



Kenneth Smith had his skates on, but he was asleep before his mother, Janice, got him out on the Xerox rink for the Great Skate.



Tom Sweeney was one of many volunteers from the Knights of Columbus who helped out with the Great Skate.

She Feels 'Skate' Will Get Greater

The Great Skate, an effort to help the handicapped and underprivileged into the world of sports, was not a financial success. But the former Olympic skater who directed it thinks things will get better because "people care."

Janice Smith, who took time off from her Head Start job in Houston to come back home for the November event, said the number of people who worked on it was heartening. There were 200 volunteers from the Knights of Columbus and a steering committee of 40 members that worked five months to launch the Great Skate. The event was patterned after Hike for Hope and Walk for Water, with participants being paid by sponsors for their time on ice.

"We didn't approach enough kids in the right way," Janice said afterward. "Kids should have been involved in the planning stages."

She took the turnout of volunteers to be "a positive statement about people." Drawing from the Olympic Creed, she said, "The important thing is not to win, but to take part."

The groups that would have used the money need relatively little, but they do need it, she continued, and somehow they will get it "because there are people who care."

Text and Photos by
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