that goes out to the community. We work together on selecting the design, and many people choose to support the costs of production.

No one is required to make a donation toward the bandanas or other gifts. We all do what we can when we can. Your work as a Temple Guardian is a huge contribution alone. You may even feel like creating a gift of your own. Whatever you choose to do, know that we all love and support you just for being a part of the Temple Guardians. The fact that you are a part of our team is the most important thing.

A collection of past bandanas appears on the following page.







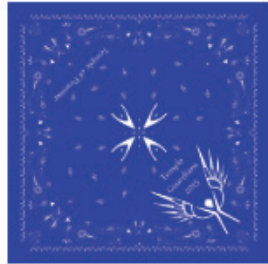
2018 Design by Papa  
Naughty



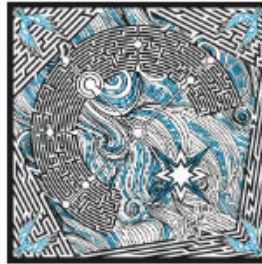
2017 Design by Papa  
Naughty



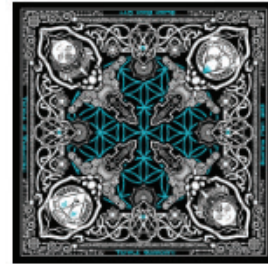
2016 Design By Eek



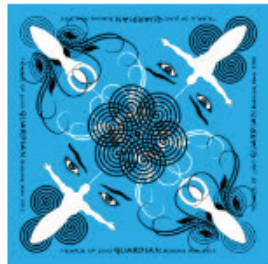
2015 Design by  
GreenEyes



2014 Design by Jason  
Decker



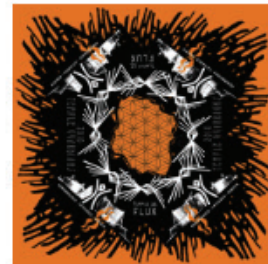
2013 Design by Brie  
Cook



2012 Design by  
Squishelle



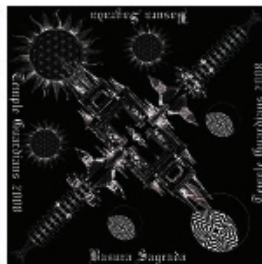
2011 Design by Random



2010



2009



2008



2006



2005



2004



2003

# BEFORE THE BURN

## How Temple Guardians can help and what they do changes through the lifecycle of the Temple

**What happens before the Temple opens?** The role of the Temple Guardians extends to holding space for the Temple as it rises, not just after it opens. We establish and hold the build perimeter until Temple opening. Typically we begin on Wednesday of build week but can start earlier if requested. Once we are on-site, Temple Guardians will be present 24/7 until the Temple burns.

Every year, the Temple rises from the dust, and every year it does so in unique and wonderful ways. There is a dedicated Temple Build Crew that have been working offsite for months as a team/family to realize the vision of this year's Temple, and our presence, in part, helps them fulfill that vision.

We hold the perimeter around the Temple as it is built, and this comes with its own unique set of circumstances and responsibilities. As with shifts after opening, Guardians work to be a non-intrusive presence, providing assistance as needed. This is an opportunity to "set the tone" for the rest of the burn as you interact with participants, letting them know facts about the Temple and its crew, explaining what the Temple is and (if known) when it's estimated to open...

There will be a perimeter that participants aren't allowed to cross during this time, for their safety and the safety of the crew. Compassionately keeping that perimeter is a must. As well, there will be participants (maybe even you) who'd like to chat with the crew, ask questions, etc. While the Guardians and the crew often enjoy a camaraderie, interacting with them during build is discouraged, as the crew are working hard to realize the Temple as quickly as possible to share it with the rest of Black Rock City.

We support the transition point when the builders hand the Temple over to the community. What actually happens to open the Temple is up to the artist; the Temple Guardians are there to help make that happen.

Enjoy your time as a Build Perimeter Guardian- it's one of the most unique and potentially rewarding roles you can have!

# TEMPLE GUARDIAN ON-PLAYA ROLES

**Serving the Temple is a calling.** Every year, many participants at Burning Man express interest in serving as a Temple Guardian. Before they can, and before any returning Guardians can serve in a role, they need to complete annual training, which is offered at a variety of times on-playa. The Guardian roles are:

## BURN WEEK SHIFTS

### Temple Guardian

Temple Guardians hold the space of the Temple, maintaining an environment that allows equal access for everyone to have the experience and expression that they need and keep the space as well as the participants who visit it safe.

### Temple Voice

The Voice of the Temple is a team of experienced Guardians that hold space for the success of Guardians at the Temple, there will be two or more working with you during your shift.

### Temple Support

Support Guardians are some of our most experienced Temple Voices who have chosen to take on a role of larger responsibility. Support holds space for the success of Voices on shift and is the main point of escalation for Voices needing assistance or information. A Support Guardian is on call during all shifts via radio and additionally is present to run the process of checking in and out during all shift changes.

## SUNDAY SHIFTS

### Temple Guardian

These are Guardians who assist during the transition period from the temple being open to it being closed for the burn. It involves helping guide participants to the realization that it is time for them to leave. If you are interested in becoming an offering carrier this is a great place to start.

## Temple Guardian » Perimeter

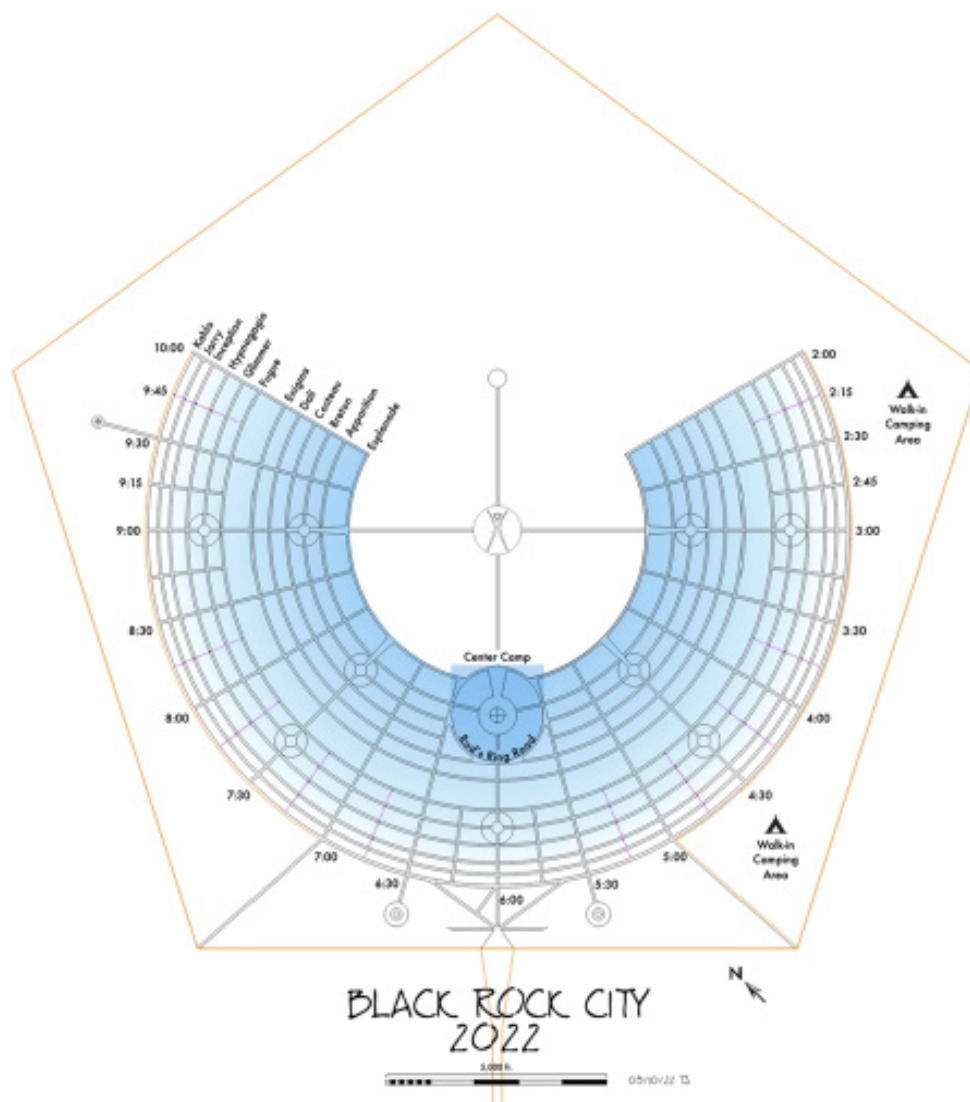
These are New Guardians who are helping to hold the perimeter when the Temple is closed.

## Temple Guardian » Burn

These are guardians who hold the perimeter for the Temple Burn. Friday Burn Perimeter Training is required for this shift.

## Temple Guardian » Offering Carrier

Offering Carriers are experienced Guardians who support participants who have come with offerings after the temple has closed on the Sunday of the burn. When not carrying offerings, these Guardians hold the safety perimeter. These posts are assigned to those who have previously served as offering carriers until all other shifts are covered.





|          | Support Shifts | Voice Shifts | Guardian Shifts |
|----------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 2:40 AM  | Grave          | Dawn         | Night           |
| 3:00 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 3:20 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 4:00 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 4:30 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 5:00 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 5:30 AM  | Day            | Morning      |                 |
| 6:00 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 6:40 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 7:00 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 7:20 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 8:00 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 8:30 AM  | Mid-Day        | Mid-Day      |                 |
| 9:00 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 9:30 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 10:00 AM |                |              |                 |
| 10:40 AM |                |              |                 |
| 11:00 AM |                |              |                 |
| 11:20 AM | Evening        | Afternoon    |                 |
| 12:00 PM |                |              |                 |
| 12:30 PM |                |              |                 |
| 1:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 1:30 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 2:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 2:40 PM  | Night          | Evening      |                 |
| 3:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 3:20 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 4:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 4:30 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 5:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 5:30 PM  | Grave          | Night        |                 |
| 6:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 6:40 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 7:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 7:20 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 8:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 8:30 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 9:00 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 9:30 PM  |                |              |                 |
| 10:00 PM |                |              |                 |
| 10:40 PM |                |              |                 |
| 11:00 PM |                |              |                 |
| 11:20 PM |                |              |                 |
| 12:00 AM |                |              |                 |
| 12:30 AM |                |              |                 |
| 1:00 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 1:30 AM  |                |              |                 |
| 2:00 AM  |                |              |                 |

## HOW A SHIFT WORKS

The Guardians outpost is where you will report to sign in for your shift. This is located approximately 600' off the 7:00 radial from the Temple. Look for the Temple Guardians flags.

Sign in for your shift begins 20 minutes before shift start time. Outpost closes 15 minutes after the shift begins and you will not be able to check in or join your shift after that.

Your Voice team will brief you about the Temple and anything you need to know before your shift begins. Voices will also help you to transition from being in the city to serving at the Temple.

Once you are at the Temple, please serve as requested by your Voice. Let them know if you need to be rotated or relieved. Also inform them if you are leaving the Temple for any reason.

At the end of your shift, return to the outpost with your Voice and check out. If you do not check out, we may think that something has happened to you and will have to organize groups to go searching.

Reminder: While some shifts do end up with openings because of no-shows, we can only take replacement Guardians if those shift slots open up. We no longer are able to take "walk-on" Guardians for full shifts. Ask at training about open slots on the schedule or stop in during a shift change and ask the Support Guardian for help with the schedule.

## BEING PREPARED FOR YOUR SHIFT

Consider that from the time you head to the Temple that you may be away from camp for 5 or 6 hours – be prepared! Also- if you cannot make your shift for any reason, as soon as you know you can't, go to Temple Guardians Headquarters (5:30/E) and let someone at that location know

**Food and water** – Your survival pack should have both food and water for your time away from camp. Remember that thirst and hunger can show themselves differently in the desert. Watch your mood and eat if yours seems off. Keep drinking, if you wait until you are thirsty you are already behind the curve.

**Changing weather conditions** – Have what you need! Dust storms can appear and vanish without warning, so have your dust mask and goggles available, sunscreen and lip protection for daytime, cool to cold weather gear at night along with lights. If your shift goes from night to day or evening to night, be aware that temperatures can swing dramatically during the time you are at the Temple.

**Weather Events** – Sometimes you will need to shelter in place during dust, rain, or hail storms. Find a safe place inside of the Temple and stay there until you get word from your Voice. We will be in touch with them via radio with updates as soon as we have them. Be there for your fellow Guardians and watch your mood, severe weather events can be difficult to be in.

Most of all, you need to **be prepared to bring your best self**. While there are many mundane tasks at the Temple our work is in what we bring in our hearts to hold the space.

## USE OF THE TEMPLE SPACE

**No exclusionary use of the space**. The Temple is available for everyone and can not be exclusively claimed by any one group. Temple space cannot be “booked” or reserved by anyone. Press and other passes are not license to violate the rules of the space or the rules and community norms of Burning Man.

**Fire free zone:** The Temple is built around having Lamplighter lanterns in specific safe spaces. No other fire is allowed on the burn pad, this includes smoking, smudging, candles, and incense. This is a rule for the event, and concerns about the policy can be referred to your Voice. Your Voice will help you locate the fire extinguishers on beginning your shift. Remember, this Temple was built to burn, please help protect it from doing so early.

If you want to personally monitor someone who is doing a ceremony with a candle or incense so that you can put those out after they leave, you may do so, but please remember that you are there on fire watch until the flame or cinder is out completely. Conversations about this should be quiet reminders of the safety of the participant, the Temple, and the others there.

**No climbing,** even to reach a higher level for leaving offerings. Rangers are at the Temple most times and can assist with uncooperative climbers. Your Voices can help in summoning Rangers.

### **Report physical altercations / assaults to your Voice**

**Mutant Vehicles/Sound Pollution-** Vehicle sound system use is restricted by DMV rules. Find the driver/person in charge and have a great conversation with them. Explain where they are and the impact that their sound has. If they do not wish to cooperate, bring the issue to your Voice who can summon Rangers to manage. Always record the DMV license # and description of offending vehicles and give to your Voice.

**Uncooperative Participants** and other problems: Always bring these to your Voice team, they can help and have additional resources available to them.



## Guidelines around offerings:

Offerings are to be left where they are. If you find someone who is moving or otherwise changing something with an offering that someone has left (and it is not clear that this is the person who has set this offering), please approach them and speak from your heart about the importance of allowing those items to remain where they are.

## BEING AN EXAMPLE AND SETTING THE TONE

When you are standing as a Guardian at the Temple your work is to hold the space for all.

**Managing the negative:** This is a reminder that you cannot create space by negating something that is within it. You can not create space by pushing against the thing that you find problematic. You have to be what you stand for and what you are committed to, then let that guide your actions.

**Be open and vulnerable to the Temple and those around you:** Accepting the gift of the Temple means that you let in the kindness and openness that the Temple gives back. The Temple is like water, it will find its way in through the cracks in your armor. Don't fight it, let it in and be with what is going on there. Give yourself to the Temple and you in turn give to the community.

**The focus is our Temple and our community. It is not about us.** We do not police, we suggest and remind people of where they are and what the space means to the community. Being a Guardian does not mean that you are a guard, it means that you hold the trust of our community and Temple.

**We do not make the space our own, but we hold it open and accepting as an invitation for all.**



# HOW TO HAVE A GREAT CONVERSATION

**Listen**, give your time and full attention generously. Consider what they are trying to get you to understand.

**Ask open ended questions** (questions which the answers cannot be answered with a single word –“Can you tell me more about your day?” is an open ended question, “How was your day?” can often be answered with one word and won’t further the conversation.)

**Show understanding** –repeat to them the story as you understand it. Use your own language, soften the sharpest corners, and own the story as your own. Let them correct you and repeat back to them your new understanding. When someone repeats themselves to you, it means that they do not feel that you are getting the important parts.

**Create something new for them.** Don’t tell someone how to fix things, relate ideas that can help them solve their own problems and leave them empowered. “Have you considered...”, “Do you know about...” are good ways to introduce ideas that may have them come to their own solutions.

**Remind them of their values** as they have communicated them to you. Embrace who they are as their best self.



# INVISIBILITY

David Best, on the creation of the Guardians told us that **our highest duty to the Temple was to remain invisible.**

**We step in from the shadows** when we are needed and we disappear back in to them when that part of our service is complete.

Step lightly, think before you speak or enter in to the experience of another participant, and when you do, **act skillfully and make the smallest impact possible.** Remember, small pushes from a great distance are the tool of your trade as a Guardian.

## DEALING WITH EMERGENCIES (“MUST REPORTS”)

### **What is an emergency?**

- Fire (even if it has been extinguished)
- Child/Elder/Spouse abuse
- Lost Child (found without parents or parents looking for a lost child)
- Violence that is non-consensual
- Assault
- Sexual assault
- Medical or psychiatric emergency
- Participants climbing more than ten feet
- The placing of any Guardian in danger
- The placing of any participant in grave physical danger

Report these things to a Voice or Ranger. Never leave anyone alone who is a victim, call for other Guardians or send a participant to get them. We do not leave people who are injured, sick or are in need of assistance alone, ever.

## MOOP / LNT

What Is MOOP? MOOP is an acronym for “Matter Out of Place”, a convenient way of referring to anything that is not originally of the land on which our event takes place. So everything that wasn’t originally on or of the Black Rock Desert, no matter how small, is considered MOOP, and is to be removed as part of our Leave No Trace efforts.

MOOP also includes greywater, and the particulates contained therein. MOOP is the biggest challenge of the entire event. Burning Man is the largest Leave No Trace event in the world and that happens because of you! Bring your MOOP bag and help keep the Temple site clean.

Smaller, lighter offerings can be moopy! Try to help participants weigh down light and moopy offerings so they don’t become windblown. Some shifts have a staple gun available (we will try to make sure there is one for you but don’t depend on it, items get lost during the week).

## ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

Did you see something, have a bad interaction or conversation that made you uncomfortable or set you off balance? We have people for that! Speak to your Voice & Support, they can put you with the right people. These resources are available for you, take advantage of them if you need them.



# TEMPLE BURN DAY (SUNDAY)

## The Temple closes early on Sunday morning!

This is a difficult time for many. What the Temple calls for during this time is unlimited compassion from the Guardians on duty. It will likely feel awkward and difficult to turn people away from entering the Temple. This is okay, be with the feelings and give empathy and compassion to those who you are dealing with.

You will encounter people who were unable to get their time at the Temple, and this may be very hard for them. Make sure that they understand the options which are available and what we can do for them. They may:

- Leave offering with memory box (arrives early morning) to be brought in during the final step before the Temple burns
- Bring their offering to the fire after the perimeter is dropped. The fire after and the fire during is the same fire, and many find comfort in knowing that

If you have offerings that you have collected, flag down the offering carrier team members to have them brought in. Encourage the use of the memory box (at the 6:00). Supplies will be on hand for writing.

If someone is heavy with grief, flag down an offering carrier and bring the participant to their attention. They have the facility and time to spend giving that participant the listening that they deserve.

This is your opportunity to engage everyone! Talk to them about the Temple, ask what drew them there. Share yourself and have them see what makes the Temple special for you. Take the opportunity to grow your community!

## CREMATED REMAINS (ASHES)

### Of special note is the topic of placing cremains in the Temple

Over the years, many participants have sought to place the cremated remains of loved ones in the Temple to provide a final release of their spirit.

While this is understandable, and poignant, **the placement of cremated remains is not allowed by current federal law, and Temple Guardians are not to participate in or facilitate the placing of ashes in the Temple.**

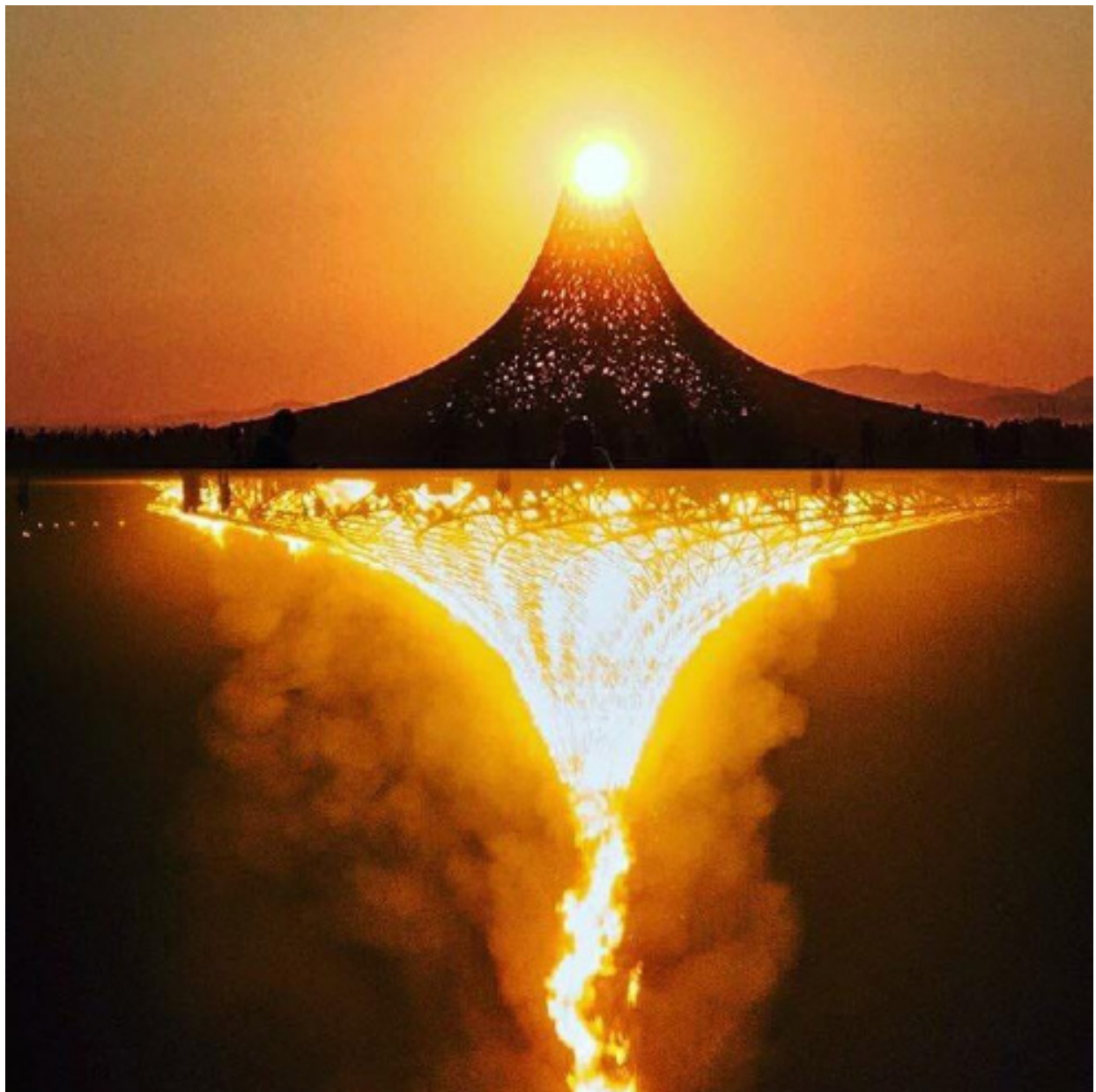
Additionally, the Paiute tribe, whose reservation is adjacent to the Black Rock Desert and who view the area as part of their tribal heritage, have requested that Burning Man participants refrain from placing cremated human remains in the Temple.

## BURNING MAN VOLUNTEER POLICIES

1. **Please arrive to your shift sober** and remain sober through your entire shift. If something occurs that makes this impossible for you, please let us know. We are here to help you!
2. **Please wear clothing** that covers your private areas while you are on shift.
3. Remember that whenever you wear your Temple Guardians logoed clothing, bandannas, or laminates, **you represent the team** – even when you are off duty!
4. **Media relations policy:** You may speak to the media or write about your Burning Man experiences, but please note that while you may speak of yourself as a Temple Guardians volunteer, you need to clearly let any member of the media know that you do not speak for your team or for Burning Man or the Burning Man Project.



*Your service to our community builds  
something that can change lives and is  
growing us toward a more understanding  
and loving world.*



## Temple Artists and (Photography) Credits

2022 – The Ethereal Empyrean Temple by Renzo Verbeck  
2021 – The Luminous Lotus Virtual Temple by Simeone Scaramozzino and his Virtual Temple Team  
2020 – The Ethereal Temple Experience by Jeremy Roush, Sylvia Adrienne Lisse and Renzo Verbeck  
2019 – Temple of Direction by Geordie Van Der Bosch  
2018 – Galaxia by Arthur Mamou-Mani and the Temple Build Crew  
2017 – Temple of Forgiveness by Marisha Farnsworth, Steve Brummond, and Mark Sinclair  
2016 – The Temple by David Best and the Temple Build Crew  
2015 – Temple of Promise by Jazz Tigan and the Dreamers Guild (Leon Gill)  
2014 – Temple of Grace by David Best and The Temple Crew (Rod Hoekstra)  
2013 – Temple of Whollyness by Gregg Fleishman, Melissa Barron, Lightning Clearwater III and The Connection Crew (M. Stits)  
2012 – Temple of Juno by David Best and the Temple Crew (Scott London)  
2011 – Temple of Transition by Chris “Kiwi” Hankins, Diarmaid “Irish” Horkan and Ian “Beave” Beaverstock and the International Arts Mega Crew (IAM) (Michael Holden)  
2010 – Temple of Flux by Rebecca Anders, Jessica Hobbs, Peter Kimelman, and Crew (Rod Hoekstra)  
2009 – Fire of Fires by David Umlas, Marrilee Ratcliffe, and the Community Art Makers (Michael Holden)  
2008 – Basura Sagrada by Shrine, Tuktuk, and the Basura Sagrada Collaboratory (Alan Turkus)  
2000 – Temple of the Mind by David Best and Jack Haye and The Temple Crew (Virgil Mirano)

## Acknowledgments & Resources

The Burning Man Project - <https://burningman.org/>

The Temple Guardians - <http://templeguardians.burningman.org/>

David Best, creator of the original Temple

Termeh Yeghiazarian, with David Best, for the original idea of Temple “Guardian Angels”

... and, of course, the original instigator, Larry Harvey (1948 - 2018)



## **2023 Temple Guardians Council (alphabetically)**

**Captain** (captain@burningman.org)

*(Council Lead, Mission, Off Playa, On Playa Data, Communications, Support, Training, Ticketing, Scheduling)*

**Cherub** (cherub@burningman.org)

*(Emeritus Council Lead, Broader Community, Mission, Off & On Playa, Support, Ticketing, Scheduling, Training)*

**Fixit-Rich** (rich.sutherland@burningman.org)

*(On Playa Site Lead, Community Circle Council Rep, Support Circle Lead)*

**Kahuna** (kahuna@burningman.org)

*(Community Circle Emeritus Rep, Health & Well-Being, Training, Support)*

**Katrina** (tina.thomas@burningman.org)

*(Council Community Rep, Community, Health and Well-Being, Training)*

**Maven** (jenna.seiden@burningman.org)

*(Off Playa Circle Rep, Ticketing, BMP Comms Liaison, Training)*

**Spanks** (spanks@burningman.org)

*(Deputy Council Lead, Community Support, Communications, Training, Support, Off Playa, Health and Well-Being)*

**Tomas** (tom.pettine@burningman.org)

*(Off Playa Circle Lead, Communications, Community Support, Support, Virtual Events)*

**TopHat** (tophat@burningman.org)

*(On Playa Circle Lead, TG Placed Camps Circle Lead, Ticketing, Community Support, Support)*

**Wizard** (adriene.douglas@burningman.org)

*(Council Community Lead, Training Circle Lead, Health and Well-Being, Support)*