

# Gamesters Convene in City

## Game makers and players meet in coffeehouse to unveil, test inventions

Patrons occupied every chair at College Perk Coffeehouse Sunday afternoon. People clustered into circles around many different kinds of board games as game makers from across the country and from as far away as Great Britain came to unveil their inventions.

Event organizer and recent university graduate Dominic Crapuchettes runs North Star Games along with partners Satish Pillalamarri, also a university graduate, and Matt Anderson. They were there to test out the company's newest game: Trivia Casino, which is in its final stages of production and will be released next year. Gamers at College Perk tested possible questions for the game.

"It started off as a trivia game when I was in high school," Crapuchettes said. "I was horrible at trivia and tried to figure out a way to use educated guesses as a part of the game. We've played the game with about 300 different people so far."

Graeme and Catherine Thomson, husband-and-wife business partners of HL Games Limited, also marketed their game, Go Mental, which was launched in February at the New York Toy Fair. Go Mental is a trivia game in which players read four items in a list and must pick the item that doesn't belong and find the connection between the remaining three.

"This game requires using what you know, as well as what you don't know," Graeme Thomson said.

Players of all ages showed up for a day of playing board games. Even young children got into the most challenging strategy games, and often beat the adults. Both dedicated gamers and casual players spent hours hopping from one game station to the next.

"We were looking for people to play games with," said Lori Martin, of Greenbelt. "We love games, but so many of them are for more than two people."

Rose Anderson, who marketed a new game called Geist, said she thought of it when she was brainstorming game ideas for her children. It is an interactive game targeted at teenagers in which the players race to capture ghosts and in the process play "pranks" on other players to slow their progress.

"So many games involving strategy are military games," Anderson said. "I have two girls, and I wanted a game where they could think strategically and still have fun."

Sunday's Free Game Festival was the third in a series of five events taking place in the area. The last two will be held at Summit Hills Apartments in Silver Spring Dec. 11 from 1 to 7 p.m. and at the Beltsville Community Center Dec. 12 from noon to 5 p.m.