

Sunday trivia nights come to Bobbi’s, in alternative to bars

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Bobbi’s, a new pizzeria on Broadway that specializes in what it calls “Detroit-ish” pizza, hosted its third Sunday trivia night on Sunday.

Bobbi’s opened in October after a ribbon-cutting ceremony that included Mayor Justin Elicker and Yale’s mascot, Handsome Dan. The pizzeria held its first Sunday trivia night on Jan. 18.

It was a “full house — not a seat open,” said Morgan Chapman, the events manager of Immodest Trivia. “We actually had to grab chairs from upstairs to make it work.”

“Night one, you kind of hold your breath,” Chapman added. “The most exciting piece was probably actually having to tell people that we’re full.”

Bobbi’s puts on these events through a partnership with Immodest Trivia, a company which specializes in planning bar trivia nights.

Eddie Daniels, Immodest Trivia’s owner, hopes that Bobbi’s will help retain a particular audience at their events. Before starting at Bobbi’s, Immodest’s Sunday trivia nights were at Fussy Coffee, a local coffee shop which closed with little notice in early September last year. After that abrupt farewell, Daniels wondered how to continue serving a similar niche.

“That was a really nice Sunday crew, because the rest of our trivia are in places that are strictly bars,” Daniels said. “So, people that were under 21, or didn’t like to drink, or just didn’t want to be out that way, they didn’t really have a place to go.”

As Immodest’s Sunday trivia night searched for a new home, Ankit Chenalli — co-owner of Bobbi’s and owner of the nearby restaurant Sherkaan — reached out to Daniels about hosting. At



CINDY ZHONG / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Bobbi’s Pizza on Broadway began hosting Sunday trivia nights Jan. 18 after adopting the tradition from Fussy Coffee, which closed last year.

first, Daniels wasn’t sure what to expect.

“It’s a Sunday afternoon, it’s a pizza place, it’s a lot of new variables that we don’t usually host with,” Daniels said. “I was over the moon that we had a huge crowd the first night.”

Each week, Daniels writes a new set of trivia questions, which are then used at Immodest’s locations. Every game has four regular rounds and one quick answer round at the end. Customers can compete in teams of up to six people and are asked to only play trivia at one location per week.

For Becca Pearlman and her friends Max Orsolini and Saige Pagano, the game fits into a familiar routine. While it was their first time at Bobbi’s, Pearlman told the News that

trivia nights were something they all looked forward to each week.

“It’s a tradition we have, and we’ve been doing it for — at this point — over a year,” Pearlman said. “It’s just a nice way to wind down, forget about things that are stressing me out and have fun with my friends.”

Usually, Pearlman and her friends go to trivia on Tuesday nights at Archie Moore’s restaurant in East Rock. This week, after one of their friends noticed an advertisement for Bobbi’s, they decided to try out a new spot.

Another team — Martha Seibel, her sister Autumn Parris and her cousin George Seibel — similarly described trivia as a source of lighthearted fun.

“I like learning,” Parris said, “and I always learn something.”

This week, players had the chance to learn about the chief justice behind United States v. Nixon, to whose song Nicki Minaj’s “Anaconda” responded and what a pangolin is. One of the categories was complete-the-list, with two items each missing from lists of novels in the “Hunger Games” series, the thirteen colonies and the cluster of Central Asian countries ending in “stan.” All questions were displayed on a TV screen above the pizzeria’s kitchen.

As the game progressed, teams alternately huddled at their tables, discussing in hushed voices, and cheered when Chapman revealed a long-shot guess to be right. Even after 90 minutes, the dining area still buzzed with energy. Chapman’s computer

screen even attracted a few spectators as they waited for their pizzas.

For both Daniels and Chapman, inspiring that curiosity remains a driving force behind their work.

“It’s rare,” Daniels said, “to put something out and see directly the impact that your work is having on a community. It really brings me a lot of joy seeing people, like, react to questions and categories, especially when they solve a mystery theme.”

Bobbi’s hosts Sunday trivia night at 6 p.m. on Sundays.

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Yale research questions the promise of biodegradable plastics

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The media is filled with surprising and horrifying statistics about our everyday encounters with microplastics.

People inhale up to 68,000 microplastic particles a day. Your brain may contain one plastic spoon of microplastics. Even the tears you shed upon hearing these facts may also contain microplastics.

Researchers from the Yale School of the Environment published a paper last month in Nature Reviews Clean Technology that explores the life cycle of biodegradable plastics and tradeoffs of the alternative to traditional plastics.

“Carbon emissions and plastic pollution affect the environment in different ways and at different scales. Our study emphasizes the need

for a systems perspective that evaluates multiple environmental impacts simultaneously,” Yuan Yao ENV ’19, one of the study’s authors, wrote in an email to the News.

Yao and her team of industrial ecologists conducted an analysis comparing traditional plastics such as polyethylene and polyvinyl chloride with biodegradable options such as polylactic acid, or PLA, and thermoplastic starch — two of the most common biodegradable plastics. Ecotoxicity, the potential to harm an ecosystem, is primarily a concern with conventional plastics.

“If you think about sand or rocks getting into rivers, right? They grind against each other. They become smaller and smaller until it becomes sand,” Hanno Erythropel, an

environmental chemist at Yale’s Center for Green Chemistry and Green Engineering, said in an interview. “You can think of that analogy for some of the plastics. They just become smaller, and eventually they become the micro scale. And that’s what we call them, microplastics.”

According to Erythropel, microplastics’ small size is only one part of the problem. He conducted research on plasticizers — liquids put in plastics to make them less brittle when heated up. Plasticizers and toxic additives are at risk of leaching out from plastic over time, ultimately ending up in the environment or in human bodies.

Another reason to be concerned is that plastics are generally nonpolar and repel water. This allows them to transport toxic compounds that similarly repel water.

The recent study found that substituting all plastics with biodegradable alternatives could reduce ecotoxicity by 34 percent, while reducing global waste accumulation by up to 65 percent.

This best-case scenario, however, is less straightforward in reality. Many biodegradable alternatives only break down under specialized conditions unachievable in a household setting. This may include humidity and temperature-regulated industrial composting facilities or biogas-producing anaerobic digestion with microorganisms.

Unless properly managed toward their end of life, “biodegradable” materials are no more sustainable than plastics.

The confusion occurs when people mix up the term “compostable” with “biodegradable,” according to Lars

Ratjen, an environmental chemist at the Center for Green Chemistry and Green Engineering.

Though the two terms are often lumped together, compostability refers to a plastic or material’s ability to completely turn into biomass, carbon dioxide and water without forming any problematic byproducts. Biodegradability is a material’s inherent ability to break down through biological processes; for food scraps, this might be a few days, while for plastic, it might be centuries.

“Hence, all compostable plastics are biodegradable, but not all biodegradable plastics are compostable,” Ratjen wrote to the News.

Ensuring that biodegradable plastics are properly managed after use is a resource-intensive process that involves facility startup costs, intensive water usage and potentially doubled greenhouse gas emissions.

In their discussion, the study’s authors note that implementing penalties and fines for biodegradable plastic mismanagement may be needed to discourage improper disposal.

“Many companies, especially startups, are working on this and are coming up with solutions for plastics that are fully compostable in home composters. But this is still a rapidly changing environment, also highly interesting, so as a consumer I would always recommend to keep eyes and ears open,” Ratjen told the News.

Over 460 million metric tons of plastic are produced each year, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

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RACHEL MAK / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Two weeks after an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent shot a U.S. citizen in Minneapolis, city organizers and volunteers described heightened fear for their community.