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Russian playground gets hand

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A 14-year-old boy from Forest Hill plans to raise \$12,000 to help build a new playground in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia.

Alex Griffith hopes to raise a portion of the \$60,000 needed to build a new playground at Children's Hospital 20 in his birth city in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia, as part of his Boy Scout Eagle Project.

Alex was adopted by Dwight and Jenny Griffith from Siberia in 1994 when he was he was 11 months old.

Alex plans to raise the \$12,000 by selling candy at local business that don't typically sell candy and hot chocolate at the athletic fields in Jarrettsville in the fall.

He also plans to have pit beef fundraisers and a hot rod car show at William Watters United Methodist

Church in Jarrettsville.

The car show will be on Sept. 27 with food and candy available for purchase. There will also be an entry fee for participants in the show, as well as an advertisement fee for those who would like to advertise in the car show program.

Local clubs such as the Bel Air Rotary Club and affiliated clubs will try to raise \$47,500 before applying for a match grant from Rotary International.

Dwight Griffith said the Bel Air Rotary is also accepting donations for the project. Alex's idea to build a playground in his birth city came about when he read a journal his father had written about their experience in Russia for the adoption. The journal mentioned a playground at Children's Hospital 20 that was in poor condition

and needed remodeling.

After reading the journal, Alex said he decided, as part of his Boy Scout Eagle Project, that he would provide a service to his birth home in Russia by building a new playground.

Alex spent six months researching and planning this project, before he presented his project to Mike Balog, Harford District Boy Scouts of America Advancement Committee Eagle Project Coordinator.

Balog approved Alex's project.

"I believe Alex is a bright young man and will do well," he said. "I support Alex."

As part of the project, Alex will be responsible for designing and purchasing the new playground, coordinating fundraising, creating an installation instruction and procedure manual.