

Polar Bears Embrace Frosty First Day

It wasn't exactly Hawaii but neither was it the North Pole when the intrepid arrived aboard a procession of yachts, braving the relatively tepid temps for a New Year's Day swim at Coney Island beach.

Daredevil members of the Coney Island Polar

Bears launched Year 2006 by making a splash in the Atlantic with a live band and other special attractions accompanying the pomp-drenched dip.

Clad in bathing suits and exhorting cheer, the joyous crowd made the annual trek across the white beach

sands to mark the first day of a new calendar.

The swim — co-sponsored by, among others, the New York Aquarium, Junior's Cheesecake and Jimmy Dean Sausages — was a benefit for the Special Olympics of New York.

People, who pledged

donations, were provided to a warm breakfast at the Aquarium.

The Coney Island Polar Bears is a cold water swimming club, established in 1903.

In addition to the New Year's Day swim and on snow days, members meet every Sunday from November to April.

For more information, call 718-356-7741 or visit www.polarbearclub.org.



A thrill-seeker busts loose — in the Atlantic.



A triumvirate gears up for the daredevil dip.



Club President Louie Scarcella commands center stage.

Ice Breakers Keep Cool In Chilled Waters



A couple of brawny "big babies" flexes muscle.

These magnificent men in their swimming trunks are at it again!

Thrill seekers from the Coney Island-Brighton Beach Ice-Breakers embraced New Year's Day by romping in the ocean off Coney Island.

The intrepid iceies seemed positively glowing with cheer as they took the daring dip in celebration of Year 2006 and attended by a group of Native American well wishers from Long Island.

The world-famous troupe - led by Ice Breakers President Rabbi Abraham - is known for such amazing feats of endurance and skill as parachute dives, firewalks and other challenges in the Arctic and Antarctic cir-

cles, the North and South poles, Alaska and other formidable nooks of the globe.

The bold bunch, several

of them sculvers, strutted their stuff on the shoreline before making the big splash, proving that - for some people at least - Old

Father Time can indeed be put on hold.

For more information about the group, call 718-266-1234 or 33-ALIVE.



Club members welcome a visiting troupe of Native Americans from Long Island.



A bold youngster leaps to it.



A daredevil rejoices in his refreshing dip.



Club President Rabbi Abraham Abraham relaxes in the ocean off Coney Island after ushering in the New Year with a frigid swim. Photos by Ted Levin