

Press Release

SKATE PARK GROUP RECEIVES \$45,000 GRANT

September 15, 2008

HELENA, MT September 15, 2008: The Helena Skate Park Improvement Group, Inc. (HSPIG) is proud to announce that it has been selected to receive a \$45,000 challenge grant from the Montana Skatepark Association (MSA). HSPIG has raised \$20,000 towards matching the MSA grant and seeks an additional \$25,000 for the full match. This grant will help pay for the 7,000 square foot expansion to the existing 10,000 square foot Helena Skatepark at an approximate cost of \$250,000.

“Our organization is honored to have been selected for this grant,” says HSPIG Director, Pete Brown. “I think we proved ourselves with a three-year track record of successful fundraising, and the additional support we’re getting thanks to the Helena Parks Bond. The MSA grant will just about put us over the top and compel potential donors to help us raise the match.”

The Helena Parks Bond provides \$30,000 for design and \$150,000 for construction of the skatepark expansion. Brown says his group is approaching potential donors and organizing efforts to augment the City funding and meet MSA’s match requirement.

HSPIG will host a skate contest on Sept. 20, a concert with the AM Stringband at the Bagel Company’s theater space in October, and sponsorships of a ceramic art installation at the park by skaters, facilitated by Helena artist, Chip Clawson.

“All of our fundraising events have been based on art, music, and skating,” says HSPIG Board Member, Colleen Murphy. “These events make fundraising more fun and reflective of the skaters. A lot of the younger guys at the park don’t have the expertise to write a grant application, but they still have something to offer. Screening their homemade skate videos at the Myrna Loy and showcasing their bands at the Eagles’ Lodge are what earned us our seed money and prove to donors our commitment.”

The popularity of the skatepark is seen by many as sign of its success, but many Helena skaters including HSPIG members see ways of making a good thing better by making the park more inclusive and challenging.

“I think the only drawback to our park is that we have little guys and big guys all bunched together. As a dad and a skater I see the need for terrain specific to the different ages and abilities out there. You don’t typically see grade school kids playing sports or riding the school bus with high school aged kids, but we all skate the same stuff at the skatepark.” says Brown.

If all goes according to plan construction of the expansion will begin in October 2008. Preliminary drawings by Dreamland Skateparks, LLC are based on input HSPIG gathered from skaters in summer 2007. Interested parties can view these drawings or make a donation at www.helenaskatepark.com.

