



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coldest Day of the Year Walk for Homelessness Taking Place

The Fort Frances Homelessness Committee is looking for participants in their upcoming fundraising event dubbed, “Coldest Day of the Year.” Taking place from noon until three p.m. on February 6th, participants will collect pledges and partake in a walk just shy of two kilometers on what the committee says is historically one of the coldest days of the year.

The walk will begin at the Northwest Community Legal Clinic and proceed down Scott St. toward Armit Ave., toward the riverfront and return north on Victoria Ave. to the Out of the Cold Warming Centre located in the Apostolic Way Church (at 324 Victoria Ave).

Walk participants and/or those unable to walk the length of the planned route are invited to join the group at the Warming Centre immediately after the walk for hot chocolate, a hot meal, and a screening of *Us and Them*, a gripping Canadian documentary on the realities of homelessness. Following the documentary will be a brief Question and Answer period with the documentary filmmaker, Krista Loughton.

“Us and Them” spans a decade and is described as a “deeply visceral film about transformation through human connection. It all begins when filmmaker Krista Loughton is questioned by addiction expert Dr. Gabor Maté about her need to relieve pain in the world. This takes her back in time when she befriended four chronically homeless people in an effort to help them heal their lives.” The film focuses on such topics as homelessness, addictions, healing and confronting personal demons.

The Northwest Community Legal Clinic, an organization member of the Fort Frances Homelessness Committee, is the sponsor of this film for this event. Committee member and Community Legal Worker at the Northwest Community Legal Clinic, Tammy Noble explains, “We want people to see this film because it puts a human face on the homelessness crisis. Four faces in fact you will meet and I think, grow to really like the folks in the film.”

Noble added, “I believe we need to change our approach to homelessness, but in order to do that, our attitudes about homelessness need to change. People facing homelessness are people first.”

A number of communities across Canada, including at least one in the Northwest also hold walks in the evening during the month of February often called the Coldest Night of the Year.

“The Homelessness Committee went in this direction because it is fitting of the temperatures we see during this time of year, which usually has Fort Frances in a deep freeze. We are always looking for opportunities to raise awareness and de-stigmatize homelessness in our district, and this is a great opportunity for people to learn more and donate to Out of the Cold, which provides a warm, safe space during the winter months for people experiencing homelessness,” explained committee co-chair Jamie Petrin. “It’s also a play on the homeless sleep out event we held in 2018 called ‘The Longest Night of the Year,’” she remarked.

Please visit “Out of the Cold Fort Frances” on Facebook to be kept up to date.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to address the issue of homelessness in Fort Frances.

For information on the Out of the Cold Warming Centre, please contact Sandra Weir at sandraw@rrdssab.on.ca or 807-274-5349 x 230.

For information on the Coldest Day of the Year, please contact Jamie Petrin at jpetrin@rrdssab.on.ca or 807-274-5349 x 248.