



**FOR IMMEDIATE
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Black Woods Blizzard Tour Back on the Snowmobiling Trails

Raises over \$1.6M to *Fund the Fight Against ALS*

Duluth, MN –The Black Woods Blizzard Tour celebrated its 26th anniversary February 5 - 9th at the Black Bear Casino Resort and raised \$1,631,400 to provide support to individuals battling ALS. 260 Snowmobilers rode an average of 420 miles each - with one group covering 516 miles - over the 3 days, all to fund the fight against ALS. The Black Woods Blizzard Tour has now raised nearly \$21 million in its twenty-six-year history.

Snow came in at the last minute, and riders blazed trails from Black Bear Casino Resort to Tower to Grand Rapids and back. Organizers had developed back-up plans to shorten the ride and to follow the snow to Lake Vermilion; however, riders were overjoyed when they got to snowmobile all three days as originally planned, with no trailering required.

Fun, fellowship, and laughter followed the rides each day, with entertainment provided by the comedian C. Willi Myles and the NorthWoods Band on Thursday and Friday nights. Former Minnesota Twins alumni Terry Steinbach and Kent Hrbek also participated in the three-day event.

Saturday night's sold-out Welcome Home Celebration Dinner featured a live and silent auction, as well as video messages from ALS organizations sharing how funds provided by Never Surrender Inc had advanced research, expanded access to clinical trials, and provided help for people living with ALS and their families. Kurt Martinson, of Sartell, MN, was named Rider of the Year, and long-time ALS advocate Kent Hrbek was Volunteer of the Year. A replay of the Welcome Home event is available on www.blackwoodsblizzardtour.com.

We are incredibly grateful to our sponsors that made this event possible. We would also like to thank our community for their important donations and our riders for not surrendering to Mother Nature and for Never Surrendering in our Fight Against ALS.

Information on the Black Woods Blizzard Tour

Four riders started the idea of an annual fundraising snowmobile ride when they rode their sleds around Lake Superior in 1999. Randy Bannor, Larry Bannor, Greg Sorenson and Dennis Nelson received \$15,000 in monetary contributions, which were used to help those fighting Lou Gehrig's Disease (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis). A year later, a group of dedicated people banded together to form what is now the *Black Woods Blizzard Tour*. That same year, *Black Woods Bar & Grill* jumped on board as title sponsor of the annual event. In its first year, 38 riders raised \$46,000. Twenty-six years later, 260 participants raised over \$1.6 million, bringing the lifetime event total to nearly \$21 million.

Each year, the *Black Woods Blizzard Tour* brings people together in the fight against Lou Gehrig's Disease. Although they participate for various reasons, all are united in a quest to find treatments and ultimately, a cure for ALS. For additional information on the event and the two other events (Kolar ALS Fishing Tournament and Tomassoni Tour-Cycle for ALS) also held by Never Surrender Inc, visit <https://www.neversurrenderinc.org>

The Black Woods Blizzard Tour Board:

Chair Matt Bordson, Cullen Flaherty, Pete Gassert, Tyler Gronseth, Vice-chair Doug Jensen, David Kolquist, Whitney Kolquist, Jim Lesemann, Kevin Swanson, Kristen Thoen-Hrbek, Jeff Thompson, Julie Thoreson, and staff Sandy Judge, Julie Jacobson and Kaila Hlava.

Sponsors for the event include: our Title Sponsor: Black Woods Grill and Bar; Presenting Sponsors: Black Bear Casino Resort, Clear Channel Outdoor, KQDS, Lamar Outdoor Advertising, Northern News Now, Ruger; Major Sponsors: 509, Bullyan RV/Winnebago, Duluth Lawn & Sport, Fortune Bay Resort Casino, Lake Rock Wealth Management, Marsh & McLennan Agency, Minnesota Twins, ShelDon Print, Superior Fuel, Tito's Handmade Vodka; Participating Sponsors: ALUMA, Amsoil, Bernick's, Cirrus Aircraft, David A. Croke, CPA, LTD., Essentia Health, Hartel's Disposal Co, Kolar Chevrolet Buick GMC, Kolar Toyota, Midwest Sports Publishing Network (MSPN) Inc, Milwaukee Tool, Molo Companies, Subway, Overom Law, Park State Bank, Polaris Industries, Summit Management, TimberLake Lodge, Tischler Wood, Twin Ports Paper Supply, Inc., Widdes Trailer Sales; Contributing Sponsors: Bell Bank, Cruise Marketing Inc, Danger Bird Productions, Duluth Coating Solutions, Holiday StationStores, Mellin Promotional Advertising, Minnesota Coaches, Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association, Morgan Stanley Greg Rieland Financial Advisor, National Audio & Visual, Performance FoodService, Perkins, ProPrint, Regional Diagnostic Radiology, RollX Vans, Skyline Social & Games, Stokes Media House, SuperOne Foods; Supporting Sponsors: AEM Accounting, Aluminum Cabinet Company, AmericInn by Wyndham Proctor, Blue Rock Refinishing Solutions, Byfuglien Trucking, DSC Communications, Duke Boy, Enbridge, Fisherman's Corner, ITEX, Johnson Brothers Liquor Co, maurices, Northwoods Bands, and SolPacific.