Kodiak's 'Choose Respect' March Thursday

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

Throughout Alaska on Thursday, residents in communities large and small will be taking to the streets to stand up for peace and human rights, during the now-annual “Choose Respect” march and rally. Here in Kodiak, according to Kodiak Womens Resource and Crisis Center outreach coordinator Sandra Wilkins, participants will gather at noon in the high school parking lot for a march down the hill to the Sun’aq Center on the Mall.

“We’re doing this ... It’s a march for respect. Really, it’s a pledge for respect. It’s a statewide event – it’s a part of the governor’s initiative to end domestic violence, sexual violence and child abuse in our communities," Wilkins said. "It’s a march to help the community – to give them the opportunity to come out together and stand up against interpersonal violence and to help promote a safer and happier Kodiak. We’re just trying to go out there to choose respect for our community.”

Each year a different government official attends marches around the state. This year, Bill Streur, the commissioner of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services will join Kodiak marchers and give a few words at the Sun’aq Center. Borough Mayor Jerrol Friend and City Mayor Pat Branson are also expected to speak.

Wilkins points out: that the marchers this year have a lot to live up to.

“Last year we had the biggest one in all of Alaska, because all of the students from the middle school and some of the students from the high school participated, so it was a really big event last year," she said. "So we’re hopping that we can get more community participation again this year.”

The march begins at 12:15 at the Kodiak High School parking lot, go down Rezanof and wind up at the Sun’aq Center, where lunch and refreshments will be served.