



MEDIA RELEASE

Celebrating Friday Night Games 1st Birthday

Wander by the Huon Valley Hub on a Friday night and you may catch a glimpse of a some very passionate young people playing tabletop games.

Friday Night Games has become quite a phenomenon in the Huon Valley, and it is about to celebrate its first birthday.

The fortnightly program has attracted more and more people over time, due in part to the relaxed, fun, and friendly atmosphere, says Huon Valley Council Youth Development Officer Mitch Robson.

“Compared to when the program first started, the nights are a lot louder because there’s more conversation, there’s more laughing, there’s more frivolity and that to me is a huge indicator that people are having fun.”

For many of the people who come to Friday Night Games, finding like-minded people had been a challenge in the past.

“The distance between Hobart and some of the towns in the valley creates a barrier for some young people to find like-minded people.

“Here at Friday Night Games a space has been created for gamers to come and hang out together. Providing this program down here has helped unlock a community - a smaller niche community - that was almost forgotten. People have found their tribe.”

Acting Mayor Sally Doyle said one of the indicators that proves the program has been a success is that it has instilled in young people a lot more interest in living and doing things in the Huon Valley.

“The young people who attend clearly feel more accepted and connected,” she said.

Mitch describes the atmosphere like a “teenager’s bedroom space” that is conducive to people feeling relaxed enough to be themselves.

Communications & Media Officer

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"It's one thing to provide a space, it's another to provide a space that youth find engaging and supportive and free to just be loud and to make noise and for them to know you're going to rouse on them and control their behaviour. It's important for them to know that this is their space."

There are around 15-20 regulars who come to Friday Night Games but each fortnight there are new people who come along. Some evenings there are between 30-40 attendees.

"I'm really excited to celebrate the first birthday of Friday Night Games because it's a celebration of the people who come, particularly the regulars who really make the space happen," Mitch said.

"They are the ones that are the reason why the space exists, and they are the ones that keep it going."

The kinds of games played at the program include Magic: The Gathering and various board games such as Dungeons & Dragons and Warhammer.

Quotes from participants:

"The social aspect of it is my favourite part and meeting new people it's great. It's awesome just seeing how happy everyone is to be here. We wouldn't have the group of friends we have now if it wasn't for the hub." Lara

"Since I've started working it was, get up, go to work, go home, go to bed, repeat. I didn't get to see my friend very often. This being an option to come to every second week, got me out of the house." Jackson

"It's just a place of comfort, knowing that I can come here be myself and nobody's going to judge me for nerding out at pieces of cardboard." Wade

"Coming and being a part of something, it feels really good. It's just so nice just to go somewhere and play games with everyone else and forget about every other stressful thing that's going on." Michael

Please note: If you would like to attend the birthday celebrations on Friday 29 July at the Huon Valley Hub please contact Helene 6264 9452.

For more information: Acting Mayor Sally Doyle (03) 6264 0300

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