



By Carolyn Lee
The Imperial Republican

It was so cold during the Kearney Polar Plunge last Saturday that a hole had to be cut in the ice with a chain saw. Dan and Connie Thompson of Imperial viewed that with dismay.

The Thompsons were part of the Defenders Motorcycle Club, comprised mainly of cyclists from the North Platte area, who were participating in the annual fundraiser for Special Olympics Nebraska.

The group was among 68 people taking a dip in the lake at Yanney Park in Kearney.

Although Connie said she didn't know the air temperature at the time of the plunge, "It felt really nice and the sun was shining. It felt warmer than it has been."

But there was that 12 inches of ice on the lake.

"Initially it was a shock, and your legs go numb," Connie said. That made it hard to climb out of the waist-high water.

Connie said she was advised that "less is better" clothing wise, when doing a winter dip in water. So, she and Dan wore swimsuits with Defenders t-shirts over them.

The Polar Plunge raised over \$15,500 for Special Olympics Nebraska. The Thompsons collected \$705 in pledges from Imperial residents.

"I would do it again," Connie said. "It's for a really good cause."

The Defenders Motorcycle Club is a national organization. Local chapters must be comprised of at least 80 percent active or retired law enforcement personnel.