

# ROCORI Times

LOCAL NEWS DEDICATED TO THE COMMUNITIES OF COLD SPRING ★ RICHMOND

## Richmond man to raise funds for cancer, hopes to set world snowmobile record

In 60 days, Nick Keller looks to drive more than 12,200 miles, help raise awareness, money for those with cancer

By Taleiza Calloway  
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RICHMOND — For Nick Keller, traveling more than 12,200 miles by snowmobile is about more than setting a record. It's about honoring his mother while helping others.

Keller will attempt to travel this distance within 60 days. The Keller Family Community Foundation, a nonprofit formed by Keller and his family this summer, will sponsor the Snowball Cancer Challenge, a fundraiser to raise awareness and money for those affected by cancer — a disease that has personally affected the Keller family and the world alike.

"Anybody who knows anybody knows someone who has cancer," Nick Keller said. "It affects everyone."

Keller speaks from experience as his mother, Mary Jane Keller, died of breast cancer March 21, 1989. She was 56.

As his 56th birthday approaches (in April) and the anniversary of his mother's passing nears, he knew he wanted to do something. Coupled with a challenge from a local snowmobile dealership to attempt breaking the record, he decided to turn the personal challenge into a way to give back.

The natural outdoorsman and avid snowmobiler regularly travels to a second home in Ironwood, Mich. The most he's traveled in a day is about 400 miles, he said.

Known as the "Mileage Man," he's not worried about the distance as he has trav-



TIMES PHOTO BY DAVE SCHWARZ, DSCHWARZ@STCLOUDTIMES.COM

Nick Keller holds a T-shirt designed to promote his upcoming attempt to break a world record for snowmobile riding to raise funds and awareness for cancer victims. Keller hopes to ride more than 12,200 miles in 60 days this winter.

eled more than 11,000 miles in the last two years. When asked about the plan if his snowmobile breaks down, he said he will pull off and get it fixed. What he looks forward to most is those who might join him along the way.

"The record is secondary," Keller said. "The main cause is cancer."

As he attempts to break the record, Keller will journey state and local trails through Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan — all familiar territory.

### Open arms

Keller, and his wife Janet operate Nick Keller Masonry Inc. in Richmond. While this is the kick-off event for the Keller Family Community Foundation, all are eager to see the turnout and what can be

done next. Currently, they are working on finalizing sponsorship.

Donations have already started coming in, said Keller's wife, Janet. From phone calls and people dropping off donations at the family's business, feedback about the upcoming challenge has been positive, she said. "We've had open arms," Nick Keller said.

The most heartwarming display of support came earlier this month when a 4-year-old girl brought all the money from her piggy bank in a sandwich bag and said something like, "Here's all my money to help the sick people."

"That was priceless," Keller said. "The emotional aspect of this is (powerful)."

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