

Board Game Club: Let the Games Begin

Jude Bolick, assistant editor

Every Tuesday from 3-7 p.m. during most semesters, the third floor of the Dickinson building is alive with energy. The circular tables are covered with games of all types and sizes, and several more lay stacked and pressed against the walls for later use. The PVCC Game Club is in session.

Although the club meeting does not officially start until 3 p.m., members can be seen playing games as early as 2 p.m. Anyone who wants to play is encouraged to join in the fun, even if they are not signed up for the club. A typical crowd consists of ten to twelve people, either playing a large game that goes up to that many players, or split off into several smaller groups.

“Board games are a good way of practicing social skills,” said Dr. Bruce Glassco, an English professor at PVCC and the faculty advisor of the PVCC Game Club. He was formerly the president of the Game Club at UVA, which inspired him to host one at PVCC after getting hired there.

He is also a game designer and has created twenty games, along with an additional three that have been published. His first and arguably most successful game, *Betrayal at House on the Hill*, is a popular choice at Game Club as well. His other published games are *Mystery! Motive for Murder* and *Fantasy Realms*.

Because the meeting place is located close to the offices on the third floor, the noise is an ongoing problem. However, as long as inside voices are used and no screaming breaks out, there are no issues. Sometimes, though, during a particularly intense game, this can be difficult to accomplish.

Members of the PVCC Game Club are encouraged to bring their own games, adding to the choices available both for the game and for the number of players it goes up to. All the games

are treated with respect, and fellow members are careful to not lose any pieces.

Students are not the only people playing. Faculty, high schoolers, and retired long-term members of the club also play, making for a richly diverse group. The atmosphere is inviting and relaxed, making for a fun, carefree experience for all.

The game variety is just as diverse, from long strategic board games to quick and easy-to-learn card games. On occasion, Glassco will also bring

in trial versions of his latest games to test them before sending them off to game companies, giving the members of the Game Club a part in the game’s creation, along with being some of the first to ever play it.

“We’re in a golden age of board games,” Glassco said. “More people are playing than ever.”

Due to the campus closing in March because of the Coronavirus, the Game Club has stopped meeting, but Glassco has high hopes for the upcoming fall

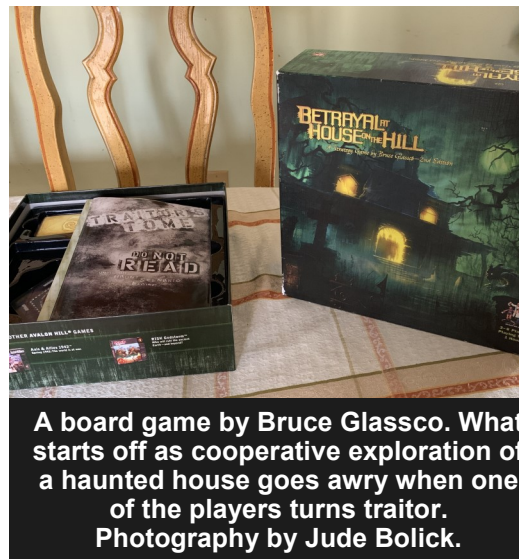
semester.

“Over the summer, I’ve been researching different online gaming platforms that would let us meet virtually once this semester starts up again,” Glassco said in a recent email. “The platform that seems to have the most potential is called Boardgamearena.com. It’s free, and it has digital versions of many of the games we play all the time...Some of the games require one player to have a paid membership, but I have paid, so that shouldn’t be a problem.”

Glassco also proposed that a Discord session could be made to allow members to chat while playing.

The meeting time for the club has also shifted to accommodate a shift in Glassco’s schedule, with the next meeting set to take place from 1-4 p.m. on Tuesdays.

For more information, contact Bruce Glassco at bglassco@pvcc.edu.



A board game by Bruce Glassco. What starts off as cooperative exploration of a haunted house goes awry when one of the players turns traitor. Photography by Jude Bolick.