

Pinball Machine Museum Holds Over 150 Machines

スマホやゲーム機が当たり前の今、アメリカで「レバーを弾いて遊ぶ」ピンボールが、あらためて注目されているのを知っていますか。音や光、手ごたえのある操作感、デジタルの遊びとは少し違った楽しさがあります。昔よく遊んでいた人が懐かしさから戻ってきてもあれば、初めて体験する若い世代が新鮮さを感じることもあるようです。こうした動きは、アメリカでの余暇の過ごし方や、人がリラックスに求めるものの変化を映しているのかもしれませんが。あなたにとって、気分転換になる遊びや時間には、どんな要素が大切だと思いますか？



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

The Silverball Retro Arcade is near the boardwalk or seaside walking path in the coastal town of Asbury Park, in the state of New Jersey. It houses more than 150 working pinball machines. Pinball is an arcade game in which small metal balls shoot down the machine, hitting targets in order to earn points.

The Silverball Retro Arcade is also a museum. Some of the machines are over 70 years old. They date back to the 1950s, when pinball was at the **height** of its popularity. The Arcade offers fans of pinball a chance to go back in time and experience their childhoods again.

William Mena is one such fan. The 24-year-old said that pinball reminds him of his father. He said that growing up they would play arcade games on the Jersey Shore in the town of Seaside.

“...He used to love all kinds of old stuff and this is just something that reminds me of him. He's not around anymore, so I come here and I play and it brings back memories from the past.”

The collection of pinball machines started when the museum's co-founder Robert Ilvento started collecting pinball machines for his daughter. She has autism, and one of her favorite activities is playing pinball.

Ilvento's friend and business partner Steve Zuckerman also had a pinball machine collection. So, they combined the collections, and in 2009, the museum opened under the name Silverball Retro Arcade.

Raffi Abelson, who is 48 years old, played one of the oldest pinball machines from the 1950s at the arcade.

He said, “It's like a [treat](#) for the [senses](#). It's physical. You can touch it; it feels very different than a video game. You can really experience it.”

Patty Barber is the museum's senior vice president. She agreed that pinball is a very physical game. She said that pinball takes a lot of attention and makes you live in the moment. Barber added that it is a refreshing change from just [staring](#) at a computing [device](#).

“Even for all of us, and for young people now, it is a very tactile game. All of these different arcade games ... you really have to use all your senses,” she said.

Barber compared the return of pinball machines to the comeback of vinyl music records. She said, “It's the same as we kept that alive here with the games, and it's something different or it's something from back in time that you remember doing when you were young.”

Roselle Chen wrote this article for Reuters. Faith Pirlo adapted it for Learning English.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. height (n.) the highest point; the maximum

The height of disco music and dancing was in the late 1970s.

2. treat (n.) something that is very enjoyable

It was a treat to see my niece perform in a play.

3. sense (n.) a way that the body gets information about the world (such as sight)

A person's sense of smell is closely connected with the sense of taste.

4. stare (v.) to look at for a long time

We stared out the window at the beautiful pink sunset.

5. device (n.) a machine with a special ability

Scientists put a tracking device on the birds to learn where they fly.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. How old are the oldest pinball machines in the Silverball Retro Arcade?

2. How did the museum get started?

3. Why do visitors enjoy playing the games in this arcade?

4. Do you ever play retro games, like pinball games or video games from 20, 30, or 40 years ago?

5. What other things from the past are popular with people today? Why?