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## WELCOME LETTER

# THE BEST CARE CLOSE TO HOME

### HOME IS THE THEME FOR THIS ISSUE OF

*Monmouth Health & Life*, and for those undergoing complex cancer treatment regimens, the comfort of having quality, compassionate care close to home is so important.

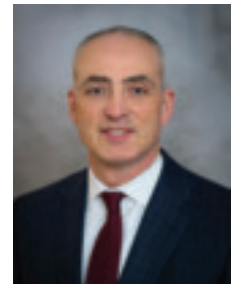
Advances in treatments have given hope to those fighting even the most aggressive cancers, but these treatments also are growing increasingly complex, involving lengthy outpatient infusions and/or radiation therapies, and additional visits for supportive care. Recognizing the value of conveniently located expertise, Monmouth Medical Center is dedicated to bringing community-based, academic-level specialized cancer care close to home, so our patients can focus not just on treatment and healing, but also day-to-day living.

In this issue, you can read about breast cancer patient Bridget Root, who was determined not to let cancer get in the way of living her life. She didn't let chemotherapy stop her from doing anything—in fact, she had taken up running just before her diagnosis, and she went on to complete several 10K races, including two at her happy place: Disney World.

Patients like Bridget who come to us for cancer treatment can do so with complete confidence that they are receiving the best possible care close to home. Our Leon Hess Cancer Center is the only facility in Monmouth and Ocean counties to be designated as an Academic Comprehensive Cancer Program by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer. This designation provides assurance to our patients that they are receiving the highest level of comprehensive care, including access to a full range of state-of-the-art services and a multidisciplinary approach to the best treatment options. And through our partnership with the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state's only NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—a competitive designation awarded to only 48 centers nationwide—our patients also have access to the state's resource for, and leader in, cancer research.

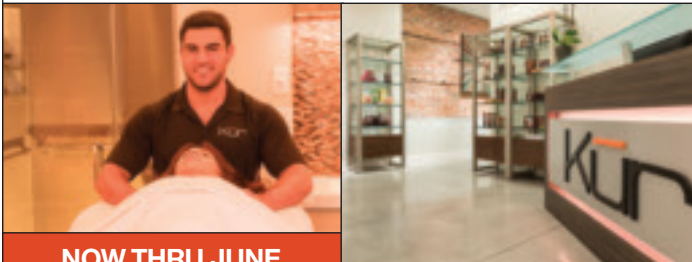
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# INGOODHEALTH

MEDICINE + TECHNOLOGY + PATIENT CARE AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER

## THE ART OF HEALING

EIGHT LOCAL ARTISTS EXHIBIT WORKS THAT EXPRESS THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO CANCER.

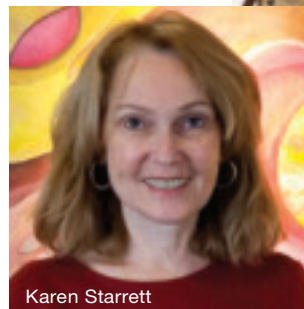
### MEDICAL CARE IS CRITICAL IN

treating and, one hopes, curing disease, but true healing takes more than doctors and medicine. There is a spiritual component to recovery as well, and perhaps no one knows this better than artist Karen Starrett. She is the curator as well as one of the eight artists whose work is featured in "Art & Healing: Expressions of Trauma and Gratitude," an exhibition at the Monmouth Museum in Lincroft. The exhibit runs through May 19.

Art & Healing highlights the role of how the creation of art can be part of the healing and recovery process after a cancer diagnosis. For Starrett, of Ocean Township, that diagnosis came in 2003. When she learned she had Stage 3 ovarian cancer, "everything changed," she says. "I thought I was going to die. I was 50 years old. I know 28 women who died from ovarian cancer. It was very frightening."

After surgery and a year of chemotherapy at Monmouth Medical Center, her cancer was gone. Physically she was healthy; emotionally, however, she fell into depression, and was unable to practice her favored art form, collage. She attended a week-long art workshop, but she "floundered" until the facilitator gave her a large sheet of paper and paints. "She said, 'Just move your hand,' so I did," Starrett says. She finished one painting, then another. "It was very powerful. I believe painting was part of my healing," she says. "I've been painting ever since."

Over the ensuing years, she studied the



Karen Starrett



"To Hell In A Basket" by Shari Epstein

relationship of art and healing, and she was trained as a hospital artist-in-residence. She then

studied "creative aging," became a certified dementia practitioner, achieved Advanced Certification in Gerontology from Rutgers University and developed an arts curriculum for older adults, including those with limited cognitive and physical abilities.

Last year, she approached Donna Kessinger, executive director of the Monmouth Museum, about curating an exhibit of artists who had been treated for cancer. The artists—including Theresa DeSalvio, Shari Epstein, Arlene Mollow, Nisha Sondhe, Carol Radsprecher, Bob Rivera, June Wilson—"all express their cancer experience, whether overtly or obliquely," Starrett says.

"The art ranges from darkly surreal to humorous," adds Kessinger, who has had her own cancer experience as well. She lost her sister-in-law to brain cancer in 2018. "I hope to honor her memory with this show," she says.

Starrett says she is grateful to the museum for mounting the exhibit. "I want people to know that self-expression has a value. Whether it's writing, painting or performing, the body needs to express itself."

## CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY ENHANCES WELL-BEING OF PATIENTS AND LOVED ONES

THE CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY (CSC) at Monmouth Medical Center is part of an international non-profit organization whose mission is to help individuals impacted by cancer enhance their health and well-being through participation in free, professionally led programs of emotional, physical and psychological support. Delivery of CSC programs by licensed professionals ensures that all members who are impacted by a cancer diagnosis are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action and sustained by community. All programs are free of charge to anyone affected by a cancer diagnosis: patients, caregivers, and adult and child family members, no matter where treatment has been received. CSC offers a full calendar of monthly activities and support groups, including music, art and play therapy, intended to help patients and their loved ones to navigate through their feelings and emotions. Call 732.923.6090 to learn more about CSC.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CANCER SERVICES AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER, VISIT [RWJBH.ORG/MMCCANCER](http://RWJBH.ORG/MMCCANCER).  
TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ART & HEALING EXHIBIT, VISIT [MONMOUTHMUSEUM.ORG](http://MONMOUTHMUSEUM.ORG).  
TO SHARE THIS ARTICLE WITH A FRIEND OR TO RECOMMEND IT ON YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE, VISIT [MONMOUTHHEALTHANDLIFE.COM](http://MONMOUTHHEALTHANDLIFE.COM).



# THE DOCTOR POET

A FORMER CHAIR AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY AT MMC PUBLISHES BOOK OF PHOTOS AND HAIKU ABOUT JAPAN.

IN SEPTEMBER 2016,

Michael A. Goldfarb, M.D., and his wife, Barbara, went to Japan for their 50th wedding anniversary. Dr. Goldfarb, former chair and program director of the Department of Surgery at Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) for 14 years, always had been intrigued by Japan's cultural aesthetic, and as a photographer and lover of Haiku, he wanted to experience it firsthand. The Haiku format is usually three lines of 7-5-7 syllables. While there, he tried to capture that feeling by taking photographs and writing poems. Many scenes "appeared different than anything I'd seen in western culture," he says.

When Dr. Goldfarb returned home, he realized he had a series of photographs and poems that worked well together and thought of putting them together in a book. That's when fate took his hand and guided him along. "I was eating dinner at a Chinese restaurant and read a fortune from a fortune cookie that said, 'You see pictures in poems and poems in pictures,'" he says.

Later, when searching for a title for his book, he signed up for a Word a Day app, and the first word was "inscape." "What does that mean? I had no idea. It means 'the unique inner nature of a person or object as shown in a work of art, especially a poem,'" he says, still astonished. "There were so many moments [while creating this book] that were coincidental, or kismet, whatever you choose to call it," he says.

He chose to call his book *Japan Inscape*, and it is available on Amazon and through his website, [japaninscape.com](http://japaninscape.com). "I wasn't doing it as a business venture," Dr. Goldfarb says. "I was doing it because I thought I would share a daydream-like experience. What if I told you your view of the world around you could become happier and more complete by daydreaming along with



Michael Goldfarb, M.D., former chair and program director of the Department of Surgery at Monmouth Medical Center, recently released *Japan Inscape*, a haiku and photography book that was inspired by his travels to Japan.

photos and poems? My worldview changed as a result of this trip and I can honestly say I possess more peace and happiness now that I have experienced the power of understanding through gentle observation."

Dr. Goldfarb, who still practices surgery, has been associated with MMC for more than 45 years. He was at one time the medical director of Monmouth's Cranmer Ambulatory Surgery Center and surgical coordinator of the Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center at MMC. He is one of the founders of the JMWCB and was on the Board of Trustees for 10 years. Dr. Goldfarb is a professor of surgery at Drexel University and continues to train surgical residents at MMC today.

After a life in science, Dr. Goldfarb seems amused by tapping into his artistic side. "I've been interested in using this side of my brain," he says. "I've always been a scientist and surgeon, and now this is sort of coming out of me and I'm enjoying it. It's been a pleasant surprise."

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# KEEPING CANCER ON THE RUN

A TOMS RIVER WOMAN DOESN'T MISS A STEP WHILE FIGHTING BREAST CANCER.

WHEN BRIDGET ROOT GOT THE NEWS THAT SHE HAD BREAST cancer, her first response was, "I don't have time for this. I have a family vacation to Disney World in 10 days." Root loves everything about Disney. And when her treatments at Monmouth Medical Center were all done and she was cancer-free, she paid the hospital her highest compliment: "I am a big fan of Disney's customer service. Monmouth's customer service is just as excellent."

## CONTROLLING YOUR RISK

SOME RISKS FOR BREAST CANCER, such as family history and ethnicity, cannot be controlled. There are certain factors, however, that are within your control, including:

- Use of oral contraceptives: Taking birth control pills slightly increases your breast cancer risk compared with women who have never used them.
- Drinking alcohol: Breast cancer risk goes up if you drink just one glass of wine, beer or mixed drink a day. The more you drink, the higher your risk.
- Your diet: Choose to eat healthy foods, rather than foods high in fat.
- Long-term use of estrogen and progestin medicines after menopause—known as hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Using HRT for two or more years may create a higher chance of breast cancer. Talk to your doctor about the right course of treatment for you.
- Excess weight, especially after menopause: Overall, your risk of breast cancer is lower if you stay at a healthy weight with a body mass index (BMI) below 25.



Toms River resident Bridget Root has completed several 10K races since her recovery from breast cancer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE JACQUELINE M. WILENTZ BREAST CENTER, VISIT [MONMOUTHWILENTZBREASTCENTER.COM](http://MONMOUTHWILENTZBREASTCENTER.COM). TO SHARE THIS ARTICLE WITH A FRIEND OR TO RECOMMEND IT ON YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE, VISIT [MONMOUTHHEALTHANDLIFE.COM](http://MONMOUTHHEALTHANDLIFE.COM).





## BREAST CANCER SYMPTOMS



Root, 62, lives in Toms River with her husband, Kevin. She is an assistant registrar at Ocean County College, and he works for Verizon. They have three children, three grandchildren and “two more on the way,” she says. She was diagnosed in September 2012 from a routine mammogram taken at the Jacqueline M. Wilentz Breast Center at Monmouth Medical Center. “The next day I got the call, and it was a whirlwind after that,” she says. Her doctor

THE MOST COMMON SYMPTOM of breast cancer is a new lump or mass. A painless, hard mass that has irregular edges is more likely to be cancer, but breast cancers can be tender, soft or rounded. It is important to have any new breast mass, lump or breast change checked by a healthcare professional experienced in diagnosing breast diseases. Contact the Jacqueline M. Wilentz Breast Center at Monmouth Medical Center to schedule an appointment. Other possible symptoms of breast cancer include:

- Swelling of all or part of a breast (even if no distinct lump is felt)
- Skin irritation or dimpling (sometimes looking like an orange peel)
- Breast or nipple pain
- Nipple retraction (turning inward)
- Redness, scaliness, or thickening of the nipple or breast skin
- Nipple discharge (other than breast milk)

told her they could get her right in for further testing so she could still go to Disney World. Root asked the doctor not to tell her what stage her cancer was. “I didn’t want preconceived notions of where this would take me,” she says. “I just told them, take care of it.”

She later learned she was Stage 2B and she opted for a double mastectomy, even though the cancer was in one breast and she did not have any family history of the disease, nor any other risk factors. “I know myself, and I would not want to have to go through the wait for that call again,” she says.

Her surgery was scheduled that November. Then, Hurricane Sandy hit. The hospital was without power and her surgery was postponed for a couple weeks. “The wait was nerve wracking,” she admits. But it went well, and what followed was chemotherapy and radiation treatments. Root’s first chemo treatment was on Christmas Eve 2012, and she admits she was “terrified. But there was another woman near me who looked great, and she said, ‘I have 25 people coming for dinner tonight, let’s hurry this up.’ That

was very helpful. I thought, look at her, treating it like a minor annoyance. I tried to carry that attitude too.”

Root tolerated the treatments very well. “I shaved my head in anticipation, and I might have jumped the gun there,” she says. When her treatments were done, she also had breast reconstruction surgery. Throughout her many treatments, she says, all of the doctors, nurses and staff treated her with courtesy and respect. “I give all credit to the staff at Monmouth. They not only treated me physically, they helped me emotionally and mentally as well. Their attitude was always that they would take care of it.” When she forgot about a scheduled bone density test and arrived a couple of hours late, “it was no big deal. They didn’t seem annoyed. I thought that was wonderful.”

Root had taken up running before her diagnosis (“I thought I should get healthy—kind of ironic,” she says) and since her recovery she has completed several 10K races, including the Seaside Semper Five in Seaside Heights and two others at—you guessed it—Disney World.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE JACQUELINE M. WILENTZ BREAST CENTER, VISIT [MONMOUTHWILENTZBREASTCENTER.COM](http://MONMOUTHWILENTZBREASTCENTER.COM). TO SHARE THIS ARTICLE WITH A FRIEND OR TO RECOMMEND IT ON YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE, VISIT [MONMOUTHHEALTHANDLIFE.COM](http://MONMOUTHHEALTHANDLIFE.COM).



# HITTING BACK

SPORT PSYCHIATRIST HELPS PRIZE FIGHTERS TRANSITION TO LIFE AFTER THE RING.

**THE BIGGEST BLOW IN A BOXER'S HARD-HITTING** career is often not found in the celebrated arena at all, but on the home front, especially with retirement. No matter how great the athlete who steps into the ring, the boxer commonly meets his most formidable opponent in everyday life and may struggle to come to grips not only with retirement, but with the sport's effect on the brain.

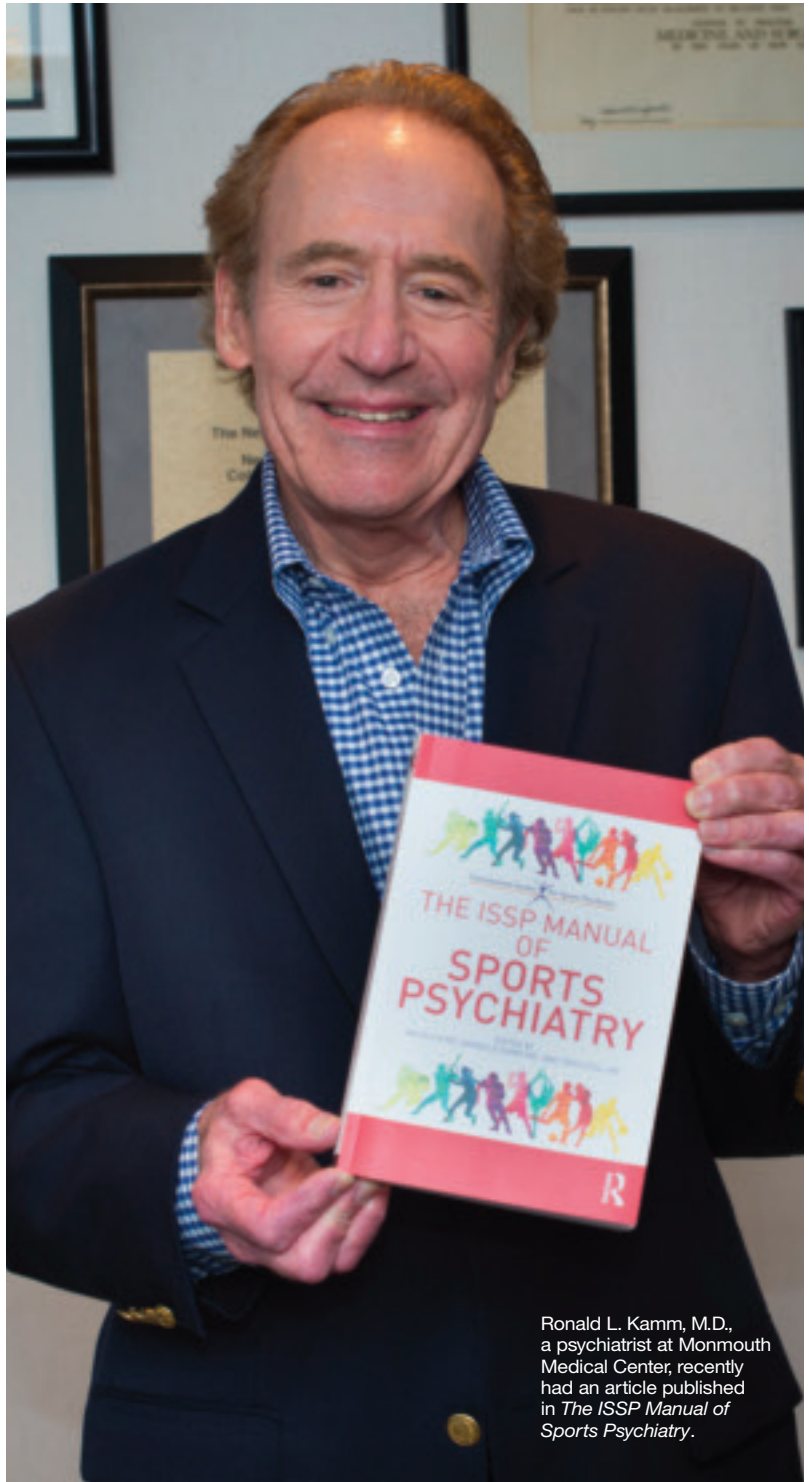
Ronald L. Kamm, M.D., a psychiatrist at Monmouth Medical Center, addresses a battle few boxing fans realize in research on boxing and retirement that was recently published in *The ISSP Manual of Sports Psychiatry*. His article, "A Sport Psychiatrist's View of Boxing and Retirement from It," delves into the impact of this physically demanding sport on the brain, the issue of performance enhancing drugs, the life of boxers beyond the ring and more.

Dr. Kamm draws upon his experience as vice president of FIST (Fighters Initiative Support and Training), as he seeks to raise awareness of a problem society often overlooks—boxers' psychological needs. Although the nonprofit founded by professional boxer Gerry Cooney to help boxers transition is now defunct, Dr. Kamm maintains these issues are as relevant as ever.

Active in sports psychiatry since the 1970s, Dr. Kamm has presented lectures and published articles on the topic all over the world, consulted with many school sports teams and served as sport psychiatrist for USBL New Jersey ShoreCats.

Outside of his work at Monmouth Medical Center, a RWJBarnabas Health facility in Long Branch, he has a private practice in Oakhurst. He also serves as an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at the Philadelphia-based Drexel University College of Medicine.

He received his medical degree in 1968 from Hahnemann Medical College, (now Drexel University College of Medicine) and completed his psychiatric residency in 1972 at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center's New York State Psychiatric Institute in NYC.



Ronald L. Kamm, M.D., a psychiatrist at Monmouth Medical Center, recently had an article published in *The ISSP Manual of Sports Psychiatry*.

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