

# Behind the Shadows of Northgate



PHOTOGRAPH: Rony Angkriwan

Adreon Henry, owner of The Factory, looks into a display case of stickers and vintage items at his store in Northgate.

*The Factory, above Copasetic Café in Northgate, is one of the few vintage clothing stores in the area*

BY JENNY VRNAK  
THE BATTALION

“One day, I saw this space was for rent. So I borrowed \$1,000 from my grandfather and opened the store.”

Adreon Henry  
Owner of The Factory

videos, incense, stickers — just about everything.”

The Factory features brands such as Fresh Jive, Pound, 37 and Planet Earth. Henry said among the most popular brands are World Industries and Scapegoat, which was created by the store.

“Scapegoat is really popular around here,” Henry said. “It’s probably a tie between the two brands.”

Henry, who grew up in Bryan, got the idea for the store when he was in high school. He made his own shirts and sold them out of his car and school locker.

“One day, I saw that this space was for rent,” Henry said. “So I borrowed \$1,000 from my grandfather and opened the store.”

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## 3-2-1 Blast off!

Northgate store brings back childhood memories

BY RHONDA REINHART  
THE BATTALION

There is a generation of people who grew up watching *The Dukes of Hazzard*, playing Pac-Man and who saw *Star Wars* at the movie theater the first time it was released. Those days are gone, but certainly not forgotten.

Blast from the Past, a Northgate store that buys, sells and trades vintage toys and collectibles, offers a trip down memory lane that is likely to stir nostalgic feelings in people of almost any age.

Susan Moses, who owns the store with her husband Jim, said they try to carry a variety of toys that range from the 1930s to the 1990s.

“Our biggest items are *Star Wars* originals,” she said. “Most people are looking for stuff from the ’70s to the ’90s. It’s very random what people will want.”

“We have a little bit of everything,” Jim Moses said. “We have little odds and ends people might remember from years back.”

Blast from the Past carries everything from “The Bionic Woman” board game to Garbage Pail Kids, and these toys are not just child’s play anymore. Many people take their toy collections seriously.

Joe Stanaland, a senior wildlife fishery science major, said toy collecting is like accomplishing a childhood dream.

“I think every little boy had the dream of being the first kid on the block to have all the stuff,” he said. “And when you get older and get a little bit of money, you can go out and get the stuff. Since they’ve opened, I know I have spent \$300 to \$400 on *Star Wars* purchases at Blast from the Past.”

Susan Moses said while rekindling childhood memories spurs a lot of people to start toy collections,

some hold on to their toys because they think the items will be valuable one day.

“I always tell people to collect because you enjoy it, not because of the value,” she said. “Not everything goes up in price.”

Stanaland said toy collecting is gaining popularity among college students.

“A lot of people have a stereotype of toy collectors as people with taped-up glasses, but you would be surprised at how many college students are collecting toys,” he said. “It’s neat that everybody is collecting this stuff, but a lot of people are collecting toys because they think they will be worth something some day, and it’s really hurting the collector’s market.”

Blast from the Past opened in October 1996, and it is the only store of its kind in Bryan-College Station.

“We’re pretty much it,” Jim Moses said. “There are other antique stores, but none that specialize in vintage toys.”

Stanaland said he has had more luck finding what he wants at Blast from the Past than anywhere else.

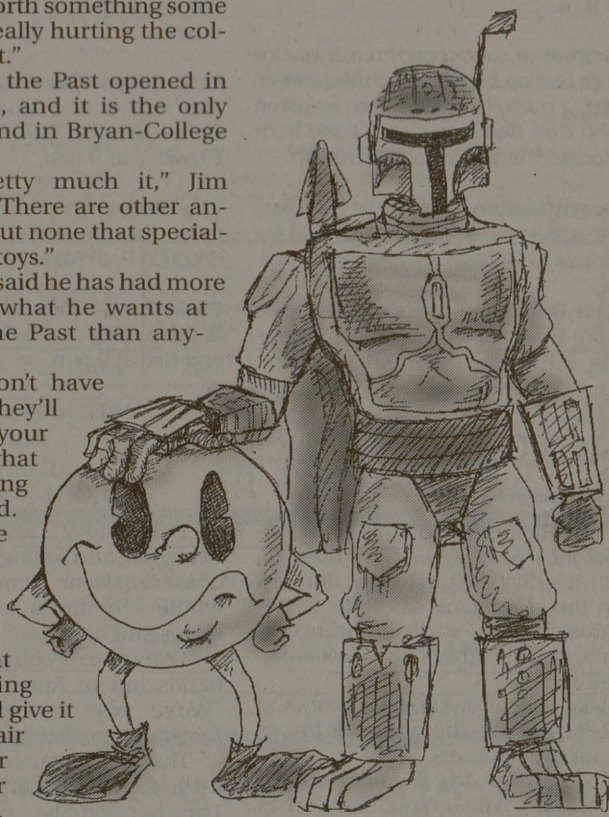
“If they don’t have something, they’ll put down your name and what you’re looking for,” he said. “And a large percentage of the time they’ll find someone with what you’re looking for, and they’ll give it to you at a fair price. Their stuff is never marked up. They always go by a catalog price.”

Susan Moses said the store is mostly just a hobby, so she tries to make prices fair.

“I like to have fun with it,” she said. “I like to make people happy, and I like to see the glimmer in people’s eyes when they complete their collections.”

Her husband agrees that toy collecting was a hobby that turned into a business.

“Toy collecting has been growing in recent years,” he said. “Toy collecting is fun. Some people collect baseball cards, some collect automobiles, and some collect toys. It’s just a matter of what you enjoy.”



GRAPHIC: Brad Graeber

# Truckin’ along: Aggies get behind the wheel and take it on the road

BY JENNY VRNAK  
THE BATTALION

Those who have ever traveled outside of the state lines of Texas might have noticed something — there are not as many trucks on the roads.

Not only is Texas the No. 1 pick-up truck state in America, it is also the No. 1 pick-up truck state in the world. Texans, on the average, buy and drive more trucks than any other area on the planet.

So, what makes trucks so important to Texans? For many, trucks are just glorified horses — they haul large loads and they will get a person from here to there without any fuss or hassle. But, for other people, trucks are almost a part of the family. They are tended to and cared for, and sometimes even loved by their owners.

Jimmy Johnson, a sales representative for Fred Brown Ford/Mercury, said Texans often like the distinctive truck brings.

“People are starting to use trucks for more than just work,” Johnson said. “Trucks are larger, they feel safer and they’re big enough for work and family.”

The most popular brand of truck in Texas continues to be Ford, although Chevrolets are not far behind in sales. Of the 250,000 pick-up trucks that were sold in Texas last year, almost 92,000 were Fords and over 86,000 were Chevys. Dodge comes in a distant third.

For those who love pick-ups, there is no shortage of truck material available. Countless magazines, such as *Truckin’*, are devoted to discussing trucks and the latest trends, models and best deals. The Internet has hundreds of Web sites for devoted pick-up lovers. There are truck chat rooms, for those who feel the need to talk to other truck fans.

There is even truck lingo. Words such as “dooley,” “power stroke” or “conversion” have their own meanings for pick-up owners. David Maxwell, a sales representative for Tom Light Chevrolet, said

brand allegiance can be strong.

“We get people here who say, ‘My daddy drove a Chevy, so that’s what I’m going to drive,’” Maxwell said.

Once owners buy a particular brand, they rarely switch to another. Johnson said most people will usually stick with the same brands.

“People will pretty well drive the same brand,” said Johnson. “They are accustomed to they feel of one brand.”

Trucks are not just a man’s vehicle any more. Truck companies are reporting a definite rise in the number of women that are buying pick-ups. Lloyd Sturgeon, a sales representative for Bossier Jeep/Eagle/Dodge, said there are a combination of reasons for women to buy trucks now.

“Women now are more educated about trucks and they are strong decision makers when it comes to buying one,” Sturgeon said.



PHOTOGRAPH: Rony Angkriwan

Shawn Scott, a junior agricultural economics major, drives a 1996 Ford F150.

Please see **TRUCKS** on Page 4.

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