

# PRESS RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***It's time for the Aloha SOMO Plunge! The official party of winter is Saturday, March 2, 2024***

KIRKSVILLE - The 17th Annual Kirksville Polar Plunge will take place on March 2, 2024. Brave men and women from around the area will don Hawaiian-themed costumes and swimwear and take "polar" dips into Thousand Hills Beach. Their Reason for Freezin' is the athletes of Special Olympics Missouri (SOMO)! All proceeds from this year's event will benefit training and competition for the thousands of SOMO athletes across the state, including right here in the North Area.

The Polar Plunge is open to anyone 10 years or older who is a fan of having a good time for a good cause. The event is hosted by Linn County Sheriff's Department and Missouri Department of Natural Resources and will take place at Thousand Hills State Park, 20431 MO-157, Kirksville. Day-of registration begins at 11 a.m., and the Plunge starts promptly at 1 p.m.

In 2023, Polar Plungers raised more than \$30,000 for SOMO athletes. Each participant must raise a minimum of \$75 to take the Plunge and can earn incentives by reaching fundraising goals. This year's goal is \$32,000, and organizers hope to break the million-dollar mark across the state with more than 10 events.

Costumes are highly encouraged. Awards will be given in the following categories for pre-registered Plungers only:

- Top Fundraisers
- Top Fundraising Group

Golden Plunger awards for the most creative costumes will also be presented to Top Group and Top Individuals.

No wet suits are allowed, and shoes are required.

The easiest and most efficient way to register and fundraise is online. Simply go to our [online fundraising page](#) to sign up. We encourage Plungers to email their friends and families to support their Plunge efforts. Paper registration forms are also available at the SOMO North Area office, 702 S Woodbine, St Joseph, MO 64507. Mail or deliver pre-registration forms and the minimum \$75 contribution to Special Olympics Missouri Plunge 702 S Woodbine, St Joseph, MO 64507.

Plunging participants will receive an official Polar Plunge commemorative shirt, bragging rights for freezing your fur off. Participants can also receive incentives for reaching fundraising goals: \$250 – Quick Dry Beach Towel, \$500 – Sling Backpack, \$1,000 – Stanley 30oz. & Quick Dry Beach Towel and \$2,000 – Touch Screen Gloves plus all the above.

SOMO is lucky to have three Plunge Ambassadors helping with this event. Our Plunge Ambassadors for this year's Plunge are Patty Sutton, Heather Lammers and Jared Niemeyer. They are all SOMO athletes, and they have been working for months to help spread awareness of the Plunge!

"I have been doing this a long time," Sutton said. "Come out and watch us Plunge or take the Plunge yourself. It's cold, but fun."

If you'd like to set up an interview with any of our Plunge Ambassadors or receive any additional information about the Polar Plunge, please contact Melody Prawitz at 816-233-6232 or email [prawitz@somo.org](mailto:prawitz@somo.org)

Thank you so much to our sponsors!

- Our Tundra Level sponsor is Adair County Prosecutor - David Goring
- Our Arctic Level sponsor is Brawner Insurance

### **Special Olympics Missouri**

Special Olympics Missouri (SOMO) is a year-round program of sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Thousands of athletes participate in 13 Olympic-type sports throughout the state. SOMO provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy as they participate in the sharing of gifts and friendship with their fellow athletes, their family and friends, and communities across Missouri.

SOMO is proud of our financial health, returning 82% of every dollar back to program services. We are privileged to be recognized with these honors: Better Business Bureau A+ Charity Accreditation, Guidestar Gold Level and Charity Navigator 4-star rating. Special Olympics was also recently named Morning Consult's No. 4 most trusted nonprofit.

Thank you for trusting us with your donations, volunteer time and your goodwill.

Visit Special Olympics Missouri at [www.somo.org](http://www.somo.org). Engage with us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Tik-Tok](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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