

Shamrock Shuffle, parade & head-shaving kick off St. Patrick's Day celebrations

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MADISON (WKOW) -- Thousands of people spent part of their St. Patrick's Day weekend giving back in a few different ways.

A few brave souls shaved their heads and made donations to childhood cancer research for the annual St. Baldrick's Foundation fundraiser at Cooper's Tavern on the Capitol Square. Others at the event kept their hair and gave to St. Baldrick's anyway.

"The turnout was at capacity. The Cooper's Tavern on the square could not fit any more people in," says organizer Liam Smith. "We had to turn people away because of the overwhelming support we've had from the community, whether it was from donating gift cards or coming to actually participate. we had 40 people shave their heads."

The group raised nearly \$25,000 during the two-hour event, surpassing their goal of \$20,000.

After, they headed out to the Capitol Square for the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. Music, dancing and costume contests are all part of the parade, which makes its way around the Square.

Organizers say the parade has come a long way since a UW-Madison student started it 18 years ago. More than 60 groups were a part of this year's parade.

Earlier in the day, others gave back to the community by lacing up their running shoes. Thousands ran the Shamrock Shuffle fun-run in downtown Madison. The event kicks off on State Street, raising money for the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County.

"It helps support our educational programs, our literacy programs," says CEO Michael Johnson. "It helps to feed our kids in the clubs and so it's a great resource that we bring to the Boys and Girls Club."

The race has brought in hundreds of thousands of dollars since it started 12 years ago.



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