



In today's society where arcades have all but faded away in normal areas, an up-and-coming chain of bar and arcade hybrids, dubbed the "Barcade" by its owners, are popping up on the East Coast. With its most recent location opening in the Fishtown section of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, co-Owner Paul Kermizian took a little bit of his time to give us the inside scoop on the Barcade as well as an inside look!

*by Christian Matozzo*



**How did Barcade get its start? In a day and age where arcades, let alone classic arcades, are virtually nonexistent, where did the idea come up to mix arcade games with the bar environment? Did you frequent arcades as a child? And did you yourself come up with the idea for Barcade or was it a co-effort?**

**Kermizian:** We opened in 2004. I had a small collection of classic cabinets in my Brooklyn apartment: Zaxxon, Pac Man, Tetris and Mappy. The games were really popular when I'd have parties. When my partners and I started throwing the idea around of opening a bar, we looked at the games as something that could be fun, different and that we were all into having played all these games as kids. We had all visited plenty of arcades. My partners and I are all late 30's to early 40's so we grew up in the classic arcade era.

**How were the arcade machines used at the Barcade locations obtained? Are you an arcade collector yourself, or are the machines rented or bought from other businesses? Are the machines at Barcade serviced by in-house staff?**

**Kermizian:** We buy from all different places: from collectors, operators and sometimes even off eBay or Craigslist. We don't rent or lease any games. We own our entire collection and most of our repairs are done in-house.

**Is there a specific line-up of arcade games that are preferred or used at each Barcade location? Does Barcade focus on strictly '80s Golden Age era games or are games from all eras represented?**

**Kermizian:** There are specific titles that we always want to have at a location. We focus on the golden period of arcade games which would be 1979-1984. However, we have plenty from the mid to late '80s and have even started throwing the odd '90s game in here and there. There are certain games that are must-have if you are doing this like Donkey Kong, Ms Pac Man, Galaga, Frogger, Tapper and some others. Then, we fill out the lineup with a mix of other styles of games: scrolling, maze, driving or 2 or 3-player games and try to mix it up.

**What are some of your favorite arcade games?**

**Kermizian:** Tapper, Timber, Zoo Keeper, Mappy, Swimmer, Eyes, Pepper II, Cheyenne, Cosmic Avenger, Ladybug, Burgertime, Strider, Rolling Thunder, and Lock n Chase.

**Barcade features quite a variety of different beers on tap. How are they selected?**

**Kermizian:** We only serve American craft beer and only

beer on tap. No bottles or cans. We try to focus on local and regional breweries but we do serve beer from all across the country. Everything rotates and so the selection is constantly changing.

**Which of these do you find draws a larger crowd to Barcade: The selection of classic arcade games, the selection of beers on tap, or a little of both?**

**Kermizian:** Both. We couldn't have one without the other. There is a surprising amount of cross over between people who are into classic games and into craft beer.

**With the recent opening of the Philadelphia location, Barcade now has 3 locations. Do you plan on opening more locations in the future? Did you predict that the idea of the Barcade would be this successful?**

**Kermizian:** Yes, we plan on getting to work on some new locations right away. We never could have predicted the success that we've enjoyed. All we wanted to do was make a bar that we could all drink craft beer in and play Gauntlet. Thankfully, other people seem to have wanted the same thing.

**The video games of today are arguably quite different from the classics of the '80s that you and I enjoy. Do you think that the success of Barcade will help in bringing classic arcade games to a larger audience? Especially in a time where arcade games, as a whole, have been all but forgotten by a generation that has grown up playing entirely different kinds of video games?**

**Kermizian:** I hope so. These games are wonderful, unique and timeless. It doesn't matter if you are too young to remember the original: the games are just fun.

**Will we someday see a revival of the dimly light rooms that were once populated with lots of people striving to etch their name in a place of honor amongst high score boards?**

**Kermizian:** I don't think you'll see many new arcades opening. You need a lot of space to have a decent selection of games and of course a lot of patience if you are dealing with vintage cabinets. And our locations are pretty different from a traditional arcade. We do have high score boards though with some pretty epic scores on them. ||Retrocade Magazine thanks Paul Kermizian for giving us his time and cooperation! If you ever find yourself in Philadelphia or want to take a trip to the Barcade, it is located at 1114 Frankford Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19125. The hours are 4PM to 2AM Monday to Thursday and 12PM to 2AM on Friday, Saturdays, and Sundays!



SIXPOINT SMP-NY-#6  
 SIXPOINT HIBISCUS-NY-#6 10oz  
 YARDS ESA-PA-#5  
 LEFT HAND MILK STOUT-CO-#6  
 ROGUE ST. ROGUE RED-OR-#6  
 VICTORY HOP DEVIL-PA-#5  
 BROOKLYN WEISSE-NY-#5  
 BELL'S OARSMEN ALE-MI-#6

GREAT DIME OLD DRIFTIN-CO-#6-10oz  
 ROY PITZ LAY DOWN STAY DOWN-NY-#6-10oz  
 CLIMAX BAVARIAN DARK-NJ-#6  
 AVERY DUGANA IPA-CO-#6-10oz  
 FURTHERMORE FATTY BOOMBALATTY-WI-#6  
 SIXPOINT BELGIAN IPA-NY-#6  
 AVERY NEW WORLD PORTER-CO-#6  
 BELL'S KALAMAZOO STOUT-MI-#6

DOC'S PEAR CIDER-NY-#5  
 WEYERBACHER PRESIDENT-PA-#6  
 BALLAST POINT LONGFIN LAGER-CA-#6  
 LAGUNITAS PILS-CA-#5  
 VICTORY DITO-PA-#6-10oz  
 NORTH COAST PRANQSTER-CA-#6  
 ALL-GASHTHING-2-ME-#7-10oz  
 WEYERBACHER OLD HEATHEN-PA-#6



## BARCADE HIGH SCORES

ARKANOID - 355,590 - BOB R 12/30/11	GALAGA - 294,170 - PAT L. 10/11/11
ASTERIODS - 43,390 - BOT 12/1/11	JOUST - 10,058,850 - LONNIE McDONALD 12/28/11
BERZERK - 24,220 - BEN 1/2/12	MAPPY - 135,040 - PAUL K. 11/9/11
BURGERTIME - 74,300 - SHAKA 1/8/12	MS.PAC MAN - 861,990 - SAM MILLER 10/22/11
CARNIVAL - 42,210 - BEN 12/13/11	PAPERBOY - 204,393 - EVIL VIC 1/6/12
CENTPEDE - 610,928 - BEN 12/12/11	POPEYE - 200,600 - BEN 10/8/11
CRYSTAL CASTLES - 770,424 - GIV 10/8/11	SPY HUNTER - 208,710 - MARK C. 12/14/11
DEFENDER	TAPPER - 182,400 - GIG 10/19/11
DIG, DUG - 669,490 - BEN 12/12/11	TEMPEST
DONKEY KONG - 897,200 - BEN 12/5/11	TIME PILOT - 727,200 - FANCY 12/15/11
FROGGER - 401,140 - PAT L 10/11/11	TRON - 52,732 - LOU 12/1/11

















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