

Story posted Wednesday, May 6, 2009

Grant To Help Pay For Teen Center Expansion

Niles village and Teen Center officials accepted a \$2,500 grant from Wal-Mart that will help fund expansion for the center but are still waiting to hear from Home Depot's corporate headquarters on their proposed donation of labor and materials.

Village trustees approved expansion of the teen center at their regular board meeting last week. Plans are in place to take over an adjacent 1,001 square foot storefront to bring total square footage of the teen center to 2,513 square feet before the annual Golf Mill "lock in" event scheduled for the weekend of June 21. The "lock in" event is one of the teen center's biggest events of the year.

The additional space will cost an extra \$5,637 in rent.

According to Asst. Village Manager Steve Vinezeano, local Home Depot managers said they would assist with labor and donate materials for the rehab of the new space, knocking out a wall that separates two storefronts, painting and laying new carpeting.

Local managers are awaiting clearance from their corporate headquarters on the donation, which Vinezeano expects shortly.

With or without Home Depot's help, construction is expected to start the second week of June and is only expected to last a few days.

Last year, the "lock in" event kicked off a year that saw attendance nearly triple after center Director Mark Williams reached out to area schools. Williams said he is gearing up for another tour of area schools to make kids aware of the opportunities available at the center.

At a Golf Mill recycling event last weekend, Williams told the Journal other communities have approached him to see what is working in Niles. He said other communities spend much more money serving fewer kids with fewer programs.