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Jack Rumley, 10, runs inside a human-size hamster ball and gets it rolling during an Eagan party serviced by Games2U and its mobile party van.

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Have party, will travel

'Games2U' and its technology-laden mobile party van bring the fun to birthday parties, church picnics and other get-togethers. There's video gaming on six big-screen TVs, a human-size hamster ball, laser tag and more.

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Want to make like a hamster? Jim and Jen Sadlovsky can fix you up.

The Inver Grove Heights couple visit birthday bashes, church picnics, tailgating parties and the like in a souped-up "Games2U" van that, well, brings games to you.

One of these is a human-size hamster ball. Pop into the inflatable, translucent sphere and you are soon rolling across the lawn, with the occasional shove from Jen Sadlovsky. Kids are wild about this thing. So are grown-ups.

What really makes an impression on the kids and their parents, though, is that van.

A tricked-out tech marvel, the

Mercedes-Benz has a half-dozen built-in big-screen TVs — three inside, three outside — for massive Microsoft Xbox and Nintendo Wii game play. Dozens of kids can have at it simultaneously.

At a recent family gathering in St. Paul, clumps of younger kids wielding Wiimotes were putting Mario through his paces on the outdoor TVs, shielded from a drizzle

by a canvas awning.

Inside the van, older kids slouched on a van-length sofa as they slaughtered each other, with superhuman concentration, in "Halo 3." They were not impressed by the disco lighting and smoke.

The laser-tag equipment did get

'GAMES2U' VAN, 4B >



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During an Eagan birthday party this week, kids play video games on three big screens mounted on the side of Games2U's van. The Mercedes-Benz vehicle also has three big-screen TVs inside to offer massive Microsoft Xbox and Nintendo Wii game playing.

CONTINUED FROM 1B

> 'Games2U' van

their attention. Soon, they were dashing from barrier to barrier while gleefully zapping each other — and Jim Sadlovsky.

The man wouldn't have it any other way. The father of four and former oil-refinery inspector is in the midst of an epic career change that, so far, is making him happy.

"I've been an entrepreneur at heart forever," he said, but had not stumbled on the right opportunity.

He finally found it in Austin, Texas-based Games2U, which sells the party-van franchises. Brothers Stuart and David Pikoff founded Games2U in 2007, and have sold 132 franchises in 27 states. One competitor, Arizona-based GameTruck, is pushing a similar concept but isn't as big. The Pikoffs are always coming up with new gimmicks. One of these, the U-Bot, is a big robot exoskeleton that a kid can control from within, not unlike Col. Quaritch in "Avatar," or Ripley in "Aliens."

Fancy a booger bash? Booger Wars lets kids yank hunks of green mucus (they are actually sticky beanbags) out of gigantic noses, and hurl those at each other. Talk about a "yuck factor."

Other Games2U possibilities include a foam machine, an inflatable movie screen and an enclosed movie rig that tilts and pitches.

This stuff doesn't come cheap. A Games2U party can run between \$200 to nearly \$500 for 90 minutes, depending on which goodies you get.

But, even in a sour economy, people seem willing to "pay for an experience," Jim Sadlovsky said.

In the Games2U universe, the Sadlovskys have Minnesota all to themselves so far.

Their gigs can be grueling. That hamster ball alone is quite a workout for Jen, who can spend hours pushing the thing around.

"It's a free gym membership," Jim Sadlovsky jokes. (His wife actually did cancel her gym membership.)

They intend to work right through the



Party guests run through the laser tag course set up by Games2U, a mobile-party service that is franchised by a Texas company and owned locally by Jim and Jen Sadlovsky of Inver Grove Heights.

winter: Their fancy rig works off an internal generator, or can be plugged into electrical outlets, to keep the interior toasty while running all those electronics (including the 42-inch plasma HD TVs).

Many of the activities, such as the hamster ball and laser tag, can be staged in gymnasiums or auditoriums, too.

"No two parties are the same," Jim

Sadlovsky said. "It's all about bringing smiles to kids' faces. The only disappointing part is when we have to leave."

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