



# Stu News Laguna

Laguna Beach's Online Newspaper and Community Forum

Volume 13, Issue 3 | January 8, 2021

## From Laguna With Love: Drag Bingo

By Dennis Piszkiwicz

It was my daughter's idea that after dinner the three of us – she, her mom, and I – go down to Main Street for a beer or two to help us relax at the end of the day. We walked over in a light rain, and it was good to get back inside where it was warm and dry. We took three seats at the bar and ordered a round of beer from the tap that the bartender recommended, something called Space Dust. Very nice.

Wednesday night was Drag Bingo night at Main Street Bar & Cabaret, just like Wednesday was bingo night at the big hall behind Saint Constance Church, my family's parish back in Chicago – although there were a few differences.

The voluptuous Endora, Main Street's resident drag queen, was there wearing a stylish dress from the 1950s with a deeply plunging neckline. In the expanse below her chin hung a mass of rhinestones with enough crystal to build a chandelier. She had even more glitter dripping from her earlobes and wrists.

She was at a table by the wall setting up for the bingo game. When we came in, she welcomed us and introduced herself to me. She has a day job cutting ladies' hair, and that's how my wife and later my daughter met him. His work clothes are a lot less fabulous than hers, and when he's at work, he goes by his less intriguing name – something like Harry.



Submitted photo

### *The fabulous Endora*

A small crowd was already there, sitting at tables set in a broad arc with Endora at the apex. She handed everybody two bingo cards – paper squares with a matrix of numbers printed on them – and sponge-tipped marking pens that put out a rainbow of glitter colors to mark the numbers that were called. My pen made shiny green blobs. Nobody had to buy the cards; they came with the drinks, just like the paper napkins.

Then it was game on. Traditional rules: five glitter spots in any straight line on the sheet wins.

Endora started calling out bingo letter-number combinations from a shuffled deck of cards holding all possible combinations, and those of us drinking beer and playing the game began stamping big glitter dots on the bingo cards in front of us. Just minutes later, I saw it on mine: five shiny green spots in a line from lower left to top right.

“BINGO!”

I handed my card to Endora, and she certified me as the winner. As my prize, I grabbed a coffee mug decorated with images of roses.

Another game began with new bingo cards. This time the winning pattern would be a block “T” in any orientation: five dots along an edge and four dots perpendicular to it through the center. Endora resumed calling numbers, entertaining us with her naughty-language patter.

### ***Holy bingo!***

Before long, my card and everybody else’s were filling up with glitter dots, and – holy bingo – was it happening again? I showed my card to my daughter to check that I really had all the right squares in the grid marked with green glitter. This time she shouted, “BINGO!”

I handed my daughter the card to take it up to Endora for a prize. I wasn’t going to go up there and claim I won the first two games in a row. Who knew what the losing players would do? They might accuse me of cheating and kick me out – or maybe not. Everybody seemed to be having a good time, win or lose.

My daughter chose as her prize an adult coloring book – no, not that kind of adult coloring book – one with intricately drawn illustrations that require a mature and skilled hand to turn them into colorful works of art.

The following Wednesday we were back for more bingo at Main Street. My wife won one game; my daughter won three. I didn’t win this time, but we stayed to watch the drag show. The house was packed. There appeared to be more than a few straight-hetero couples there with us, but who knows? The LGBTQ community embraces all kinds of possible pairings.

I hope Endora returns after the pandemic. Drag Bingo was our kind of wholesome family fun.

*Dennis Piskiewicz, who has lived in Laguna Beach for nearly four decades, has written biographies and histories, and likes to think he still has a sense of humor.*

Organized by the Laguna-based nonprofit Third Street Writers, “From Laguna with Love” features personal stories (anecdotes of up to 200 words and longer pieces up to 750 words) and photographs that celebrate only-in-Laguna moments and experiences, whether they’re funny, sad, insightful, or simply a reflection of daily interactions. If you or someone you know has a Laguna experience to share, you can submit your story or photo to <https://thirdstreetwriters.submittable.com/submit> for consideration.

Questions? Contact Amy Dechary at [amy@thirdstreetwriters.com](mailto:amy@thirdstreetwriters.com).



Photo by James Dechary