New shops, conventions promote tabletop gaming

Eric Acosta

A board game renaissance has taken the nerd world by storm, so much so that there’s even International TableTop Day on Saturday, April 29. That day, the Las Cruces Board Gamers and South West Area Gamers will host a game-a-thon at New Mexico State University’s Corbett Center.

With several shops catering to tabletop game enthusiasts, El Paso’s board game scene is growing, too.

“I started my shop because I wanted to build a community around games and gaming,” said Brandon Sivret, owner of Military Gamer Supply.

The store had its grand opening in November 2016 and already has two locations, including one at Fort Bliss. With 1000 square feet of retail space, the venue includes video game rooms, a coffee bar, a custom board game terrain workshop and a tabletop game area. Sivret is currently working on adding a PC game room.

Hardcore gamers aren’t necessarily going for the classic Trouble and Clue games of yore. Taking it miles further, enthusiasts are going for games that delve into worlds filled with complex plots and boundless fantasy. Take Scythe, a game where five players compete in a steam punk 1920s Eastern Europe. The game includes coal
powered merchandise, battles and stealing food and money from local farmers in an attempt to start a lucrative coal mine.

For those undaunted by such detailed games, gathering at places such as Military Gamer Supply have become a routine pastime.

“The community and the people we’ve drawn to the store are a diverse group of wonderful gamers who have made the difficulties of starting a small business all very worthwhile,” Sivret said.

Other game stores around town include Sun City Games on Yandell Drive, the Northeast’s Comics, Cards and Collectibles and Game Vault.

Game Vault, which also opened last year, hosts a board game night every Tuesday, Magic: The Gathering night on Fridays and a “Pokemon” card game night on Thursdays. Owner Lyndi Barnard said she’s seen attendance increase over the past few weeks.

“I’ve got people that know nothing about board games except for the typical Monopoly type of thing, and they’re really enjoying it,” Barnard said. “They’re making new friends. They’re hanging out after the game’s over with, talking and getting to know each other.”

One frequenter of Game Vault’s board games night is Rogelio Long. He and a few friends started the Boarder City Game Convention last year. He also started the University of Texas at El Paso’s Meeple Board Game Society. A meeple is a little board game piece that represents a person.

Long isn’t content with just playing board games, though. Along with his buddies Willy Enriquez, Matthew Melendez and Georgie Hinojosa, he created a game company called Three Wizards of the Mustache.

“It all starts with the idea,” Long said about crafting board games. “I work through the mechanics to balance them to make sure that it is a game that can be fun and not broken in some way.”

Long and his buddies plan to debut their latest game, Artisan Jewel Crafters, at this year’s Boarder City Game Con. It’s a card game meant for two-four players that takes 30-45 minutes to play. The point of the game is to gather a limited supply of ore and gems to make jewelry and score points.

As more gamers begin to connect throughout the city, the opportunities to create more events and games have also increased. This gave Long and his friends the confidence to continue with the game convention, which happens June 23-25.

“We had been going to board game cons outside of El Paso and the nearest one is a five hour drive, which is kind of a pain,” Long said. “I told myself if we got a hundred, it would be a success and we’d do it again next year, and here we are.”

Be sure to catch the convention’s fundraiser on May 20 at UTEP’s Union Building.

Game Nerdirectory:
**Military Gamer Supply**
Fort Bliss: Global Reach Shopette, Bldg. 13471, Sgt. Major Blvd.
East: 1121 Larry Mahan Dr., Ste. A
**What’s Up (El Paso, TX)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun City Games</td>
<td>1716 E. Yandell Dr., Ste. A</td>
<td>915-546-2733</td>
<td>SunCityGames.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics, Cards &amp; Collectibles</td>
<td>9477 Dyer St.</td>
<td>915-755-6877</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rebels Comics</td>
<td>12400 Montwood Dr.</td>
<td>915-594-2977</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Star Comics</td>
<td>4406 Dyer St.</td>
<td>915-562-0443</td>
<td>AllStarComics.net</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three Wizards of the Mustache</td>
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<td>3WMoustache.com</td>
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Be sure to catch these upcoming events:

**Int. TableTop Day gathering**
Saturday, April 29, 11 a.m.
Corbett Center, Room 106
New Mexico State University – Las Cruces, New Mexico
More info at facebook.com/groups/SWAGamers.

**Boarder City Game Convention**
Fundraiser: May 20, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.
UTEP Union Building, Templeton Suite (room 313)
500 W. University Ave.
Boarder City Game Convention 2017: June 23-25, 2-5 p.m.
BoarderCityGameConvention.com

**Meeple Board Game Society**
Meets every Friday
UTEP Bell Hall, room 130A.
facebook.com/TheMeepleSociety