



# SIMON SAYS

News from Carol G. Simon Cancer Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital

Spring 2009

## a letter of *Gratitude*

Dear Dr. Chung,

You perhaps can't readily place the name, but my wife, Roberta Rountree, was a patient of yours in the May-June time frame.

Words can only begin to tell you how grateful I am to you!

As we frequently do, this Thanksgiving we'll be saying a special prayer for you and your family, and will be thanking God for the talent and perseverance He put into your heart, enabling you to do so much to help others.

Although Blue Cross insisted that additional testing was unnecessary, you, dear lady, went with your gut instinct that "I don't know what it is, but there's something there," and (please pardon the metaphor) you stuck with it like a junkyard dog with a bone.

As a result, Bobbi had a lumpectomy followed by a full mastectomy and, though certainly not at all a fun way to spend the summer, her cancer was arrested at 1 cm Stage 1, and she's now ... happily getting on with her life, a life which you quite possibly saved.

May God richly bless you and yours!

Gratefully yours,  
Michael E. Rountree  
Bernardsville, NJ

## Sights Set on Robotic Table

If James Wong, MD, chairman of radiation oncology, gets his way, Carol G. Simon Cancer Center will become the international Mecca for cancer treatments. His plan: purchase a robotic table for cancer patients receiving radiation therapy that complements the futuristic imaging technology currently being used at the center.

The cancer center has already broken ground in prostate cancer treatment by being the first nationwide to use image-guided radiation technology to determine positioning of the gland, which can shift location. Yet without the robotic table, the true value of these high-tech scans cannot be realized because the current table has a limited range of motion.

"The prostate gland can move, and this can be corrected by maneuvering the table if the gland has moved up and down, but what if the gland has tilted?" asks Dr. Wong. Only the robotic table can slant and allow physicians to target anatomy most accurately. The device, which costs \$1 million with installation, will make the cancer center the first site in the world to offer such advanced treatments.

"With the new imaging we can see the nerves, and with the help of the robotic table, we can conduct nerve-sparing radiation treatment, which has never been done," he says. For prostate cancer patients undergoing radiation, the table would provide more accurate targeting of tumors, resulting in treatments that preserve patients' sexual function. Patients with other cancers, particularly brain, lung and pancreatic, would also benefit.

Dr. Wong envisions working in tandem with Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute physicians to use the new technology for procedures such as atrial defibrillation. Employing radiation to achieve partial ablation of the heart would open new frontiers in cardiovascular care.

To find out how to become involved in the fundraising effort for the robotic table, please call Hyona Revere at 973-593-2429.

The cancer center has already broken ground in prostate cancer treatment by being the **first** nationwide to use image-guided radiation technology



The following Carol G. Simon Cancer Center physicians made the NJ Monthly Top Doctors list:

### ONCOLOGY

Ken Adler, MD  
William DeRosa, MD  
Steven Papish, MD

### PATHOLOGY

Jory G. Magidson, MD

### ONCOLOGICAL SURGERY

Aaron Chevinski, MD  
William Diehl, MD

### OTOLARYNGOLOGY

Renato Giacchi, MD

### THORACIC SURGERY

Mark Widmann, MD

### UROLOGY

Ian Atlas, MD  
David Chaikin, MD  
Lee Pressler, MD  
David Taylor, MD

## Patient Touts Robot's Virtue

When John Autore, EdD, of Wayne was diagnosed with prostate cancer, he feared his dream of finishing an Ironman Triathlon® would be sidelined. Hope returned when he discovered that Lee Pressler, MD, at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, performed robotic prostatectomies and had completed the rigorous race.

"Athletics is a big part of my life, and I knew Dr. Pressler could relate to me," says Dr. Autore. He chose robotic surgery because it provided the best results — the most accurate surgical precision combined with reduced recovery time. Sure enough, only weeks after his prostatectomy in 2007, he was back to biking. The following year he achieved his life-long goal: the Ironman.



Reception guests examine the da Vinci® Surgical System

"I'm especially grateful to the hospital; Intuitive Surgical, who manufactures the robot; and Dr. Pressler, for his expertise with it," he says, adding that his wife, Carol, had great results from robotic surgery for uterine prolapse performed by Patrick Culligan, MD, in October.

Dr. Autore shared his success story at a reception benefiting robotic surgery held at the Atlantic Health Jets Training Center on January 27. Ayal Kaynan, MD, talked about the da Vinci® Surgical System, and guests were invited to maneuver the robot's arms.

To date, the \$912,000 has been raised toward the \$1 million goal. The campaign committee, chaired by Tom Welsh, includes Bill Kearns, Allen Kopelson, Bart Oates, Stuart Sendell, Ed Walsh, and David Welsh, as well as Drs. Culligan and Kaynan, Arthur Israel, MD, and Daniel Tobias, MD.

## STORIES of Hope



**Blair MacInnes** considers herself a poster child for early breast cancer detection. For years, she faithfully had regular mammograms and breast exams. "I did everything I was supposed to do, and it worked," says the Morris Township resident.

**"I didn't expect the level of plain, old-fashioned, tender-loving care."**

—Blair MacInnes

Three years ago, after a routine mammogram, she received the dreaded call that doctors saw something suspicious. It turned out to be a 1.2 centimeter tumor that breast surgeon William Diehl, MD, deemed cancerous but highly curable.

"I had some choices — I could have gone to the Internet and scared myself with all the material out there, or trust my doctors," she says. "I decided to trust my doctors. I didn't overly worry or over think. I accepted their assessment. I wasn't frightened. I've known hundreds of women with this diagnosis in the last 10 years and they're all still walking around."

After surgery, Mrs. MacInnes underwent radiation at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center. "I picked a book to read while waiting for radiation and didn't get one-third of the way through because they were so efficient. There were days that I left the car and was back in 10 minutes."

Mrs. MacInnes considers herself lucky the cancer hadn't spread to her lymph nodes and chemotherapy wasn't necessary. Although radiation drained her, she didn't miss a day of exercise. She credits her husband, former state Senator Gordon MacInnes, along with her friends who survived breast cancer, for keeping her steady.

She also received uplift from unexpected sources. "I love Morristown Memorial and all of my doctors, but the support staff — the nurses, the radiology technicians, the people who check you in — is what makes the place what it is," she says. "You get a comfortable feeling because of the people you encounter behind the desk, at valet parking, in the radiation suite. I love the place because these people make it work. I expected and received an accurate diagnosis. I didn't expect the level of plain old-fashioned, tender-loving care on the part of the support staff."



# Donor Dollars Reach FAR and WIDE

*The community's generosity enables Carol G. Simon Cancer Center to deliver superb medical care and top-tier complementary services. These are a sampling of the vital projects and programs made possible by donor dollars.*

## Research and Education

Scott Merrick, chief medical dosimetrist, was able to share his innovative research using image-guided radiation technology with more than 100 international physicists and oncologists at the prestigious European Society of Therapeutic Radiation and Oncology in Goteborg, Sweden, last September, thanks to unrestricted funds.

"Sites from all over the world got to see the latest technology, ideas and research of our cancer center," says Mr. Merrick, whose studies show how to determine more precise treatment dosages for prostate cancer. In fact, doctors from other countries, including Korea and China, have since visited the center. Participation in conferences like these improves patient care. "As the research gets better and better, the standards of treatment improve," he says.

## Breast Imaging Fellowships

At The Carol W. and Julius A. Rippel Breast Center, two radiologists will begin one-year fellowships, one in July 2009 and another in 2010. Funded by an anonymous donor who lost his wife to breast cancer, the fellowships train radiologists to specialize in breast imaging.

This training is crucial for the center, which conducts 75 to 100 mammograms a day, says Paul Friedman, DO, director of Rippel Breast Center. "There's a national shortage of people reading breast imaging, while at the same time, more women having mammograms," he says. "If we don't impart our knowledge, it will become a dying art."

## Renovations and Technology

As the number of patients increases, the need to reconfigure space at the breast center is paramount. To that end, the center will begin a \$150,000 renovation later this year financed by unrestricted contributions that will expand the gownned waiting room, increase the larger recovery room and create more reading rooms for radiologists.

For some breast cancer patients undergoing treatment, the new \$4,500 prone breast board will help reduce radiation dosage to the lungs, when targeting lymph nodes along the chest wall. "It provides more accuracy when dealing with patients of certain body types and offers the best treatment outcome possible when doing radiation," says Elizabeth Rodriguez, manager of radiation oncology.

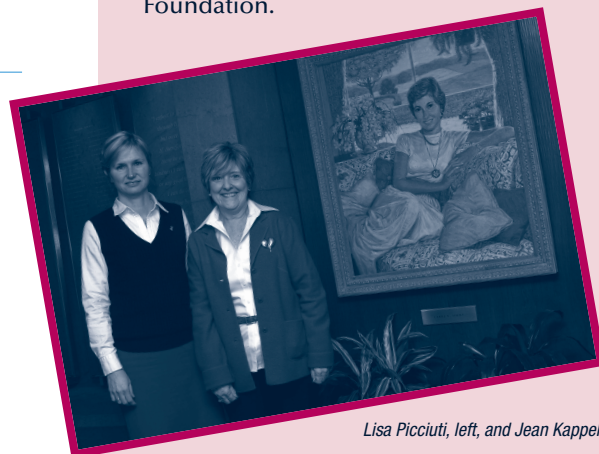
## Complementary Programs

These programs have all been funded through philanthropy: The Bereavement Support Program offers a safe place to express emotions for individuals who have lost loved ones to cancer. The Special Needs Fund provides up to \$500 per year to patients struggling to pay expenses, such as medication, child care or transportation. Survivor's Day, celebrated the first Sunday in June, offers music, food and entertainment to patients and their families. Pet Therapy, funded through the Joe Abrams Oncology Fund, brings dogs to cancer patients' bedsides to brighten their day.

## More Caring Hands: New Staffers

Thanks to philanthropy, two new staff members were hired to improve patient care at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center. Jeanne Kappel, breast center concierge, assists patients at The Carol W. and Julius A. Rippel Breast Center, while Lisa Picciuti, LCSW, oncology social worker, counsels patients with lung cancer.

Ms. Kappel, who started in October, handles all non-medical aspects of patient care: she greets visitors, schedules appointments, answers insurance questions, escorts patients to procedures and provides updates to those waiting for patients undergoing surgery. Her salary is funded through a \$130,000 grant over two years from the William E. Simon Foundation.



Lisa Picciuti, left, and Jean Kappel

"If there's anything I can do for a patient who comes to the breast center, I do it," says Ms. Kappel.

On staff since July, Ms. Picciuti is supported by a two-year grant funded by the Leslie Grimm Lung Cancer Patient and Family Support Program, which honors the memory of Leslie Grimm, a lung cancer patient treated at the center. Ms. Picciuti helps patients cope with lung cancer through short-term counseling and monthly support groups. In addition, she offers a smoking cessation program for patients and their families.

"There are some things that patients with lung cancer just can't talk about with family and friends," says Ms. Picciuti. "It's important for patients to have a place where they can speak freely and share their fears."



# GIFTS *Heart*

from the

Operation Bling Foundation, which marked its first anniversary in March, is shining bright at both Morristown Memorial and Overlook hospitals. **Chris Ferdinand**, owner of Ferdinand Jewelers in New Providence with her husband **Bill**, founded the not-for-profit to bring joy to oncology patients. Each week, a "bling angel" presents free sterling silver cubic zirconium rings, earrings, necklaces

or bracelets to cancer patients. These pieces are especially appreciated by patients who cannot wear valuable jewelry during hospital stays.

"We started with a prayer and a dollar and now we've raised over \$38,000," says Mrs. Ferdinand. Her band of bling angels expanded their inpatient rounds to include outpatient infusion areas as well as the Valerie Fund Children's Center at both hospitals. To date, Operation Bling has provided 333 pieces to Morristown Memorial and 301 to Overlook Hospital.

When **Stephanie Dotterweich** (pictured with mom Ellen) learned that family friend and substitute teacher Debbie Lacy had breast cancer, she was devastated. The Montville High School junior wanted to support the woman who'd always been there for her. At school, she sold pink bracelets inscribed with Mrs. Lacy's name for \$5 each to raise money for Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, where the mother of two teenage sons is being treated.

So many students — even the boys — purchased pink bracelets in honor of their favorite sub that they sold out the first day. After replenishing supplies several times, the 17 year old collected \$1,000 for the center.

"She calls me her angel," says Miss Dotterweich. "Once she saw everyone helping, she got much stronger."



## Happenings

### Come Back to Our Cabaret

April 23, 2009 | 5:30 – 9:30pm

Morristown Memorial, Malcolm Forbes Amphitheatre

Sponsored by the Jeffrey Frank Wacks Memorial Fund, the event features a wine bar, light buffet dinner and musical entertainment. Proceeds benefit the Jeffrey F. Wacks Music Therapy Program. Tickets, \$100 per person, can be obtained by emailing [jfwmemfund@optonline.net](mailto:jfwmemfund@optonline.net) or by calling 973-285-0963.

## MORE Clinical Trials Coming

Carol G. Simon Cancer Center is upping the ante. In its quest to provide superior treatments, the cancer center is making more clinical research trials available to patients.

"To offer the best comprehensive cancer care for patients, good clinical trials need to be offered," says Brian Slomovitz, MD, a new gynecologic oncologist at the center. "Our goal is to offer trials to most, if not all, of our patients."

Clinical research trials are of particular importance because they give patients access to innovative treatments before they are available to the public. Currently, the cancer center has 15 clinical trials open for women with new and recurring cervical, uterine and ovarian cancers. The trials, whose sponsors range from the National Cancer Institute's gynecological group to various pharmaceutical companies, involve chemotherapy, drugs and surgery.

For one international surgical trial, the cancer center is only the second participating site in the United States. This trial evaluates the role of minimally invasive, laparoscopic surgery for patients with cervical cancer, as opposed to traditional surgery requiring a big incision. No previous study has examined laparoscopic surgery, which offers improved quality of life, decreased blood loss, decreased post-operative pain and shorter hospital stays, says Dr. Slomovitz.

For further information, please contact the cancer center at 973-971-5900.

## Introducing...

**Michael Most, MD**, specializes in head and neck oncologic and reconstructive surgery.

**Maithili Rao, MD**, medical oncologist/hematologist; she specializes in breast cancer prevention and treatment.

**Brian Slomovitz, MD**, specializes in gynecologic oncology, including cervical, ovarian and uterine cancers.

If you are interested in hosting an event or promotion to benefit Carol G. Simon Cancer Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital, please contact Eileen Heltzer, director of annual giving, at 973-593-2412 or [eileen.heltzer@atlantichhealth.org](mailto:eileen.heltzer@atlantichhealth.org)