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Arcade celebrates 30th year with all-you-can-play event

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Marilou Terrones

Star Worlds Arcade will hold an all-you-can-play event this weekend to kick off its 30th anniversary celebrations.

Patrick O'Malley, of DeKalb, will celebrate 30 years as the owner of Star Worlds Arcade, 1234 E. Lincoln Highway, in January. A pre-party for the anniversary will be held Saturday at the arcade. People are encouraged to gather at 4 p.m. for a group photograph. After 5 p.m. an all-you-can-play party will be hosted.

Admission to the weekend's anniversary event is \$25.

O'Malley reopened the arcade in 1985 after the original arcade went out of business in 1983. As a kid, he and his friends visited the arcade frequently. O'Malley said the friendly atmosphere that encouraged him to frequent the arcade during his younger years was also the reason he decided to purchase it for \$1,200. Now, the average arcade game costs about \$8,000, O'Malley said. He uses his "instinct" when investing in games, he said.

"I spend money on games that weren't successful but will be a big hit because nobody else has them," O'Malley said.

O'Malley said he wants "people [to] relive the dream [they had] at the age of 12 ... except it's not a dream, it's real."

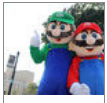


Ryan Ocasio

Star Worlds Arcade

The Mario Bros. take pictures with students Monday in the Martin Luther King Jr. Commons while promoting the 30th anniversary of Star Worlds Arcade, 1234 E. Lincoln Highway.

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Star Worlds Arcade celebrates 30th anniversary

Star Worlds Arcade will hold an all-you-can-play event this weekend to kick off its 30th anniversary celebrations.

The newest edition to the arcade, "Pop'n Music," is similar to Dance Dance Revolution except players use their hands instead of feet. O'Malley's game is the only "Pop'n Music" in the state.

O'Malley said he grew up in a generation that portrayed video games as either a waste of time or an activity done simply because parents sent their kids to play. He has learned there is more to video games than that, he said.

"It's not about the games, it's about the interaction," O'Malley said.

Mitchell Meerman, of Sycamore, has been visiting Star Worlds Arcade for three years because he is drawn to the antique games.

It's "classic arcade gaming brought to [the] modern age," Meerman said. "It's almost like a time machine."

Hayden Wurtz, of Malta, a frequent visitor of Star Worlds Arcade for three consecutive years, said he mostly enjoys the atmosphere O'Malley creates because it is as if "someone is going back in time and keeping it alive."

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