

LONG ISLAND / SUFFOLK**St. Patrick's theme rules at postponed New Year's polar plunge**

The event is run annually at Steers Beach by Northport Boy Scout Troop 410



From left, Kevin Sherwood, Michael Sherwood, and Walter Sherwood hang out at the ninth annual Northport Polar Bear Swim at Steers Beach in Northport on March 18, 2018. Photo Credit: Marlo Jappen

By Marlo Jappen

Updated March 20, 2018 5:00 AM

Michael Sherwood was disappointed when ice on the beach postponed the annual New Year's Day Polar Bear Swim at Steers Beach in Northport to March 18.

But he decided to make the best of the situation.

Sherwood wore a green bowler hat and shamrock beads to embrace the event's temporary St. Patrick's Day theme.

For the past three years, he has jumped into the frigid water at the event, which is run by Boy Scout Troop 410 and benefits the Northport Food Pantry.

"I find it exhilarating to start every year that way," Northport's Sherwood said.

Aside from the thrill, the event also gives Sherwood an opportunity to show off his artistic chops.

Each year, he brings a wooden decoration he crafted to the beach — which features a painted one-toothed baby dressed in a sash and oversized top hat — to serve as a welcome sign for participants.

Get the Breaking News newsletter!

Get the latest breaking news as it happens.

Sign up

By clicking Sign up, you agree to our [privacy policy](#).

Although the piece was still staked into the sand as a remnant of the event's traditional New Year's date, it was joined by Sherwood's latest creation: a leprechaun grasping a mug of foamy beer.

He creates these decorations for every holiday and enjoys giving them as gifts. Sherwood, who describes himself as "the kid who sat in the back of the classroom drawing cartoons," watched as participants posed with the signs.

"I wish I had the time to do it more," said Sherwood, who works as an insurance salesman.

As Sherwood charged into the water, a team of supporters including his wife, Nancy, his son, Kevin, and his parents cheered him on. Even his dog, Shaymus, was in attendance.

Joked Sherwood, "He's an English springer spaniel, but today he's an Irish springer spaniel."

By Marlo Jappen