

Untitled - August 8, 2025

Speaker Welcome to Pickup and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step out of the library and deliver an episode to you while I walk home. I'm Brendan Riley. Good afternoon, listeners. It's a traffic noisy day here in suburban Chicago. I'm kidding. It's a lovely day. The weather is pretty nice. The sun is shining, a breeze is blowing. I'm having a good time. Having a good time! Well, this is my Gen Con roundup. I'm not sure when I'm going to post this, but I'm going to talk about it while it's fresh in my mind. In the last few years, uh, see the show notes for links. I have done a roundup of Gen Con, generally focused on the idea of my five best moments at Gen Con, and that's what I'm going to do again this time. Five. Well, five things anyway. Five things I really liked about this Gen Con, GenCon. Of course, not even counting. One of the things was just the general experience of it. GenCon is usually great. Some years it's been really grueling. Some years it's been kind of disappointing this year. Pretty fun. It was pretty fun this year. The XYZ Game Labs booth is where I was for a third to a half of the con. I one of the partners there at that company, and we have our new expansion on the boat right now. It should be here soon and delivering to backers, but we were able to air ship in some so that we could have something to sell at the con, and it worked out great. It was really fun for people to see them. We let some backers pick up. If they let us know that they were coming, they could pick up their expansions and such. I'm a little sad that we weren't able to get it out before the con. It would have been nice if we could, but circumstances are what they are, so that is the nature of the beast. So it was really nice to be able to show off that new material and talk about it with people and enjoy what they had to say about the game, which is usually that they like it because people who don't like it. Yeah. Why waste your time going and telling somebody you don't like their game? Just go do something else. That's what I say. Uh, we also, I also got to walk around the hall a lot. Got to play some games. I was a little more aggressive in planning games this time, which was very nice. Um, I got to meet up with some friends, went to a couple events. All in all, it was a delight. That said, I do have five Gen Con moments. I wanted to share some things that I got to do that were particularly fun. Number one, meet up with faraway friends. I got to meet up with three friends at the con and lovely to see them all. First. First off, John, uh, I just realized I don't know how to say your last name. John. Grishny is his online persona. If you see him on board Game arena or the other places, that's usually what handle he uses. He's a regular listener, so he's probably listening to this right now. Hiya, John. It was lovely to see him at the convention. I was walking around. I just happened to see him at the Grandpa Becks Games booth, where he was helping teach people how to play some of those delightful games. He taught me how to play Reign of Dragoness, and we played that, and then we were able to connect later to hang out during one of his lunch breaks. It worked out great. It was lovely to see him and chat a little bit, catch up, do some, make some challenges for board game Arena. So I think we're going to be playing there. If you want to join us, please post in the Board Game Geek Forum for this podcast. Or I do have a group of players on game board Game arena. I don't really use it, but I did make a group for people who listen to the podcast, so feel free to reach out to me over there. Wombat ninety nine is my username so it was lovely. Lovely to see you John. I also got to meet up with a friend, Kervin, who is a board game TikTok content creator. That's how I know him and also a game designer. He created a game called Allow Me to Mansplain a Little party game, and now

he's working on starting a Kickstarter for Marsh Hallow, which is a roll and write game about marshmallows holding a terrifying ritual. Kind of. That's a fun little, uh, roll and write with sort of some combo building up really great theming, excellent art in the rulebook, very well written rulebook, really easy to read, and I'm looking forward to that when it comes out. So it was nice to meet up with him. I got to chat with him for a few minutes while he was in between other meetings, so. And then, uh, as always, I got to spend about an hour with my friend Rolfe. Rolfe is my forever GM kind of. And he. I've known him for like thirty years now. Uh, and he works at Flying Frog Productions, so he's always at GenCon working with them. And I like to get together with him during one of his lunch breaks, and we walk around the hall and chat about stuff and just generally catch up. So That was my favorite part of the con was seeing these three friends that I haven't seen very much in person, and getting to connect with them and chat with them and that sort of thing. Number two, my one of my favorite games of the con, if not my game of the con, is a game called I don't know how it's pronounced Raas: A Dance of Love This is a game coming out from, I believe, AEG [Ed: it's Arcane Wonders]. I'm not sure if that's right. It might be Devir. Now that I think about it. I think it's AEG as designed by Mihir Shah and Shailene Haalke. The art is by Tara Anand and is published by Arcane Wonders. I had it on my sheet the whole time. Listener arcane wonders. This is a game about doing a dance, uh, part of a Indian folk dance. So is the theme. You are trying to match rhythm and movement and the color of your clothes. And that's kind of the theme is sort of orchestrating the most perfectly choreographed dance. The gameplay is really interesting. The on the board there is a central wheel with gears on it, and around the board there are six additional wheels, each of which has six placement spots on it. The game plays, I believe six. It might only play five, and on your turn you are choosing one of the wheels that you want to activate. You take a die matching the color and number from the wheel that you activated, and you're using that to complete challenges. It's really interesting. The. And then after each person takes their dice, the board rotates. So or after each turn the board rotates. So it is really interesting puzzle. And I think the board movement is too complicated for people to adequately predict what's going to happen. So I think it should be hard to plan ahead. That said, I played with Rob. Hey, Rob. Rob did make the point that there are some people who very well could anticipate how it's going to move, and for them, it might be analysis paralysis paralyzing because the level of a huge scale of possible, uh, results for what might occur in the game is huge and I think potentially problematic or paralyzing. That said, I really liked the things that were going on in the game. I liked the choices that were available. I had a lot of fun with this game. Now, because of one of my meetups with somebody else, I had to duck out early so I didn't actually get to finish the game. Maybe I would have liked it less had I played the rest of it, I don't know. But for now it is. It was my favorite gaming experience of the con and I'm super excited for it. Apparently it's mostly done. They are doing a crowdfunding pre-order campaign for it, in part because its production was interrupted by the tariffs. So I guess that's a thing. I mean, I know the tariffs are a thing, but I guess that's what's going on with it. Apparently it was almost done or it was done something like that. So it should be coming out late this year. It is marked as the twenty twenty five game, but you could not get it at the con. That's Raas: A Dance of Love designed by Mihir Shah and Shailene Haalke. Number three the food adventure. Now this. So when you go somewhere, sometimes you have an experience that in itself is annoying or bad or frustrating or infuriating or hang rising hang it makes you hungry. In this case, we had an

experience that with all of these things, but it makes for a really memorable story. And this was our absolute failure to get dinner Friday night. So Friday night, uh, a bunch of us from the XYZ crowd got invited to an event hosted by Backerkit, where it was at the Bad Axe Throwing Company. There's a nice little pun there. It's ax bad axe throwing company. It's an ax throwing place that's also a bar. They said there was going to be food there. I guess we got there a little late or something. There was no food when we got there. There was, I guess, a little bit of pizza, but we didn't find the pizza before it was all gone. And so we got there at seven by like eight thirty, I was ready to leave, I had a headache and I had not had food yet, so that was not my favorite day. Um, or I mean, the event itself was really neat, but the lack of food was not my favorite thing. So having had that experience, then we decided to look for food. Half the group decided they just wanted to order food. Half the group said no, we just we don't want to wait for an order. We're just going to go get food. Boy, was that a blunder. The people who ordered their food, got their food and finished eating before we got our food going out because the first place we went was hard to find. It said it was open. We got there. This place was called Xtreme Pizza or Xtreme Pizzeria and this X like with no E at the beginning, extreme pizza. And we got there and they were open, but they said it's going to be a long wait. And we're like, well, how long? Like at least forty minutes. We're like, okay. So we are not going to get food from Xtreme Pizzeria tonight. So then we went to Indy all night, which in some places had a two point oh rating, but other places had a whole bunch of ratings and was four point something. I think what happened is it's closed, it's gone out of business. And the the four point zero rating on one place, they've stopped letting you rate it because it's closed. So it's just stuck with a four point zero rating or four point two rating and it's not open. Although it says it's open. And then the other place they have let people keep rating it and they're rating it low stars because you can't go there. So but yeah. So we wasted time looking for that. Then finally we ended up at Papa Ray's Pizza and Wings, which was very good food, but took forever. And then we got home and I, I told y'all I did not eat well. I was out there. It was late. I was feeling a little hangry. Feeling a little self-indulgent. So I ordered cheese fries. We got home. We unpacked all our stuff. I opened up my clamshell of cheese fries, and there was no cheese on them. Listener I cannot tell you how incredibly disappointing it was to open up my cheese fries and have them just fries. There's no reason this should be incredibly disappointing. This is a very minor problem. In a very privileged moment. I'm at GenCon. I'm having fun. I bought dinner out. I, you know, this is one hundred things that say I'm living a life of privilege and extreme delight. But boy howdy, was I sad. I was actually sad because there was no cheese on my cheese fries, and I was really looking forward to those cheese fries. So I acknowledge those feelings right now and it made for a good story. So that was my third. I don't know, favorite story from GenCon? It'll be a thing. And then there was no cheese on the cheese fries. It's the button on the story that makes it amusing, I think. So there we are. Number four. My number four moment is kind of a gameplay moment combined with an amazing customer service moment. On Thursday, I had the afternoon all to myself. I got done working the booth at noon and I was like, what am I going to do with myself? And I was gonna walk around for a while and I made arrangements to meet Rolfe at three, but I thought, I'll see if I can get into a game. Now, if you haven't been to a Gen Con, one of the main ways that you can play games is to schedule events. A lot of the games that you can play are most easily played by scheduling events and buying these quote unquote tickets. They're easy to get there. Um, but you have to do it kind of

ahead. A lot of the games sell out early. People buy, you can buy your tickets well ahead of time, and as a result, you then don't have to worry about what you're doing. But if you're an exhibitor like me, I don't know my day to day schedule until I get there. And so it's really hard to plan ahead and say buy tickets to a game. So I do that on the day, but generally not far ahead. Nonetheless there are you can often just kind of walk along and sit in the games too. That's how that Raas game, we didn't buy tickets to it. We just showed up and we did the same for a couple other games as well. Okay, so I've set the stage. So as I'm looking through the things I noticed that at all at the Allplay booth, they are doing plays of a game called High Rise. Now, High Rise is a game that I have been interested in for a long time because I backed it on Kickstarter in like twenty nineteen when High Rise originally came out. It had cardboard standees for the buildings, but it's the kind of game that really benefits from these big plastic chonky things. So that's what I wanted. So I backed High Rise the Deluxe edition on Kickstarter in like twenty nineteen, and life got in the way of the production company, the designer Gil Hova and his company Formal Ferret Games. They weren't really able to get the game produced and delivered. It just didn't happen. No, no shade there. I understand life gets in the way, but it was a bummer to lose my money and not get my game. Well, then I did hear rumblings that All-play was going to rescue the project. They were going to produce the game, and there was a story that they were going to honor the Kickstarter pledges of the people who had backed the game originally. That's amazing, I love it, I'm really excited for it, but I never heard anything about it. I don't know if I screwed up or they screwed up or some combination of both. Whatever. Life is weird, but I never got any notice or anything. And then we get to GenCon and the game is here. And I was like, hey! So after I played the game, it was fun, good time. I'm looking forward to playing it some more and telling you about it when it comes out or when I get it. Then I talked to the guy at All-play and he told me that I could email help at all-play and they would send me a link to their backer kit or their pledge manager, where I could go to request the game, and my pledge would be in there, and I would get the game for free. Well, not free. I paid for it, just I would I would get to redeem my game even though they're not the company I made the deal with. So I went and that's exactly what I did. I did the help I and then to say thank you, I bought a game from them that I had my eye on. Anyway, I heard is really fun. And then I picked it up because of course when I say went out of their way to help everybody else, there's profit in there, right? They they're selling this game now nonetheless. And sure enough, I sent the email Friday night. Saturday morning I had the link to the pledge manager Sunday morning or Sunday night. I had a a note indicating that my game had been shipped. Yowza. Or games, the game I bought and the game I got for free. Amazing. So that was very exciting and really a nice treat for me. That was so high rise, the play of it and then all of the things around it, the treat of having this game that I thought I had kind of put in the category of maybe someday I'll get it actually coming through. What an exciting opportunity for me. That is high rise. Well, that's about it. If you went to GenCon listener, I would love to hear what your experience was. Head over to BoardGameGeek. Yield three three two six nine and share your thoughts about that. Let us know what games you had. Post a picture of your game of your hall. If that's a thing you want to do, and generally just share the love about the best weekend gaming. I don't know if it's actually the best weekend gaming, but that's what they call it on the Flyers. Thanks for joining me on my walk today. I hope your next walk is as pleasant as mine was. Bye bye. Brought to you by Rattlebox Games.