

Annual Skate in the Park hopes to raise \$10,000

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Staff Writer

Although he's 10 years older than when he did it the first time, Tony Hayward of Georgetown plans to skate 300 miles around Brampton's Gage Park in approximately 19 hours this weekend to raise money for a children's charity.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the "Skate in the Park at Dark" event for Sunshine Dream for Kids—a Canadian charity that makes dreams come true for children suffering from life-threatening illnesses or disabilities—Hayward and Darron Pennock of Brampton will each skate the entire 1,000 laps of the event set for Saturday and Sunday.

Except for that first year in 1997 when Hayward launched the event and skated all the laps on his own, the skate has been split between team members who complete 200 laps each.

Hayward, 45, said he decided to do the full course again this year in honour of the 10 years and "before I get any older and fatter."

Accompanying Hayward and Pennock for their share of the skate will be Brampton residents and teammates Tim Fielding and Aldo Campitelli and Hayward's son Mark, also of Georgetown.

"The satisfaction of seeing a child benefiting from the skate, that just blows me away," said Hayward. "Knowing that there are children being helped really hits home."

He said over the years the event has come through for many ill or physically challenged children, some of whom have taken trips to Disney World.

The skate is to begin at 8 p.m. Saturday and will conclude at approximately 3 p.m. Sunday.

The team hopes to raise \$10,000 this year in honour of the 10th anniversary. Since its inception the event has raised more than \$50,000.

Hayward has been training nightly in the park for the 300-mile skate logging between 50 and 100 laps at a time.

"We've had favourable weather every year," said Hayward who is hoping for a repeat this year.

Maple Lodge Farms is a national sponsor of Sunshine Dreams for Kids and the main sponsor of Skate in the Park at Dark. Other sponsors of the event include Georgetown Market Place, Topper's Pizza, Emerald Isle, J.V. Clothing, King Pizza & Submarine, Clariant, Rotary Glen Catering, Norcan and Canadian Tire.

Hayward is looking for pledges for the skate, additional sponsors and anyone who wants to donate raffle gifts for the event. Anyone interested should call Hayward at 905-873-6122.

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