

Gardner skating rink to host weekend benefit

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GARDNER — Gardner residents interested in helping grant the wishes of children with life-threatening conditions can make it as easy as gliding on ice.

The Veteran's Memorial Skating Rink will play host to three public skating sessions in an effort to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, starting at 1 p.m. on Nov. 30. The skating center will also hold public sessions from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.

"The Make-A-Wish Foundation of Massachusetts is delighted to benefit from FMC's Public Skating Weekend," said Charlotte Beattie, CEO of the foundation, in a statement. "We thank **FMC Arenas** for celebrating the winter season in this meaningful way, and we hope many individuals will lace up their skates to support our children's wishes," she added.

Besides foundation members, local officials and politicians expressed their support for the

chance to reach out and share an unlimited happiness with some very special children.

"I am very excited that the Gardner Veteran's Memorial Rink is willing to host an event for the Make-A-Wish Foundation," said state Sen. Robert Antonioni, D-Leominster, in a statement. "I encourage all area residents to take advantage of this unique opportunity to spend time with their families during the holidays, while contributing to a worthy cause," he added.

President Rob McBride of FMC Arenas said he is thrilled to lend a hand to such a worthwhile cause.

Across the state, there will be as many as 70 public skating sessions in 24 different facilities in the hopes of raising \$10,000 during the weekend.

Additional donations will also be accepted at the rinks during the weekend.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation is a nonprofit organization network of more than 25,000 volunteers that serve children with life-threatening

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medical conditions has enriched the lives of children with life-threatening medical conditions through its wish-granting work. Since its founding in 1980, the group has granted wishes for more than 144,000 children around the world. cgarofolo@thegardnernews.com

