



Neupauer completes trek

*By Megan Duncan
Eagle Staff Writer*

BUTLER TWP — Nick Neupauer wasn't complaining about his four-hour commute Monday morning. It was for a good cause.

Neupauer, the president of Butler County Community College, made good on his deal with the college community to walk to work if it raised enough money.

Normally, Neupauer has a 25-minute drive to the campus from his Slippery Rock Township home. His 15-mile walk Monday took him 4:11:56.

As he entered the campus drive about 1 p.m., he was greeted by a crowd who cheered him on as the theme from "Rocky" played.

"I did a little better than I expected," he said. He said he averaged between 4.5 mph to 5 mph on his trip from the Old Stone House in Brady Township to the campus gates.

Neupauer in September challenged the community college to raise \$25,000 by Oct. 31 for the college's annual fund. If the goal was met, he pledged, he would walk to work. By the deadline, the college had raised \$30,000, so Neupauer began the planning. On Monday, he announced the fund, which covers college scholarships and other student benefits, has reached \$32,000.

"I started checking out the weather two weeks ago," Neupauer said. The forecast for Monday then was 41 degrees. But, by Monday the actual temperature was in the 60s.

So, attired in his trusted Reeboks, a long sleeve shirt, a Windbreaker and basketball shorts, he started the walk at 8 a.m. accompanied by his wife, Tammy. She joined him for the first hour.

His first pit stop was at the Kwik Fill convenience store at Mercer Road and Route 8. Then, a few miles later, he stopped into the McDonald's at Clearview Mall for lunch.

There, restaurant owner and fellow Rotarian Jim Sweeny took his order — a ranch chicken wrap and water — and handed out a \$500 donation to the college.

Neupauer was driven portions of Route 8 near the Clearview Mall and from Butler to Decatur Drive because of safety concerns.

However, the last leg — up Decatur Drive — was a little daunting.

"I knew (Decatur) was a big hill; I just didn't realize how big," Neupauer said. But, he said, he had enough energy to make it.

The number of people at the reception surprised him. Additionally, people along the walk came out of businesses to congratulate him, and the sign at one business urged him forward. With a Diet Pepsi with plenty of ice waiting in his office, Neupauer said he was already thinking of challenges for the 2010-11 campaign.

This year's annual campaign continues, now turning to the external portion. The goal for the year is \$50,000.

He wouldn't have too long to think about next year, though. He said his wife and children were to be at the college later in the afternoon to give him a lift home. There, he said, he planned to drink lots of liquids, get a nap, and watch the Steelers game on television.