



## Women Are Swimmin' for a Good Cause

In the first **Women Swimmin'** in August 2004, 127 determined women between the ages of 18 and 82 swam 1.2 miles **across Cayuga Lake**. The swimmers were accompanied by over 35 small craft including canoes, kayaks, and motorboats. This community swim fundraiser supports Hospicare and Palliative Care Services of Tompkins County (HPCS).

The idea for the event was born in a conversation between an Ithaca woman who is active in **Hospicare** and her physician, also a woman. Both swam that first year and each year since. Everyone completes the swim at her own rate: Some more experienced swimmers make the crossing in only 35 minutes, but others take more than an hour, stopping to chat and dog-paddle as they move across the lake. Speed is not the important thing. Prizes are given to those swimmers and boaters who raise the most money in sponsorships.

The first **Women Swimmin'** raised over **\$54,000 for HPCS** and the third, a staggering \$152,000 – a demonstration of the incredible generosity of people in Ithaca (and beyond) and their recognition of the importance of Hospicare. For this, the fifth year, 150 women have already signed up for the event, which is limited to 275 swimmers. Their fundraising goal is \$220,000. The swim is scheduled for Saturday, August 9, with a rain date of August 10. To learn more, volunteer or register to swim, visit [www.WomenSwimmin.org](http://www.WomenSwimmin.org).

## SENATE



"I'D LIKE TO START A COMMISSION ON WHY THE PRICE OF GASOLINE ALWAYS HAS TO END IN POINT NINE!"

## Old-Fashioned Apples Finding Renewed Popularity

Red Jacket Orchards in Geneva is reintroducing several **heirloom apple varieties** (breeds developed prior to 1900). Many heirlooms fell out of favor or were simply forgotten with the rise of refrigeration, long distance shipping and hybrids with higher yields and bigger, redder fruit.

The orchard planted hundreds of trees on more than seven acres in spring of 2007, obtaining bud wood for grafting from Cornell Professor Ian Merwin, who produces heirlooms at **Black Diamond Farms** in Trumansburg. When the trees mature to bear a commercial crop (expected in fall of 2010), **Red Jacket** will become one of the largest commercial producers of heirloom apples in the northeast.

"People seem attracted to heirlooms because each variety has its own storied attributes," said Mark Nicholson, Red Jacket's vice president of business development. For example, one variety they selected, the Newtown Pippin, is the oldest commercially grown apple developed in the U.S. It became so popular that the original tree in Newtown, Long Island (now Queens), was dead by 1805 because so many people took scions for grafting. The variety was a favorite of both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, and when an American diplomat in London imported some Newtown Pippins in 1838 and presented them to Queen Victoria, she, in turn, lifted the apple import tax.

Finger Lakes visitors and residents will soon get to see what the Founding Fathers' fuss was all about and have a taste of the past – when they chomp down on one of the most popular apples from the Colonial era.



This sculpture by **Jay Seaman of Trumansburg** was installed for public viewing recently in front of Gateway Plaza at 311 E. Green Street off the Commons in Ithaca.