

Skaters to converge at Central Park

By Alyson Iott
STAFF WRITER

This Saturday, the Friends of Milford Skate Park will host the best kind of fund raiser — the kind where participants can skate all day, help raise money for a good cause and maybe even win a prize.

Five dollars buys all-day access to open skate, which will be held in the Milford Central Park upper parking lot from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Attendees will have the chance to compete in mini-competitions throughout the day. Categories include best trick, manual and biggest air, and winners will receive prizes donated by Aura Boardsports.

There will also be a 50/50 raffle, and pizza and other refreshments will be on sale. All proceeds will benefit Friends of Milford Skate Park.

Group chair Ric Mueller estimated that Friends of Milford Skate Park has raised more than \$8,000. The group's ultimate goal is to build and maintain a public skate park near Milford, paid for entirely by private funds.

Some of the money raised earlier this year has been spent creating apparel and other Friends of Milford Skate Park merchandise, which will be available for sale at Saturday's event.

Also for sale will be bottled water, sponsored by area busi-

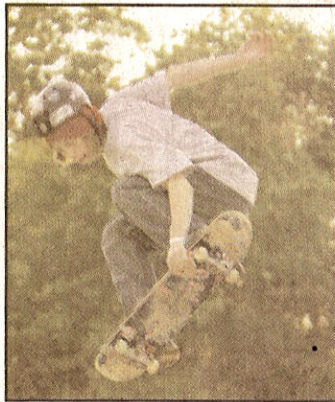


Photo by GILLIS BENEDICT

Cameron Strand, 17, gets some air on a jump. The Friends of Milford Skate Park will host a skating fund raiser this Saturday at Milford's Central Park.

nesses.

"Every dollar we get from (the bottled water) is pure," Mueller said. "There's no expense against it, and we have plenty to sell yet."

He said that the town has been "extremely supportive" of the group's efforts.

The open skate is intended to serve several purposes besides fund raising. One of the group's goals, Mueller said, is to provide youth ages 12 to 18 the chance to skate in a structured environment.

"What we're after is to let all

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the youth skate," he said.

He also hopes the open skate will increase parent and youth support of a public skate park.

"The other thing that I hope to gain from (the event) is recognition that we are really out there and this is for real," Mueller said. "We're not going anywhere. We're going to build a skate park."

Dean Flugel, 14, is a Friends of Milford Skate Park member. He has been skating for more than three years.

He plans to skate on Saturday, but there's volunteer work to be done, too.

"I'm going to be there early, helping set up and selling water for part of the day," Flugel said.

While he may enter one or two competitions, he said, "I'll probably just skate."

Usually, Flugel goes skating with his 18-year-old brother Grant and a group of friends.

"We go to a skate park in Birmingham, and we just skate in parking lots and places where we won't get in trouble," he said.

One advantage of having a skate park near Milford, Flugel said, was that he could walk over instead of having to find a ride.

Friends of Milford Skate Park currently has about 30 regular youth and adult members. The

SAFETY RULES

■ All skaters must wear helmets.

■ Skaters under 18 must have a parent present to sign a waiver. If a parent cannot be present, skaters can bring a signed and notarized waiver. Waivers may be downloaded at www.skatemilford.com.

group meets on the second and fourth Monday of every month at the South Hill Church. For more information, contact Ric Mueller at (248) 318-9010.

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