

Star Worlds Arcade still in play

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DeKALB – Star Worlds Arcade is still chugging along in a world with epic single player games, massive multiplayer games, and social games people can play on their mobile device.

Co-owner Patrick O'Malley said the arcade, located at 1234 E. Lincoln Highway, just finished a cross-promotion tour for the movie "Wreck-It Ralph." The animated movie, featuring the voices of John C. Reilly and Sarah Silverman, takes place within different arcade games.

O'Malley said the arcade set up three different games, all of them set to free-play, at Carmike Market Square 10, 2160 Sycamore Road in DeKalb, and another in Oswego the weekend the movie opened.

"It was amazing to see kids walk into a movie theater and not even know what Q*bert was, and come out of the movie theater and see them line up for the Q*bert game," O'Malley said. "Suddenly, Q*bert was the favorite character that they liked."

Gaming, in both arcades and in general, has changed dramatically since Star Worlds opened in 1985. Amidst mobile gaming and console games that rake in hundreds of millions of dollars, O'Malley said he sees a place for a neighborhood arcade like Star Worlds.

"Star Worlds fits in wherever I want it to go," O'Malley said. "We don't just focus on the classic games. ... Our slogan is play today the games you miss from yesterday. But yesterday is different depending on how old you are."

O'Malley said he has been working to include newer arcade games such as "Dance Dance Revolution" because for younger customers, a game that was initially released in 1998 could be considered "retro."

"I haven't gotten stuck in a rut on gaming," O'Malley said. "Wherever I see gaming going, whatever we can afford, whatever the public demand sets that for [us]."

That said, there are some things O'Malley and arcade co-owner Glenn Thomas won't compromise on. For instance, if an arcade cabinet was initially released with a tube screen instead of a flat screen, O'Malley will always go for the tube screen.

O'Malley described the original "Pac-Man" as looking "grainy" on a flat-screen arcade. Thomas added that if a game was originally released with a flat screen, they would include it in their arcade.



DeKalb resident Darrin Cormier plays Robotron: 2084 on Thursday at Star Worlds Arcade in DeKalb. Cormier has visited the arcade just about every other day for the past four years. DeKalb resident Darrin Cormier plays Robotron: 2084 at Star Worlds Arcade in DeKalb, Ill., Thursday, Nov. 15, 2012. For the past four years, Cormier has visited the arcade just about every other day. (Rob Winner – rwinner@shawmedia.com)

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