

Press Release

'Awesome' Annie raises £6,000 by finishing extreme marathon

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Annie Dougall (centre) presents £3,000 cheques to JTYAF's Peter and Linda Thornton and WaterAid's Hazel Taylor watched by Roger Harrington, SBW's Managing Director.

Billing manager Annie Dougall has been praised for her "awesome achievement" after tackling one of the world's toughest physical challenges.

Annie, who works for Sembcorp Bournemouth Water (SBW), raised £6,000 for charity by completing the gruelling Kalahari Augrabies Extreme Marathon in South Africa.

She was among a seven-strong Sembcorp global team taking part in the 155 mile (250km) test of endurance in daytime temperatures of more than 45 degrees Celcius (113 degrees Fahrenheit).

The seven day run, across the Northern Cape close to the South African border with Namibia, comprised an energy-sapping combination of desert and mountainous terrain.

Annie survived searing heat, scorpions, lizards, bugs and agonising blisters to compete against 44 other runners from across the world

The race featured seven stages of between 19 miles and 49 miles per day through desert sands, fertile valleys and the rocky outcrops of the Augrabies Falls National Park in the footsteps of the legendary Bushmen of the Kalahari.

Each runner carried a backpack of around 12 kilograms, or just under two stone, consisting of an essential daily water supply plus all their food, clothes and safety equipment for the event.

Annie said: "The event completely took over my life but I wouldn't have missed it for the world. It was very tough but I can't thank Sembcorp enough for letting me be part of such an amazing experience."

The total sum raised from Annie's exploits was £3,000 with SBW adding a further £3,000. The money has been divided equally between the John Thornton Young Achievers Foundation (JTYAF) and WaterAid.

JTYAF was established in 2008 to honour the memory of John Thornton. The young Royal Marines officer, who came from Ferndown, was tragically killed at the age of 22, while serving in Afghanistan.

The charity supports young people from a wide range of youth organisations providing them with scholarships and bursaries to support their personal development and the pursuit of their ambitions.

Receiving a £3,000 cheque from Annie, John's father Peter, JTYAF's Chairman, praised her for an "awesome achievement."

Peter, who was accompanied by his wife Linda, said: "We have total respect for Annie who has raised thousands of pounds for the foundation over the years. What she has achieved is truly inspiring."

He added: "The key values of the foundation are: courage, determination, unselfishness and cheerfulness in adversity and Annie epitomises all those qualities. She is one very special lady and we are both honoured and privileged that her support will help us to provide so many opportunities for young people in 2013."

A £3,000 cheque was also presented to Hazel Taylor, SBW's WaterAid representative. The international charity aims to overcome poverty by enabling the world's poorest people to gain access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education.

Roger Harrington, SBW's Managing Director, said: "What Annie took on was a truly awesome challenge and with so much obvious commitment we were extremely happy to support her.

"The two charities nominated by Annie do fantastic work in their fields and we know that the funds raised will help to really improve lives."