



A video gamer's heaven

Local arcade features vintage classics from the '80s such as Donkey Kong

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Since this past summer, DeKalb has hosted its own arcade, owned and operated by Pat O'Malley, a veteran of arcades for 20 years.

The Star Worlds Arcade is located on East Lincoln Highway between Simmons and Evans Avenue. The arcade includes a "Vintage Vault" full of rare 1980s retro games, including Pac-Man, Donkey Kong and Galaga.

"We're going to hold a Galaga tournament," O'Malley said. "I hope to draw in a lot of customers, including college kids, parents and even the younger kids."

All the arcade games are token-operated so O'Malley can offer better deals to customers, he said.

"Almost all of the games operate on one token each, except some of the newer games," O'Malley said. "I think we're one of the only places that offers 30 tokens for five dollars."

O'Malley said he started in the arcade business as a collector until he built up enough items to start his own business.

"I would buy the games from bowling alleys and restaurants," O'Malley said. "Usually, an old Galaga game will run between \$1,500 and \$2,000."

Although O'Malley maintains the arcade business isn't always the most profitable one, he does believe arcades offer customers a different experience than home entertainment consoles such as Playstation 2 and X-Box.

"This is a whole different platform," O'Malley said. "Its more of a social environment."

It is that appeal, combined with the current trend for retro nostalgia, that O'Malley believes will slowly boost the revenue for Star World Arcade.

"I always ask my customers what new titles they want to see in Star World, and they won't give them to me," O'Malley said. "They're happy with the classics."

In the Huskies Den, students have access to arcade games such as Soul Calibur, Crazy Taxi and Dance Dance Revolution, all of which are relatively new compared to the vintage classics in O'Malley's Star Worlds Arcade. Still, Stars World and the Huskies Den share a few common titles, among them being Galaga and Ms. Pac-Man.

"[Dance Dance Revolution] is always on, especially in the summer," said Jasmine Weisz, a senior communication and psychology major employed at the Huskies Den. "They even put on contests with the game."

Although Weisz is not sure if students would likely go to an off-campus arcade, she contended that arcade games

continue to rack in the money.

"The coin collectors inside every machine are about the size of a garbage can," Weisz said. "Every week we check these cans; they are about three-fourths full with quarters."

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