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A Wish Come True Plans Virtual Alternative to Polar Plunge

Participants Encouraged to Participate in an Ice Bucket Challenge

WARWICK, RI – A Wish Come True is making its 17th Annual Polar Plunge at Easton Beach in Newport a virtual event this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Instead of plunging into the ocean, A Wish Come True is asking plungers to dump a bucket of ice water on themselves and share a video of it on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram with the hashtag #AWCTPolarPlunge. The event was inspired by the Ice Bucket Challenge made popular by former Boston College baseball player Peter Frates who lost his battle with ALS in 2019.

Each year, the Polar Plunge has drawn thousands of plungers to raise funds for A Wish Come True, Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts' oldest wish-granting organization for children facing life-threatening illnesses. It is one of the organization's largest fundraisers. Last year, about 5,000 people took the plunge, raising $27,000.

The 17th Annual Ice Bucket Challenge will be running throughout the month of January, not just on the 1st, when the Polar Plunge usually happens. A Wish Come True also asks that plungers mention in their video who they are plunging for, and also to challenge family and friends to participate to spread awareness of the virtual fundraiser and raise funds for this special cause.

Donations can be made on A Wish Come True's Just Giving page, https://www.justgiving.com/awishcometrueinc, or on Venmo @AWishComeTrue. More information on the sponsorship levels can be found here.

We understand that some individuals may still wish to do the Polar Plunge at the beach on their own. Even though we are not running the event due to COVID-19 crowd restrictions, we will still welcome any donations from those individuals as well.

Mary-Kate O'Leary, Executive Director of A Wish Come True, said that all donations allow A Wish Come True to fulfill wishes for children with life-threatening illnesses. Often, A Wish Come True sends families to theme parks like Disney World or on trips to places like New York City.

"It's a needed break for the families because they're constantly worried about their medical issues. They're constantly going to doctors' appointments," O'Leary said. "It brings them hope."

There are numerous sponsorship opportunities available to support this event and to fulfill the wish of a local child in their community. The sponsor's name/logo will be shared with over 5,000 people and will be featured on all promotional and marketing materials, including A Wish Come True's website, social media and in video communications. Anyone interested in becoming a sponsor is asked to contact Mary-Kate O'Leary by email marykate@awishcometrue.org.

Two of the many children who will benefit this year are Kaiden and Nathan.

Kaiden is 4-years-old and is from Fall River. He was diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder in 2019, which causes inflammation that damages his immune system, vital tissues, and organs. Kaiden recently received stem cell and bone marrow transplants and spent most of the year in Boston Children's Hospital. Kaiden's wish is to go with his family to Give Kids the World and Disney World in Florida.

Nathan is 4-years-old and lives in Wakefield. He was diagnosed with cancer in 2019 and has spent months at Hasbro Children's Hospital for surgeries and other treatments. He is looking forward to the end of his treatments at the start of 2020 and hopes to also go with his family to Give Kids the World and Disney World in Florida.

ABOUT A WISH COME TRUE
A Wish Come True, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization founded on October 8, 1982. We are the oldest wish granting organization in RI and MA. Our mission is to provide wishes and resources to families with a child (ages 3-18), suffering with a life-threatening illness that live throughout Rhode Island and Southeastern MA.

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