



The Beat Goes On

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February 7, 2012 Alton, Illinois - Due to the overwhelming success of middle school dances which have been offered monthly at the Riverbender.com Community Center, the decision has been made to now offer dances twice per month. "Of course having another dance during the month means needing more volunteers, so we are urging members of the community to come out and help us provide a safe environment for the kids," said John Hentrich, Executive Director of the Center.

Several community organizations have already come forward to take on the Center as a service project, but even more help is needed. "We have been lucky to have volunteers from the Junior League of Greater Alton assist us with dances, but we would like to see even more groups come forward and partner with us on our dances," Hentrich added.

The Center can accommodate up to 300 teens at the dances, and a minimum of 20 volunteers are needed to staff each dance. Volunteer duties include admission/check-in, selling concessions, kitchen help, coat check, security, general supervision, and help during pick-up after the dances.

Because of the direct contact with teens, volunteers are required to pass a background check in addition to attending volunteer orientation. Those interested should contact Michelle Pawloski at (618)465-9850, ext. 212, michelle@riverbender.com or visit the Center's website at www.riverbender.com/communitycenter.

Middle school dances are open to any area teens in grades 6 through 8 with admission cost of \$5 for members and \$8 for non-members. Dances have been scheduled for the following dates from 7 to 10 p.m.: February 11, February 25, March 10, March 24, April 14.

Not only do teens listen to tunes spun by the DJ during the dances, but they are free to check out the rest of the Center. Arcade alley offers three gaming stations projecting right onto the wall, offering a more interactive gaming experience for PlayStation3, Wii, and Xbox. Additional gaming options featured are three Forza Racing stations, Xbox Kinect and PlayStation Move which is located in the black lit vault in the basement. Teens are also able to have their shot at the microphone in the “Underground” where open mic and karaoke take place. Another favorite of teens is the movie theater complete with Netflix for live streaming. The snack bar at the Internet café also offers time to take a break and get something to eat while surfing the web at one of five computer stations. In addition to the foosball tables, ping-pong, air hockey, pop-a-shot games and dancing there is never a dull moment at the Center. During the dances all areas of the building have volunteers supervising the activities.

The Riverbender.com Community Center is a 15,000 square foot facility on three levels offering a safe place for teens to hang out with their friends or make new ones, where kids can be themselves without bullying or intimidation from others. The focus of the Center is to provide youth the chance to experiment with new ideas, games, and activities like art and music and avoid at-risk behaviors and negative peer pressure.

The Riverbender.com Community Center is located 200 W. 3rd Street in downtown Alton.