

MS awareness campaign rides into Prince Albert

By Spencer Sterritt

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From left: Delila Hogg, Travis Hogg, Nathan Langton, Nicole Rolfes, Wally Rolfes

Spencer Sterritt, paNOW staff

After being diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in 2012, Nicole Rolfes wasn't going to let her disease stop her from riding her snowmobile. Now she's riding across Saskatchewan to raise awareness and funds for MS.

"When you're going through the process of being diagnosed with an illness or a disability you're never going to know what the outcome will be in the end," she said. "Will this be a life changing event where you have to stop loving all the things you do love, or are you going to be able to continue on?"

"I just want to let others know 'continue on.' Where there's a will there's a way. There's always a way to continue to enjoy the things that you love doing."

She and her husband Wally embarked from Goodsoil on Sunday, Feb. 21 for the 1st annual Believe Sled Ride. The ten-day 1,100 km trip will take them across the province, ending in Yorkton on Mar. 1.

Nicole said the trip has been amazing so far. "It's absolutely beautiful country out on those trails and in nature. It's so relaxing and there's nothing like it."

Wally said they've had a few small hiccups, such as flat tires on the trailer that's accompanying them on the trip, but "Everything else's been good. Trails have been in good shape and the weather's been awesome."

Unfortunate weather would be enough to ruin any snowmobile trip, but it can be especially problematic given Nicole's diagnosis. "We've had to make frequent rest stops at times," she said, "just so I could take a break and rest."

Their trip has been planned around MS to keep fatigue and stress to a minimum. Wally said he's been keeping a close eye on his wife to make sure she's still in good shape. "We've made the days so that they're manageable and achievable...She does very well on her sled. She's able to manage that sort of stuff herself."

Nicole set a fundraising goal of \$15,000 for the ride, but said the money, while important for MS research, isn't the main goal.

"The success doesn't only come financially, the success comes from how many people we've reach out to, and so far we've already been a success."

According to MS Society of Canada, Canada has the highest rate of MS in the world, affecting 100,000 Canadians and roughly 3,500 young adults aged 15 to 40 in Saskatchewan alone.

MS is a chronic often disabling disease of the central nervous system made up of the brain, spinal cord and optic nerve.

The Rolfes and their team will next be in Nipawin. Their journey across the province can be tracked on their [twitter account](#).

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