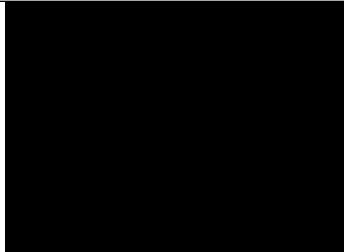


Desert Blast draws crowd to secretive p...



MILITARY TECH

Desert Blast draws crowd to secretive pyrotechnic orgy — Part 1

by: [George Knapp](#)

Posted: Sep 10, 2019 / 09:49 PM PDT

Updated: Oct 11, 2019 / 04:26 PM PDT

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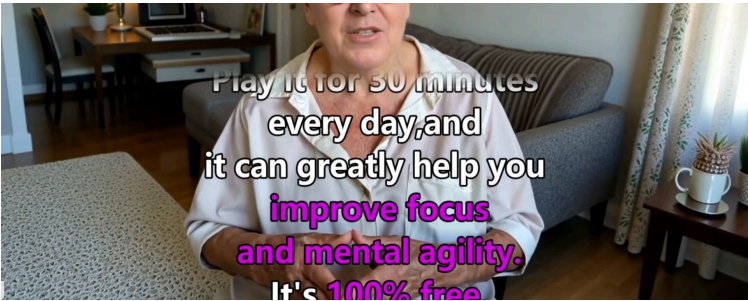


A secretive, slightly off-kilter event known as Desert Blast was staged at a dry lake bed near Las Vegas. A few hundred heavily-armed people got together to blow things up. People come to this event from all over the world because there is no event like it anywhere else. Aired on KLAS TV on May 24, 1999. First of 2 parts.

The arrival begins slowly. A trickle of trucks or RVs slipping into the desert for a one-day pyrotechnical orgy. The trickle becomes a torrent until a few hundred of the hard core are gathered at the dry lake bed to pursue mutual interests on a weekend in May 1999.

A man wearing a camouflage sun hat talked about what you're likely to see at the event. "Guns, explosives, anything that flies, burns, or explodes. You know, basic stable kind of people."

×



Daylight hours are devoted mostly to guns of all varieties:

- .50 caliber machine guns ripping off rounds at a mountain a mile away.
- An assortment of cannons and howitzers blasting away at unseen enemies.
- A mortar that fires bowling balls?

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Desert Blast draws crowd to secretive p... at a strange zoo of cardboard cutouts. Overhead, vintage planes buzz the lake bed. Rockets are fired ,000 feet. Clearance had to be obtained from Nellis Air Force Base for those.

bizarre contraptions. When did you last see someone in a motorized lawn chair carrying a arts? The vehicles transport folks to spots on the lake just dying to be blown up.

described the raw materials:

here we regenerate pounds of steel mesh underneath a gallon of gas and it makes for a nice little fireball for the worst mileage in the world. Zero miles per gallon. Fire in the hole.”

Desert Blast is now known all over the world, spread mostly by word of mouth. Fireworks companies scramble to get here. Not to compete, but rather to show off their wares.

A fireworks dealer flew from Australia found his way to the event. “Everybody sort of knows about it and it’s one of those events where everyone wants to go to but you can’t necessarily get there.”

As the sun starts to set, preparations begin for the real show. Fireworks, firebombs and all things that go boom in the night. Obviously, it’s an event that’s not for everyone.

Are all attendees on their best behavior? “Absolutely not,” the fireworks dealer says.

Next story: [Guns, fireworks on center stage at secretive Desert Blast — Part 2](#)

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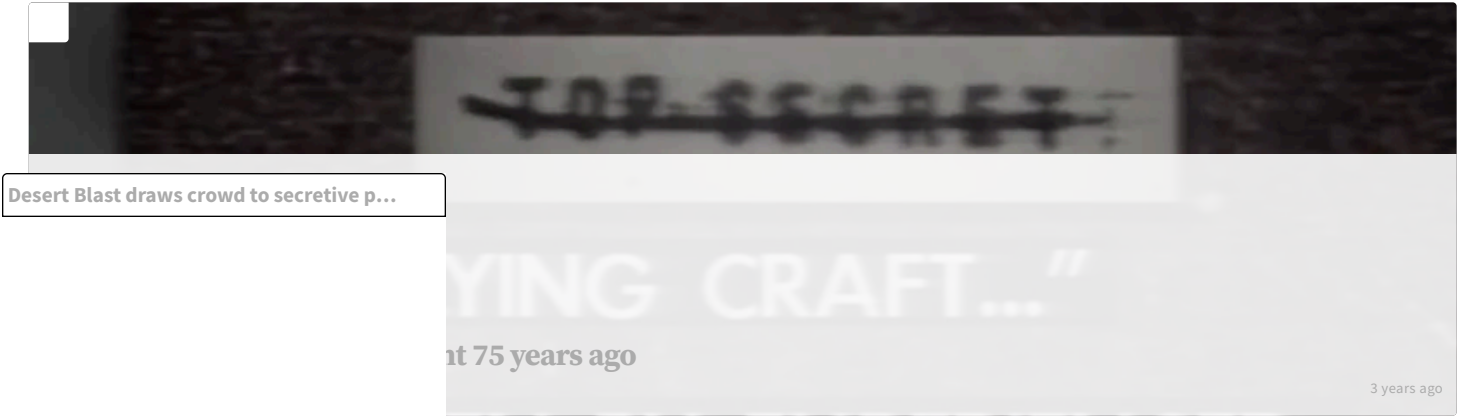


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