A Growing Concern

Niles Police Add Second ‘What To Do In Active Shooter Event’ Class

After three recent mass shooting events in the course of one week near night clubs in Dayton, OH, at a Walmart in El Paso, TX, and at a festival in Gilroy, CA, Niles police scheduled a "What to do in an Active Shooter Event" class for the general public next month.

Are Niles Kohl's, Ross Stores Moving To MG?

No Comment From Retailers; Golf Mill Owner Has Redevelopment Plan

By TOM ROBB
Journal & Topics Reporter

Demolition is underway to clear the way for Sawmill Station, a $150 million mixed-use retail and residential development on 26 acres at Dempster Street and Waukegan Road in Morton Grove, across from Niles.

Whether the new development would impact other area shopping centers, including Niles' biggest -- Golf Mill -- remains unclear.

Morton Grove officials released a list of Sawmill Station's planned retail tenants. Some are currently located at Golf Mill Shopping Center in Niles two miles away, and at Village Crossing Shopping Center in Niles three miles away, including Kohl's and Ross Dress For Less. It is unknown if those tenants will be moving out of Niles, however.

Morton Grove officials said the development includes seven-story, 250-unit luxury residential apartments overlooking the nearby forest preserves, along with commercial, retail, dining and entertainment uses.

The Sawmill development will be located in a new tax increment financing district with $25 million in financing from the village through sales taxes. Morton Grove meeting minutes said.

Morton Grove officials said the (Continued on page 2A)

Super Fans

Jack Carrasquillo, 4, of Niles (left) dressed as a red Dalek, with his larger green counterpart, Dalek Trevor of Dalek Asylum Milwaukee, attend Niles-Maine District Library's Fandom Fest. Coverage of the event continues on page 8A. (Journal photo)

Des Plaines Doesn't Need 'Pot' Sales. Here's Why OFF THE RECORD, PAGE 14A
Flock To ‘Fandom’

Stormtroopers, Daleks, Avengers Star At Library Event

About 400 people, many in costume, attended the second Niles-Maine District Library Fandom Fest, Saturday, Aug. 17.

The Fandom Fest event is similar to a comic book convention, often called a Comic Con, celebrating not only what is in the pages of comic books and graphic novels, but all things in entertainment and popular culture.

Saturday’s event was the second Fandom Fest the library held. The first in 2017 drew about 700. Library officials said the difference between the two was both the draw of local WCKU Channel 26 television celebrity Svengoolie in 2017, and the fact that in 2017, the Niles-Maine District Library was one of the first public libraries to hold such an event.

Library Publicity and Marketing Manager Sasha Vasilic said whether Fandom Fest would be an annual event, or held once every two years, would, in part, be determined by patron feedback.

What celebrity guests might appear at a future would depend on availability, Vasilic said Svengoolie, being local to Chicago, made logistics easier.

“If an opportunity presented itself (for a celebrity guest) we would do it,” Vasilic said.

Special features at the 2019 Fandom Fest included the return of the Jedi — but the Midwest Garrison of the 501st Legion, Vader’s Fist, a group of “Star Wars” stormtrooper reenactors.

Two Daleks, or armor plated villains from the long-running British science fiction show “Doctor Who” including one piloted by Chris Adams of the Dalek Asylum Milwaukee group, roamed the library.

Vasilic said one of his favorite characters was not an invited guest, but a man who came in an elaborate Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles costume.

Pop-Up Polos gave kids a chance to check out replica weapons, like one of Thor’s hammers, Thanos’ gauntlet of infinity stones, Captain America’s shield or Black Panther’s clawed gloves, along with masks to pose with.

Pop-Up Polos also featured a recreation of the arcade from the Netflix series “Stranger Things” with real 1980s-era video games.

The event featured a teen costume contest, rounds of gaming and a crowded top floor full of artists and vendors selling their wares.

To critics of the library hosting such an event, Vasilic pointed to the library’s mission to, “Engage, inform, enrich and educate.” He said the library’s Fandom Fest offered a similar, if smaller, experience to larger expensive Comic Con’s, such as Rosemont’s Wizard World, but at no cost.

Niles-Maine District Library intern Lisa Kolaski as Lady Vox’ahila de Rolo from the “Vox Machina” fandom (left), with Teen Services Librarian Donna Block as Robin from the Netflix show “Stranger Things” (right), get ready to host a teen costume contest at the library’s Fandom Fest. (Photos by Tom Robb/The Journal)

Chris Adams as Dalek Trevor of Dalek Asylum Milwaukee, comes out of his shell to reveal himself at the Niles-Maine District Library’s Fandom Fest. The Daleks are the sworn enemy of the Doctor, throughout all of time and space, on the long-running British science fiction show “Doctor Who.”

Twins Addy Makar (left) as hero Rey from “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” and “The Last Jedi” and her brother Holden, 6, as “Star Wars” villain Darth Vader clash with light sabers at Saturday’s Niles-Maine District Library Fandom Fest.

Spiderman, also known as Mike (no last name given) from Niles, with 8-year-old Liz Gernetza of Niles (right) practice web sling at Saturday’s Niles-Maine District Library Fandom Fest.

Stormtrooper TK3303050, of the Midwest Garrison of the 501st Legion, Vader’s Fist, “Star Wars” reenactor group, takes a break from looking for rebel scum to read “Interviews from the Last Days” by Christine Lorane at Saturday’s Niles-Maine District Library Fandom Fest. (Note: Stormtroopers wouldn’t break character to give me their real names).