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Niles Teens Center, Senior Center Serve as Intergenerational Link

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The Niles Teen Center and the Niles Senior Center are working together to serve as a connection between local teens and seniors.

Teens will have a chance to help seniors with various tasks, such as leaf raking, snow shoveling and yard work.

"I'm hoping to get an increasing number of kids who sign up," said Teen Center Director Mark Williams.

Williams said that the kids would be paid by the seniors for the chores they complete. He said at the middle school level receiving some extra money might be the "driving force" for them to want to participate in the program. At the high school level, Williams said students may choose to earn community service hours instead. The incentive will be between the seniors and the kids.

On the horizon, there may also be an intergenerational pool tournament with local seniors.

Williams said the new teen center that opened recently at Golf Mill has been very busy.

"Since we opened we have 45 new members," said Williams. "On an average day I have between five and 15 kids in here."

Teens from the center also participated in the festival of giving at the mall on Nov. 18. The teens helped with gift-wrapping and running errands.

The teen center also plans to participate in the chamber of commerce job shadow day.

Williams also said they have recently met with the Niles Public Library officials to create an inter-agency relationship in which some of the library events may possibly be held at the teen center.

Those who want to sign up for the intergenerational program or learn about other teen center happenings can go to www.nilesteencenter.org. There is also a link on the Village of Niles website.