

BEST of PORTLAND 2012

BEST NIGHTS

BEST Drinking Game

Team Guzzle Puzzle is stumped. They know that the bike light attached to a two-wheeler parked in front of Alberta's Bye and Bye is flashing Morse code, but they haven't yet figured out that the playing cards attached to its back wheels are semaphore. Or that the number puzzle they've been poring over for an hour is actually a word puzzle.

Scattered around the bar, around 45 others are quietly scratching their heads over the same brain teasers.

This is **Puzzled Pint** (puzzledpint.com). On the second Tuesday of the month, teams of puzzle fans gather in a Portland bar to work through logic puzzles (the first puzzle is the location of that month's bar itself—published online the night before). There are no winners, there are no prizes. But each month, around 50 Portlanders show up just for the fun of solving puzzles. And also the beer, according to members of Guzzle Puzzle, who live up to their name.

"This is the only event in the country where people get together in person to do these sort of puzzles," says Matt Kleinman, one of five Puzzled Pint organizers. "Most other places have weekend-long things, or day-long things that happen periodically, but this is pretty unique to have a monthly recurring event, going on for two years."

Kleinman and the other organizers spend the whole night giving help and hints to the puzzlers. Each contributes one puzzle per event, which take from five to 40 hours to create. None receives a cent.

"We had one puzzle that was just 16 cookies. A third were chocolate chip, a third were chocolate chip and walnut, and a third were raisin," says Kleinman, who baked the cookies at home. "The raisin ones had letters spelled out in the raisins. The walnut and chocolate chip were Morse code. And the chocolate chips were Braille. So if you translated all these sets of cookies, they translated to 'Pabst ribbon color.' The solution was blue." RUTH BROWN.



Willamette Week JULY 25, 2012 [wwweek.com](http://www.wwweek.com)

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