



Hartford HealthCare  
St. Vincent's Medical Center

# Swim Talk NEWSLETTER



July 2024 Published by the Swim Marathon Committee

## Swimming With Gratitude



Jonathan Saxon, a resident of Weston, CT, is preparing to take the plunge for his first Swim Across the Sound Marathon on Saturday, August 3.

While some swimmers participate in the marathon to challenge themselves physically or achieve a personal or fundraising goal, Jon's primary inspiration is one of gratitude.

Traci, Jon's wife, was re-diagnosed with breast cancer in 2022 and received treatment at St. Vincent's. "We really appreciate St. Vincent's, the care of Dr. Richard Zelkowitz and the staff at the cancer center," Jon said. "Traci received the highest quality care, and we met some truly amazing people. She has since come out the other side and we want to give something back."

Swimming while raising funds for Swim Across the Sound seemed a natural fit for Jonathan who participates in Ironman triathlons. "Swimming is my weakest discipline of the three (swimming, cycling and running)." But Jon is ready to up his swimming game.

"I've been swimming 6,000 meters per week to prepare," he says. "I love swimming at Compo Beach in Westport with my triathlon friends. Open water swimming is a great experience. I thought joining a relay team in this year's marathon would be a great opportunity to challenge myself and give

back to St. Vincent's while helping others who are struggling with a cancer diagnosis."



To support Jonathan with a donation toward his fundraising goal, visit:  
<https://charity.pledgeit.org/JonathanSaxon>



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## Swim Across the Sound August 3, 2024

We are still in need of Boat Captains to sign up to support the swimmers as they make the journey from Port Jefferson to Black Rock Harbor. If you, or someone you know, has a sail boat or motor boat, please help by registering today!

[Click Here to Register](#)

## Combat Vet Swims to Support Others



Elise Holtan is from New Cumberland, PA. She will be participating as a relay swimmer with fellow Army West Point swimmers in this year's Swim Across the Sound Marathon on Saturday, August 3.

Anyone who has participated in, or even witnessed the marathon, knows it's a heavy lift. A lot of time, talent and training goes into this race – and Elise is up for the challenge.

However, Elise has faced challenges before. Not only is she an Army combat veteran, she and her husband were also primary caregivers for her father-in-law, Rick, during his battle with

“Rick’s cancer was a brutal experience, and we would not have made it without the support from our hospice personnel,” Elise explains. “As a two-time Iraq combat vet, I honestly don’t know from which experience I have been more impacted by.”

Elise understands how a cancer diagnosis can rob people, and those who love them, of control. By participating in this year’s marathon, she is looking forward to taking control of this situation, challenging her mind and body, and even says she looks forward to the discomfort and mental challenge.

“I am healthy – but I’m angry,” she says. “I’m angered by what cancer has done to my family members and friends. I want to use my own health and fitness to help those that no longer have the ability to be active and to feel secure in their future.”

Elise says that a cancer diagnosis is only the beginning. “Supporting the patient, their families and friends is so important. That includes financial support, therapies and essentials that insurance doesn’t cover. These are aspects that can help to restore dignity to people who are suffering. Swim Across the Sound shoots straight to the heart of what patients and families need so they can focus on the fight.”

To support Elise with a donation toward her fundraising goal, please visit:  
<https://charity.pledgeit.org/EliseHoltan>

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## HOW ELSE CAN I PARTICIPATE?

***There are several ways you can help Swim Across the Sound raise money to support cancer patients in our community. Here are just a few:***

- Donate toward a swimmer or make a general donation by visiting:  
<https://charity.pledgeit.org/SwimAcrossTheSound>
- Participate virtually in an activity of your choice. Register and set your own fundraising goals at: <https://charity.pledgeit.org/VirtualChallenge24>
- Volunteer as a boat captain, medical support or on-land. Volunteers make the difference in helping us keep our swimmers safe as they cross Long Island Sound: <https://swimacrossthesound.org/marathon2024>

**For more information about how you can help, please call 203-576-5451**

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***Thank you to the generosity of our Corporate Sponsors.***



**We look forward to seeing you August 3rd!**

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