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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Guard member takes cancer awareness to new level

RAPID CITY, S.D. – CHEMO IS HARDER. That is the motto of a South Dakota Army National Guard member and his friend who are champions in the fight against cancer.

National Guard member Brendan Murphy, Rapid City, and friend Nolan Taylor, Great Falls, Mont., will be running 429 miles across the state of South Dakota in 14 days beginning April 26 in an effort to bring awareness and to help others who are affected by cancer.

“The idea is to create awareness at a grassroots level,” said Murphy on the purpose of the Chemo is Harder Cancer Research Run. “There are some tremendously brave men and women fighting this battle and they shouldn’t have to do it alone.”

Both Murphy and Taylor are well aware of the sacrifice made by family and friends in this fight as Murphy recently lost his father to the disease and his mother is a cancer survivor. Taylor’s father was diagnosed with cancer last year, which led to surgery, radiation and chemotherapy.

“Many of us have no idea of just how difficult it really is,” said Murphy.

Taylor, who works at his family’s implement dealership in Great Falls, Mont., and Murphy hope to raise money and awareness in the name of cancer research by promoting a positive outlook on life through running and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Murphy, who is a mobilization and planning specialist for the South Dakota National Guard in Rapid City, said the two expect to begin their journey on April 26 at Capitol, Mont., and finish on May 9 at Ortonville, Minn. They hope to average of 31 miles a day during their run across the state.

The two friends plan on being completely self-supported during the run by pushing all their supplies and equipment in two three-wheeled strollers. The gear is expected to be between 40-60 pounds and includes clothing, shelter, cooking equipment, food, water, first aid kits and communication devices.

Murphy and Taylor have been training for the past year for the event, recently averaging up to 100 miles per week.

“The last several months of training have really paid off,” said Murphy. “We have finalized our packing list and looking forward to journey.”

However, there still are some final details that need to be worked out, according to Murphy.

“I think our biggest challenge right now is making sure we link up with our lodging sponsors along the route,” he said. “We need to make sure we are getting the proper amount of rest, and then getting to the exact same spot where we get picked up.”

The lodging sponsors will link up with Taylor and Murphy at designated points along the route and then take them to a location off of the route to get a good night’s rest. Murphy said it is extremely important that they be returned to the same location where they stop running each day to rest for the evening.

How the weather is going to affect the two runners is also a concern, according to Murphy.

“We are ready. I’m in the best shape of my life,” he said. “It’s the unknown factors like injury or bad weather that causes us to be a little nervous, but overall we are confident that this will be a rewarding and successful journey.”

Murphy said for those interested in finding out more about the Chemo Is Harder Cancer Research Run and how it started, or view the planned route, they can go to the Web site at www.chemoisharder.com.

After the run across the state, Taylor and Murphy will be hosting a celebration on the evening of May 9 in Milbank, S.D. The public is encouraged to attend and more details on this event will be published.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Maj. Orson Ward at (605) 737-6721, cell (605) 431-8753 or Capt. Brendan Murphy at (605) 430-9625.

Photo cut line:

Taylor and Murphy: Nolan Taylor, Great Falls, Mont., (left) and friend Brendan Murphy, Rapid City, (right) will be running 429 miles across the state of South Dakota in 14 days beginning April 26 in an effort to bring awareness and to help others who are affected by cancer. The two expect to begin their journey on April 26 at Capitol, Mont., run across the state of South Dakota at an average of 31 miles a day, and finish on May 9 at Ortonville, Minn. Courtesy Photo.

Link to Photo: https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/released/Taylor_and_Murphy.jpg

Stepping it out Murphy and Taylor: Brendan Murphy, Rapid City, (left) and friend Nolan Taylor, Great Falls, Mont., (right) step out on a training run with their three-wheeled strollers filled with gear in preparation of a 429 mile trek across the state of South Dakota next year in an effort to bring awareness and to help others who are affected by cancer. The two expect to begin their journey on April 26 at Capitol, Mont., run across the state of South Dakota at an average of 31 miles a day, and finish on May 9 at Ortonville, Minn. Courtesy Photo.

Link to Photo: https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/released/Stepping_it_out.jpg

Brendan Murphy: Brendan Murphy, Rapid City, takes a break during a 20-mile training run last month in the snow. Murphy will be running 429 miles across the state of South Dakota with friend Nolan Taylor in 14 days beginning April 26 in an effort to bring awareness and to help others who are affected by cancer. The two expect to begin their journey on April 26 at Capitol, Mont., run across the state of South Dakota at an average of 31 miles a day, and finish on May 9 at Ortonville, Minn. Courtesy Photo.

Link to Photo: https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/released/Murphy_break.jpg