

The Doogood Conservatory



Ari walking the talk

PHOTO AARON SEDWAY

THE (preposition)

DOOGOOD (verb)- the act of helping others in a positive way

CONSERVATORY (place)-a school of dramatic art

"Skateboarding saved my life." How many times have we all heard that messianic mantra? The art of applying aggression toward inanimate objects is grounded in the fields of forgotten fortitudes. Simply put, skateboarding doesn't hurt anyone (except yourself). Albeit slightly self destructive, skateboarding is pure freedom; you... your board... and the world.

But for some unfortunate souls, the road to freedom is riddled with financial potholes and despondent dreams. That is where The Doogood Conservatory comes in. This is a foundation set up to provide free skateboards to low-income families and free-to-use boards at participating skateparks (S.P.O.T. included). To learn more about the specifics of the program, just click on over to doogood.org.

Ari Evan Gold had a dream, a dream to be a philanthropist. But, he had a little problem; his daddy isn't exactly on the Forbes 500 list. "Screw it, I'll just do it," he thought. A phone call to A.S.R., a letter of proposal to Allison and BLAM-right next to Surfrider at the September 2002 ASR - FOR FREE. Many thanks go out to everyone at Action Sports Retailer who opened the initial door to freedom. Yep - ASR did that. After many bro-bra's and the vehement support of key people like Sunny Zobel at *Skateboarder Mag* (for the first letter of support), Aaron Sedway (who donated vintage shots for the booth) and Scott Ward of Monsterskate (who designed and maintains doogood.org), the show was a success.

First to put their money where their mouth is goes to perennial powerhouse, Blitz Distribution. An initial donation of 250 decks from Birdhouse, Flip, Firm, Baker and Hookups was received in the middle of October. Blitz becomes the first official Gold level sponsor, and the race is on to build these decks for Christmas distribution. Without the coveted tax-exempt 501c 3 status, many companies are on the fence and subsequently haven't contributed to this benevolent cause. So what the hell is a man to do?

Give away what you can, with what you've got: So, the proposed plan was swept aside, for now, and Christmas presents will consist of new decks and not completes. But hey, that's somethin'. Ten cities in Nor Cal (cheap or no shipping costs) received 20 new decks. Through charitable organizations like Toys for Tots (Reno, Sparks, North Lake Tahoe and Truckee), Christmas Cheer (South Lake Tahoe), Auburn Christmas Basket Program and The Boys and Girls Club (Sacramento, Santa Cruz, Chico and Grass Valley) their presents this Christmas for the underprivileged will include new skate decks.

Now back to the plan. A nation-wide program of free-to-use skateboards at participating skate parks, along with free skateboards to governmental welfare agencies and established charitable entities; a monster plan with a win-win-win philosophy. Skateboarding did save my life and if I can help save other lives through turning them on to a free start to alternative means of aggression management, then maybe I really have achieved my philanthropic dream. Or maybe I have just instigated more ruined city curbs, more skateboarding tickets and more resentment for the freedom that skateboarding inherently harbors in its passionate participants. Whatever the result, you too can help skateboarding save lives by contributing to The doogood conservatory at doogood.org and pat yourself on the back. Yeah.... it feels good, huh?

Ari Evan Gold-Founder



Doogooders

PHOTO JOHN STEELE

"Helping skateboarding save lives" (slogan)