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Skate park opens to teens' delight

ANDERSON TWP. - With the rumble of hundreds of tiny wheels across concrete, area skateboard enthusiasts enjoyed the opening of Anderson Park District's first phase of its Skate Park at Beech Acres Park.

Consisting of concrete bowls, ramps and steps, the 12,000-square-foot skate park was packed on its inaugural day, April 8.

"We need it because there's lots of skaters around here. It's about time," said Jeff Phillips, 19, of Amelia.

Before the park opened, 15-year-old Jake Tucker of Anderson Township would go to a skate park in Florence or just skate up and down Beechmont Avenue - and get stopped by Hamilton County Sheriff's deputies, he said.

Kids didn't have anywhere legitimate to go to skate locally, said Molly McClure, park district executive director.

In partnership with a volunteer committee, the park district has worked several years to make the skate park a reality.

The park is a good idea, said Adam Case, 17, of Anderson Township.

"It keeps us out of the stores' (lots) and stuff. It gives kids something to do," he said.

The park district is paying \$200,000 of the estimated \$500,000 for the two-phase, 24,000-square-foot skate park, while committee members continue to raise money for the rest of the cost.

McClure said the park district is also working at a feverish pace to finish the rest of the renovations at Beech Acres Park, which include walking trails, baseball diamonds and an amphitheater.

The park's grand opening will be at Greater Anderson Days this summer, she said.

To contribute to the skate park's second phase, call 474-0003.

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