

# arts & lives

## Asteroids obsess

By R.W. Greene  
Of The Print

You may have seen them in a variety of places, at Magellan's or Fred Meyer's, or 7-11, or the Minit Mart: groups of young and middle-aged men huddled around a large oblong box from whence emerge synthesized sounds of explosions, laser gunfire, and something that could be the heartbeat of a tachycardiac elephant.

The oblong box is Asteroids, and unless you've been walking around the moon for the last year, you know that it is the hottest video game in the country. Developed by the Atari Company of Sunnyvale, Calif. Asteroids will earn the Atari people over \$100 million in 1981.

The game sounds deceptively simple. The player controls a small, triangular-shaped "spaceship" which fires at various oncoming objects. These are asteroids, which, when hit, split into smaller asteroids and keep coming. The object of the game is to destroy all the rocks before one of them hits the spacecraft and destroys it, while dodging flying saucers which saunter erratically across the screen, firing at the spacecraft. Destroying the flying saucers garners you

more points.

The player uses four buttons to manipulate his craft. There is also a fifth button, called "hyperspace," which, through some Einsteinian logic of its own, makes the spacecraft disappear and reappear on some other part of the screen.

Next week, Student Activities will be holding a Space Invaders/Asteroids tournament. Students can sign up in the Student Activities office.

Anybody who enters, however, will have to contend with Monte Harris. Monte is a freshman at the College, a soft-spoken man of 20, who does not, on first glance, appear to have hands of lightning.

But put him in front of an Asteroid machine, and he is dazzling to behold. In a game where 50,000 is a fairly respec-

table score, Harris has, on occasion, gotten the machine to 100,000 and turned it over 13 times. He has had more than 80 games over 100,000 points in the College's game room alone. He has gotten so good that he prefers to spend his time practicing various eclectic shots at the flying saucers, rather than just going after the points.

Harris is not close-mouthed about his technique. "Ninety percent of the game is firing," he says. "If you can't fire well, all that thrusting and turning won't do you any good." He never uses "hyperspace," he says, because there's too much chance of getting blown up, and he considers it something of a cop-out anyway. He prefers to manipulate his spacecraft horizontally from left to right; most people stick to a



Photo by Amy DeVour

### Local Asteroid fiend submits to addiction

vertical motion, according to Harris.

As impressive as Harris' stats are, there are people who even have him beat, he says. He knows one person who built up five million points, the equivalent of turning the game over 50 times.

To watch Harris work on the

machine is a numbing treat. He is loose and casual, pointing out subtleties of the game, and carrying on conversation. It is only when you watch his hands that you grasp the amazing dexterity he possesses.

The tournament starts next week. Watch out.

## ACUI tourney pockets interest

The ACUI tournament, cause of all the hubbub around the game room last week, has concluded. The winners of the eight areas of competition will participate in the regional competition in Tacoma at Pacific Lutheran University Feb. 5-7.

Kelly Sullivan, outdoor recreation director, declared himself well-satisfied with the process and result of the tournament.

Winners are as follows: in bowling, the five-man team of Don Hansen, Rich Ferguson,

Daryl Woods, Steve Mills, and Dean Dodge will be headed north. In men's pool, Mitch Keith was the winner, with Arlene Boyko doing it for the women. The backgammon champion was Lynn Purdue, and in chess, Ken Basting defeated Jim Rogers for the crown.

The frisbee competition, done on the soccer field, with its main criteria being distance and accuracy, was won by Bob Ryan, but Ryan had already qualified to represent the College at foosball, so his place will be taken by Paul Lamar. Ryan will team up with Bob Grey in the foosball competition--the two will also compete individually. The same situations exist in ping-pong, where Bob Theis and Monte Campbell were the champions.

The participants all agreed that the competition was tough and interesting, said Sullivan,

noting that 85 students started out the tournament, 23 of them in men's pool alone. Quizzed about the amount of work that must have been necessary to pull the entire tournament off in one week, Sullivan cited the help he received from David Boone and Mark Sanford.

The participants will have fairly stiff competition in Tacoma, Sullivan added. Besides all the regional community colleges (including PCC, which has one of the best ping-pong teams in the nation), the 14 competitors will face challengers from the U of O, OSU, PSU, and the University of Washington, among others.

Although the competitors paid an entry fee, the cost of their trip to Tacoma will be borne by Student Activities and the ASG.

Watch this page for final results.

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## arts briefs

Debbie Baker, director of student activities, has announced a multi-media, multi-departmental program which will take place in the Community Center Mall at noon on Feb. 18, at 8 p.m. on Feb. 20, and again at noon on Feb. 26. The program, the first of its kind at the College, will feature video programs, jazz dances, swing choir and dramatic presentations. It will not be a talent contest, says Baker, but rather a chance for different departments in the humanities to show their stuff. Interested artists should contact individual

departments...The Back to School Dance featuring Bently came off not too badly, in spite of a low turnout. This may have been a result of insufficient publicity. The band had a good, tight sound, but the low turnout may have contributed to their pronounced lack of enthusiasm. The next band to play Friday night, Feb. 13 may play during the noon hour the same day, in order to incite more interest...If you see anything interesting going on in humanities around the College that we're missing, please let us know.

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