

Toys: Onaclea asked to remove some from view

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with comics and cartoons.

After he moved into his new office, located on the first floor just east of the circulation desk, he was required to frame wall decorations. With this restriction in place, Onaclea found plastic miniature toys an ideal replacement.

Most of the action figures are similar to the prizes found in Happy Meals, while others have been collected over time.

"I get most of them at second-hand stores, but I buy some of the nicer ones," he said. "It's turned into a sort of obsession."

However, Douglas Blandy, an associate professor of arts and administration, said the behavior of Onaclea isn't fanatical, but very important in creating a comfortable working environment.

Blandy teaches a course called "Arts and Human Values," which addresses fundamental, theoretical and practical uses of art. One of Blandy's students asked Onaclea to speak to the class about how he has turned his working environment into a more comfortable setting through the use of art.

"He was excellent," Blandy said. "He feels good, which is conducive to business."

The class covered multiple topics, including how to individualize different places.

"Students learned an appreciation for how people personalize their own space," Blandy said.

Onaclea said he thought toy collecting was a positive and relaxing hobby.

"It's not a bad habit," he said. "I could be drinking or smoking."

He said the toys have become a huge part of his life. "The toys

had gone to my home, too," he said. "I wasn't a collector anymore when I found news groups and started subscribing to magazines."

Although he sometimes feels a little abnormal, he said finding other people over the Internet and subscribing to hobby magazines has helped him feel more comfortable.

Some of Onaclea's favorite toys include the ghouls and goblins from the movie "Nightmare before Christmas."

His collection has grown so much that Onaclea's son even pointed out that his father owns more toys than him.

Onaclea said his son thinks it's normal now, but he worries that in a few years his son will realize that not all adults have as many toys as he does.

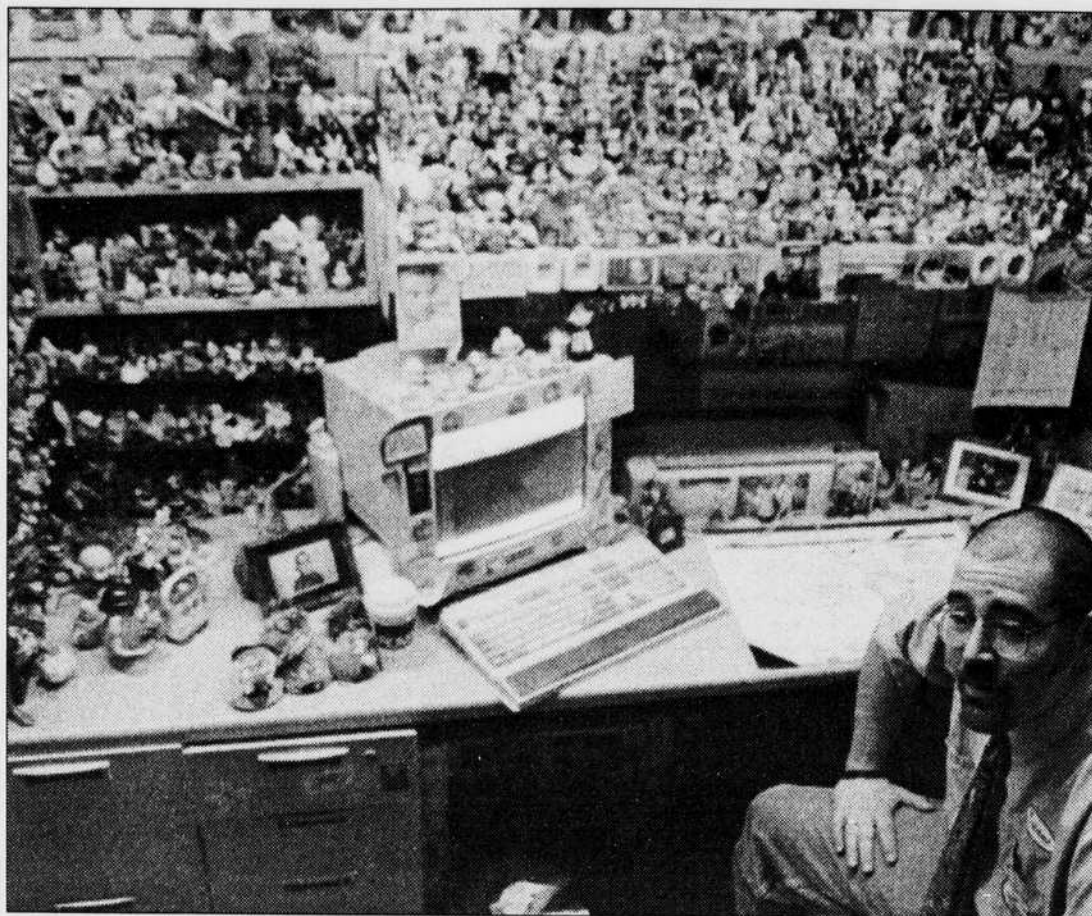
At one point the toys lined other surfaces in the office, including the tops of file cabinets, Onaclea said.

"They have caused me more trouble than they are probably worth," he said.

About four years ago, Onaclea's supervisor Andrew Bonamici asked him to remove some of the toys.

In a memorandum from Bonamici, Onaclea was told, "Due to the public nature and business character of the operation, the visual impression of the [library copy service] space needs to be consistent with that of other public service units in the University Library System."

Bonamici said it had nothing to do with him personally and that he was a good employee. After Onaclea filed a grievance with his union, the two of them reached a



AMANDA COWAN/Emerald

Onaclea says having so many toys at work helps relieve stress and brightens up the office.

compromise.

Onaclea was allowed to keep the figures on the top of two bulletin boards and on his cubicles. However, he was to remove the figures from the tops of the built-in storage cabinets and from the tops of storage cabinets near the staff copy machine.

"The main reason was because

it wasn't professional," Onaclea said.

But he said he wondered why this was necessary. "This is a University, how professional do we need to look?"

Onaclea also shows his unique brand of professionalism by what he wears every day: work shirts such as those from gas stations

and 7-11s, mismatched boots and crazy, brilliant ties.

He also has a box of random name tags that he sometimes wears and has available for his staff.

"Most people think it's different," Onaclea said. "I receive a lot of positive remarks when people get copy cards and get change."

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