

Charleston Daily Mail

DAILYMAIL.COM

September 16, 2013

Southern WV citizens to walk 100 miles in 100 days

by **Candace Nelson**
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CHARLESTON, W.Va. - Organizations across southern West Virginia have teamed up to encourage community members to walk 100 miles in 100 days.

The Hatfield McCoy: A Healthy Feud - Walk 100 Miles in 100 Days is adding a new twist to an age-old story by pairing southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky in a friendly feud to get fit.

The first Walk 100 Miles in 100 Days is held in conjunction with West Virginia on the Move, West Virginia University Healthcare, the Mingo County Diabetes Coalition, McDowell CHOICES, Sustainable Pikeville (Ky.) and the Pike County (Ky.) Health Department and seeks to get those located in Hatfield and McCoy country active.

"Community health is considered important to our community development efforts, in addition to work with local food systems, tourism, sustainable construction, energy optimization and education," said Jenny Hudson, the director of the Mingo County Diabetes Coalition, in an email.

On Monday teams started tracking their miles for 100 days or until Dec. 17. Participants will strive to walk a mile a day, totaling 100 miles.

During this time, communities will see that the feud can drive families, friends and businesses to embrace healthy competition among counties, said Kayla Whitt, the Mingo County Diabetes Coalition Health and Wellness Promoter.

The program has about 650 people registered so far, and the registration deadline has been extended until Sept. 21 in order to allow more participants. Organizers hope to see 1,000 people involved.

Lincoln, Boone, Logan, Mingo, Wyoming, McDowell and Pike (Ky.) counties are all participating. A minimum of five and a maximum of 20 people are suggested to form a team for the competition.

Each team's average mileage will be tracked on an online map of the Appalachian Trail. Different routes will be mapped out, and it will monitor progress through the program.

For example, those aiming to walk 100 miles will show the distance to about Bland County, Va. on a map. More competitive teams that amass more total miles can be shown walking as far as New York (600 miles) or further north toward Maine.

Those who still want to be active but not necessarily track distance can equate 20 minutes of aerobic exercise to one mile. Each team member reports mileage online individually or to the team captain on a weekly basis.

There is no cost to be in the program, and in some counties - like Mingo County - two types of pedometers are available for a \$1 or \$5 deposit. Other ways to track mileage include smartphone applications or pre-marked trails.

Registration forms can be found at participating county agencies, or you can register online by

sending an email to **get...@mingodiabetes.com** including your team name, team captain and the team captain's email address. Instructions for online registration will be emailed back to you. At the end of the program, once each individual has completed their 100 miles, they can receive a commemorative T-shirt for only \$6.

For questions, or to become part of the healthy feud, email **get...@mingodiabetes.com**, call 304-235-3400 or visit **www.mingodiabetes.com** or **www.sustainablepikecounty.com**.

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