

UNSUNG HEROES
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A BETTER PLACE TO BE

It is not necessary to name the man who came to see me. He was not seeking recognition, just input and information on what a dream might cost in time and money. He wants to build an indoor park for kids, a skateboard park to be precise. He has children who enjoy the sport, and they have friends who enjoy the sport. This parent has a dream.

What he really wants is a place where kids can hang out safely. He visualizes a place where they will feel wanted. What a nice idea. He is willing to spend part of himself to realize his dream.

He asks, where in our town can kids realistically hang out in late evenings or early night time? What recreation is available that does not cost money children do not or should not have? Should they get together in homes without supervision, subject to unknown influences, and try out drinking, drugs, or maybe pharming? Skateboarding might be less dangerous and more rewarding.

Where can kids go to practice this activity? Where will they not be trespassing or accused of vandalism? Some skateboarders purposely defy the rules, just as we did when younger. They make a nuisance of themselves. But by and large, they are respectful when asked to leave place after place. Some are truly athletes.

I applaud the dream of this parent, and will do what I can to help. He will likely never profit from this endeavor. He might never recover his time or expenses. He might make the community a better place to be. If he succeeds, his will be a place where kids meet with peers, learn new techniques, and find recognition for their accomplishments from those peers. It will be a place where, under the supervision of parents who understand, they can play, eat, drink, and socialize with others. They will be welcome there.

It is not necessary to give this man's name. But if he succeeds, he will build better citizens and a better community. To a few select children, he will also be a hero.