



*Swim a Mile for*



Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley  
6805 US Hwy 11  
Potsdam, NY 13676

# **Boater Information**

Swim a Mile for Hospice

Pre-event meeting:  
7:00 a.m. at Postwood Park Beach

[www.swimamileforhospice.org](http://www.swimamileforhospice.org)

**Swim a Mile for Hospice** is a fundraising event that supports the care which Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley brings to patients and their loved ones at any stage of a serious illness and following a death.

Thank you for participating in this unique Hospice event! We hope you find the day fun and rewarding.

### **Why Your Help is So Important to Hospice**

Clearly this swim could not take place without you! Skilled and attentive boat support allows swimmers to cross the lake safely. 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 the hard issues of mortality and loss.
- Bereavement and educational services for our friends and neighbors throughout St. Lawrence County.
- Ongoing training and support for registered nurses, physicians, licensed practical nurses, social workers, nurses' aides, and volunteers

On average, only a percentage of these and other critical expenses are covered by insurers and other sources.

**Hospice's services are available to everyone regardless of their ability to pay. To learn more about Hospice, please visit our website at [www.hospiceslv.org](http://www.hospiceslv.org).** When you watch over swimmers from your kayak, canoe, or powerboat, you support Hospice's services and create ripples of care and generosity that touch the lives of people throughout our community. Thank you!

### **What to Bring**

Please bring a personal flotation device for you and for any passengers in your boat, and an extra one to pass to a swimmer in distress if necessary. You will be provided with a whistle to alert lifeguards if additional help is needed. (We will have extra flotation devices available.) You will be provided a t-shirt to identify you to the swimmers as a boater volunteer.

### **Registration**

Please register by going to the website: [www.swimamileforhospice.org](http://www.swimamileforhospice.org) as soon as you can. If you have any questions, contact Kellie Hitchman at (315) 265-3105.

### **Briefing Meeting**

Kayakers, canoeists and power boaters need to attend the briefing meeting at 7:00 a.m. on the beach at Postwood Park before the event begins. At the meeting, you will receive instructions and have any last-minute questions answered. If you cannot get to the beach for instructions, please contact Kellie Hitchman at 265-3105 before the event.

### **The Day Before the Swim**

Boaters, swimmers and volunteers are invited to a pre-swim registration reception from noon to 6 p.m. at the Hospice Center in Potsdam. Details will be sent in mid-July.

### **The Day of the Swim**

Kayakers and canoeists can park in the Postwood Parking lot and carry their boats to the beach for launching into the water. Please arrive by 7 a.m. to receive final instructions and station your boat for the swim which will begin at 8 a.m.

Kayakers and canoeists will either guide the swimmers across the course, along with a number of other boaters, or monitor the swimmers from a stationary position on the course.

## **The Swim**

Swimmers will be grouped according to their swimming pace in "pods" of six to 10. The first pod of swimmers will begin swimming at 8:00 a.m. The remaining pods will leave the beach every few minutes. The fastest swimmers will go first and will likely finish the course in about 30 minutes. The slowest swimmers might take as long as 1.5 hours.

The course will be marked with numerous buoys. Kayakers and canoeists will be stationed along the course, or guide the swimmers along the course. Your role will be to serve as the eyes and ears of the swimmers, guiding them safely through the course, and carrying out your role until the last swimmer finishes the swim.

## **Safety**

**Remember: This is not a race. The goal is safe completion for every swimmer.** "Master swimmers" are asked to be mindful of this fact when passing others. Swimmers are encouraged to stay the course at their own pace and let the experts pass them by.

If swimmers should feel tired or anxious, they may signal for help or to leave the water. As a boater, you will be near the swimmers to notice these signals and offer help. There will be lifeguards and trained medical personnel in power boats with appropriate life saving devices.

If a swimmer needs to rest, offer him/her a life jacket or flotation device. If you think they need further assistance from a lifeguard, blow your whistle and wave your paddle to get the attention of the nearest power boater/lifeguard who will come to the swimmer's aid. It is important for the boaters to coordinate help for a swimmer in need of aid while continuing to monitor the swimmers moving through the course.

## **Event Cancellation**

There will be no rain date if the swim be cancelled because of unsafe swimming conditions. (Such conditions might include lightning, severe wind, heavy rain or very choppy water.) A rain date is not possible because we are unable to ensure full participation of all the volunteers and services vital to the safety of the event on two separate days.

If the weather is unfavorable for swimming we'll have a celebration on land which will include breakfast and an awards ceremony at Postwood Park Beach. Please check your email and the event website [www.swimamileforhospice.org](http://www.swimamileforhospice.org) for updates about the plans.

**THANKS!** ~~~ On behalf of the patients, families, staff, and volunteers at Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley, THANK YOU for your support!