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Kanawha Valley Neighbors

Nitro shop specializes in vintage video, arcade games

By Ben Calwell



Array Ben Calwell

Steven Hager poses next to a classic Ms. Pac-Man arcade game for sell in his shop. He is holding a Pong game -- one of the first home console video games. At left is a pinball game from the 80s.

If you remember the Atari "Pong" video game, you might get a little weepy-eyed at Steven's Vintage Arcade Games and Collectibles in Nitro.

That early 1970s forerunner to modern video and computer games can be found at Steven's Vintage Arcade Games, a gold mine for gamers of any age.

In fact, just about any kind of game, from vintage video games and consoles to old board game classics - even large arcade games - are at Steven's, 705A First Ave. (W.Va. 25) near the Nitro-St. Albans bridge.

Store Manager Steven Hager, 30, is a diehard gamer and grew up playing a variety of arcade, video and computer games.

In addition to vintage Atari games and consoles, Hager also has vintage systems made by Nintendo.

"We have older games and older systems. I have all the different systems that Nintendo made and a lot of older Nintendo games," Hager said.

He also has Sega Genesis and Dreamcast systems, PlayStations and early Xbox systems.

"Sega is like Nintendo, but it's a rival," he said.

Visitors can find a treasure trove of games for the vintage systems, including "Mario," "Sonic the HedgeHog," "Donkey Kong" and "Space Invaders," to name just a few.

"People are really interested in the old stuff. They want to share it with their kids," he said.

Hager's shop is crammed with fun, vintage stuff. When visitors walk in, there are big arcade games to the left.

"They can play them, and they are for sale, too."

His vintage arcade games include "Ms. Pac-Man" and "Gauntlet," which can be played for 25 cents.

Hager is a graduate of Nitro High School, and he also earned a degree in business from West Virginia State University.

He gets a lot of his old games and other items from people looking to sell them.

"People bring them in, and I buy them. We also go to auctions. It's a niche market," he said.

Steven's Vintage Arcade Games also stocks a variety of low-tech board games, too, such as Monopoly and other classics.

There is a selection of collectible toys and novelties, as well, including Disney, television and movie figures. Steven's also has Beanie Babies and toys that were given out by various fast-food chains.

In another area of the store, shoppers can find comic books and old LP albums from the 1950s, '60s, '70s and '80s. LP selections include music by Blood, Sweat & Tears and Glen Campbell. There are selections of movie DVDs (recent and classic) and music CDs for sale, too.

At the back of Steven's is an area where visitors can play card games such as "Magic the Gathering." Visitors can also play Monopoly or chess.

"We like people to come in and play," Hager said.

Steven's Vintage Arcade Games and Collectibles buys and sells all types of used games and collectibles.

Store hours are from 1 to 9 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and from 1 to 6 p.m. on Sunday. It is closed on Mondays.

For more information, call 304-727-8787 or visit www.stevensgames.com.