

Fun in the Forest



Overview

Another great year for BitF. The event increased in numbers plus an extra day. The extra day definitely provided more scope for interaction and community involvement and the majority of participants had arrived by Thursday. The participation of art and theme camps continues to grow each year. We had 50% increase in art and theme camps needing placement. Additional placement was required for an increase in RV's coming to the event and we experimented with an RV area that worked well.

For the first year we did not have a burn due to fire bans in place but we had a great fire show. The effigy was spectacular even though we did not get to burn it.

We had very few medical incidents mostly cuts and one broken nose. We had a new medic team who were awesome and are excited to come back next year.

Our previous insurers were unable to cover fire performance in our general liability for the event so we had to find new insurers. This process took a number of months in consultation and preparation. In looking for a new insurer and broker we encountered a number of rejections before someone was willing to take us on. The new insurers did not provide us with a policy and quote until a couple of weeks before the event. This contributed to a delay in receiving our Official Regional Status this year but as always we are committed to upholding the 10 principles and meeting the requirements for how we run BitF.

Organization.

The production team overcame a few challenges this year, the first of which was a delayed start due to a prolonged appointment process for the producer role. Benjamin Faegin and Delyse Ledgard began as co-producers for the first couple of months with Delyse continuing as sole producer. Benjamin's commitment and contribution to BitF was greatly appreciated and he added much to the development of the event.

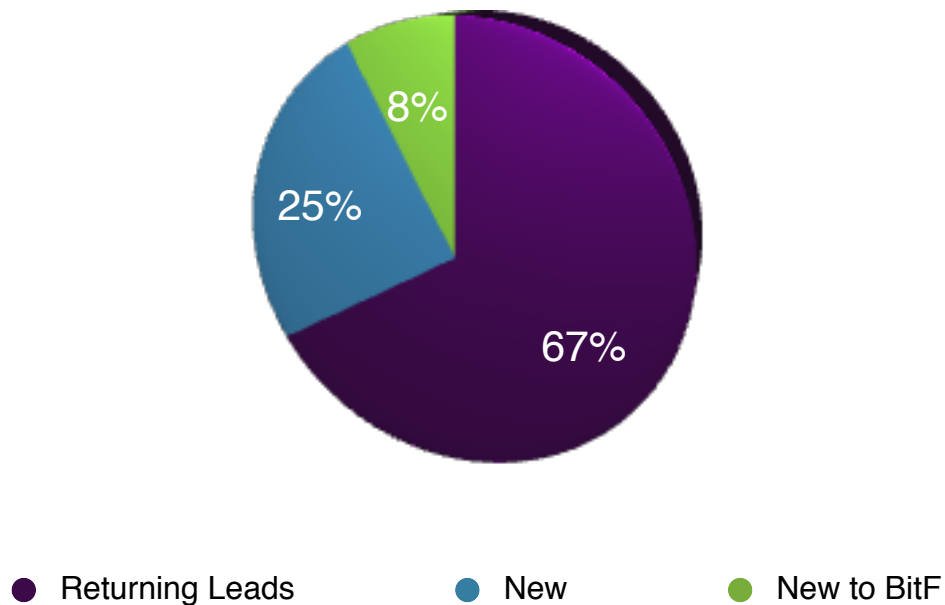
In an attempt to facilitate training of new producers for next year Simon Hunkin, Ashley Gartshore, Aaron Barrett and Melonie Newel joined the production team as mentees.

The Production team developed a strong collaborative working relationship. Luisa Deziel (Volunteer Co-ordinator) provided a very positive and encouraging support to our many volunteers and team leads. Hunter Lund (Tech Producer) joined the Production team for the first time this year and did a great job on overseeing the Placement team and WWW aspects of the event. Pi Feathersword (Tech Producer) added his experience of the last three years overseeing the fire team, DPW and Power. Delyse Ledgard (Producer) was the main support to Gate, Registration and Rangers.

Team Leads/Volunteers.

We had a great team of volunteers and a great mix of new to returning leads. Building a strong team has to include a fair number of people who have done it before so that the learning curve is not so great and we are not reinventing the wheel. So a ratio of 67% returning leads to 33% new leads was a great balance. The team of leads has grown as we have grown to be able to cover the on call aspect throughout the event such as Rangers and Gate.

We had an on site volunteer booth to recruit volunteers during the event. This did not work as well as we would have liked. Improvements next year include clearer and larger signs about what we need and to have the volunteer co-ordinator have particular hours they will be there for participants to check in with, rather than self-serve sign ups.



Town Hall Meeting.

This was the first year we held a Town Hall style meeting for BitF. We believe this was a great success with many new people coming out to learn about Art grants, theme camps, volunteering and of course to vote for the effigy. We had two great designs to vote on and many experienced members of the community gave great advice to the newbies. This year the production team took this on and perhaps next year this could be taken on as a Lead position.

Gate and Greeters

All our Gate leads were new to BitF this year. They all took on the job with great enthusiasm and dedication. Thanks to Angie, Mia, Gabriel and Zoe for doing a great job and dealing with the initial difficulties in setting up the system.

We set up gate on wednesday during pre-event early arrivals. The owners internet connection caused us a lot of problems this year and we spent all of wednesday afternoon trying to come up with a solution. In true burner style we rose to the challenge and one participant offered the cable he happened to have on him, another the end connections and crimpers and after a few phone calls someone turned up with a router that gave us a working internet connection. It became clear we may need an offline solution to ticket scanning next year.



This year we dealt with more security issues through the gate and having greeters and gate combined is becoming a less viable option. The 'fun' part of greeting can distract from the 'serious' tasks of ticket processing.

Suggestion moving forward is to have gate at the front of the property and Greeters when they arrive at the Beach area where the event is. This way Greeters will have easier access to the parking team, Rangers and Placement and Greeters can help facilitate people to camping areas more easily.

In the future pre-event training for Gate volunteers is also strongly suggested.

Security had to deal with a greater number of gatecrashers which may relate to having to put a sign up two weeks prior to our event as part of our permit requirements. We are looking into alternative ways to inform the neighbours directly of details of the event.

Ticket Sales and Registration

We had a great registration team (Nora Curti, Wendy Niessen, Kale Gossen) who worked tirelessly to respond to the numerous email inquiries and keep the system up to date. We sold the first 650 tickets within a month. The final 100 tickets sold in an hour when they went on sale. Due to some registration glitches we actually sold 784 adult tickets in the end.

We had a number of glitches to the system which are related to the website not being fully functional and people trying to get around only being able to buy one ticket per person. Event espresso works best with people being able to buy multiple tickets and the web team will be looking into ways to make this possible and still cover our waiver needs.

Ticket transfer was labour intensive for the registration team. Production had decided not to do transfers but a participant believing she was being useful advertised a google list for people who wanted to transfer their ticket as soon as we sold out, and so we proceeded with this. We want to support the spirit of gifting by having an easy way of people being able to transfer their ticket and not put undue stress on the registration team. Again the web team will be looking into this.

Subsidized ticket applications exceeded the number available. With donations we were able to give out 52 subsidized tickets. We were able to offer everyone on the low income list a ticket as we processed those that no longer wanted a low income ticket. We sold 8 discounted tickets to some of the permanent residents on site.

Sound Noise Issues.

Sound is always a complex and problematic issue for most regional events, both within the event and towards the surrounding communities. The valley that BitF is situated in has a number of acoustic challenges where sound bounces off the mountains and can be fine one year and then the sound camps have configured the speakers badly and the sound is amplified in areas you would not expect. The owner of the campground and us have worked over the years to try and find the best spots on the site for a sound stage to operate from. However, even these spots will be problematic if the set up is such that sound travels in the wrong direction, or the volume is too loud.

Thursday evening when the sound camps first operated the sound was loud and the production team were in the process of addressing this when the owner communicated that there were noise complaints from the neighbours. The sound was adjusted and reduced the volume that evening. Friday some changes to speaker set up were implemented and we received no noise complaints from the owner. We were unaware that any noise disturbance had occurred Friday until Saturday when the permit authority representative informed us he had received a number of complaints that evening. In addition, our permit requirement was to shut off the music at 4am. Friday evening the production team approached the sound camps just before 4am to make sure they turned it off at 4am. They failed to do this until 4.20am and as a result our permit was changed for Saturday to shut off the music at 12.45 am.

The change in our permit actually had a positive effect as it created an increase in interactivity throughout the event and many participants commented on how they liked this, as well as people being less disturbed by loud music. There were a few areas that sprung up with music playing on small systems and dancing that was not an issue. SynerGy also continued with live music performance as their system did not create any sound bleed.

Delyse followed up with the neighbours during the week following BitF and received positive responses from this communication. A sound policy is being developed to include sound checks within the valley and requirements for set up and volume control.

Discussions with the SLRD and RCMP following the event have been positive and supportive of our event continuing and working together to develop relations and understanding with the residents. There is a lot of tension in the valley between residents that is in transition regarding zoning changes and noise requirements that organizers and residents need to come to a resolution about. Any rezoning is not anticipated to affect the continuation of Burn in the Forest.

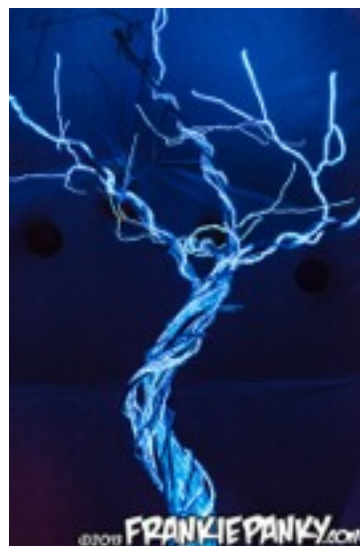
Theme Camps and Art Installations.

Being a participant driven event the experience of BitF is dependent on the many people who bring their art, performance and theme camps to share with everyone. This is the heart of BitF and each year grows with new theme camps and art installations.

This year we held ReCharge for the first time. The idea behind this was to give Artists another opportunity to fundraise for their project. Art grants only fund up to 50% of the costs and the rest is up to them. In addition, it was a way to involve the community in providing their input into what they view as art and what they want to give their money to. It was a great success and the artists were able to collectively raise \$3980.

ReCharge Art Grant Recipients - TOTAL DONATED \$3980.00

I Jones - Bubble Dome
Caley Bourden - Circuitree
Claire Roberts - Portal of Rebirth
Hunter Lund - Micro artifactuary
Kevin Curry - Kai Pod
David Jardine - Temple of Embrace
Jacy Lawrence - Jellyfish in the Trees
Johan Thornton - Abstrance
Andrew Bondfield - Big EQ
Ron Simmer - Suspended Animation
Chelsea Ousey - Board Games for Giants
Travis Petten - Oscar's Sweet Secretions
David Whitely - Heavy Petting Zo



Art grant awards including microgrants totaled \$6,267.2 this year. The following grant recipients were:



Kim Cooper	Hope The Whale
Juniper Quin	West Coast Hug Emporium
Colby Ferguson	Q's & A's by U's and I's
Dani Yannece	Fowl Unlawful Carnal Knowledge
Markus Andersson	Micro-Artifactory
Madeline Cake	Immersion
Dylan Cole	Baghdad Breakfast
Benson Ho	Potato Cannon French Fries
Bryan Corey	Burning to the Beat
Phil Jones	Splart
Baha Vahi	Bad Parenting Camp
Anna Stauffer	GeliDome
Ryan McCann	WTF Theatre
Deb Beaudreau	The Embrace Booth
Cal Nairne	Red Neck Gong Show
Chris Harrison	Blastodil
Chelsea Ousey	Board Games for Giants
Ron Simmer	Suspended Animation
Kevin Curry -	Kai Pod
Adrian Wilson	The Organizer
Matt Quickenden	Bubble Station
Caley Bourdon	Circuitree
Kristy Fadley	Finger Painting





Theme Camps

- 1 Vertigo
- 2 No Pants Camp
- 3 We Love it All / Heavy Petting Zoo
- 4 VW Bus Camp
- 5 Apres Ski
- 6 The Empress
- 7 Camp Beaverton & Gender Blender
- 8 Disaster Area
- 9 Bed Akzent Kemp
- 10 Foamus Maximus: Bifrost
- 11 The C-Section
- 12 Crave Chill Lounge
- 13 SOBCO (Sons of Bunnarchy Canada Original)
- 14 River Rush Café
- 15 Bubble Camp
- 16 Bad Parenting Camp
- 17 Cirque de Relaxacion
- 18 Buddha Lounge



Parking and Bears.

We attempted to move cars to parking areas as soon as possible after people arrived. We did not anticipate the issues with bears on the property and the need for a number of cars to be at campsites to store food out of reach of the bears. Some participants food was eaten and one bear was seen to run off with someone's cooler.

We did not have a clear system in place to accommodate which cars needed to stay at campsites. Participants were very cooperative as we all tried to work out the best solutions for this. Because the site is very long and narrow having cars easily at campsites or in easy reach is a challenge. It is recommended that next year we provide information and best practices in regards to the bears in association with the Squamish Conservation Officer.

We need a new Parking/RV team next year to facilitate parking and implement a system that incorporates these challenges.

Fire Performance and Effigy (Submitted by Pi - Tech Producer)

This year we had a very strong team in charge of fire management and safety, including Geoff Budinski (an experienced lead safety tech with Radiant Heat) and Sherry Simon (a previous BC provincial firefighter). Geoff was looking after the performance aspect and Sherry the “structural” burns. Along with Belva Stone (performance lead), a strong fire plan was developed over the preceding months and submitted for inspection and feedback to Ali Albofathi (property owner), Rod Allen (Forests Protection Officer – Pemberton Fire Base) and Marc Simpson (Forests Protection Assistant – Squamish Fire Base).



At the eleventh hour, effigy burns did not happen. Depending on who you talk to at the Wildfire Management Branch of the Forest Services department of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations, our effigy burns have either been appropriate as a Category 3 Open Fire burn (“an open fire that burns material in piles larger than two metres high and three metres wide, windrows, or grass over an larger than 0.2 hectares (2000 square metres) in size.”) or not. Such burns require a Burn Registration number, which can only be acquired no more than two weeks before the planned burn.

When requesting the Burn Permit number this year, the operator took issue with the fact that the effigies did not consist of clean, woody debris, which is what a Category 3 Open Fire is aimed at – agricultural and industrial debris removal and clearing, not artistic expression! As a result, I was unable to receive the number until explicit permission had been obtained from the Ministry of Environment.

At the same time, a Category 2 fire ban came in place in the Coastal Region.

I spoke with a number of people at the Ministry of Environment, working my way up to the ministry’s meteorologist. Unfortunately, he was on vacation and not getting back to his office until after the event. No-one there was able or willing to provide permission for our proposed burns, and so, unfortunately, the fire team and I concluded to call off the effigy burns. This was communicated to the artists, Ali and Rod and Marc, all of whom were surprised and disappointed.



For 2014, receiving approval from the Ministry of Environment will be an added necessary step if effigy burns are to happen. I would advise that this also includes exception to the venting index stipulation. Marc has also offered to answer any questions that might be of assistance.

As a result, fire at BitF 2013 consisted of a number of propane artworks, (all of whom submitted fire safety plans to me, had fire suppression tools at the ready at all times in operation and were never left unattended), and a fire performance on Saturday evening. The show was well received and adequately staffed, although I believe Rangers were needed to assist in maintaining the crowd control perimeter.

DPW

Many thanks to Tori for tirelessly leading our DPW team and providing us with a very smooth run operation. We had lots of volunteers for set up and everything was achieved before the event began. We had a great new set of signs that can be used from year to year, our thanks to Brian Corkum for organizing the making of all the signs.

Justin Hay was our new power lead and did a great job. Justin was very active in the initial design, resource acquisition, setup and maintenance of the power equipment. Justin was active throughout the weekend taking care of the lighting and Power Maintenance. Always with a smile and eagerness to help.

Not having a dedicated Transport lead this year was also difficult and resulted on falling mostly on the Producer. Even so, co-ordinating loading of the trucks to go to the site was pretty smooth. Few locations and times. And the sizes of the trucks rented were appropriate for the amount being transported – a step up to 5t trucks from previous 2t, neither was too large and empty. Unloading on site was also pretty good, although, not having a co-ordinator to plan the unload, there was a few instances of having to double back or things being dropped in the wrong place, but even with one, they'd have to be pretty good at that to avoid these few mistakes.

Loading up at the end of the event was a little more trying, however. Significantly impacted by downing all tools to participate in an emergency, the load was quite delayed and as a result, we probably lost willing hands to help. As has been the chance frequently in the past, the bulk of the work ended up falling onto a small handful of people. And it's a lot to ask of them repeatedly. But we have a "get it done" attitude when we recognize that it just has to be done. Tori and Michelle Pollard were standout people in this instance. Back in the city, this volunteer base dropped off even less. In the end, it was mostly Pi and Justin Hay who unloaded both trucks. So, as well as managing the natural logistics of transportation, a Transport lead also needs to look at staffing at all four points, and is probably the hardest task of all.

WWW

Getting the WWW together is no easy task to get all the information in on time. Despite initial difficulties Brian Corkum and Megan Brooking managed to catch up and the WWW that was produced was on time, accurate and a professional document. Also thanks to Megan for a great new Logo for BitF that was used in our volunteer appreciation on T-shirts for team leads and patches for volunteers.

As the new website gets up and running it is hopes that information gathering will run smoother.

Moving Forward

The expansion and growth of BitF needs careful consideration with the unique nature of our volunteers, participation and demand. It is clear that we could sell more tickets and whether we do that next year or give it another year will depend on a number of things. We have increased the numbers every year and this year with the extra day it was apparent that there were extra stresses on the Production team that we may want to settle into before increasing numbers significantly. As a volunteer participant driven event we have challenges that are different from other events. We don't 'hire' people to come in and take care of things (except where it is of utmost importance, such as, Medics and Security), instead we use the talents and willingness of members of our community to step up and help organize. Many of our volunteers learn by doing and we support this because it provides opportunity for people to experience themselves in a different way from their day job and discover talents they didn't know they had, and support our principle of communal effort.

Our collective experience of running BitF needs a steady growth because we want to support the participation of our community as we grow. For that we need Leads and Production team members who have a number of years experience of BitF and their particular department to support greater numbers. To grow, the Production team needs to have a group of Leads that are confident, autonomous and knowledgeable in their department. We definitely have a growing pool of experienced Leads that have taken on areas of the event repeatedly. However, not everyone can do it every year and so this pool needs to keep growing for the numbers to increase.

The available usable area for camping is limited to a 1km narrow strip along the river. It is not an easy site to create areas for RV's, theme camps, art or parking. In order to expand the following would need to be taken into account:

Rangers. This year we increased our Ranger team through training and many people stepped up which was awesome. The majority of these people were new to Ranging. We still need to develop experienced Ranger Leads that need another year for that group of rangers to feel more confident and for us to identify those Rangers suitable and willing to take on the extra responsibility. In addition, we need to keep training new people to continue to expand the pool of volunteers who can cover the shifts.

Dispatch. We have to be able to cover the radios at the Ranger Station 24hrs and with increasing numbers unfortunately there is more risk of theft and the radios need to be secure at all times. In addition, greater numbers increase the need for easy access to emergency personnel. We either need more volunteers to do this or greater numbers of Rangers to share this responsibility.

Parking/Rv Team.

This would be a new team of volunteers and main lead. More volunteers needed and processes developed and tested next year. A clear parking policy, areas for parking and storing food from bears is needed.

Gate/Greeters.

In separating the two functions we would need more volunteers to support these two teams. Typically people have volunteered because they want to do the fun part of greeting. We need to develop the serious tasks of gate and know we have the volunteers for this.

Website/Tech Support.

GVIAS is in the process of developing the website to make production easier for team leads and participants registration. Increasing clear lines of communication through a centralized website system will help us to grow. Giving a year to put the new system in place and provide the leads and production with lots of time to get use to the system would be wise. In addition, a team of tech support volunteers who can be scheduled during events needs to be developed.

While Squamish Valley Campground covers a large area in land, a lot of it is inaccessible and to add a significant number of people the area would need to be cleared and expanded from the beach. Having people camp in isolated areas away from the main area would possibly make them an easier target for the bears. Working with the owner on this expansion could involve supplying volunteers to help develop further areas in a way that works for us and him. Discussions to develop a plan with Ali over the next couple of years is recommended.

Financial Report can be found on the website at: <http://burnintheforest.com/financial/>
Moop Report can be found on the website at: <http://burnintheforest.com/2013-reports/>