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# Star Worlds celebrates 30 years with party for fans

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Alex Chettiath

Star Worlds Arcade, 1234 E. Lincoln Highway, celebrated 30 years with local officials and record-holders Saturday.

The celebration was an event that brought in players from throughout Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. An employee since 1988, Michelle Brennan said the arcade's success comes from word of mouth and roots in the community.

"Parents come in with their kids and stay for the memories," Brennan said.

The event gave guests unlimited play on videogames and pinball, food and drink, door prizes and entry into an arcade contest that challenged participants' skills in arcade game "Q\*Bert." Fourth ward Alderman Bob Snow said Saturday's party was his first time at Star Worlds, and he attended after he heard about the event from his neighbor.

Walter Day, a Guinness World Record record-keeper and recurrent gamer at Star Worlds, said the arcade is an international shrine to gaming.

It's "the last great neighborhood arcade," Day said. "The other 100,000 have closed."

The most recent game to gain a spot in the arcade's rotation is "Pop'n Music," which is similar to "Dance Dance Revolution" but is controlled by the hands as opposed to the feet. The game is from Japan and no other arcade in the area has one, arcade owner Patrick O'Malley said.



Kelsey Brown

## Star Worlds celebrates 30 years with party for fans

Jeff Ramsey, of Iowa City, Iowa, plays a vintage arcade game Saturday at Star Worlds Arcade, 1234 E. Lincoln Highway. Ramsey and his brother traveled from Iowa to DeKalb to celebrate Star World's 30th Anniversary.

### If you go

**What:** Star Worlds Arcade

**When:** 3-10 p.m. Tuesdays-Thursdays, 3-11 p.m. Fridays, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturdays, noon to 8 p.m. Sundays

**Where:** 1234 E. Lincoln Highway

**Web:** StarWorldsArcade.com

Along with passion, O'Malley said he puts in hours of endless work at the arcade: cleaning, repairing and selling to allow the arcade to stay "fresh." About 700 games have gone through O'Malley's hands to get a spot in the Star Worlds Arcade rotation or to be sold.

O'Malley credits his success to his customers and said Star Worlds will never be a ticket redemption arcade.

"The payoff is the happiness of the players, not the money," O'Malley said.

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