



Polar Plunge raises more than \$6,100 for Special Olympics

Compared to the 20-degree air temperature Saturday morning in Battle Creek, the temperature of the water of Goguac Lake checked in at a relatively temperate 35 degrees.

So, without apparent hesitation, about 60 people jumped through a big hole in the ice to get a brisk soaking.

Did we say brisk? We meant fr-r-r-rigid-d-d-d-d. But everyone was smiling.

It was the second year for the Polar Plunge, which on Saturday raised a bit more than \$6,100 in pledged donations to the Special Olympics, said Rick and Pam Lasley, who organized the event on behalf of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Calhoun County.

"We're extremely happy with that," Pam Lasley said. "We were astounded by the amount of money that came in."

She said the amount raised was about six times what was collected at the first such event in 2011, when 42 people jumped into the water and raised about \$1,000.

"I am really, really happy, because there were only seven more registered than there were last year," she said, mentioning that she originally had hoped for about 100

registrations this year. "We thought we might just double the money this year, but this was much better."

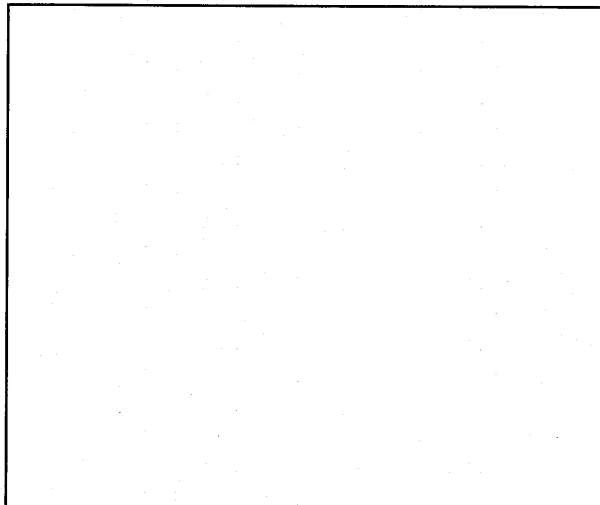
Kellogg Community College's Police Academy walked away with top honors for the highest amount pledged -- \$1,600. Tekonsha's First Baptist Church took second place with \$1,450 in pledged donations, Lasley said.

As part of a competition among area high schools, students at Lakeview High School contributed about \$800 this year, about twice as much as what students there raised last year, Lasley said.

Some people who didn't pledge any money still went into the water for the fun of it, Lasley said. And, even though they didn't have to, three men representing the Best Buy store in Battle Creek jumped in three times.

The event was sponsored by the Fraternal Order of Police Wayne B. Fitch Lodge in Battle Creek. It is one of 27 similar winter

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plunges in Michigan, Pam Lasley said.

Nearly 140 people showed up Saturday morning, and many bought T-shirts to help the cause, but just 60 of them risked the shock of an icy bath in the lake.

The divers took their plunge off the dock in back of H2O -- the former Waterfront Restaurant -- at 315 W. Columbia Ave., and H2O's managing partner Jeremy Palmer joined them for his first such icy dip.

Members of Calhoun County's Area Law Enforcement Underwater Recovery Team were on hand -- and in the water -- to make sure everyone got out of the water in good shape.

Donations can be made online at www.firstgiving.com or by texting "somibc" to 52000 to make a \$5 contribution.

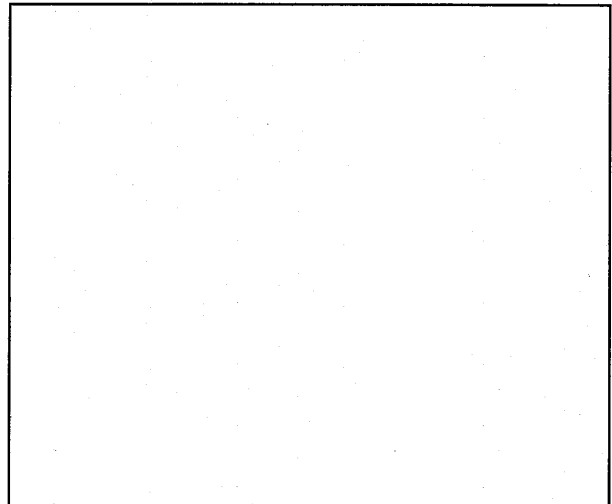
More information about the event or making donations may be obtained by calling Rick or Pam Lasley at 616-516-7000.




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Polar plungers jump in Goguac Lake as they take part in the 2012 Law Enforcement Torch Run Polar Plunge Saturday. / Kevin Hare/The Enquirer

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