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# RINKSIDER

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July-Aug 2009

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Follow George Babineau's prescription for turning a plain, unpopular rink into a successful FEC that focuses on roller skating via many unique offerings and partnerships.

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Help yourself and your business by attending the 2009 RSA Convention and Trade Show at the Flamingo Las Vegas, August 9-13. Visit the additional trade show booths presented by this year's partnership with the ILTA. Enjoy FREE room upgrades. Partake in the Roller Skating University and many informative seminars. Make this your summer vacation!

Manage your risk..15  
Gather risk management tips from USA Rink's risk management guru Nancy Giltner. Be prepared and reduce liability and claims by training staff, maintaining a checklist and adhering to the good advice Nancy shares in this issue.

## Wisc. roller skating center volunteers mentor a community



*Pictured left to right are volunteer floor guards-mentors Fred Lamping, Dan Zarling, Kenneth Tatum, John Lamping and Bryan Bukowski. Each man offers his time weekly at Incred-Roll Skate and Family Fun Center in West Allis, Wisc., acting as a role model and mentor to kids in this underprivileged community.*

By Suzy Weinland

Cory and Becky Hundley, owners and operators of Incred-Roll Skate and Family Fun Center in West Allis, Wisc., have watched a wonderful trend evolve at their rink over the past few years.

In this primarily inner-city location, the skaters are about 90 percent African-American. Several men – and one woman – have stepped up to the skating floor, so to speak, to offer a parental presence amidst a large number of single-parent families.

A select group of adult volunteers

spend their Saturday and Sunday afternoons gliding around Incred-Roll on skates and offering personal guidance, direction and pointers on skating. The recipients are typically African-American boys of all ages.

Owner Cory Hundley explained, "We'll have two (volunteers) from 9:30 to noon, two from 12:30-3 and then three or four from 3:30-6, the session they most frequent and get the most 'pow' out of. We also have volunteers at our 3:30-6 session on Sundays.

"(The kids) love these guys and the parents love these guys because they are disciplinarians, but at the same time are kind of like a father figure, teaching the kids to skate out there on the floor."

It's just a fact in this community that there are not a lot of fathers involved, explained Hundley. "Moms come in and see these men taking an active roll and teaching their kids."

The two leaders of the volunteer group are biblically-centered, and one of the weekly volunteers is a school principal. "They really have a strong moral code," Hundley shared. "Men in the community will come up and ask if they can be a volunteer and these two will say, 'Let me watch you for a few weeks and see how you interact with the people.'" Then the men

*continued on page 35*

## Fundraisers, school events create steady income in tough times and beyond

By Jim Morris

Every skating rink and family fun center has its tried and true programs and sessions that are counted on to produce the bulk of the revenue each year.

But as times get tougher, rink operators



find themselves forced to become more innovative, constantly coming up with new ideas for

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*A birthday child gets a chance in the money machine at Skateland Indianapolis.*

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**Mentoring** (cont'd from page 1)

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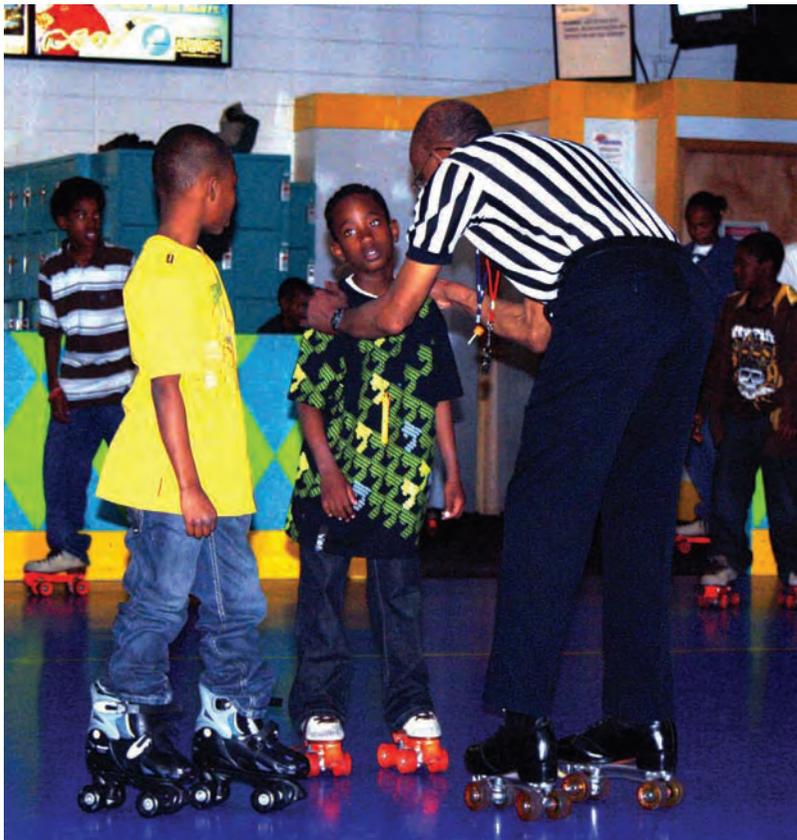
Hundley has personally seen a big change in the kids who skate at his Center. He shared that the volunteer floor guards, who are typically in their 50s to 60s, will select boys to groom into junior floor guards. The junior picks are sometimes as young as 11 years old.

"These guys will pick individual kids who show up and maybe need the most help," Cory said. "They will mentor them while they're there and after some time will give them a shirt and let them come out and help during the younger sessions. They will teach them the rules and help them with the games. Eventually the (junior guards) become a part of the system – they know how the

sessions run, they're there every time, helping the older volunteer floor guards. All of a sudden the junior floor guards decide, 'Hey, I'd like to get a job.'"

The men and woman who have taken on the mentor and volunteer floor guard rolls at Incredi-Roll, are rewarded not only with free admission, free food and the ability to bring in their families for free, but are blessed with the knowledge that they have made a huge difference in a child's life within their own community.

"They have to wear the uniform and they take it very seriously," explained Hundley. "These floor guards are fulfilling themselves by helping these people."



*Floor guard and mentor Kenneth Tatum volunteers several hours a week to offer personal guidance and roller skating direction to kids at Incredi-Roll Skate and Family Fun Center in West Allis, Wis.*

The Incredi-Roll volunteer floor guards have created a set of "floor rules" for themselves to adhere to during their weekly lessons/sessions. According to one of the lead volunteer floor guards, Dan Zarling, the team's "4C's" philosophy is:

**I. COURTESY**

When we put on the uniform, we represent Incredi-Roll for the duration of the time we are there. We also expect our customers to treat us, the rest of the patrons and the staff with respect. We do not permit belligerent behavior or foul language.

**II. CHALLENGE**

We are always in 'recruiting mode' (i.e., looking for the adults that with a little encouragement would join their kids out on the floor). We are also challenging ourselves to learn new moves, refine the ones we do have and appreciate those on the floor who are more advanced than we are. Jealousy does not enter the picture for us.

**III. COMFORT**

We recognize that skating is not without its hazards. Falls, bruises and cuts are part of the sport. If someone is injured, we immediately take care of the person with as little fanfare as possible. We pay little attention to 'Screamapillars' (i.e., those who exaggerate supposed injuries for attention).

**IV. COMMRADERIE**

Most of all, we do this for the love of skating and the enjoyment and support we get from the Hundleys, the staff and each other. Skating can never really be "mastered". There is always something to learn, someone to teach and encourage and good friends to be appreciated.

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