Game developed in Providence makes Block Island debut

"Hull Breach" captivates a young audience

By Lars Trodson

There was a lot of military strategizing going on at the Island Free Library the other day.

Commanders were leading their troops. Heavy artillery was being deployed. No one wanted to be caught by surprise, so tactical options were being weighed. The sounds of this particular day of combat, however, consisted of animated conversation and the roll of 10-sided dice.

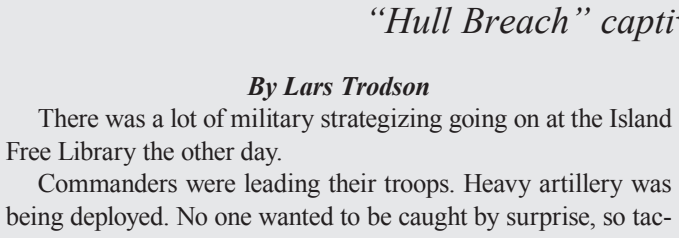
The goal was simple – eliminate all the other players – but the game was new. This was the Block Island introduction of a game called Hull Breach, which was created by a team out of Providence.

The game's creators had been invited to Block Island by Andre Boudreau, the founder of the local Drama 911 project. A member of the group that created and owns the game has done film-work with Boudreau, and that led to the event at the library.

Hull Breach is described as a "sci-fi card game that combines the randomness of dice and cards with skill and tactical might." Company employees are: A.J. Paratore, the CEO and art director; Dan Auxier, who created the game and who is a staff sergeant in the U.S. Army Reserves; and Neil Remiesiewicz, who writes the stories.

Strategy, said Paratore, "depends on the cards you hold. You manipulate events according to what you hold in your hand." Fans of such games as "Magic: The Gathering" will be familiar with how things work in "Hull Breach."

Paratore said earlier versions of the game had captured the 20- to 30-year olds, but the Block Island event was designed to introduce the newest incarnation of the game "to a younger audience," who Paratore said "picked up the game pretty well" at the library.



A group of young gamers test out "Hull Breach," a dice and card game developed in Providence, at the Island Free Library this past Sunday. *Photo by Lisa Nolan*

"I think it was great," said Boudreau of the event.

"It was great to have all those kids at the library – and there were some older ones there – reading and doing the math" that the game requires of them, said Library Director Kristin Baumann.

The owners of the game are drumming up funds for production costs by running a campaign on the crowdfunding website called Kickstarter. Kickstarter helps startups raise money through micro-donations – which can be as high as $1,000 or as low as a $1. Donors are encouraged through incentives, such as gifts and other merchandise. Paratore said he and the other owners have also been buoyed by the fact that "Hull Breach" was named "Game of the Year" at the recent SnowCon event in Orono, Maine – an iteration of the now-famous ComicCon event in San Diego that used to focus on graphic novels but is now a global multi-media phenomenon.

Baumann said that "Hull Breach" is available to be played at the library.

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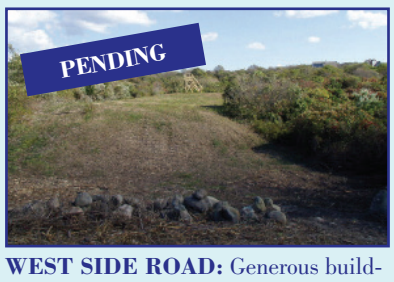

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