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In May, Friends of Milford Skate Park sponsored a Skatewave National Demo Tour event at South Hill Church.

Group vows to keep working until skate park is financed

By KANIQUA S. DANIEL
Of The Oakland Press

In hopes of one day having a township skate park to call their own, the Friends of Milford Skate Park will continue its fund-raising efforts Saturday in Central Park.

The non-profit group will host "$5 Skate Day" featuring skating competitions in the upper parking lot of the downtown park from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Patrons will be allowed to skate all day for $5. Proceeds will benefit the group's goal of raising $500,000 to build a 15,000-square-foot park in Milford Township.

"It sounds like a chunk of change, doesn't it?" said friends group President Ric Mueller. "The township did a feasibility study. It would only cost about $20 per resident in the township — but you can guess how easy it would be to get residents to support such a cause."

Mueller's 15-year-old son Evan has been skateboarding for about seven years. Because there are no skate parks in the township and most parks don't allow skateboarding, Mueller said he went to a Friends of Milford Skate Park meeting in January to see what he could do to help. He soon became president.

MILFORD

In May, the group sponsored the Skatewave National Demo Tour, where Skatewave, an internationally-recognized manufacturer of recreational equipment, brought skate equipment to South Hill Church near General Motors Road for show and purchase.

The friends group kicked off its fund-raising efforts with this event by hosting a 50/50 raffle and selling beverages, T-shirts and skateboard equipment. Participants skated five hours for free.

Mueller said the idea for a skate park came about years ago after the township clerk did an informal survey to gauge residents' interests.

"That survey established there was a need for a skate park. It's something people wanted," he said. "There isn't much in the Milford area for 12- to 15-year-olds to do. As far as organized, structured activities, there is nothing."

The group will host another fund-raising event in the spring, and Mueller said they will continue to host fund-raisers until the money is gathered.

"Someone needs to stand up for these kids," Mueller said. "There's no doubt we're going to have a skate park here. I'm committed to that. It's just a matter of time."

Mueller said township officials have been supportive of the group's efforts. They have raised nearly $8,000 and hope to begin construction in an area near Milford village in spring 2007.

The group is also applying for grant funding and soliciting private and corporate donations. Mueller said they do not intend to use tax dollars to construct the park or maintain it.

How to help

For donation information, contact Ric Mueller at (248) 318-9010 or visit www.skatemilford.com.