

ETF Trader Goes Polar

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Chillin' at the Jersey Shore

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Gregory Bresiger

It's early February. It's freezing. The winter seems as though it will never end. Cabin fever is unbearable. What to do? Let's become polar bears. Let's go for a swim in the ocean!

Some might say that was the thinking of Chris Hempstead, WallachBeth's director of ETF execution services. Along with four other hardy souls, he jumped into cold water off the Jersey Coast. But he had more on his mind than joining the polar bears. He intended to raise money for one of the most popular Wall Street charities.

"It seemed like the right thing to do," said the veteran trader. "We had a great time jumping in the ocean."

A friend in the security business asked Hempstead to take a swim in the Atlantic at Manasquan, N.J. Hempstead and friends, along with other groups in the Northeast, were taking the Valentine Plunge to raise money to help ALS patients.

ALS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a serious neurological illness that causes muscle weakness, disability and eventual death.

Throughout this month, tough-minded people like Hempstead and company are plunging into the ocean to help fight this deadly disease.

How was the swim?

Remarkably, Hempstead said, it was a lot of fun.

"The air was great. The water temperature was really cold. It was biting. Your skin was itching when you came out. But we actually ended up going in twice," Hempstead said.

"One of the guys said to me 'look at these waves. Let's go body surfing.' So we all ran back in. There were a lot of people and we had a really nice time."

Afterwards, Hempstead and company needed a libation or two just to warm up. And yet it was all much more than fun.

The most important thing, he notes, was that his group reached its goal of \$30,000 for ALS patients. Put together with other ALS plunges, Hempstead noted \$100,000 was raised.

What is the result of all this fun, camaraderie and generosity?

"The money," he explains "goes directly to all the families of those who are stricken with ALS."

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