Breast Cancer Survivor Turns Radiation Treatment into Visual Journey

New American Cancer Society book -Rad Art - Shares Artistic Expressions of a Patient Undergoing Radiation

ATLANTA— October 30, 2012— The American Cancer Society envisions a world with less cancer and more birthdays, but artist Sally Loughridge, Ph.D., literally takes that vision to heart in her new book ***Rad Art: A Journey Through Radiation Treatment***, in which she uses a series of 33 oil paintings to illustrate her emotional state each day following radiation therapy.

As a coping strategy, Loughridge, a retired clinical psychologist, turned her vision of cancer cells escaping her body and her feelings of being on an emotional rollercoaster, into breathtaking art expressing the fear, sadness, vulnerability, uncertainty, and anger many cancer patients experience.

“After the initial shock of being diagnosed with breast cancer, I felt a surge of unfamiliar, uncomfortable emotions that I could not articulate easily,” said Loughridge. “When radiation was recommended after surgery, I knew that I needed a private strategy to help steady myself, in addition to the loving support of family and friends. I turned to painting, knowing that visual art, as a lifelong personal resource, could help me feel alive and vital during this harrowing time.”

In the foreword, Tony award–winning playwright, Eve Ensler, best known for *The Vagina Monologues*, describes Loughridge’s work as “calling up the exquisite beauty that can only be burned out of suffering.” Acknowledging that every person’s experience is unique, Loughridge hopes this resource encourages expression, sharing, and connection among cancer patients and their loved ones. “I hope *Rad Art* will encourage those experiencing cancer, as a patient or a loved one, to express and explore their feelings, particularly those for which they cannot find words,” Loughridge remarked. “The book can help those supporting or treating a survivor recognize the complexity and fluidity of emotions stirred by an encounter with cancer.”

Rad Art: A Journey through Radiation Treatment (ISBN-13: 978-1-60443-092-9; $16.95) is available for purchase at www.cancer.org/bookstore , by calling 1-800-227-2345, or at any online or retail bookseller.

A video podcast featuring author Sally Loughridge is also available on the Society's YouTube channel: http://youtu.be/82ypztkiUq8

About the Author and Artist

SALLY LOUGHRIDGE, Ph.D., has drawn and painted since early childhood. After nearly thirty years of working as a clinical psychologist, she turned to creating art full-time. She paints, studies, teaches, and exhibits her art along the coast of Maine. During her recent cancer experience, Sally embraced painting as a natural mode of self-expression. She attributes a deepening of her artwork and self to the emotional journey of facing a life-threatening illness.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end cancer for good. As a global grassroots force of three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping you stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early, helping you get well by being there for you during and after a diagnosis, by finding cures through groundbreaking discovery and fighting back through public policy. As the nation’s largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing more than $3.8 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, an estimated 13.7 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.