

## Art Car Wrangler ART

### **FIRST THINGS FIRST: AN OVERVIEW OF THE ART CAR WRANGLERS**

**Who the Wranglers Are:** The Art Car Wranglers are vehicle and bike-mobile teams of Rangers that establish, maintain and manage the Mutant Vehicle Zones for Art Cars parked behind participants during large Burn events and, most importantly, the Man and Temple Burns. Wranglers support the Burn Perimeter Rangers in helping to manage participant crowds from the backside, and team with Intercept Rangers to monitor the Art Cars.

**Wrangler Qualities:** An Art Car Wrangler is a primarily bike-mobile Ranger toasted by (ideally but not absolutely necessary) at least a year of Burn Perimeter Ranger experience, so as to have an understanding of the basic dynamics of a Burn event. The essential elements of every Wrangler are great situational awareness, a willingness to actively engage participants, and an ability to be Ranger calm and creative in the midst of real chaos.

**Wrangler Duties:** The Wranglers are in near-constant motion in the hours leading up to the burn, monitoring Art Cars as they arrive from all over the playa and jockey for the best viewing spots. They assist and educate Art Car drivers and crews on the proper placement of their vehicles (explained in detail below.) Wranglers may have to mediate disputes between participants, Art Cars, and other Art Cars, sometimes under very noisy and crowded conditions.

**Quadrant Patrol:** Bike-mobile Wranglers ride as pairs, each pair managing an entire quadrant from end to end with other Wrangler teams. They come to know the Art Cars and their crews on their frequent passes through their Quad, and sometimes will enlist the aid of these crews to help assist other Art Cars, should they appear a little lost. As the need arises, a Wrangler team might address a situation in an adjoining quad.

**Wrangler Support:** Backing the Wrangler quadrant teams is the Wrangler Lead, who is vehicle-mobile, and slowly circles around the entire burn perimeter, monitoring Art Car and participant traffic and assisting the Wrangler teams in dispute mediation or the moving of Art Cars. The Lead is in constant contact with Incident Command (IC) and Intercept, and keeps the Wranglers informed of relevant Burn event information.

Most large Burn events will also have a vehicle-mobile Wrangler Second, who drives slow counter-circles to the Wrangler Lead, available to manage a situation and helping to establish a Wrangler presence around the Art Car perimeter that participants become familiar with and can count on regularly passing by.

As Art Car rush hour approaches, and Quads 2 and 3 begin to fill in, the Second shifts attention onto those two Quads. The Lead continues to monitor the entire perimeter up through the actual burn.

## **LIFE OF PIE: QUADRANT DYNAMICS**

**Quads 2 & 3:** These quads fill in first, the fastest and the fullest, especially with participants who have trekked out to the Burn by foot. The Art Car and participant density in Q2 is greatest from about 4:00 on to 6:00, and Q3 is fullest from 6:00 to around 8:00. Some time before the burn, these areas will fill up like a massive gooey playa puddle, and Art Car movement becomes impossible. At this point, the area is considered “set” as far as Art Cars are concerned, and Wrangler focus shifts to participant movement and bike placement.

**Quad 1:** The ember falls that come with a large burn, and the usual winds that carry them, almost always head towards Q1. For this reason, the Wranglers generally keep Art Car density here the lightest of the four quads. We don’t discourage anyone from parking where they please, but we do a wind check and educate accordingly about the potential for falling embers on a particular area.

This is an especially important point that the Wranglers make to Art Cars decked out in flammable materials parked in a potential ember fall zone:

*If you are going to be here, stay with your vehicle, have a fire extinguisher at the ready, and pay attention!*

Or, we suggest, they can relocate to . . .

**Quad 4:** This quad isn’t as packed as Q2 or Q3, and there’s still room to find a nice spot, with a great view of the Art Cars and participants fleeing the embers that are going to be raining down over there in Q1.

## **WALKING IT OFF: FINDING THE FOUR ART CAR PERIMETER LINES**

Hours before the burn, the Ranger SITE Team places orange stanchions to mark the perimeter for the largest Art Cars, which are always the first to arrive at the burn site. From there, the perimeter distances of the various sizes of Art Cars are:

- \* 250’: the largest (bus-sized) Art Cars (marked by orange stanchions)
- \* 200’: large (truck-sized) Art Cars
- \* 175’: medium (car-sized) Art Cars
- \* 150’: small (cart-sized) Art Cars and bicycles

(Note: The only exceptions would be DMV-licensed Disabled Art Cars, which may park at a comfortable viewing distance for the disabled participants; Art Cars directly associated with the Burn event; and the occasional entitled DPW vehicle that might be best left alone.)

However, most of the Art Cars have a way of congregating along this line, restricting and blocking access paths for participants and smaller Art Cars. This is not good. So, much of a Wrangler's attention will be on monitoring and keeping these access paths open between the largest Art Cars, and placing the smaller ones at their appropriate distances in front of them.

The best way to find the appropriate distance away from the orange stanchion/largest Art Car line is to literally "walk off" the distance. The average human stride, or step, covers around two to three feet. By becoming a human yardstick, a Wrangler can walk the appropriate number of steps in from the perimeter to find the proper line for the Art Car they might be guiding forward.

At some point, the participant perimeter fills in such that walking off steps is no longer possible. The surrounding Art Cars and your best judgment will then provide a rough guide for proper vehicle placement.

You are not a Parking Control Officer. You're just making sure that everyone has a fair chance to land a good spot to see the burn. If an Art Car is over its line by a few feet, but isn't creating a problem being there, then leave it alone.

## **PEOPLE BEHAVING BADLY: COMMON ART CAR ISSUES**

Most everyone is a terrific Burner about how they park their Art Cars amongst their neighbors, but the ones who aren't will usually trigger an agitated call to the Wranglers to mediate the ensuing unhappiness between participants that will be sure to follow.

Employing Ranger FLAME strategies and techniques, Wranglers seek to mediate a settlement in their own unique way, one that will make everyone reasonably happy. Hopefully, in the end, there will be hugs all around.

Here are examples of some of the challenging situations Wranglers face, and some guidelines on how you might handle them:

**Blocked Views:** This is the most common issue that Wranglers deal with. It happens when a late arriving Art Car snakes its way through established groups of participants and Art Cars and stops in front of them, especially as the Burn nears and space is getting tight everywhere but behind the largest Art Cars.

If space permits, guide the vehicle to a better location by leading with the aid of your flashlight, another Wrangler team or, with encouragement, a helpful Art Car crew. In tight quarters, a compromise might mean a move of just ten or fifteen feet in one direction or the other.

However, a stopped Art Car is an instant magnet for bikes, and once so magnetized, it is impossible to move. The same goes for groups of participants that choose to camp themselves around a parked Art Car. Once surrounded, let it be.

**Wandering Art Cars:** An Art Car wandering through a dense crowd, looking for a spot to park, needs a spotter, so help guide the vehicle to a good location by leading it by flashlight, with the assistance of another Wrangler or Art Car crew member.

**Ladders:** A tall ladder topped by a participant and his camera equipment, in the middle of a moving ocean of participants, is an invitation to a sky fall upon those below that is much heavier and full of hurt than any falling ember.

Educate the participant about the dangers to body and soul being up there like that, and encourage them to relocate their ladder next to an Art Car or a group of bikes that won't mind the company, so as to create a barrier next to or around the ladder that will lessen the chances of participants running into it.

**Scaffolds:** The ideal place for a scaffold is one that is appropriate for its height, but they have a tendency to quickly go up somewhat closer. There's not much to be done about a scaffold once it's up and peopled. But they make great neighbors for that ladder you might find all by its lonesome not too far away.

**Film Crew Cherry Pickers:** They are usually very good about their placement. Make sure there is enough space for participant movement in front of the rig. The area around the cherry picker should be cordoned off, and some might have their own site monitors.

**Fire, Medical or Experiential Emergencies:** In the event of an emergency, the Wranglers will be the only Rangers able to first-respond to the situation.

As per standard Ranger procedure:

- Contact the Wrangler Lead, who will then notify IC.
- Secure a safety perimeter around the situation.
- Enlist the aid of helpful participants, if possible.
- Signal arriving backups, Green Dots or EMT/LE by rotating your flashlight overhead, in a steady circular motion.
- Remain on-site until released by the Wrangler Lead.
- Resume Wrangling your quad.

## **GEARING UP: PREPARING FOR THE BURN**

The equipment listed under the “Getting Started” section of the Burn Perimeter ART is the largely the same for the Wranglers:

- Long sleeved Ranger shirt and Ranger hat
- Jacket (optional, but highly recommended)
- Comfortable, protective footwear
- Clear goggles
- Dust mask
- Full water bottle or camelbak
- Small food items (optional, but again recommended)

Each Wrangler has their wheels under them, and carries a radio and a strong flashlight. They will use plenty of both.

**RANGER HQ Roll Call:** The Art Car Wranglers rally at the same time and place as the Burn Perimeter Rangers working the Burn event that night.

After the general briefing, the Wranglers hold their own briefing, where they choose their partners and the quadrants they want to ride. The Wranglers are then released, to rally again later at the burn site.

**Burn Site Roll Call:** After one final huddle, Wrangler teams ride out to their respective quadrants and begin their rounds, getting to know the various Art Cars that will fill their quads as the night progresses. The Lead and Second begin circling the entire perimeter.

## **SHOWTIME!: AWARENESS DURING THE BURN**

The main Wrangler concern during the actual burn is an ember falling on an unattended Art Car and setting it on fire. It has happened.

During the burn, the Wrangler teams, still in their respective quadrants, get to watch the fire, while still keeping a watchful eye on their Quad. However, all teams should be aware of the direction of the ember fall towards a particular quad, especially in high winds, and be prepared to assist in the safe movement of participants and Art Cars away from the fall.

Self-preservation is usually enough to move Art Cars and participants out from under an ember fall. Scan the crowd for Art Cars to see that they are accompanied by their crews, with their diligent eyes on the falling embers. If you encounter an unattended Art Car, stay with or keep an eye on it until their crew returns.

It is not your responsibility to put out the fire on a burning Art Car. Report the incident to the Wrangler Lead, who will contact IC. Create a large perimeter around the burning vehicle, and wait for the firefighters and LE to arrive.

### **AFTER THE FALL: POST-BURN CHECK-IN**

The Wranglers are released at the same time as the Perimeter Rangers. Check-in is by radio with the Lead. They do not have to gather at a rally point. However, duty changeover and shift checkout still occurs at Ranger Headquarters.

### **CAN YOU SEE WHAT I'M SAYING?: FLASHLIGHT SIGNALING**

Darkness and loud Art Car sound systems can make it difficult managing Art Car movement, especially through throngs of participants and other Art Cars. A bright flashlight speaks for you in these situations.

#### **Signaling to Stop a moving Art Car**

- From the front or side: quick plays of light across the windshield or driver's windows are usually enough to catch their attention.
- From the rear: bounce the light off the outside rear view mirror, if it has one.

#### **Signaling Stop and Go to an Art Car**

- Tell the driver to follow your flashlight, and only your flashlight.
- "MOVE – SLOWLY" -- rotate the light in a slow circular motion.
- "STOP" -- slash the light in a back and forth horizontal motion.
- "LEFT" or "RIGHT" – guide with your free hand.

#### **Signaling to Back Up an Art Car**

- One Wrangler is positioned off the left front of the Art Car, in view of the driver.
- One or more additional Wranglers stand off the rear corners, with one always in view of the front end Wrangler.
- Tell the driver to follow your flashlight, and only your flashlight.
- Using the circle/slash light technique, the back end Wranglers lead the way, in a coordinated flashlight signal relay through the front end Wrangler to the driver.

NOTE: Never focus your flashlight on the driver's eyes!

## **I'M TELLING ON YOU!: REPORTING AN ART CAR VIOLATION TO THE DMV**

Aside from the standard rules regarding Art Cars on the playa, Burn events carry their own special set of guidelines, as mentioned above. Being a bit over a perimeter line is not an issue, in and of itself, especially if no one is affected.

But being over the line, and blocking views, while being an asshat about it, is serious. This is especially true for asshat behavior of the driving kind, which has a nasty way of endangering participants, many of who might be sitting on the playa.

Every Wrangler has the discretion to report the bad behavior of an Art Car and its driver to the DMV. Should you find the need to do so, provide the Lead with the following information: Art Car permit number, and time, location and nature of the asshat behavior, regardless of the resolution of the situation.

The Lead will forward this information to Intercept, which is the Ranger link to the DMV, and they will act on it accordingly.