



Hartford HealthCare
St. Vincent's Medical Center

Swim Talk NEWSLETTER



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Surviving the Sound: Team Survivor captain describes the experience



"What a surprise it was during my first relay turn on the swim to find myself jumping into battle with waves slapping me in the face and pushing me around when the wind whipped up."

For those wondering what it feels like to actually swim across Long Island Sound, Teresa Gagnon sums up some of the salty details nicely. Teresa, who has been a member on the Swim Committee for the past five

years, is captain of the team "Survivors."

"The Swim has been part of my life since 2002, and I can honestly say that each event was a unique experience," says Teresa. Before then, I hadn't done much open water swimming, and what little I had done was in relatively calm water.

The 15.5 mile swim from Port Jefferson on Long Island to Captain's Cove in Bridgeport is quite the challenge. The conditions can be unpredictable and dipping your toe in first will not yield many hints of what it's really like out there.

Teresa explains that winning was not particularly at top of mind – surviving was.

"Rather than worrying about making good time, or even moving forward in a reasonably straight line toward the Connecticut shore, I mostly worried about when it was safe to take a breath and keeping my eye on the guide boat."

Over the past years, the Swim Across the Sound Marathon has seen fair and foul weather and our swimmers, boaters and volunteers hope for the best but prepare for the worst.

"Some years, we had calm, glassy seas under hot, sunny skies. It felt like a meditative journey. Other years, we had to contend with jellyfish, cold and rainy weather and the disappointing reality of cancellation when conditions became unsafe."

Surviving the Sound is one thing. Surviving a cancer diagnosis is quite another – a battle Teresa would unfortunately have to face herself.

"For many years, we would name our team in memory of family member or loved one to honor their life. In 2013, I decided to name our team "Survivors." I wanted to have continuity and recognition of our team name as well as promote a positive message for those impacted by cancer. Little did I know, over the years several swimmers, including myself, would be diagnosed and treated for cancer."

Teresa faced that challenge head on and continues putting herself to the test of whatever the waters of Long Island Sound has in store for her and her teammates.



"I've learned a lot since my first marathon. In addition to the myriad of support and services Swim Across the Sound provides to families dealing with a cancer diagnosis, it was also an opportunity for me to physically challenge myself each year. I have a great time with some friends on a beautiful boat and try to stay in shape to be able to swim for those 20 minutes or so each time my turn comes back around on the relay wheel.

The swim is the reward (and never a guarantee) for training hard. But mostly it's about raising funds for a very worthy cause. In many ways, it is a metaphor for what people dealing with cancer undertake every day, never knowing what challenges lie ahead.

To add your support toward Teresa's fundraising goal, please visit:

<https://charity.pledgeit.org/f/TeresaGagnon>



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Boater's Needed!

We are in need of additional boat captains to help keep our swimmers safe as they make the trek across Long Island Sound. If you have a power or sail boat, please consider joining us on Saturday, July 29th.

[Click Here to Register as a Boater](#)

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/VirtualChallenge>.
- Make a donation toward our Radiothon Giving Hour and have your loved ones name announced live on WICC on June 16 between 8-9am. Donations of \$50 or more can choose to receive a Bridgeport Ferry Pass. Donate today at: <https://swimacrossthesound.org/radiothon>

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

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**Thank you to the generosity of our
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We look forward to seeing you July 29th!

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