



CANCER: 12,200-mile itinerary

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aimed at raising awareness and money to help people with cancer.

"I am dedicating this trip to people living with cancer," Keller said Thursday.

The event is being presented by Keller Family Community Foundation, a non-profit organization with Yamaha Motor Corporation, USA, as sponsor.

Donations can be made by logging on to snowballcancer.org

Keller said his mother suffered and died from cancer at the age of 56. Keller does not have cancer but, he said, "I am now 56 years old."

He said other family members have been stricken with cancer, as well. "I have 12 family members that either have cancer or have died from cancer.

"We worry about the patient lying in bed with cancer, but we forget about the children and spouses who are standing in the dark." Keller said he is riding for those people, "People that have to live after the death of a cancer patient."

Keller will begin his 60-day trek in Richmond on Dec. 26 at 10 a.m. "I will travel in the Richmond area for the first couple of days, and then transport my sled to the Ironwood area and hit the trails."

He said he plans to snowmobile in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin. He will travel throughout the Upper Peninsula to Sault Ste. Marie, and he plans to touch the North Dakota border.

The journey will cover a lot of northern Wisconsin, as well.

Keller is in the area for the next few days, breaking in his sled before the Dec. 26 kick-off event in Richmond.

He said there is minimal snow in the Richmond area.

AN AVID SNOWMOBILER

Keller is no stranger to snowmobiling. He has been snowmobiling since 1983 and the majority of riding has been done in northern Wisconsin and the U.P.

"My house in Ironwood is my second home, and most of my snowmobiling has been done on the Gogebic Range," he said.

Keller is a member of a snowmobile club in Richmond, where he has groomed snowmobile trails. He said he has applied for membership in the White Thunder Riders Snowmobile Club of Oma, Wis.

SNOWMOBILE CONDITIONS

"It is almost guaranteed we will have good snowmobiling," Keller said of his outing on the Gogebic Range. He said the trails get better "with every turn you take."

"The scenery is great," Keller said. "I am so impressed with the scenery, the wildlife — deer, wolves." Traveling throughout the area with other snowmobilers from Minnesota, Keller said, "We enjoy looking at the new homes along the shorelines on lakes and we meet great people. No one is a stranger, just friends we have not yet met."

PUBLIC INVITED TO RIDE ALONG

Keller said some of his friends will join him on his 12,200-mile trek. "At times I will run by myself."

Local riders are invited to join in the fun. "If local people want to ride along, they can call me on my cell phone at 320-260-3751 or call Bob (Walesewicz) at Cary Mine Convenience in Hurley," Keller said.