

Todd and Trent Courage

FUNDRAISERS

Oakville, Ontario

It takes courage to jump into a freezing lake—and it takes Todd and Trent Courage to convince others to do the same. The brothers are co-founders of the Courage Brothers' Polar Bear Dip for World Vision. This annual New Year's Day ritual draws hundreds of hardy souls into Lake Ontario for a brief, but unforgettable, taste of 1 C water.

"It feels like pins and needles," says Todd, 41. "You hyperventilate," adds Trent, 37, "and you feel like your chest is constricting. But you feel really refreshed afterward."

Todd and Trent first tested the icy waters in 1985 as a youthful lark. But when the Oakville, Ontario, dip began to attract crowds, they contacted World Vision to turn it into a fundraiser. "[World Vision] is very efficient, it involves children, and it makes a real impact on people's lives," explains Trent, who runs a window-film manufacturing and distributing company with Todd.

Since the partnership with World Vision began in 1995, the Polar Bear Dip has raised \$120,000 to provide impoverished communities with clean drinking water. Thanks to Todd and Trent's dedication, the event is now the largest of its kind in Eastern Canada. Last year, 400 people hit the water as 5,000 watched from shore.

Kristina Huddy, manager of World Vision's volunteer department, gives the brothers credit for the event's success. "There's the craziness aspect, but a lot of it has to do with Todd and Trent's personalities. They have a great sense of humour and they're really passionate about World Vision's work."

So will even more people brave the cold for World Vision in 2005? Let's just say Todd and Trent are warm to that idea.



Todd (left) and Trent Courage can hardly wait for the 20th anniversary of the Polar Bear Dip on New Year's Day.

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