

# Las Vegas Decompression 2018

## After Report

24-hour micro-Burn, all ages until 9pm. October 6, 2018

### Intro

While there have been several Decompression multi-day camping events in the Las Vegas region, this single-day “on-the-pavement” event was a new spin. Inspired by the decompression street faires of other regions, we hoped to create something that was more accessible to non-Burners and Burn-curious who might not be ready to commit to a desert campout.

Wrangling participants was a bit of a challenge, as many people were put off by a failed attempt to throw an official event in 2017. The people who were involved in the planning committee lost faith in each other, and the community lost faith in the organizers. The result was one person actively working to organize 2018’s event for most of the year, with very few people showing interest in the idea. However, a member of the community with a large store of theme camp gear had stepped up (after an exploratory inquiry from another RC) and offered to donate a venue, staff, and all the equipment we could possibly need. We also have a community member with an online ticketing platform who donates those services to our regional burns (which he used to organize) and now to our decompression as well. Even if it was just me and the crew sitting in the lot playing tunes for ourselves, this event was going to happen.

After Burning Man, with just a couple months before the big day, a saving grace came about in the form of a fresh volunteer with a past-regional-event-organizer title under her belt. Between her credentials, contacts, and big energy, we were able to start gaining some traction! It built up slowly, but it built. The more people who signed on to play with us, the more inspired the rest of the community became.

An additional challenge was the budget. It was non-existent. I was paying out of pocket for upfront expenses, and hoping that enough tickets would sell to cover everything we needed. Two weeks before the event, not even 25 tickets were sold. This can partially be blamed on the distrust the community felt, but I also think it’s kind of a general Las Vegas thing. Despite that hurdle, and thanks to the generosity of our host, we kept moving forward, knowing that at least *we’d* have a good time, and probably break even.

By the end of the night of the event, over 300 tickets had been sold. Once people started to see that their friends were on-board, things quickly snowballed. It was a beautiful sight, and everyone had a great time catching up with each other and sharing the great energy that they’d been craving since that thing in the desert.

## Participation

Total tickets claimed: 330

Total checked in at event: 264

## Financial

Event income: \$4,852.06

Event expenses: \$1,664.94

Still deciding how to split the remaining funds to pay back LLC operating costs (a couple years with no income) while leaving enough money to comfortably throw the next event with art grants.

## The Good

- Hosting Burner-owned venue generously donated everything we'd need to make a safe and fun event
- In the end, the community really rallied to make something special for each other
- Put some money in the bank for future events
- Learned too much about what it takes to put this type of event together
- Our Southern Nevada Rangers got to wear their khakis
- No major incidents, no police (sound ordinance has been an issue for the venue in the past), no big whoop!
- Several kid-friendly activities thanks to some amazing community members. The kids had a blast during all-ages hours wearing costumes, playing with science, riding art cars, and even performing stand-up comedy
- Despite some people bringing much larger setups than they'd indicated to the placement team, there was plenty of space to accommodate everyone. We even had an art car track circling the perimeter of the venue

## The "Meh"

- With tickets selling so poorly in the beginning, there wasn't any money to permit FIRE
- Volunteerism was severely lacking, BUT the few who really put their energy in went way above and beyond all expectations.
- Several scheduled performers completely flaked out and ghosted
- Couple years of LLC costs fronted that can hopefully start being paid back (cuts into future budget)
- I never wanted to be an event planner!

## The future

We will likely continue to use the same venue for at least another year. The space is very convenient, but it may be outgrown as more of the community latches on to this concept. The donation of the venue is an incredible boost to Decompression event funds. I am looking forward to offering art grants and donations now that there is some money to cover early expenses. I was very stressed out and didn't directly enjoy much of the fruits of my labor, but hearing from so many people how everything was "just what we needed" ~~almost~~ makes it all worth it!! Many lessons were learned in general event preparation and execution, but I think I'd welcome a more experienced helper to manage some these tasks!