

Local woman aims to spread MS awareness through snowmobiling

By Colton Swiderski

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File photo/ meadowlakeNOWstaff

A young woman who was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is using her love of snowmobiling to spread awareness about the disease.

With the help of her husband Wally, Nicole Rolfes was able to plan the 1st annual Believe Sled Ride, a 10 day, 1,100 km snowmobile journey.

Rolfes has been riding since she was 13 but when she first learned about her diagnosis, she didn't know if she would be able to continue doing the things she loved.

"After my diagnosis I didn't know how (snowmobiling) would fare. After being on medication for a couple of years to try to stabilize it, I've learnt how to work with MS and not against it so it could be in my favor to jump on my sled and go," Rolfes said.

"Going through all the trials and the unknowns of MS, it's an extremely scary adventure until I got to know what MS is all about. It's not the end of life. I feel the more I'm able to share my story the more people will be able to understand what MS is and how MS can affect us," she said.

Since being diagnosed in 2012, Rolfes has been an MS Ambassador and tries to spread awareness about the disease.

"I know the scary thing about MS is hearing it and not knowing a thing about it, so now I just try to make a difference," she said.

The Believe Sled Ride kicks off Sunday, Feb. 21 in Goodsoil and ends Mar. 1 in Yorkton.

The ride will also stop in Meadow Lake on Monday, Feb. 22 where riders will be at Renegade Recreation BBQ located at 312 Nineth Ave. E.

For online donations, or to track the ride visit www.believeride.ca.

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.

cswiderski@jpbg.ca