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Niles Teen Center Expansion **Underway; 'Lock-In' June 21**

The Niles Teen Center is buzzing with activity this week as construction work to expand the center is underway and center workers gear up for their annual "lock-in" event.

Volunteer construction workers brought in by Home Depot began work on Monday, June 1, a week ahead of schedule, to convert an adjoining storefront the Teen Center recently took over in Golf Mill Mall doubling its size.

Work is expected to be completed by Monday, June 15 in time for the Sunday, June 21 Teen Center lock-in event.

The lock-in is one of the Teen Center's largest events of the year and was a valuable recruiting tool to attract teens to the center throughout the summer and the rest of the year last year.

Teen Center Director Mark Williams said the event reached its 100 teen limit in registrations at the end of

last month and about 15 had to be turned away after the event filled.

Teens will arrive at the center on Sunday, June 21 at 9:30 p.m. when a DJ will provide music for dancing. At 10 p.m. Subway will serve up sandwiches and teens will make their way to the Golf Mill theater to watch a midnight showing of "Paul Blart Mall Cop". At 1:30 a.m. teens will compete in relay races and video game tournaments, write on the graffiti wall and eat pizza followed by unstructured free time. At 6 a.m. breakfast will be served before the event ends at 7 a.m. After last year's event that drew 70 teens, and a push by Williams to reach out to schools, regular attendance at the center tripled causing the need for expansion. The new space will cost an additional \$5,637 a year in rent. Expansion costs were partially offset by the donation of labor and materials from Home Depot and from a \$2,500 grant from Wal-Mart.

The new center will also include a satellite branch of the Niles Public Library District.