

**The Table Community Food Centre
Perth Polar Bear Plunge 2018
Final Report**

by Contracted Fundraising and Event Planner Sarah Lickley (lickley.sarah@gmail.com)
and Ramsey Hart, Executive Director (ramsey@thetablecfc.org)
January 22, 2018

Results: Target: \$30,000
 Total Fundraised \$32,653
 Online: \$17,606
 Offline: \$15,047
 Plungers: Target 100, actual 84. Ten more had signed up but did not make it or
 decided not to plunge at last minute.

LCIH 2017: Total Fundraised: \$28,000 (approx.)
 Online: \$8000
 Offline: \$20,000
 Plungers: 84

The 2018 numbers show great growth in the online portion of fundraising. The Table has a large online following. With rigorous online outreach and coaching plungers to use our Canada Helps “peer to peer” fundraising platform the online fundraising was very successful.

Offline fundraising was done by plungers who used pledge forms in person, as well as encouraging attendees of the breakfast and spectators of the event to donate. Although the offline amount raised is lower than in 2017, it is expected that some plungers that previously would have used offline means to fundraise, may have switched over to online because of the resources and help that were offered to promote online fundraising.

Overall the total fundraised (gross before expenses) surpassed the target.

Event Schedule and Planning Details

Schedule

Breakfast: 8:00-10:00am

Registration: 8am-9:45am

Safety Briefing (by PPBP Committee Member): 9:45 am

Plunge: 10 am onwards

Breakfast

In a change from recent years The Table coordinated the breakfast ourselves which worked well given our expertise in feeding large numbers of people. Based on our conversation with Jamie Law who had done the breakfasts in recent years, it seems unlikely that he will want to do it again. If future groups partner with someone on the breakfast it is strongly recommended that they have very clear communication regarding expectations for volunteer support needed and covering the costs of food and supplies, and that there is appropriate recognition of their efforts.



Aisha and Wendy from The Table and a team of 8 volunteers prepared and served a beautiful breakfast. Breakfast tickets (\$10 each, \$5 for children and free for plungers) helped make breakfast line smoothly. Plungers received their free ticket at registration. The past two years attracted the 84 plunges plus +60 visitors for breakfast, plus volunteers. We suggest groups plan for 150-200.

Use of kitchen must be confirmed with Legion Committee and Women's Auxiliary.

It is recommended that someone experienced cater the breakfast.

There will be extra food as you should over prepare. Decide ahead of time where excess food can go to (local food bank, youth centre etc).

Registration

Registration is hectic with many plungers coming at once. Be prepared with two tables.

Online and Offline donation can get complicated. Keep totals separate and verify each. It is ideal that there is a person at each table counting cash and verifying online totals in addition to a person to intake the plunger, and another who hands out t-shirts and certificates.

Other registration items: waivers (mandatory), photo release, breakfast tickets, t-shirts, certificates, ballots for prizes (we gave a ballot for every \$500 raised).



Volunteers

Registration Tables: 2 tables with 3 volunteers at each table (6 volunteers total) from 8am-11am (there will be last minute plungers up to 10:30am).

Kitchen: 2-3 cooks plus 6 volunteers in the kitchen and 1 volunteer taking cash and tickets from 7am to 11am (TOTAL 10 people on kitchen).

Plunge Site: 1 volunteer writing plunger lists (list are sent with each group and handed off to the MC), 1 volunteer at outside door opening when next group is up, 2 volunteers at top to hold clothes and towels.

Polar Bear Pete: 2 volunteers - Polar Bear Pete Costume Wearer and assistant

MC (Master of Ceremonies): can be anyone who will brave the cold and narrate the ceremonies. The Legion Committee may take care of this, or it may be your responsibility to find someone.

Photographer: If you would like professional photographs, it is best to recruit a photographer.

Set Up: December 31st from noon onwards the Legion committee will prepare the plunge site. They require 3 strong people to assist them with bleachers, shoveling etc. This is also a great time to get a head start on the inside set up of tables and chairs and kitchen supplies with two to three additional volunteers.

Signage

Breakfast menu and price (\$10)

Breakfast signs with arrows

Registration signs with arrows

Registration Desk sign for stage

Tea and Coffee Signs (by donation or free for plungers)

Change Rooms signs with arrows

Vinyl sign for ice with year and organization name** Make sure Legion takes care of this

Banner across Foster Street ** Make sure Legion takes care of this

Other Logistics

If the Ice is NOT frozen: Ennis Lake Cottages will lend docks. Call them in late November to confirm their availability.

If docks are required, you will have to arrange for the fire department to install the docks. The Legion committee will share their contacts with you for this.

The PA system for the MC is set up by the Legion Committee, however it is good to have someone who can assist with this task on the morning of the plunge.



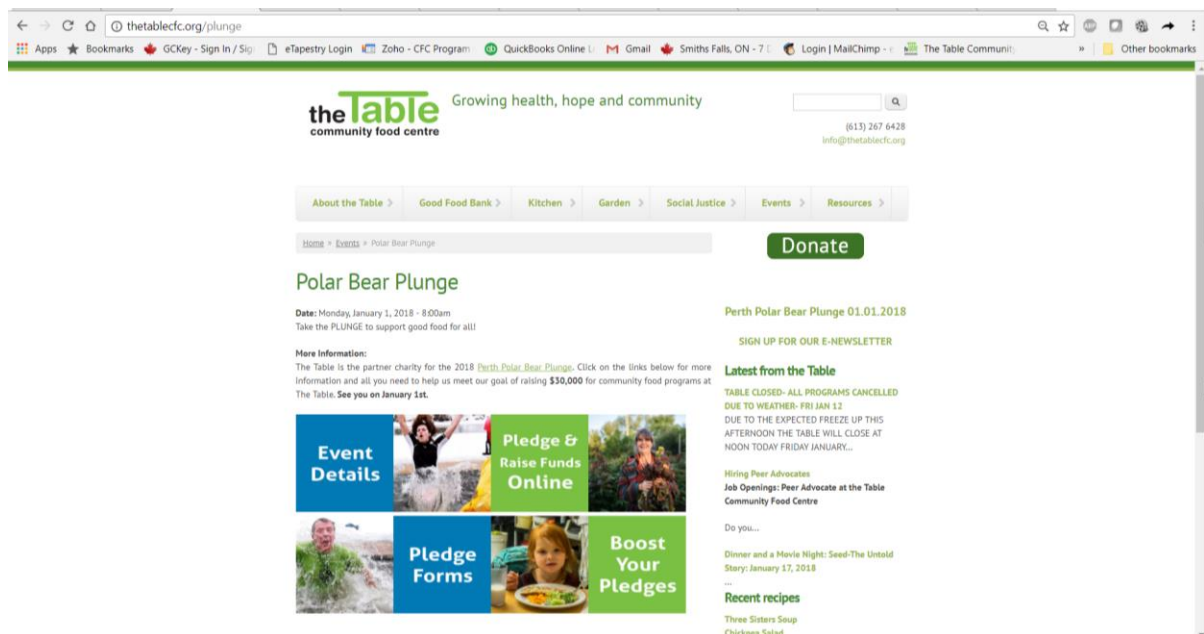
Items Needed for Day of Plunge

- 1 Cash Box Breakfast
- 2 Cash Boxes registration
- 5 donation tubs
- Table Cloths
- Centre Pieces
- Disposable plates, utensils, cups, bowls for breakfast (200 of each)
- Name tags for volunteers

Outreach

Online: Utilizing social media platforms to outreach for plungers and donations is a vital side to the fundraising campaign. Facebook and Instagram can be particularly fruitful. Small amounts were paid to boost the event through FB (\$50 boost 1 ad and helps your organization connect with many more people). Post were made 3-5 times per week with a concentration in mid-late December when fundraising efforts are most effective. Sharing posts in local groups and encouraging your partners and supports to share posts is vital.

The Table's website page for the plunge www.thetablecfc.org/plunge (see screenshot below) included basic info about the plunge, tips for raising money, the downloadable pledge forms and a link to the online fundraising platform on Canada Helps. It proved a useful tool for plungers. Specifically, the HELP page which was aimed at helping plungers fundraise more successfully and learn about The Table was very effective.



Canada Helps: A platform that was vital in the success of the online fundraising. A P2P campaign can be set up and the link can be share throughout the online outreach efforts.

Plunger Outreach: Efforts to encourage people to plunge are important online. Showing positive fun images of plungers and your organization good work can inspire plungers. Tap into your network and promote plunging from your supporters by emailing your email list, emailing local businesses and petitioning your board of directors to help with outreach efforts. Poster locally can also promote people to plunge.

In Person: Posters, in schools and to local businesses.

Support for Plungers: It is effective to give plungers information about your organization, how to fundraise and how to use the online platform. The more help you can give to plungers to make it easier to fundraisers, the more likely they are to fundraise.

Incentives and Prizes

An effort was made to motivate people to plunge with two different rewards, custom T-shirts (for minimum \$200 funds raised) and prize draws (ballot with minimum \$500 raised).

Although, it is difficult to say how effective these efforts were, it was apparent that most plungers wanted to get the t-shirt, with some buying them for \$30 if they were unable to raise the minimum \$200. The t-shirt incentive was advertised online and by email to plungers. Because the t-shirts were unique and very 'wearable', it was more enticing for plungers to raise the minimum. We also used the t-shirts as thankyou's to volunteers. Of the 100 t-shirts ordered we had 30 left after the plunge.



In past years prizes have been given out to top fundraisers and best costume. We wanted to broaden the impact of these incentives and also didn't want to have to have people wait until the end of the event to announce the winners as this did not seem to be of interest to very many of the plungers. We gave a prize ballot for every \$500 raised and prizes were items and gift cards donated by local businesses. We had the plungers drop their ballots in a box on a table with the prizes and did the draw after the event and contacted the winners the following week.

Event Coordinator

The Table contracted an event coordinator to manage the logistics of the event, outreach, inquiries and plunger support as we felt we did not have enough in-house capacity to dedicate to the event. This proved to be a worthwhile investment. The event planner worked for more than 145 hours on event related work. The ED also contributed a number of hours (estimated 40 to 50 hours total) reviewing material, and supporting the event coordinator.

SUMMARY of Successes and Challenges in 2018

Successes

- Online outreach techniques and frequency drove online support. Posts were made 3-5 times per week with emphasis on December as fundraiser date got closer. Most



successful (views and clicks) posts were MEMES that caught attention and linked to Canada Helps and the Table's website (see above). Other successful posts were quotes from Table program participants, statistics and photos with Polar Bear Pete.

- The Table made good use of the Polar Bear Pete costume with Pete appearing at Maple Fest, Stewart Park Festival, Festival of Lights and the day of the plunge. We had hoped to have him in the Santa Claus parade but that did not work out. We had some enthusiastic "Petes" who may be willing to continue their role at future plunges.
- Event set up on December 31st was smooth. It is recommended that as much set up is done the 31st both inside and outside to prepare. Getting help early on New Year's Day is understandably challenging and there will still be lots to do the day of.
- Lots of onsite signage to direct people helped everyone find what they needed. See photo at right.
- Plunger registration inside the main hall against the stage worked well and prevented congestion at the front doors. (See notes re registration under hurdles.)



- Plungers waited their turn to plunge in the lounge ahead of plunging with one volunteer writing names of plungers lined up in groups. An additional volunteer outside door managed sending out new plungers. This saved plungers from the -30 C weather.
- The Legion Committee shared their knowledge and notes on preparation in meetings, which was very helpful. They also take responsibility for many aspects of the event on the day of. We hope this report and event plan documents can complement that relationship with the Legion for the next group.

Challenges / Things to Improve

- There was an oversight with getting the two banners (one for across Foster St. and one goes up at the plunge site) updated with the date and Table's logo. The Legion committee has committed to ensuring this gets done in a more timely fashion in the future.
- We tried to determine how many people were planning on plunging but, as in other years, this remained a mystery until the day of. Most people downloaded their pledge forms with relatively few people picking them up in person (It is estimated that less than 10 people picked up pledge forms in person from 4 pick up point across Perth). Future organizers could consider an online registration before people get the forms but this adds some administration and a bit of a barrier to people getting involved.
- We are not sure how effective the incentives were (t-shirts and prize draw). People seemed to appreciate both but it's hard to determine if they were worth the effort and expense. We could have done more to promote the prize draw as many plungers didn't seem aware of this opportunity which means it was a nice "thank you" gesture but not an effective motivator.
- Half of the volunteers for the registration tables were a no show, in addition we were also short one cash box. There was also some confusion with plungers who used both online and offline fundraising and how to confirm their totals. Due to these factors, the registration tables were hectic and somewhat disorganized. It would be useful to meet with volunteers for registration earlier and go through registration system. Ensure there are people very comfortable with counting large amounts of cash and summing totals. It would also be good to consider how to integration Canada Helps into registration process on the day of. A list of online totals was printed the morning of, however this changed throughout the morning as more funds came in online. Always have extra volunteers! Luckily we had extras that jumped in and helped.

- It is important that volunteers assisting with the plunge line up and moving people down to the water are informed about their jobs and there are enough people on hand to move people through efficiently.
- For environmental reasons we would have liked to use proper plates and cutlery but were told fairly late in the day this was not an option. Clarifying this earlier would be better.
- It is a good idea to have warm drinks available for plungers and spectators through to the end of the event but access to the kitchen needs to be negotiated with the Ladies Auxiliary. Our kitchen crew were concerned about staying there past 11 but the kitchen wasn't needed until after noon. This last hour is the time when being able to serve warm drinks is important.
- Though we had a target to increase the number of plungers to 100, the number of plungers remained the same. An additional 10 plungers were registered online, however may have been put off by the cold weather. An effort to recruit NEW plungers may be useful. Some recruitment was done in Ottawa newspapers and radio station events listings. More could be done to recruit plungers in the wider area.
- We did not consider having a calligrapher or printer on site to make up certificates for plungers and given how hectic the registration table was it meant some of the certificates were done in a rush and did not end up looking very professional.
- We received feedback from several plungers that getting out of the water onto the ice was harder than it has been in past years. One plunger even pulled in the person that was trying to help her get out! If possible cutting the hole right to the shore would allow people to walk out and up the stairs. The stairs leading down and up could use some more coco matting to ensure they don't turn icy during the event.

Perth Polar Bear Plunge Jan 1st 2018



in support of

theTable
community food centre

Using the power of good food to
build health, hope and community.

www.thetablecfc.org

www.perthpolarbearplunge.ca

Event information, fundraising resources, online registration and fundraising support are available at: www.thetablecfc.org/plunge, plunge@thetablecfc.org, 613-267-6428 x 8

Plunger Name:

Team Name(where applicable):

Plunger Email:

Address:

Plunger Phone:

Proceeds of the 2018 Perth Polar Bear Plunge will support the Table Community Food Centre's innovative community food and engagement programs. Tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more, with full postal address.

Please make cheques payable to **The Table Community Food Centre**, with *Polar Bear Plunge* on memo line.

Sponsor Name	Sponsor Address	Sponsor Email	Amount

<i>Sponsor Name</i>	<i>Full Postal Address</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Amount</i>
		Total:	

PERTH POLAR BEAR PLUNGE – Line List for MC

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PERTH POLAR BEAR PLUNGE – Line List for MC

Page#

#	Name	Group	Notes
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NAME: _____ AGE: _____ (if under 18)
ADDRESS: _____
TOWN: _____ PROV: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____

In volunteering to participate in the PERTH POLAR BEAR PLUNGE, I understand there are risks and I hereby agree that I am participating at my own risk. I confirm that I accept all risks with respect to any injury to myself (including death) and with respect to any loss or damage to my property, regardless of the cause.

I hereby release and discharge the ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION, BRANCH 244, The Polar Bear Plunge Committee, and THE TABLE COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE, ("the sponsors") and agree to indemnify them of and from all actions, claims and demands of every nature and kind whatsoever which I, or my heirs, executors, administrators or assigns, may now or can at any time hereafter have against the sponsors of the PERTH POLAR BEAR PLUNGE, their servants, agents, members, resulting from my participation in the PERTH POLAR BEAR PLUNGE.

I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS WAIVER.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

****A participant under the age of 18 must have this form countersigned by a parent or guardian****

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____
(if applicable)

Registration Sign In

Registration Desk Volunteers:

Page: #

#	NAME	Offline (Cash)	Verified	Online	Verified	TOTAL
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