

Roller skating returns to Matamoras



Teens enjoy skating at the former Big Wheel Skating Center in Matamoras. The rink, now called the American Roller Skating and Sports Complex, recently reopened. Skaters are urged to participate in a contest to give the roller rink a new name.

POCONO RECORD

STEPHEN SACCO | POCONO RECORD | 11:00 pm EST March 2, 2008



MATAMORAS — Lace up your skates, pump up the Village People and head out with that girl or guy you have a crush on, because roller skating has returned to Matamoras.

And just in time, too, according to Jay Machin, who opened American Roller Skating and Sports Center this month.

Machin said the building on Reuben Bell Drive — which has gone by the name Skateland, Big Wheel and Gotta Roll in previous incarnations — had been vacant for a while, putting young people at risk of growing up without the roller-rink experience.

Machin said the response has been tremendous.

"I have 20-year-olds coming up to me telling me that they had their ninth birthday party here," he said. "About a hundred people have just said 'thank you' (for opening)."

The building has featured roller skating in one form or another since 1979, with the exception of brief stints as an RV dealership, Machin said.

Machin has a vision of making the 20,000-square-foot facility into a sports complex with league competition in indoor sports like volleyball, roller hockey and basketball.

Adult men's roller hockey is scheduled to begin March 6 and cheerleading and gymnastic programs are slated to begin later next month. For now, there are more than 150 people showing up for roller skating per session. It is also available for parties and events, Machin said.

American Roller Skating and Sports Center is open for skating from 7 to 10:30 p.m. Fridays, 1 to 4 and 7 to 10 p.m. Saturdays, and 1 to 4 and 5 to 8 p.m. Sundays. The rink is located at 151 Reuben Bell Drive in Matamoras. For more information, call 570-229-7190.

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