Written by Tyler Yonke, Daily Vidette Staff Writer
Thursday, 06 December 2012 14:57

Among the quaint shops and restaurants in Uptown Normal sits a store which lets locals keep up their collections of items “across the nerd-verse.”

Acme Comics, located at 115 North St., has a vast array of comic books and related items.

Owner Jim Schifeling has worked at the store since 1994 and purchased it in 1997. After rising to a manager position, Schifeling found himself in a position to acquire the business.

“This was one of four jobs that I was balancing when I started,” Schifeling said. “I was a DJ, a bartender and a janitor and then I started here.”

Schifeling remarked on the benefits of working at the store in his youth.

“I got to work a block away from my girlfriend and I got free comics. It was pretty cool,” Schifeling said. He started reading comic books as a child and has developed a wide-ranging taste in titles.

“I even like this awful old comic called ‘Trencher,’” Schifeling said, “so I don’t judge people on what they like to read.”

Acme’s selection in comics ranges from famous franchises like Superman and Batman to more artistic, independent titles.

Brittany Powers, a senior theatre design and production major, said she goes to Acme Comics every week.

“I have been going to Acme for over a year now, and it is great,” Powers said. “I go on Wednesdays because that is when all of the new comics are released, and they always have exactly what I need. They are fully stocked across all nerd universes.”

Acme has more than just comics, though. The store also has a variety of memorabilia and toys, including posters, statues and video games.

“I am currently collecting a Gotham City chess set -— I buy a piece every week as they come in,” Powers said.

Frequent comic book buyers at Acme can enjoy a special pulling service.

Customers who purchase 10 titles can have new issues ordered and set aside for them. Patrons who do so even get a modest discount.

“It makes things a lot easier for me when ordering the comics to know how much that people want, so that is how I repay them,” Schifeling said.

Some comic book rarities have even been known to pass through Acme; among them is “Amazing Fantasy #15,” which is the first appearance of Spider-Man. Copies of that issue are worth thousands of dollars.

“That is probably the most expensive comic we have ever had,” Schifeling said, “but we have had plenty of other notable ones. For pretty much any big Marvel hero, we have had their debut issue at some point.”

Acme Comics is also a participant in Free Comic Book Day. The annual event encourages people to get into comics by distributing free issues. The next Free Comic Book Day is May 4, 2013.

“We also have a big sale during the Sweet Corn Festival each Fall,” Schifeling said. “I normally even dress up as Spider-Man during that one.”