Semi-Annual $1 Sidewalk Book Sale
Thursday, May 15 thru Sunday, May 18

It’s spring and time for our Semi-Annual $1 Clearance Book Sale. We’re not the only ones spring cleaning, though. Given all the books coming in the last few months, some people started early.

We’ve been working to integrate our First Edition books into their appropriate categories: Mysteries & Intrigue, General Fiction, Sci Fi & Fantasy, etc. Of course, in order to do that, we had to pare down the number of hard cover books already in those categories first. So expect to see lots of nice fiction hard backs from the afore-mentioned categories in our sale.

We also trimmed some books from the Romance section and moved games to the front of the store so we could move the Paranormal section to the beginning of the Romance aisle. Our goal is to get the games concentrated into one or two areas instead of all over the store, wherever we can fit them. Hopefully, this will make it easier to organize them into categories like Two-Player Games, Dice Games, Party Games, etc. We’re still shuffling books and games around to accomplish this, so if you have trouble finding something, just ask us. We’re always happy to help.

About that sale I mentioned. As usual, it’s a sidewalk sale. We’ll have thousands of books set up on tables outside the store. Paperbacks 50¢ each. Hard covers $1. The sale runs from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 pm Thursday thru Saturday and 11 am to about 4 pm on Sunday. On Sunday, all clearance books will be Buy 1, Get 1 Free. We will not be accepting trades during the sale.

Note to Our Current Customers: You can use your existing Trade Credit to pay 100% of your clearance-book purchases.

If you want to receive an email reminder about the sale, call us or drop by now and give us your email address. We’ll also be making phone calls, so make sure we have your current phone number on file if you want a call. You can get notices via our Facebook page, too. Just Like Us on Facebook and add us to one of your Interests Lists. You can even note that you’re planning to attend and Share the Event with your friends!

Marvel Dice Masters: The New Super Hero of Collectible Games?

Marvel Dice Masters has taken the gaming world by storm. Storm even makes an appearance in the first set titled Avengers vs. X-Men. The Starter Kits for the collectible card & dice game (CC&DG?) sold out at most stores before even touching the shelves. Though booster packs are still readily available, don’t even bother looking for a Marvel Dice Masters: Avengers vs. X-Men Starter Kit until the end of May. You’d have a better chance of finding the Invisible Girl, who is notably absent from the set despite the presence of the rest of the Fantastic Four and several of their adversaries, Dr. Doom and Silver Surfer included.

Wiz Kids thought they’d ordered enough Starter Kits to meet the demand.
They’re old hands at the collectible gaming gig, so have a good idea what demand should be. “We thought we had produced enough for six months of demand after launch based on a good, solid seller,” said Justin Ziran, President of WizKids Games. After introduction at the GAMA Trade Show in March and the continuous wave of Marvel Super Heroes on the big and small screen right now, however, popularity soared.

"Instead of normal solid week-over-week increase in numbers, things exploded," said Ziran. "Each week we wondered - does it go back to a normal pre-order pattern now? We had already ordered a very sizeable reprint based on the strong pre-orders prior to GAMA, but then we looked at each other and went 'This is crazy... do we do another one? The answer to that is yes, and the product hadn’t even launched when we made the decision on a second reprint.'"

That second reprint is on a slow boat from China right now and won’t arrive in the U.S. until the end of May. Wiz Kids doesn’t expect to get even with Starter Kit demand until the end of June, when the third wave arrives.

In the meantime, booster packs are still in good supply and Wiz Kids has released a work around so you don’t have to wait until you can get your hands on a Starter Kit to begin playing Marvel Dice Masters. The work around consists of a PDF file containing a set of Basic Action Cards that you can print and play.

At Here Be Books & Games, we put that together with a few other items to create a Marvel Dice Masters Survival Kit consisting of: 2 full-color sheets of Basic Action Cards and 2 full-color Tutorial Play Mats, both laser printed on card stock and 1 color rulebook printout.

You’ll also need some booster packs, two dice bags and some regular six-sided dice (d6): 8 of the same color for each player to serve as your Sidekick Dice (total of 16) and 4 sets of 3 different colors to serve as your Basic Action Dice. You can buy the booster packs, bags, and dice at Here Be Books & Games. When you buy five or more booster packs, we’ll give you the Survival Kit for FREE!

We’re playing with just such a proxy ourselves. So, if you’d like to check out Marvel Dice Masters: Avengers vs. X-Men and see for yourself what all the excitement is about, drop by Here Be Books & Games and we’ll teach you how to play!

### Games Played on TableTop Day

7 Wonders x5
Betrayal at House on the Hill
Castles of Burgundy
Chicken Cha Cha Cha
Coup x4
Eldritch Horror
Euphoria
Firefly: Out to the Black
Forbidden Island
Get Bit!
Glass Road
Gloom
King of Tokyo x6
& Power Up! exp
Kingsburg
Krosmaster Arena x2
Lords of Vegas
Pandemic x2
Power Grid
Ra: The Dice Game
Resistance: Avalon x5
Rise of Augustus
Roll For It! x4
Russian Railroads
Shadows Over Camelot
& Merlin exp.
Smash Up
Spot It! x2
Takonoko
Tell Tale: Fairy Tale
Tzolk’in: The Mayan Calendar

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### Marvel Dice Masters Organized Play Coming in June

The mysterious and powerful Phoenix Force is on a collision course with Earth! Prepare for an unparalleled series of challenges as you enter into the Marvel Dice Masters arena and battle for six months. Will you join the Avengers or the X-Men?

Richard Mellott has kindly agreed to help facilitate monthly Marvel Dice Masters Organized Play events at Here Be Books & Games. The first of the six-month storyline events is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, June 12 from 5 to 8 pm.

Cost will probably be about $10 and include some booster packs and a participation prize. We don’t have a lot of details yet, but will post them on our web site and Facebook as they solidify. Space is limited, so sign up now to secure your spot.

### Huge Turnout for TableTop Day

Over 60 gamers accepted our invitation to play more games on International TableTop Day at Here Be Books & Games. By 5:30 p.m. more than 30 adults and kids had learned to play more games at our store. Games played during the day included: Roll For It!, Tzolk’in: The Mayan Calendar, Takenoko, King of Tokyo, Pandemic, Forbidden Island, Spot It!, Chicken Cha Cha Cha, Tell Tale Fairy, and Krosmaster Arena. (Thanks, Roz for teaching the last one!)

Then it got really crazy as more tables were set up and gamers crowded round tables to play even more games: 56 in total were recorded. Every victor of a game, whether they accidently cheated or not, was awarded the Trophy of Awesome and got their picture taken with our Wil Wheaton standee, signed by the geek icon himself. You can check out the pictures on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/herebebooksandgames.

We gave free promos to everyone who attended our TableTop Day Game Night. The most highly-sought-after were awarded to lucky Play-To-Win participants.

According to the TableTopDay.com web site, 2,577 events were registered for International TableTop Day 2014. Three of those were right here in Charleston. In addition to the 60+ players we hosted at Here Be Books & Games, Green Dragon had about 30 and the Charleston Area Gamers played almost as many games as they had people attending (16 and 17 respectively) at the Goose Creek Library.

And we can all look forward to Table Top Season 3 and International TableTop Day 2015 as Season 3 of TableTop has already reached and surpassed its Indiegogo fund-raising campaign goal (www.indiegogo.com). The campaign may even hit the $1 million mark by the end date of May 10, 2014. So here’s to another year of TableTop episodes.

Many thanks to everyone who helped make our 2014 International TableTop Day Celebration a success by playing more games at Here Be Books & Games!
**Marvel Dice Masters: Avengers vs. X-Men**

In *Marvel Dice Masters: Avengers vs. X-Men*, you play a mastermind controlling a team of Marvel characters. Your goal is to use your team of superheroes and villains to take out your adversary, another mastermind team leader. Reduce his hit points to zero and you win!

As in most deckbuilding games, each player starts with the same thing. In this case, it’s eight Sidekick dice in a bag. You and your opponent also each get a number of Hero cards on your side of the table (each with 1-4 dice on them), and share 3 to 4 Action Cards placed in the center of the table with three dice on each.

On your turn, draw four dice from your bag and roll them along with any dice left in your Prep Area from the previous turn (see Tutorial Playmat diagram at right). After rolling your dice, you can reroll (once) any you don’t like. Possible die results include: Energy, Characters, and Actions. You can use any Energy you roll to recruit Hero Dice or Action Dice. All dice spent or purchased then go into your Used Pile. If you roll characters, you can use Energy to field them (move them into your Field Zone), making them ready to attack or defend on the current turn or in the future. Any Actions rolled can be used immediately or saved for use before your next turn.

After deploying or saving your dice, you can attack with any Character dice you’ve fielded, while your opponent defends, if desired, by blocking with his own Characters. Resolve damage as follows: 1) Each Character that took damage greater than or equal to its defense is Knocked Out! Move it to your Prep Area. 2) Attacking Characters that were unblocked, deal damage to the defending Mastermind (player). Deduct the damage on the player’s life counter and place the unblocked attacking Characters in your Used Pile. 3) Characters that blocked, but were not knocked out return to your Field Zone. If your opponent Mastermind’s life reaches zero, Congratulations! You Win. Otherwise, do a little cleanup and now it’s your adversary’s turn to try and take you down.

The Character dice (left) and cards (right) are what make *Marvel Dice Masters* special, exciting and collectible. Each Character die has different character levels on 3 of its sides and 1-2 Energy on the other three sides. All dice for a particular character are the same, but each character card has a unique special ability. There are 4 differently named cards for each character in the *Starter Kit*, three of which come in the kit, the fourth is an uncommon you can acquire via a booster pack. The rest of the characters in the *Avengers vs. X-Men* set have 3 named cards each. Character cards are either Common (brown line), Uncommon (green), Rare (yellow) or Super Rare (red).

Each character (die and card) has its own unique custom icon and utilizes 1 of 5 energy types: Fist (melee), Bolt (blasts), Mask (wits), or Shield (toughness). You’ll need at least one of that specific type of energy to recruit the character’s dice. For example, you need at least one Mask to recruit Rogue, at least one Fist for Black Widow and at least one Bolt for Phoenix. (Apparently, none of the female characters are tough.) Most of the characters are also associated with a particular team: Avengers, Fantastic Four, Villains or X-Men. Sidekick Dice feature 1 of each Energy type on 4 of their sides, a question mark (?) representing Wildcard Energy on one side, and a pawn Character on the final side. The Action Dice and Cards add variety to the game, as each game you’ll only choose 3 or 4 to use.

*Marvel Dice Masters* is simpler than the intimidating 24-page rulebook, in tiny print, might at first have you believe. I downloaded the rulebook and printed it on letter-size paper to ease my old eyes. A closer look, will show that the rules are covered in just 10 1/2 pages, the rest provide examples of play and combat, and discuss powers and abilities in detail.

By no means do you have to acquire the entire set to have fun playing *Marvel Dice Masters: Avengers vs. X-Men*. With a few Characters and the Action cards, there’s plenty to keep the game fresh, interesting and different every time. In fact, having all of the cards to choose from at once feels a bit overwhelming. How do you even begin to choose which characters and actions to play?

I think you can get a lot of fun out of the game by playing a few characters in various combinations for awhile, then add more boosters and experimenting with the new options those provide, then add a few more, etc. This is not a game where it’s absolutely necessary, or perhaps even desirable, to have everything all at once - unless, of course, you’re a completist or collector at heart.

*Marvel Dice Masters: Avengers vs. X-Men* supports 2 players ages 14 & up and plays in about 15 to 30 minutes. *Starter Kits* with everything you need to get started run $14.99. *Booster Packs* each contain two character cards and two character dice and cost $1.
Cash-A-Catch

Fresh Fish! Get your fresh fish here! Have you ever dreamed of being a fish monger? With Cash-A-Catch, you and up to four of your friends can experience all the excitement of selling your fishy wares on the wharf, without all the odoriferous aroma that usually comes when dealing in fishy products.

Game play is simple: players take turns auctioning off batches of fish by presenting a steadily growing selection to their fellow players. When you’re the auctioneer, turn up a card, announce what it is (type and number) and pause to give players a chance to ring the bell signaling their desire to purchase the offered batch of fish. If no one rings in, turn up the next card, announce it, pause and so on until someone rings the bell and buys your fresh catch for €10 cash. The cost is always €10 (paid to the bank), regardless of how many fish (or cards) are in the batch. The auctioneer, however, receives €1 commission for each card sold. Each card contains 1 to 3 fish. When only 3 players are playing, you can participate in your own auction, but you won’t receive any commission when you buy your own fish.

After the auction, the buyer arranges the fish he bought among his three trays. Two of the trays are really just wooden crates, with no refrigeration, but one is an ice tray perfect for your most valuable catch. You can only store one type of fish in each tray. Any lefts over have to go in your garbage can. You really don’t want to accumulate too many fish in your garbage can because at the end of the game you have to pay the bank €1 each for the fish you trashed. Overbuying isn’t the only way you’ll accumulate trash, though.

When you’re the auctioneer, before you begin an auction, you may sell some or all of your fish to the bank. The more fish you have of a particular type, the more they’re worth. (Note the handy chart.) Whenever a player sells fish, the other players must check their wooden trays for fish of the same kind. If they have any fish of that type, they must place the highest valued one into their garbage can. Fish in your ice tray are protected from spoilage and never have to be trashed.

The illustrations on the cards of Cash-A-Catch are fun and colorful and include 6 kinds of freshly caught fish and seafood: eel, shark, flounder, crawfish, tuna, lobster and octopi. Each card represents 1 to 3 fish or seafood. The octopi act as jokers or wildcards. There are also two types of action cards: Fish Thief and Canned Fish. The Fish Thief, appropriately depicted as a cat, allows you to steal the top-most fish card from another player’s tray. Canned Fish allows you to remove up to two cards from your garbage can and put them on the discard pile. This could save you as much as €6 at game end!

The two other cards in the deck, End Phase and Market Close, signal the last phase of the game and game end. Once the End Phase card appears, buyers may sell their fish right after sorting them into their trays (and garbage can), instead of having to wait until they’re the auctioneer. When the Market Close card appears, however, the game ends immediately. Players can sell any fish left in their trays, then must pay the bank for the fish in their garbage cans. Everyone counts their money and the player with the most cash for their catch wins!

Cash-A-Catch, a Fairplay À la carte Award Winner, is an excellent family game supporting 3 to 5 players ages 8 and up. Play is quick, interesting, and constantly engaging. If you don’t pay attention to the auction, you’ll miss out on the best fish! Play time is a short 20 to 30 minutes. The original German title of Cash-A-Catch, Fang Frisch, translates to Fresh Catch. Fresh fish! Get your fresh fish here!

ParaNatural Book Club

The next Book Club meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 13 at 6 p.m. This month we’re reading Allen’s pick: The Sparrow by Mary Doria Russell. Newcomers are always welcome. Just read the book and come to the meeting. Well, we might make you talk a bit, too.

Reading: The Sparrow by Mary Doria Russell

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