

LOCALNEWS

One step at a time

Walk aims to end hunger

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

A long line of walkers is expected to be seen between Smokey Bear Park and Ranier Sunday for the local Christian Rural Overseas Program, or CROP walk, beginning at 2 p.m.

According to organizer Pat Norby, the event raises funds to help end hunger locally as well as around the world, “one step at a time.”

“Walking a CROP Hunger Walk is a fun and healthy family event,” Norby said. “It promotes involvement and awareness.”

According to the CROP website, cropwalk.org, each year, more than 2,000 communities across the U.S. join in more than 1,600 CROP Hunger Walks. More than five million CROP Hunger walkers have participated in more than 36,000 CROP Hunger Walks in the last two decades.

The goal of the local walk this year is to raise



FILE PHOTO

Participants of last year’s annual Christian Rural Overseas Program, or CROP Walk, make their way from Rainy River Community College on a loop around the community. According to Pat Norby, an event organizer, the event drew more than 55 participants and raised more than \$5,000 for Church World Service and other designated international agencies for relief and development programs, with 25 percent of the money kept locally to be divided between the Falls Hunger Coalition and Salvation Army.

at least \$6,000, Norby said.

Last year, the group raised more than \$5,000 and had more than 50 people walk – around the snow – the 6.2 miles from Smokey Bear Park to Ranier and back.

“After our late winter last year, we are hoping for better weather,” Norby said of moving the walk from late April to mid September.

She said the community has conducted 14 CROP Hunger Walks in this area, since the first one in 1994. That was started by then Rev. Tom Aitken of First Lutheran Church. Becom-

ing involved in the walk, she said, includes a fun sendoff from Smokey Bear Park, engaging in conversation with old and new friends and snacks and water along the way. For those who need a ride back from Ranier, transportation will be available.

Pre-registration packets for the walk are available at the following churches and organizations participating in the event: Bethany Lutheran, Faith United Church of Christ, First Lutheran, Zion Lutheran, The Salvation Army and the Falls Hunger Coalition.

Once people have a donation packet, Norby said they can get people to sponsor them. Any donations go into the packet and should be brought to the event.

Registration for the event begins at 1:30 p.m. Sunday at Smokey Bear Park. At 2 p.m., walkers will leave the park and walk to Ranier and then back.

To participate, contact an above listed organization or church for a donation envelope and additional information. People may also contact Norby at 283-4113.

61st North Star Expo returns to Bemidji

Two-day meeting of loggers is biggest equipment show in Minnesota

MTPA STAFF REPORT

The center of Minnesota’s timber industry will be in Bemidji this week, when the state’s biggest logging equipment show comes to town.

The 61st Annual North Star Expo opens Friday at the Sanford Center in Bemidji. Admission to the two-day event is free. The Expo features more than 100 exhibitors, including over \$15 million in the latest logging, trucking, and sawmill equipment and technology.

Loggers, vendors, and timber company representatives from Minnesota and around the Upper Midwest will attend, making the Expo “the Great Minnesota Logging Get-together,” say organizers.

“We’re thrilled to be back in Bemidji,” said Wayne Brandt, executive vice-president of the Minnesota Timber Producers Association, organizers of the Expo. “It’s the home of Paul Bunyan, so this area is steeped in tradition and lore of our industry. With

all of the loggers located in Bemidji and Beltrami County, it’s an ideal spot to hold our event.”

It’s the first time since 2008 that Bemidji has been home to the North Star Expo, when the event was held at the Beltrami County Fairgrounds. This will be the first time the Sanford Center has hosted the Expo.

This year’s Expo will not only include equipment displays from the world’s top manufacturers, but also contests that allow participants to show off their skills and knowledge of the logging business, including the loader and master loader contests. Other competitions include biggest cookie, and “guess the weight.”

The Minnesota Timber Producers Association is the state’s largest trade organization that represents loggers, truckers, sawmills, and allied businesses. The North Star Expo runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, and continues from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturday.

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A skate and dress sale will be held during registration. If you have items to sell, please bring your pre-tagged items (name and price) to the cafeteria at 5:30 p.m.

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