

# Washington Arcade Big Token Fan

Let's Play! Café, a new arcade, restaurant and amusement facility in Monroe, Wash., was founded by long-time industry veteran **David Shoemaker**. It offers its customers more than 50 games, from the latest pinballs (including *Jersey Jack's Wizard of Oz*) to classics like *Atari's Asteroids*, plus a large selection of racing/driving games linked for head-to-head competition. Each game is operated by tokens supplied by **TokensDirect**.

Shoemaker had 0.984" tokens minted in both brass and Nickel-plated brass. "When we have a machine jam up, we fix the problem then give the customer a Nickel-plated brass token to refund their initial lost token. That way we're able to track which machines are jamming and having problems when we do collections, because we note the silver tokens," Shoemaker advised.

The game center operator opted to use tokens versus cash because he's seen the problems that can arise from having cash lying around – even when it's hidden in a coin box. "I chose tokens to avoid the theft



and vandalism that occurs when people try to break into coin boxes" he said. So far his strategy is working, because four months into his new venture he has not had a single incidence of vandalism or theft.

As a bonus, he's seeing a higher than expected

level of "walkaways" — tokens sold but not redeemed — which means that each token is promoting Let's Play! Café each time they are seen in pocket change. The brass tokens sell for a quarter, but have a landed cost less than that, so each walkaway is generating a small profit as well as the free advertising. (Let's Play! sells the tokens at face value, with a 20-token bonus for purchases of \$20.) Shoemaker estimates that it's close to a 50/50 split between token purchases of \$5 and \$20.

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