



i n t e r n a t i o n a l m u s e u m o f g a m i n g a n d p u z z l e r y

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kyle Engen
Co-Steward of Operations
Cell: 541-490-1559
Email: kyle@imogap.org

BEAVERTON START-UP BOARD GAME MUSEUM RECEIVES WARM WELCOME IN SEATTLE

Gamers love board games as much as they do video games

Beaverton, OR – September 1st, 2011 A small start-up museum from Beaverton, the International Museum of Gaming and Puzzlery (IMOGAP.org), joined 70,000 game enthusiasts for the Penny Arcade Exposition (PAX) in Seattle last weekend. This year IMOGAP was invited to present materials on the history of board games in the Table Top Library (many enthusiasts include games that don't have a board, like card games or dice games, in the category Table Top games). "We are just getting started," said Kyle Engen, Co-Steward of Operations for the museum, "and to have a prestigious event recognize our efforts to celebrate the history of game play was a tremendous opportunity."

"It's been a long month getting ready, and a long weekend presenting," added Carol Mathewson, the other Co-Steward of Operations. "We're tired, but overjoyed that it all came off without a hitch."

The museum brought several small exhibits for the amusement of gamers. One was a survey of 3M bookshelf games from the 1960s, which was one of the first game lines marketed to adults. Another was an exhibit on primitive games, including astragalus bone dice, mancala boards, and Native American stick games. "Gambling games go to the heart of Native American culture," said Kyle, "the modern casinos are just the latest expression of a deep tradition." They also had a display called *How many pieces can you identify?* in which there were several game pieces from different eras, and people tried to name them. "Some of those were pretty obscure," added Sam Engen, who helped with the booth, "but people had fun." They also brought a large poster called *Structured Play*, prepared by Carol Mathewson, that showed an abbreviated history of games and their relationships. "Most experts agree that modern Backgammon derives from the ancient Egyptian game Senet – found in Tutankhamun's tomb, and that cards came to Europe from China in the 14th century. I just wanted to gather those threads into a single image

and get an overview.” She added, “some patrons objected to our mentioning only 3 video games (Pong, Ms. Pacman, and Minecraft) but we didn’t have room for everything.”

The museum received donations as well. Dozens of people donated used board games, money, and support for the museums operations.

IMOGAP has been invited back next year, and they’re already working on exhibit ideas. “We’re very excited to be able to return to PAX,” said Kyle, “but there’s so much more we need to work on. We need to grow our collection (currently approaching a thousand games), we need to write grants, we need to add features to our website, and we need to find a physical space that lets us share our collection with patrons.” While the museum is just getting started, they have big plans. “Oh yes, there’s the 1 year plan, and the 5 year plan, and the 20 year plan,” adds Kyle. “We hope to be kept busy for a good long time.”

IMOGAP is the International Museum of Gaming and Puzzlery, an Oregon non-profit corporation in Beaverton, Oregon. They have not yet received their federal 501(c)3 tax-exempt status, but hope to by the end of the year. IMOGAP seeks to reach a hand across every social, economic, and cultural boundary to engage other humans in structured play. They believe the exploration of ideas that are modeled by games and puzzles can produce common ground, encourage creativity, and enhance learning. They celebrate the aesthetic, historic and functional beauty of structured play and its components. If anyone would like to donate to the museum please go to <http://www.imogap.org/contribute.cfm>.

PAX is Penny Arcade Exposition. The exposition was started in 2004 by Jerry Holkins and Mike Krahulik, the authors of the Penny Arcade webcomic, to bring together their enthusiasm for console games, computer games, and board games, and it has been growing in popularity ever since.

#