

Mall Expands Library Use In Niles

For residents of Niles' northwest side, the library, located on Waukegan Road and Oakton Street, is not always easy to get to. But a new emerging partnership between Golf Mill and the library aims to change that.

Today (Wednesday), at 10:30 a.m. Niles librarians kick off "Story Time in Center Court". They will read and interact with children as part of an effort to reach out to families.

Friday from 5:30 to 7 p.m. library officials will be at the Niles Teen Center in Golf Mill for an ice cream social to sign up kids and adults for the summer reading program. Other library programs will continue at the mall throughout the summer.

Golf Mill Marketing Direc-

tor Regina Verdico called the program a "win-win," adding the library is able to use Golf Mill to serve residents on Niles Northwest Side while bringing more exposure to mall stores.

To encourage diversity, Verdico said there would be an "Eat Around the World" program.

For every book log completed, library teen club members will receive free treats from food court vendors.

This fall, summer programs will be evaluated to see what areas to enlarge and what not to, Library Board Trustee Morgan Dubiel said.

Discussions began between library and Golf Mill officials about the summer reading program several months ago,

but Library Public Relations and Marketing Director Sue Wiltse said the relationship with the mall goes back much further than that.

The Niles Teen Center, located in Golf Mill, has a standing bulk checkout of books from the library it lends to teens.

Several years ago, library and teen center officials applied for a grant aimed at funding a small remote library branch in the teen center. When the grant was denied those immediate plans fell by the wayside, but Wiltse said the subject of some sort of branch on Niles Northwest Side is still frequently discussed.

Library officials also worked with Golf Mill for their Teen Idol and Big Read programs.

Wiltse said Golf Mill provides a valuable geographic asset for the library on the northwest side as the library itself is on Niles' southeast side.

In addition to the library's partnerships with Golf Mill and the Niles Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Wiltse said she hoped to reach out to the Niles Park Dist.

When Library Board Trustee Dennis O'Donovan won a seat on the Niles Park Board in April, Wiltse said the library was put in a stronger position to strengthen its working relationship with the park district, leaving open the possibility of bringing the summer reading program to park district day camps.