

Skatepark fundraiser May 17

Alley-oop. Fakie. Nosegrind. McTwist. Mongo-foot. Pop shove-it. Never heard these terms before? They are all part of the lexicon of a select few who like to surf the concrete slopes of Wilmington and beyond.

Soon, these terms will be heard in excited shouts at the J.W. Denver Williams Jr. Memorial Park. At the end of a fundraising campaign, it will be home to an 18,400 square foot skate park.

So far, the Clinton County Skatepark Association (CCSA) has raised \$8,500 through fundraisers such as a dodgeball tournament in conjunction with the Wilmington College Sweethearts sorority, yard sales, bake sales and recycling.

Another dodgeball event is being planned for this year, according to Jen Stewart, president of the CCSA.

The CCSA's next fundraising event is an extreme one from 1 to 11 p.m. May 17 following Fitness Day at the J.W. Denver Williams Jr. Memorial Park.

Headlining the event, 3rd Lair, a skateboarding team from Minneapolis, Minn., will present two 30-minute demos, along with sponsoring contests for area skateboarders who wish to compete in the highest ollie (skateboard jump) and best trick categories. The team will also teach skating technique and talk about protective gear. An open skate on professional portable skate equipment will be held for any local skater who brings a helmet and signs a release form. Doug Brown, a professional skateboarder from North Carolina, will be on hand to sign autographs and talk to the public about the sport of skateboarding.

Kickball 4 Concrete is the main fundraiser for the day. Registration forms for individuals or teams may be picked up at Reality Skates or Jen's Deli inside Books 'N' More at 28 W. Main St. in Wilmington. Cost to play is \$5 per person or \$45 per team of nine. By registering before May 17, teams may sign up for \$40.

Other events scheduled include two one-hour demonstrations by Ultimate Impact Wrestling, helicopter rides, live music all day including bands from Dayton, Cincinnati, Middletown, Athens, and Columbus, raffles, food and artisan vendors. The lineup of musical entertainment includes Losanti, Sons of Sophistication, Groove-struction, Sam Brewer, Gran Bel Fisher, Kamikaze Sunbirds, Killing Chloe, Formerly Dispute, Zebulon of Babylon and Kris Kerr aka Bainbridge Lights, Morningstar, More than Snake and Vicariously Indecisive.

"We'll be offering an extreme fitness day after the morning fitness day," said Stewart. "There will be something for everyone and we encourage families to bring kites, hacky sacks, blankets and chairs. Just come to chill out and enjoy the view."

Admission is a suggested \$10 donation at the gate with all proceeds to go to CCSA.

The planned 18,400 square foot park will be located by the big metal caterpillar and the old bathrooms, which will be torn down. New bathrooms will be built by the shelterhouses. Stewart said the issue was put before the city parks committee, which voted to approve it.

The completed project will cost \$500,000, but they plan to start soon on the design process and



The area of J.W. Denver Williams Jr. Memorial Park as proposed for a skatepark.

could actually complete Phase I for \$350,000.

The park will include a street course, beginner course and more advanced courses. Calling it a "flow park," she said skaters will be able to start at one part of the park and continuously skate throughout the entire park. Plans call for the park to be made of concrete, which she said is the fastest, most fun and the safest of the options.

"If you're a skater, concrete is the way to go," she said. "If you fall down in a concrete park, you slide pretty easily. If you fall down in a park that isn't concrete, that has maybe asphalt or is wooden, you run the chance of getting splinters. Asphalt you fall down and really hurt yourself because it's like a skin grater, basically."

The response from skaters has been very positive, she said.

"They're super-duper-duper excited," she said. "The closest park is [in] Dayton, Cincinnati or Columbus, so there's quite a drive. There is a park in Hillsboro and one in Washington Court House, but they are not concrete parks."

To donate money, money can be given to National Bank & Trust under the Clinton County Skatepark Association Inc. Endowment Fund or in the name of Sgt. Steven Daniel Conover, the late son of Wilmington residents Lorraine and Mike Earley.

Stewart said the late soldier, who died Nov. 2, 2003 in Iraq, was a BMX rider and skateboarder. His stepfather, Mike, has been an announcer for professional skateboard competitions in Dayton and Cincinnati areas. The endowment, which is in honor of the fallen soldier, will provide continued maintenance for the park.

The Clinton County Skatepark Association is a non-profit organization started in 2006 with the sole purpose of raising funds to build a concrete skate park for the youth of Clinton County.