

Around Town

Your weekly urban planner

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Play by beer

Testing our endurance, we spend our weeknights playing bar games. Here's how they compare.
By Madeline Nusser

Monday

HAMBURGER MARY'S HAMBINGO!

We went to this drag-centric bingo night for the hammy entertainment, but its most noticeable aspect (aside from the exuberantly plus-sized, table-dancing bingo caller, Velocity Metropolis) was the stellar service. We paid for it in the form of pricey \$14 hamburgers and \$9 drinks, but they were delivered lightning fast by one of many dotting servers. Promptly at 8pm, Ms. Metropolis began calling the balls in expert fashion as we quickly ticked off the letters on our \$5-a-pop **bingo cards**. The occasional quip—"Hey first-timers, thanks for choosing Mary's to pop your bingo cherries"—was made more sultry as Metropolis batted feathered black eyelashes that stretched endlessly across her cherubic face. A few games through, she wowed us with a costume change and a buoyant dance performance to Pink's "Raise Your Glass"—the extra long remix. Although this game was adults-only (the jocular use of "beh-tches" echoed through the bar), proceeds went to the night's charity, Lawrence Hall youth services, which amply repaid the crowd with theater-ticket prizes. *Hamburger Mary's, 5400 N Clark St (773-781-6969)*



Tuesday

BEACHWOOD INN'S BOARDGAMES

We went to Raunchy Bingo at Grace Street Tap, but found the game inexplicably canceled. (Heed my warning: Call all bars before you head out.) So we moseyed on down to Beachwood Inn, which stocks a plethora of board-games—from Parcheesi to Clue—playable on any day of the week. My friend and I plucked

Scrabble from the shelf and laid the board across a cozy booth table. A sweet array of kites lined the tin ceiling, and a soft light emanated from beer signs. The crowd, solidly after-work regulars (read: men with heavy Chicago accents), provided a soundtrack in the

form of drunken jokes and jukebox picks. With two Qs and no dictionary, I racked up hundreds of points playing questionable words like "rhymings." Beers cost a bit much (around \$4.50 each) for a dive bar, but otherwise it felt like home... when heavy-drinking uncle Joe comes around. *Beachwood Inn, 1415 N Wood St (773-486-9806). 5pm-2am.*

Wednesday

UNCLE FATTY'S TWO COOL 4 SCHOOL

We were expecting nostalgic antics at this new trivia night, a supposed imitation of kids' TV show "Double Dare." Instead the giant tropical-themed bar hired Whaddayaknow Free Pub Trivia—a trivia purveyor that hosts conventional game nights in about 22 bars around town. The company's solid formula includes two rounds of six questions, three bonus rounds and a final question. But on this night, one "bonus" round—which featured crowd-pleasing, infantile subjects such as a Paris Hilton movie—was scored disproportionately high. The crowd was good, though; composed, yet crude enough to go by team names like "Team Vag" (as in, two players with vaginas). Prizes didn't amount to much, but the drinks—\$2 beer and **cocktails**—cost so wonderfully little, \$10 lasted us the entire night. *Uncle Fatty's, 2833 N Sheffield Ave (773-477-3661). Wednesdays 8pm, free.*

Thursday

KINCADE'S FAMILY FEUD NIGHT

Before I headed to here, a knowing coworker told me, "It's better if you **drink** a lot." Prescient words. The game—a *Family Feud* style trivia—taps into your emotional affinity with the general populous, not to be confused with, say, general knowledge. Two rounds of nonstimulating trivia (which started an hour late) asked us to predict the public's answers to questions such as "Name six things you might get on New Years' Eve." Write down the No. 1 response, and receive a few points; but if you know the fifth or sixth answer, you rack up serious points. The strongest team—fresh-faced student-types—accumulated a high score with the reply "STD" (the answer to no less than two questions). Prizes included giant straw-festooned drinks called fishbowls and bar gift certificates, but the real boon was the night's special: juicy **30¢ chicken wings**. *Kincade's, 950 W Armitage St (773-248-0010)*



JIM NUTT, TRIM, 2010; COURTESY DAVID INGLAN GALLERY; TOP RIGHT, JIM NUTT, HEE-MAN, 1969; COURTESY NEW ORLEANS MUSEUM OF ART

ANDREW NAWROCKI