

**LONG ISLAND / NASSAU****Woman, 81, defies doctor's advice at polar plunge in Oyster Bay**

She's no newbie and has been participating in the event at Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Park for 10 years.



Carol Walsh, 81, of St. James, took part in the plunge as a way to help individuals who have cerebral palsy. Photo Credit: Marlo Jappen

**By Marlo Jappen**

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Judging by Carol Walsh's pre-plunge outfit — fuzzy polar bear pajamas, a matching ski hat and a pop of pink lipstick — she was excited about taking on the CP Nassau Polar Bear Plunge at Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Park in Oyster Bay on March 10.

Walsh, 81, of St. James, has been participating in the event that benefits CP Nassau — the Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County — for 10 years. Before she retired as a nurse at the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults in Hempstead, she had a patient who had cerebral palsy and died.

Walsh takes part in the plunge, she said, “even though my doctor says I better not” because of her age, as a way to help individuals who have cerebral palsy.



“The people at CP Nassau gave her a home, they gave her recreation,” she said of the former patient. “She loved it there.”

An entourage of supporters, including two of Walsh's friends, her daughter and son-in-law, cheered her on. She held onto a homemade sign decorated with snowflakes and the phrases, “Sending Warm Wishes Your Way!” and “Go Nana!”

"She's crazy," Walsh's daughter, Terry Stranieri

of Smithtown, said with a laugh. "We admire her for it."

Nearly 100 participants were all smiles as they dashed into the chilly waters, some even wading and dunking their heads.

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"There are a lot of good people in the world who care about helping people with disabilities," said Patricia Quinn, communications and community outreach manager

of CP Nassau.

"I'm amazed to meet people who love polar plunges," she added. "They're funny, adventurous people."

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