

Swimmer Information Manual

Eighth Annual Women Swimmin' for Hospicare

Saturday, August 13, 2011
(No Rain Date! See inside for details)



**Women Swimmin' is a community swim (not a race!)
for women ages 18 and over to benefit Hospicare and Palliative Care Services**

"I swim to celebrate life, and to have the time of my life, and to give thanks for the lives of others."~2009 Swimmer

www.womenswimmin.org

WOMEN SWIMMIN' FOR HOSPICARE AND PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

Women Swimmin' is a fundraising event that supports the care which Hospicare and Palliative Care Services (HPCS) brings to patients and their loved ones at any stage of a life-threatening illness and following a death. Women Swimmin' raises funds and provides information and education about the agency and its mission in a manner which is inclusive, fun, and consistent with HPCS' ideal of respect for all people.

WHY YOUR SWIM IS IMPORTANT TO HOSPICARE

Thank you for diving in to help HPCS! We hope your swim across Cayuga Lake is fun and empowering.

All the funds raised from the swim are used to support patient and family care:

- Items such as medications, oxygen, specialized medical equipment, and more
- Important emotional, psychological, social, and spiritual support to patients, families, and friends facing difficult issues of mortality and loss
- Bereavement and educational services for everyone throughout Tompkins County
- Ongoing training and support for registered nurses, physicians, licensed practical nurses, social workers, nurses' aides, and volunteers

On average, only a small percentage of these and other critical expenses are covered by insurers and other sources. **HPCS' services are available to everyone regardless of their ability to pay. To learn more about HPCS, please visit our website at www.hospicare.org.**

When you jump into the water as a Swimmin' Woman, you create ripples of care and generosity which touch the lives of people throughout our community.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The idea for Women Swimmin' was born in a conversation between an Ithaca woman looking for a unique activity to mark her 60th birthday and her primary care physician. Both women swam that first year and each year since have been deeply involved with the event. Every woman who participates swims at her own rate: some more experienced swimmers have made the crossing in less than 30 minutes; others take more than an hour, stopping to chat with fellow swimmers and dog-paddle a while to rest. Speed is not the important thing. What is important is sharing a unique athletic experience on Cayuga Lake with other women and raising money for HPCS in the process. Prizes are given to those swimmers and boaters who raise the most money in sponsorships.

The first Women Swimmin' event in 2004 raised over \$54,000 for HPCS, and a staggering \$274,399.02 was raised in 2010 - a demonstration of the generosity of Ithacans and other supporters and their recognition of the importance of HPCS.

The event has captured the hearts and minds of area women and their friends and families locally, around the country, and indeed, the world, with contributions coming from as far away as the Bahamas, Switzerland, and England.

Whether this is your first or eighth swim, the day will be very special. Many of us are inspired to swim in memory or in honor of people we love. Others swim for the exhilaration of joining an extraordinary band of women swimming together for a worthwhile cause.

HOW THE SWIM WORKS

Please read the following information carefully. Safety concerns are of the utmost importance for all of us and for Hospicare.

Please check our website at www.womenswimmin.org or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WomenSwimmin regularly for updates and news.

REGISTRATION

Please click *Register* on the Women Swimmin' website to register online. If you are not able to register online with a credit card, you can call or stop by Hospicare (607-272-0212, 172 East King Road, Ithaca, NY) between 9am and 4pm Monday through Friday. We are pleased to announce that once again registration will be open to the first 350 women to sign up.

Registration usually fills up very quickly and we will not maintain a waiting list, so please sign up early in order to avoid disappointment. Swimmers must submit an additional \$175 (total \$200) by **Friday, August 12** in order to participate. There will be prizes for the top fundraisers so please feel free to continue to seek sponsorship up until the day of the event.

SWIMMER MEETINGS (ALL SWIMMERS MUST ATTEND)

All swimmers must attend a brief meeting on either **Thursday, July 14th at 5:30PM OR Saturday, July 16th at 10:00AM**. You will have a chance to meet other swimmers, turn in money you've raised so far, and learn more information about details of the swim.

FRIDAY CHECK-IN - IMPORTANT!

You need to come to the **Nina K. Miller Hospicare Center, 172 East King Road, Ithaca between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on FRIDAY, AUGUST 12**, to check in.

At this time you will:

- Receive your t-shirt and swim cap
- Receive information about which pod and wave you are in
- Submit any additional sponsorship money
- Receive a Women Swimmin' incentive gift if you raised \$500 or more
- Receive a Women Swimmin' incentive gift if you raised \$1,000 or more by July 22, 2011
- Meet other swimmers
- Receive instructions for the morning of the swim
- Have any last minute questions answered
- Walk around the beautiful Hospicare gardens and relax before the swim

If you still have contributions to deliver on the morning of the event, please total them and put them in an envelope with your name on it and hand that envelope in at the check-in table.

THE DAY OF THE SWIM

On the day of the event there will be a pod check-in at the Ithaca Yacht Club (IYC). If you are in the first wave, please be there by **6:15 a.m.** (see below about parking). The second wave should arrive by **6:30 a.m.** The third wave should arrive by **7:15 a.m.** We will note your presence.

The women's changing room at the IYC will be available to swimmers; however, you are urged to wear your swimsuit to the event to save time. You may leave a change of clothes at the IYC grounds in a designated area.

There will be port-a-johns available on site. The IYC provides a changing area, but no toilet facilities.

Details about the swim will be posted on our website at www.womenswimmin.org prior to the event.

PARKING AND SHUTTLE SERVICE

Parking for Women Swimmin' participants and guests will be at Union Fields in Cass Park, with shuttle buses ferrying folks back and forth throughout the morning. To ensure we keep to schedule, swimmers will be given priority on the buses, which may mean that family and friends follow a bus or so behind you. Do leave some extra time in the morning to park and take the shuttle to the IYC.

Swimmers can be dropped off directly at the IYC, with cars continuing back to Union Fields to park.

DIRECTIONS TO CASS PARK

- From the northeast: take 13 south to 89 north.
- From the southeast: take 96B north to downtown Ithaca, turn left at Buffalo St. and turn right on 89 north.
- From the east: take 79 west to 13 north and turn left on Buffalo to 89 north.
- From the southwest: take 34, 96 or 13 north to 89 north.
- From the northwest: take 96 east to 89 north.
- From the west: take 79 east to 89 north.

Cass Park is 0.7 miles north on Route 89 from the bridge over the Cayuga Lake inlet. Note that Route 13 separates into two roads, one way north and one way south, within the Ithaca city limits.

BREAKFAST

We are happy to say that a scrumptious breakfast is once again being provided by the Ithaca Bakery/Collegetown Bagels and will be free to all swimmers and volunteer boaters. Please present your swim cap to receive breakfast. Breakfast will be available for \$5 each to friends, family, and supporters.

ONSHORE ACTIVITIES

This year there will be no rain date. To ensure that the event remains safe and fun for all, we rely on the help of more than 200 volunteers and many other important support services. Given that we are unable to ensure full participation of all the volunteers and services vital to the safety of the event on two consecutive days, we are planning some fun on-site activities should the swim be cancelled because of unsafe swimming conditions. Such conditions might include lightning, severe wind, or very choppy water (rather than light rain). If the weather is unfavorable for swimming, we'll have an onshore celebration instead which will include breakfast, music with the Yardvarks, a raffle, announcements and awards, photos and more fun! Please check the website www.womenswimmin.org or our Facebook page www.facebook.com/WomenSwimmin as the summer progresses for updates about the plans.

RAFFLE AND AUCTION

Once again, Puddledockers has generously donated a Kayak package to raffle off at the event. The prize includes a **Prijon Prilite T505 Touring Kayak**, balanced wing rudder kit, Sawyer carbon fiber paddle, and MTI Maya lifevest. Tickets are available at Hospicare and Puddledockers -- \$5 each or 5 for \$20. You need not be present to win! Raffle tickets will be sold at the event and in advance at Hospicare, Puddledockers, or from a Women Swimmin' volunteer. To make the process of filling out tickets faster, we encourage folks to bring address labels to place on their tickets.

We will be auctioning **Annie Campbell's original artwork** that is featured in this year's Women Swimmin' posters, notecards, and t-shirts. This one-of-a-kind watercolor is framed and ready to hang on your wall. We also have a lovely **hand-made quilt** from local quilter Pat Costantini to auction.

DIRECTIONS TO ITHACA YACHT CLUB

From Ithaca:

The Ithaca Yacht Club is on Route 89 North, 3.5 miles from the Island Fitness. As you approach it, you will see Glenwood Heights Road going off to your left away from the lake; almost immediately, on your right, you will see Glenwood Road which slopes down towards the lake. (There will be a blue and red flag (IYC logo) and a sign for Women Swimmin'). Turn down this road and park at the bottom in the parking lot on the left; then cross the road and walk into the IYC grounds to the right, heading for the beach and check-in area. If you pass Glenwood Pines, you have gone too far on Route 89. *Note: Please park at Union Fields at Cass Park for the day of the event. See shuttle information above.*

DIRECTIONS TO THE HOSPICARE CENTER

From the West:

Take Route 96 South to Ithaca. Turn right onto Fulton Street (Route 13) and cross Meadow Street onto Clinton Street (look for signs saying Route 96B and Ithaca College). Continue to the end of Clinton and turn right onto Route 96B past Ithaca College and turn left on East King Road (Sam Peter's furniture store will be on the left). Follow East King Road just under a mile. The Hospicare Center will be on your left.

From the Northeast:

Take Route 81 South. Take Homer exit (Route 13 South) and follow into Ithaca. Cross Meadow Street onto Clinton Street. (Look for signs saying Route 96B and Ithaca College.) Continue to the end of Clinton and turn right onto Route 96B past Ithaca College and turn left on East King Road (Sam Peter's furniture store will be on the left). Follow East King Road just under a mile. The Hospicare Center will be on your left.

From the Southeast:

Take Route 17 West to Owego. Take Route 96 North to Candor. Follow Route 96B through Danby. Turn right on to East King Road (Sam Peter's furniture store will be on the right). Follow East King Road just under a mile. The Hospicare Center will be on your left.

From the North:

Take Route 81 South through Syracuse to Homer exit (Route 13 South). Follow Route 13 into Ithaca. Cross Meadow Street onto Clinton Street (look for signs saying Route 96B and Ithaca

College). Continue to the end of Clinton and turn right onto Route 96B past Ithaca College and turn left on East King Road (Sam Peter's furniture store will be on the left). Follow East King Road just under a mile. The Hospicare Center will be on your left.

From the South:

Take Route 81 North through Binghamton to Whitney Point. Take Route 79 West into Ithaca. Continue straight down the hill – the Ithaca Commons will be straight ahead. Turn left at the Commons onto Aurora Street (Route 96B). Follow Route 96B past Ithaca College and turn left on East King Road (Sam Peter's furniture store will be on the left). Follow East King Road just under a mile. The Hospicare Center will be on your left.

WEATHER

If there is uncertainty about the weather – a threat of a storm, rough water, etc. – log onto www.womenswimmin.org or [/www.facebook.com/WomenSwimmin](https://www.facebook.com/WomenSwimmin) to check for updated information. In the event that the swim across the lake is cancelled, plans for alternative activities will be posted.

NORTH/SOUTH SWIM

In the event of adverse swimming conditions, the swim may be conducted on the west shore of the lake. Pods of swimmers will line up and board the MV Columbia as usual, but will be dropped off at a point North or South of the IYC depending on the wind direction. Swimmers will be escorted by the boaters back to the IYC following along the shore. Detailed information will become available online as the summer progresses. **Under no circumstances are swimmers to enter the water from the Ithaca Yacht Club property! The insurance for the event does not cover a swim from the shore.**

TRAINING TIPS

- Start now! A list of places to swim in Ithaca can be found at www.womenswimmin.org under Swimmer Information. That said, nothing beats training in the lake when possible.
- Start slowly.
- Concentrate on timed swims. For instance: five minutes straight, rest for a minute, then repeat.
- Practice good technique. Get some tips from a coach or “expert.”
- Take advantage of having your 500 yard swim time tested. Check the website for more information about specific dates we have reserved lanes at Island Health and Fitness and the YMCA.
- Increase your timed swims gradually. Add two to five minutes each week.
- Once you are swimming 10-15 minutes straight, increase the number of repetitions.
- At least once every two weeks or so, do a continuous swim of about 30-40 minutes.
- Try to increase the intensity (speed) of your swims weekly. Monitor this by the pace clock at the pool or by your watch.
- Practice breathing on both sides, if you can.
- Practice looking up and ahead occasionally so you will be better able to sight and swim a straight line the day of the actual swim.
- Get in the lake or other open water to condition yourself to cold water with possible currents and wave action.
- Make sure you have swum at least a mile and a half in a pool – without holding onto the sides – before you swim on August 13.

- If you have any health-related questions about your ability to swim the lake, please discuss the advisability of your participation with a physician.
- If you require any accommodation or additional equipment (other than a wet suit, goggles, flippers, and/or a latex swim cap) in order to complete the swim, please inform the Women Swimmin' for Hospicare organizers as soon as you become aware of the need of an accommodation so that Women Swimmin' Safety Committee can discuss with you how your needs can be safely met. You can email this information to info@womenswimmin.org
- Good luck and have FUN!

THE SWIM

Around 6:30 a.m., the MV Columbia will begin to transport groups of swimmers to the east side of the lake. Kayaks and canoes will be there already. Swimmers will jump off the boats in staggered waves, beginning shortly before 7 a.m.

Swimmers should plan to leave towels and clothes for after the swim on the IYC grounds. However, depending on the weather, you may want/need a sweat shirt or a bottle of water as you cross the lake by boat. That's fine, but to make retrieval easy, bring along a bag with your name clearly identified on it and then stow your belongings in that bag. Each pod will have a large laundry bag clearly identified with the pod number. All swimmers in the pod should put their belongings in the "pod bag". These bags will be returned to the IYC and placed in the designated pod area.

There will be markers along the way to help guide boaters which will, in turn, help direct swimmers. Please know that the boaters are there to help guide swimmers safely across. Communication between boaters and swimmers is important in maintaining a safe swim. There will also be a large bright helium balloon tied on shore intended to direct swimmers towards the Yacht Club.

PODS

Once again we will be organizing swimmers into pods (groups of 6-10 swimmers) based on requests and swim speeds. Swimmers will be accompanied across the lake by kayakers and canoeists (ratio 1 boat per 2 or 3 swimmers). It is important that EACH swimmer be accompanied by a boater throughout the swim and at least 1-2 other swimmers. NO ONE should swim across the lake unaccompanied. Pod number and color, along with wave information, will be distributed at Friday check-in on August 12. You will line up with your pod at the IYC prior to loading onto the MV Columbia. This system helps to ensure that nobody swims alone, facilitates check-in and check-out of the lake, and can increase the sense of camaraderie!

Questions can be answered at Friday check-in or by calling 272-0212 or by checking the website at www.womenswimmin.org prior to the event.

SAFETY

Remember: This is not a race. The goal is safe completion for every swimmer. "Master swimmers" should be mindful of this fact when passing others. If you are new to lake swimming, do not rush because others are ahead of you. Let the experts pass you by and stay the course at your own pace. And if you should feel tired or anxious, do not be embarrassed to signal for help or to leave the water. There will be people in kayaks and canoes close to swimmers; there will be lifeguards and trained medical personnel in power boats with appropriate life saving devices. If you need to rest with a life jacket or flotation device, signal the closest boat or tell the

swimmer next to you. Wetsuits are acceptable, as are fins and flippers if you've been swimming with them regularly prior to the swim. **For safety reasons, you should not plan to bring any personal flotation devices. Be honest about your comfort level in the lake: if you have not swum a mile before, this is not the time to do it for the first time. Be sure you are comfortable with the distance and try out the lake earlier in the summer.**

No swimmer should participate if on the day of the event she is not in good health or has become aware of any physical or medical condition that would make participation in the event an unacceptable risk. If you are not able to jump into the water from a height of about 4-5 feet and swim 1.2 miles in the lake or if you require any accommodation or additional equipment (other than a wet suit, goggles, flippers, and/or a latex swim cap) in order to complete the swim, please inform the Women Swimmin' for Hospicare organizers as soon as you become aware of the need of an accommodation. You can email this information to info@womenswimmin.org. Likewise, as of the day of the swim, each swimmer should have enough experience, and should have undertaken sufficient training, to be highly confident of the ability to complete the 1.2 mile course in conditions that might be considered "choppy." Swimmers have the option to leave the swim course if personal conditions change. This must be determined between the swimmer and boater and may involve pickup of the swimmer by a power boat.

The swimmers will load onto the *MV Columbia* or another designated boat at the north dock of the Yacht Club. Instructions will be given onshore at that time. Also at that time, all members of each of the pods should be gathered into an onboard group to ensure that they can later enter the water together as efficiently as possible.

Under no circumstances are swimmers to enter the water from the Ithaca Yacht Club property! The insurance for the event does not cover a swim from the shore.

BOAT SUPPORT

With an anticipated 300+ swimmers crossing the lake, we need more volunteer boaters than ever before! If you know people who have a canoe, kayak, or powerboat and would like to support swimmers on August 13, please invite them to learn more and register as a volunteer boater at www.womenswimmin.org. Boaters will receive a snazzy Women Swimmin' baseball cap and a free breakfast in addition to the satisfaction of playing such an important role in this event. We couldn't do it without them! Boaters are not required to fundraise, but are welcome to do so if they would like. Boaters are also eligible for prizes if they wish to fundraise.

The Swimming Coordinator will be present on the *Columbia* or on a power boat nearby and will remain in consultation with the boat captain once the vessel is under way. He will confirm with the captain when the vessel is appropriately placed in relation to the entry point of the marked course. At that time swimmers will enter the water by pod. All swimmers from a single pod will enter the water before any swimmers from another pod are cleared to go. Because of the number of swimmers involved, it is important that the swimmers disembark quickly when called. If it becomes necessary to reposition the boat, the Swimming Coordinator will stop discharging swimmers between pods to allow the captain to do so.

When swimmers enter the water the Swimming Coordinator will make certain that the swimmers of each group have been identified to their assigned boater. The Swimming Coordinator will have general management responsibility for directing swimmers into the water and for directing the identification of boaters to their assigned swimmers. Once in the water, swimmers should proceed immediately with their boater to the start of the course and begin their swim. They

should move expeditiously to the course to prevent congestion between the *Columbia* and the entrance to the course.

- 1) The challenging swimming conditions of the 2010 event have informed planning for the 2011 event, and accordingly additional safety arrangements will be initiated. The three key concepts for 2011 are: a) better boater/ swimmer communication; b) more direct accountability of boaters with swimmers; and c) a different swimmer-to-boater ratio.
- 2) The swim will continue to be organized with pods of six to ten swimmers. Members of the same pods will wear the same color caps. Swimmers will need to self-organize into small clusters of 3 to 4 swimmers, either before (i.e., on the *Columbia*) or when they enter the water.
- 3) The color on the caps will allow the assigned boater to maintain contact with, and accountability for, the swimmers identified to him or her. The boaters assigned will not leave the entry point until there has been a clear understanding with the swimmers and the Swimming Coordinator of the identities of the swimmers to whom they are assigned.
- 4) Once the swimmers have entered the course (as marked by buoys), it is highly recommended that they remain together if possible as it will help to simplify the safety of the event. Boaters will have the ability to ask the swimmers to stop or pause a moment if one swimmer needs this moment. Because it is entirely foreseeable that some swimmers will find that the pace of other swimmers is (or becomes) incompatible with their own, the following system will be employed:
 - Sometimes one swimmer may need only a short break and the others in the group may simply tread water for a brief period. If a swimmer needs support from the boat itself, only the bow (never the stern) should be used for that purpose.
 - A swimmer seeking to move ahead or behind the other members of a subgroup should inform the assigned boater of that intention.
 - The assigned boater will advise the boater in the adjacent group that a swimmer will be moving forward or backward to join that boater's group. The use of a single whistle blast to alert another boater is strongly encouraged. The cap color and name will be used to identify the swimmer who is changing to a new assigned boater.
 - The boater with whom the swimmer then becomes assigned should confirm the new assignment with the newly arrived swimmer.
 - Swimmers have the responsibility to communicate with each boater to whom they are assigned; boaters have responsibility to communicate with each swimmer to whom they are originally assigned, each swimmer for whom they assume responsibility during the course of the swim, and each boater to whom or from whom a swimmer is transferred.
 - Assigned boaters will remain with the swimmer groups as they proceed through the course, but members of the Kayak Safety Team (KST), recognizable by their bright red caps this year, will be deployed in roving positions between the buoys along the sides of the course. They will be available to assist in maintaining contact between boats during the course of the swim and will be available to assist the assigned boaters and swimmers if the situation so requires.
 - Providing physical assistance to a swimmer in distress will be a judgment call based on discussion between the swimmer, boater and the KST. If the physical removal of a swimmer from the water is necessary, a power boat may be called in. Trained lifeguards will be present on the power boats and will be called in if, in the judgment of the boater and KST, circumstances warrant that intervention.

The overall safety of the event will depend in large part on maintaining communication between swimmers and boaters and in maintaining an overlapping set of boaters both on and adjacent to the course so that no swimmer will ever be unaccounted for and no unacceptably long distance from assistance will be allowed to develop. “No swimmer shall swim alone” is the rule, meaning that in practice there will always be an identified boater in relatively close proximity looking out for each swimmer. In the event a swimmer goes off course or is in distress, boaters will proceed as follows:

- Boaters should intrude on swimmers only to the extent necessary to maintain safety and order on the course;
- If a swimmer is in distress, boaters should move quickly and decisively to produce a safe result.
- If a swimmer is in distress, boaters, KST members, power boaters and lifeguards should communicate and jointly arrive at a plan based on the circumstances presented and the skills and abilities available.
- In the event of any issues arising that create or could result in a safety concern, communication among all participants should be active and continuous until the situation has been fully resolved.
- Similarly, any actions appropriate to resolve safety issues should be dealt with without delay and without equivocation; passivity by boaters or other safety personnel is not appropriate when a safety issue arises.

Swimmers and boaters will note that the swim lane is narrower this year (approximately 35 yards wide). This change should enhance overall safety by reducing line-of-sight distances. The shorter distances will make it increasingly important that all participants maintain an awareness of those swimmers and boaters around them and should use caution at all times.

Swimmers completing the course should exit the water ONLY by way of the Yacht Club’s south dock. Staff will be present there to check swimmers off against the master list and each swimmer should confirm that they have been accounted for. Due to the limited amount of space available and the related safety concerns, ONLY authorized staff may be present on the dock. Family and friends can meet swimmers at the exit to the south dock. If needed, blankets will be available to swimmers there as soon as they leave the dock. A volunteer physician will also be stationed there to help resolve any medical issues.

Swimmers who are removed from the water by power boat or other water craft should be brought to the Yacht Club’s north dock. Emergency medical staff and the ambulance will be present there to assess the need for any care or to provide transportation. To make certain the swimmer is not mistakenly assumed missing, a designated staff person will also be present at the north dock to make certain that the identity of the swimmer is conveyed to staff maintaining the master list of participants. That staff person will also be authorized to make announcements from the bandstand to notify family and friends to meet the swimmer at the north dock area.

FUNDRAISING

In order to swim in this event, each participant commits to raising at **least \$175 (in addition to the \$25 entry fee)** to support Hospicare’s work in our community. But don’t feel you have to stop there!

Read below to learn more about this year’s incentives to go the extra mile (out of the water!) when raising funds to support Hospicare.

- Top fundraisers (those swimmers who have raised the most money by the date of the event) will be eligible to win fabulous prizes. Prizes will be given to the top 12 fundraising swimmers, the first-year swimmer who raises the most, and more!
- Prizes will also be given to the top two boater fundraisers. Please check the Women Swimmin' website for an updated list of the prize categories.
Note: Only one prize per person.
- Receive a Women Swimmin' healthy backpack if you raise \$500 or more.
- Receive a Women Swimmin' beach blanket if you raise \$1,000 or more by July 22, 2011.

Please send pledge money to us as you receive it, making sure that it is identified in support of your swim, i.e. include your name. Sponsorship forms to track your donors are available on the website. Tracking your sponsors accurately helps HPCS to be able to thank each and everyone for their support.

Our website **www.womenswimmin.org** offers an easy way for people to give on line using their Visa and MasterCard credit cards.

Remember that the money raised through Women Swimmin' goes directly to help provide our patients with comfort measures that are not fully covered by insurance, as well as to provide services to our patients' families. Hospicare is pleased to report that we never refuse services due to a person's inability to pay, which is only possible because of the generosity of our supporters. Please keep this in mind as you go about asking for pledges to support your swim. If you would like to direct your supporters to a list of ways that Hospicare utilizes donations, send them a link to <http://www.womenswimmin.org/about.mgi#donation>.

Consider these thoughts and ideas from other swimmers:

- Post a Women Swimmin' poster or sign in your workplace and attach a note asking people to sponsor you. Free posters are available at Hospicare or Puddledockers. See website for personalized examples.
- Wear a Women Swimmin' t-shirt from a previous year and when people comment on it, invite them to sponsor you.
- Update your Personal Page on the Women Swimmin' website. Add photos and write about the swim and why it is important to you. Encourage friends and family to use this site to donate in support of your swim.
- Email, email, email! Short ones, long ones - email with a link to the Women Swimmin' website is quick and easy and works wonders!
- Use Facebook or Twitter as a way to spread the word!
- Remember to ask -- it's not as hard as you think!
- Remember: You are not asking for yourself; you are asking for a very worthy cause.
- Making a positive difference in the world simply feels good. "After the swim, hearing how much was raised made me want to weep with joy!"

Matching Gifts – Remember to ask if your company or your sponsors' companies have matching gifts. Some companies double or even triple the initial donation! To find out if your company has matching gifts, contact your Human Resources Department.

Collect the donation when you ask for it. It will be easier for you if you collect as much as possible at the time you request the donation.

Emphasize the tax-deductibility of donations. People are often interested in getting a tax deduction “in return” for their donation. Their canceled check, credit card statement, or emailed gift confirmation can serve as a receipt.

SAMPLE FUNDRAISING LETTER OR E-MAIL

By using the mail or e-mail to raise money you can solicit contributions from a variety of resources such as:

- Business associates
- Family, friends, neighbors (greeting card lists)
- College alumni, sorority members
- Everyone for whom you have an e-mail address!

The following is a sample fundraising letter. Do consider personalizing it by including information about what the swim or Hospicare means to you. When sending a letter, include a donation form so that we can be sure to attribute gifts made as being in support of YOU. (Technical note: Most PDF readers allow you to copy text from a PDF and paste it into a word processor. In order to copy text in Adobe Reader, you will need to use the “Text Select Tool” indicated by a bold, capital “T” in the toolbar.)

Dear Diane:

On August 13, I plan to swim across Cayuga Lake along with other women swimmers to benefit Hospicare and Palliative Care Services of Tompkins County. Last year 300 swimmers, aged 18 – 83, swam 1.2 miles across the lake to raise over \$274,000 for Hospicare. This year, I hope you will join me in supporting this important effort.

By making a pledge on my behalf, you are supporting Hospicare’s mission to bring medical expertise and compassionate, respectful care to people and their loved ones at any stage of a life-threatening illness, and to provide information and education about advanced illness, dying, and bereavement to the entire community.

My goal is to raise at least (\$GOAL). Please help me reach that goal with your pledge. Your donation is tax deductible. You can make checks payable to Hospicare (HPCS) and mail them along with the enclosed form. Or, if you would like to make a credit card donation, you can do so easily online at www.womenswimmin.org or write your credit card details on the donation form and return it to me or to Hospicare and Palliative Care Services, 172 East King Road, Ithaca, NY 14850.

If you would like to learn more about Hospicare and this event please visit www.womenswimmin.org or www.hospicare.org. Feel free to contact me with any questions about Women Swimmin’.

I deeply appreciate your support of this worthy cause and thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Swimmer

THANK YOU LETTERS

Do send a thank-you note when you receive pledges. Writing your notes on Women Swimmin' postcards or notecards (available for sale at Hospicare and Satori) is a fun way to express your appreciation. Better yet, after the swim include details about the event -- donors will be curious about your experience and the event's success. Donors may use their canceled checks or credit card statement as receipts for tax purposes. We will send out a postcard to donors thanking them for their support after the event.

TRACKING DONATIONS

When you receive donations, please mail them to Hospicare as soon as possible along with a sponsorship list and/or donation forms (both forms are available at www.womenswimmin.org). We encourage you to write thank you notes as you receive funds, and to include an invitation to come to the Ithaca Yacht Club to cheer for you on August 13!

Note: Donations that are sent to Hospicare through the mail "offline" will NOT appear on your online personal page. Each swimmer has to enter and update this information herself. We will track donations as they come in, awarding prizes to the swimmers and boaters who have raised the most funds by **FRIDAY, August 12.**

If you would like a list of your donors prior to August 12, please feel free to contact Hospicare at 272-0212 or info@womenswimmin.org. We are happy to email you this information anytime before the event!

THANKS TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS

A huge thank you to **Ithaca Bakery/Collegetown Bagels; Cayuga Medical Center; Ciaschi, Dietershagen, Little, Mickelson and Company, CPAs; Robert Deer, a local representative of Wells Fargo Advisors; Family Medicine Associates of Ithaca, LLP; Ithaca Cayuga Optical Service; Maguire Family of Dealerships; Miller Mayer, LLP; OB-GYN Associates of Ithaca; Satori Day Spa & Salon; Sheldrake Point Vineyard & Bistro; Surgical Associates of Ithaca, P.C.; Tompkins Trust Company and Tompkins Insurance Agencies, Inc.; and Visiting Nurse Service of Ithaca and Tompkins County** for providing funds to cover event expenses so that the money raised by swimmers and boaters can go directly to patient services.

THANKS TO...

Special thanks to the **Ithaca Yacht Club** for graciously hosting this event and **Cayuga Radio Group** for providing media coverage of the event.

Thanks also to **Bangs Ambulance** for being on site; **Brewer's Septic; Cass Park** for providing parking; **Cayuga Compost; Cayuga Lake Cruises** for transport across the lake; the **Coast Guard Auxiliary** and **Cornell Meteorology** for their help in keeping participants safe; **Eric Epstein** for sharing his bagpiping talents with us; **Finger Lakes Running** Company for giving discounts on wetsuits and swim merchandise to registered swimmers; **Glenwood Pines** for offering overflow parking space; **Island Health and Fitness** for offering a discounted rate for registered swimmers; **Ithaca Airline Limousine** for shuttling participants to the event; **Jon Reis Photography** for making sure the event is well-documented; **LUNA Bar** for donating sample energy bars for event participants; **Lauren McFeeley** for crafting beautiful display boards; **Annie Campbell** for the adorable original artwork featured in this year's poster; **Linda Mikula** for designing the 2011 poster; **The Pilates Room** for underwriting minimal waste efforts; **The Plantsmen Nursery** for underwriting volunteer shirts and hats; **Millspaugh Brothers Hardware** for underwriting the cost of tents and rentals; **Puddledockers** for generously

donating a beautiful kayak for the raffle; **RMF Designs** for creating our fun and informative website; **Tompkins Weekly** for printing our posters in their weekly newspaper; **Ken Zesersen** and **The Yardvarks** for joyfully keeping us afloat with their upbeat rhythms on land; and all of the generous folks who donated prizes to the top fundraisers and to our raffle.

Additional thanks to our 2011 Women Swimmin' Committee members: Louise Adie, Sally Baines, David Banfield, Joan Jacobs Brumberg, Carol Chernikoff, Jennifer Cook, Francesca Crannell, Casey Creamer, Betsy East, Joan Lovejoy, Tara Masters, Linda Mikula, Sharon Morehouse, Jane Powers, Jack Stewart, Judy Stewart, Susan Straight, Dianne Valesente, Linda Wagenet, and Mark Wheeler. We couldn't do it without your dedication and commitment!

AND THANK YOU!

Warm thanks to you for committing to swim for Hospicare. We hope that you will find it an immense amount of fun, a rewarding personal challenge, and a great way to support hospice in your community!

On behalf of the patients, families, staff, and volunteers at Hospicare and Palliative Care Services of Tompkins County, we THANK YOU!

