

West Valley VIEW

The community newspaper of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, Litchfield Park & Tolleson, AZ
Phone (623) 535-8439

Email Updates

View this issue on-line!

Subscriptions

View More Photos

Volume

Slideshows

Classifieds

Daily Updates

Place An Ad

News

Road Report

Business News

Education

Tax Credit Form

Summer Meal Program

Sports

Viva

Police Logs

Obituaries

Submit an Obituary

Obituary form

Calendar

[home](#) : [news](#) : [news](#)

Friday, December 11, 2009

12/10/2009 11:43:00 AM

[Email this article](#) • [Print this article](#)

Game's premier will feature cash prizes

Warstone tournament set for 3 p.m. Saturday at Samurai Comics

Rich Ott
assistant editor

A new game combining marbles and trading cards will debut Saturday at a local comic book store and feature \$300 in cash prizes.

WarStone combines shooting marbles with card strategy while playing on a tabletop battle arena, almost resembling a pool table.

The free tournament is for children 17 and under and will feature cash prizes of \$150 for first place, \$100 for second place and \$50 for third place. Plus, the following top 50 players will receive WarStone merchandise, including skirmish and booster packs.

The first-ever WarStone organized tournament will last three hours and begin at 3 p.m. at Samurai Comics, 10720 W. Indian School Road in Phoenix.



TOY INVENTOR Richard Levy holds his latest invention, WarStone — a game that combines marbles with playing cards — while standing next to other toys he has created. WarStone's first ever organized tournament will run from 3 to 6 p.m. Saturday at Samurai Comics, 10720 W. Indian School Road in Phoenix. The event for children 17 and under will feature cash prizes totaling \$300.

If you go

WHAT: WarStone tournament

WHEN: 3 p.m. Saturday

WHERE: Samurai Comics, 10720 W. Indian School Road, Phoenix.

COST: Free

INFO: 623-872-8886, warstone.com

Avondale, AZ

54 °F / 13 °C

Scattered Clouds

at 11:41 AM

[Click for Forecast](#)

CLASSIFIED
ARIZONA

[Editorials](#)

[Commentary](#)

[Letters](#)

[Send Letters](#)

[Area Directory](#)

[Our Sponsors](#)

[Article Search](#)

[Jobs at the View](#)

[Home Feedback](#)

[Subscriptions](#)

[Submit a Story](#)

[About Us](#)

Site Search

search

[Advanced Search](#)

Samurai owner Mike Banks used to have a marble collection as a child and looks forward to the game's premier in his West Valley store.

"I loved marbles as a kid," said Banks, who is impressed with the marbles used in WarStone.

Some of the marbles, or stones as they are called, are clear and have characters from the game inside, others are very colorful with various patterns and symbols.

Banks, who has either worked in or owned comic book stores in the Valley for more than 25 years, sees people buying the game just to collect the marbles.

"And if the game play is decent, that can really propel it forward," he said.

Marbles, cards and gods

Richard Levy knows one thing that has to happen - "Of course, the game gods have to smile upon it," he said.

Levy has licensed and/or developed more than 130 original concepts for such companies as Hasbro and Mattel, including the 1998 must-have toy, Furby. He has also penned two books on the subject, *The Toy and Game Inventor's Handbook* and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Cashing in on Your Inventions*.

The 35-year veteran of the toy and gaming industry is one of the minds behind WarStone.

"Ultimately, it's a kids game," Levy said, but one that provides a challenge.

"Too simple would be the kiss of death," he said. "Kids are very smart; they want the mental challenge. Kids like it to be complicated; they enjoy the mental gymnastics."

"When you get into the game, you learn it's not quite a marble game," said Michael Brown, WarStone's project leader and veteran of the toy industry. "The marbles are playing pieces controlled by the cards. You'll be learning strategies for weeks."

Brown will help facilitate the tournament Saturday at Samurai Comics, which will feature table top arenas that helps keep the marbles in play. The table top arena concept was just added to the game's development with the first shipment of them arriving about three weeks ago, he said. The table top arena creates a playing surface similar to a pool table.

"So the kids move around the table to position themselves for the best shot," Brown said. "It forces the kids to get up and move around a little bit instead of just sitting there all day [as other games allow them to do]."

The origin of WarStone

WarStone will be Duncan Toys - known for its yo-yo - first foray into games, Levy said.

The game came about after Levy listened to a "dear friend" mention his daughter-in-law was interested in bringing her empowered-marbles idea to toy manufacturers. So he talked with her and she sent him samples of what the Vancouver-resident had been selling to local children in bags known as WarBall.

"I thought it was pretty unique," Levy recalled. "I called her back and said it is just not enough. 'You need more,' I told her. I took it from there and ran with it."

His friend's daughter-in-law will "earn royalties from it, hopefully a lot," he said.

That is basically how toy's get invented, said Levy, whose most popular game invention was Adverteasing, which sold more than a million units back in the late 1980s and is making a comeback with new material.

"Any product is really teamwork," Levy said. "Ten percent is the idea and the rest is teamwork and product development. There was a big cast of characters to make this game

happen."

He is hoping a big cast will come out for the first-ever WarStone tournament.

"I wish I could be there this weekend," he said. "It sounds like fun."

Samurai Comics will be one of the first retailers in the nation to have WarStone merchandise available for purchase beginning Saturday as well, including the basic starter set, which has 22 marbles and 60 playing cards, for \$24.99 and skirmish packs, six marbles and 15 cards, for \$12.99.

"It's a great game for this economy," Levy said. "It's not expensive and it's going to give them hours of fun."

Rich Ott can be reached by e-mail at rott@westvalleyview.com.

© 2008 West Valley View-Material may be copied for private, non-commercial use only. No material may be copied for commercial use. All Rights Reserved.