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A Night On Ice spotlights new local sport

DUBUQUE - It's been more than 30 years since area figure skaters have graced the Tri-State community, but that's about to change with the launch of a new organization.

Dubuque Figure Skating is a non-profit group founded earlier this year to provide both recreational ice skating lessons and competitive figure skating. It is the first time in more than three decades that such a program has existed here.

"I was a member of the original Dubuque Figure Skating Club," said Tammy Remakel Ryan, vice president of Dubuque Figure Skating and lead instructor. "When it disbanded, I was left with nothing. I had all this passion and drive, and no way to fulfill it. My goal is to offer skaters the opportunity I never had."

Demand for figure skating and ice skating is strong throughout the region, as evidenced by a 300 percent increase in class enrollment immediately following the Olympics. This is the first time skating lessons have been offered here during the Winter Olympic Games.

"For years, figure skating was something you saw on television. It was something other people did," said Elizabeth Davies, president of Dubuque Figure Skating and a competitive skating coach. "Now, this is an athletic option for children in Dubuque as well. We're here to make sure that this sport, so embraced for its beauty and grace, is no longer something for people who live elsewhere. It's for kids who live here."

The group will showcase its figure skating programs and area skaters on **Tuesday, June 10**, in a first-of-its-kind exhibition at Mystique Community Ice Center, 1800 Admiral Sheehy Dr.

The community is invited to the free figure skating exhibition from 5:30 to 6 p.m., featuring both local competitors and seasoned figure skaters from the Eastern Iowa Figure Skating Club in Cedar Rapids. Following the show, audience members can skate with the performers from 6 to 7 p.m. Skating is \$5, which includes skate rental. All proceeds go directly to Dubuque Figure Skating to purchase practice ice for local students. The event is produced by Dubuque Learn To Skate and sanctioned by the United States Figure Skating Association.

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