

Events Calendar

September - November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						30
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Click on a date for a list of events.

events

Pac-Man fever and pinball wizards
Classic arcade games find new life in Lyons

By STACY NICK
StacyNick@coloradoan.com

If your excuse in school for not handing in homework assignments was “Ms. Pac-Man ate it” have we got a town for you.

Lyons isn’t just a town on the way to Boulder or a quaint place to go antiquing, it’s also home to two, count ’em — one, two — places to get your old skool pinball and video game fix.

Lyons Classic Pinball and the newly opened Lyons Classic Video at Oskar Blues Grill and Brewery are giving Xbox a run for its money.

“It’s our own little time capsule,” said Marty Jones with Oskar Blues Brewery, where more than 29 ’80s video games call the walls home.

Lined up along black-lit walls are some of the greatest tributes to ’80s culture: Frogger, Galaga, Donkey Kong. Pac Man. Tron. (OK, so it wasn’t exactly the period of enlightenment)

There’s even a place for the lesser-known, harder



Zoom Photo



Courtesy of Marti Jones

Even the younger generation is susceptible to Pac Man Fever.

NAPA AUTO PARTS
Service & Selection
Napa

216 W. Horsetooth
 Fort Collins
 970-226-62

to find games such as Dig Dug, Tempest and Q*Bert. There's even a 1980 black and white Asteroids Deluxe.

Jones' downfall was Missile Command.

"My first job had a Missile Command and I cut my teeth on it," he said as he rolled the tracker ball around, smacking the counter missile launch button to defend his city from being destroyed by a hail of interplanetary ballistic missiles. "I still got it," he said, hitting the machine's most recent high score of 22,400.

The machines are owned by Kevin Carroll, who also owns Lyons Classic Pinball, just around the corner.

The collection started as a personal hobby — Carroll's wife, Carole, bought him a KISS pinball machine four years ago as a birthday present. From there it tilted like a hip-checked "Tommy" game with Carroll rotating in new games every few months from his home collection. At last count there were more than 40 machines just in the pinball arcade, ranging from a 1961 Kismet to a brand new "Pirates of the Caribbean."

Video fans can also find the rare Discs of Tron game and a 1977 Laguna Racer. There's also 1979 Hercules, the world's largest pinball machine and one of only 180 made.

"I want to be buried in this," Carroll joked (we hope).

It's anomalies like these that have the biggest pull, he said.

Where to play

- Lyons Classic Video at Oskar Blues Grill and Brewery — 303 Main St., Lyons. 11 a.m. to midnight Sundays through Thursdays and 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Kids are welcome until 9 p.m. when it goes to 21 and older. Information: www.oskarblues.com
- Lyons Classic Pinball — 339 A Main St., Lyons. Open 5 to 10 p.m. Thursdays, 3 to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 3 to 9 p.m. Sundays. Information: www.lyonspinball.com

Looking for something a little closer to home to get your video or pinball fix? Here are a few options:

- Fort Fun — 1513 E. Mulberry St.
- Games X Treme — 215 E. Foothills Parkway (inside Foothills Mall)

Game stats

- In 1871, inventor Montague Redgrave was granted a US Patent for the first pinball prototype, including the spring loaded plunger still used in games to this day.
- From the 1940s until the mid-1970s, pinball machines were banned in New York City; they were seen as a form of gambling because you could win free games. This is why machines now often carry the "FOR AMUSEMENT ONLY" sticker.
- The best selling pinball game of all time is "The Addams Family."
- The word "Atari" comes from the game go and means a stone or a group of stones is in danger of being taken by one's opponent; in Japanese it means "to be engulfed."
- Missile Command is often looked at as a manifestation of the Cold War's effects on popular culture. The game features a Star Wars-like implementation of National Missile Defense and parallels real-life nuclear war.
- It is rumored that in 1983 Atari buried millions of unsold ET game cartridges in a landfill in Alamogordo, New Mexico.
- In Sept. 1982, MAD Magazine named Pac-Man its Man of the Year.
- In 1982 the album "Pac Man Fever" was recorded by novelty songwriting duo Jerry Buckner and Gary Garcia. Each song contains sound effects from the game. Titles include "Froggy's Lament," "Do the Donkey Kong" and "Ode to a Centipede."

Related news from the Web

- Latest headlines by topic:
- [Strategic Defense Initiative](#)
 - [Microsoft Xbox](#)
 - [Entertainment](#)
 - [Games](#)

Powered by topbx.net



"These oddities didn't do well back in the day but now people are intrigued because there's a 'What is this?' to it," he said.

Younger gamers want more bells and whistles to their games while old-timers want to feel the machine click, Carroll said. There's also the obviously high nostalgia factor.

"Right now I'm looking for a PONG," he said.

Ray Hurley, 43, of Fort Collins, takes his sons, Bryce, 10, and Lionel, 8, down to the pinball arcade to drop a few dollars every so often.

"Well, I say it's for them but really it's for me," said Hurley, noting that the Tommy and Monty Python Black Knight games are his favorites.

"There's just something about a pinball machine," said pinball fan Hurley. "You lean against it. You shift the machine's weight. You become part of the game. A computer just can't match that."

Carroll said he's had pinball fans from all over the world stop in to play a few games. They've even started a monthly tournament and a Thursday night pinball league.

"There's some hard-core psyching out there," he said.

Some of the more ... enthusiastic video and pinball fans feud a bit. Both think they're game of choice involves more skill and the other is just a game of chance.

But whether you're a pinball wizard or have Pac Man Fever, Lyons has something for you.

STORYCHAT 

 [Post a Comment](#)

This article does not have any comments associated with it

Originally published September 28, 2006

 [Print this article](#)

 [Email this to a friend](#)

 [Subscribe Now](#)



Copyright ©2004 The Coloradoan. All rights reserved.
Use of this site indicates your agreement to the Terms of Service
(Terms updated 12/20/02)