



## Southington Care Center receives highest national rating

**S**outhington Care Center recently received the highest Best Short-Term Rehabilitation Rating from U.S. News & World Report. Ratings are categorized as “high performing,” “average” or “below average.”

U.S. News & World Report gives the rating based on evaluation of the “quality of post-acute care for patients recovering from a hospital stay such as after stroke, heart attack, infection or accidental injury.” Southington Care Center exceeded the state and national averages in nurse staffing; physical therapist staffing; patient-centered rehabilitation therapy; patients’ ability to return home; prevention of falls; and other areas.

“This high performing ranking is a tribute to the hard work of our staff – the nurses, the therapists, the CNAs and all are to be congratulated for a job continued to be well done,” said William Kowalewski, Executive Director, Southington Care Center, a not for profit member of Hartford HealthCare Senior Services.

Southington Care Center offers inpatient short-term rehabilitation, which

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## Southington Care Center honors loved ones with ‘Light the World’

The winter night fell quiet when more than 60 names were read in memory of loved ones at Southington Care Center’s “Light the World” held Dec. 8. Dozens of people attended the second annual event to remember those who have passed away and to honor others. The several hundred luminaries lining the driveway guided guests to the outdoor ceremony that featured music by the Mt. Hebron Gospel Choir of Meriden.

“It was a brisk 30 degree December evening with warmth and love in the air. The reading of the names was especially powerful,” said William Kowalewski, Executive Director, Southington Care Center.

The Pastoral Care program, which presented “Light the World,” also honored someone “who ‘lights the world’ with care and See **Light** on page 3



Residents and staff gather at “Light the World.”

## News from Southington Care Center

### Looking back at 2019

The year 2019 saw the following milestones at Southington Care Center:

- U.S. News and World Report ranked Southington Care Center at its highest rating for Short-Term Rehab
- Light the World had its first event in 2018 with the second held Dec. 8 (see story on page 1).
- A new dementia-friendly Patio Garden and Garden Room opened thanks to a grant from the Main Street Community Foundation
- Cirie Dorosh was appointed as the new Director of Nursing
- Tammy Michaud was appointed as the Lead Receptionist
- Patty Dion was appointed as the Manager of the Second Floor Dementia Unit
- Doris Medina was appointed as the new Holistic Palliative Care nurse.

Looking ahead: In 2020, Southington Care will be enhancing its Palliative Care and Dementia programs under new nurse leaders.

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### Dinner with the Experts: Understanding Dementia

Dementia is an overall term for the condition that is defined by a decline in memory, language and other thinking skills. An estimated 78,000 Connecticut residents have Alzheimer's disease, a type of dementia, and by 2025, a projected 91,000 will be living with this condition.

The free program, "Dinner with the Experts: Understanding Dementia" will be held Wednesday, Jan. 22, 5 to 7 p.m., at Southington Care Center. Topics include: conditions associated with dementia, diagnosis and treatment options, and steps after diagnosis. Presenters will be Amy Sanders, MD, MS, FAAN, Director, Memory Care Center at Hartford HealthCare Ayer Neuroscience Institute, and Patty O'Brian, dementia specialist, Hartford

HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging, the program sponsor.

A light complimentary dinner will be served. Seating is limited and registration is required. To RSVP, call 1.855.HHC.HERE/ 1.855.442.4373.

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### New format for family gatherings

In an effort to spark additional attendance and to be more respectful of the schedules of those who have a loved one living at Southington Care Center and also wish to attend any of these bi-monthly gatherings, the Family Gatherings will now rotate following a Sunday day and Thursday evening routine. Please review the schedule below.

A guest speaker is scheduled for each of these meetings to present a topic as chosen by family members.

- Thursday, Feb. 20, 5:30 p.m.
- Sunday, April 19, 3 p.m.
- Thursday, June 11, 5:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Sept. 20, 3 p.m.
- Thursday, Nov. 12, 5:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Dec. 13, 11:30 a.m. – Holiday Gathering

Questions? Call coordinator Donna Malicki-Gornicz, Southington Care Center Director of Social Services, 860.378.1253.

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### Dementia Caregivers Support Group

Caring for a loved one can be daunting, presenting a maze of problems to solve including helping a loved one with daily tasks, communicating effectively, making financial decisions, managing changes in behavior, and more. Southington Care Center offers a free Alzheimer's and dementia support group on the second Wednesday of the month (Jan. 8 and Feb. 12), 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., in the Anna Fanelli Room.

This group is an affiliated support group of the

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3 corporation. All donations are tax deductible.

## McCarty family memorial tree-trimming tradition continues

By William Kowalewski, Executive Director,  
Southington Care Center

During the past 11 years, the Steve and Donna McCarty family has come to Southington Care Center during the first week of December to decorate a tree planted adjacent to the Healing Garden. The tree was originally planted 11 years ago in memory of Donna's mother who lived the last months of her life here at the Care Center. The McCarty family was so grateful for the care given to Donna's mother that they planted the tree in her memory following her passing.

The tree has done very well of late and now tops out at 28 feet tall. We realized that 10-foot ladders just weren't enough, so this year, for the first time, Southington Care Center had to rent a "cherry picker" to do the top portion of the tree. Eighteen volunteers from the McCarty family, the SCC family and Hartford HealthCare Senior Services arrived at 11 a.m. on Dec. 7 and got to work – the cherry picker up high and the rest of us at the 10-foot line down with three ladders. The work was done in less than two hours and the results are beautiful.

A huge note of thanks again this year to Donna McCarty for being our "leader" and for all the volunteers who came out to help.



Members of the McCarty family and staff gather to admire the tree trimming.

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compassion." The first honoree was Donna Malicki-Gornicz, MS, Director of Social Services, who has worked at the Care Center since 2006. "I was completely surprised and feel so honored," she said.

The Rev. Victoria Triano, Director of Pastoral Care, said it was a poignant evening for not only family members but for staff. "As we remembered those who have meant so much to us, there was great solace, peace and a wonderful feeling of family," she said.

"Light the World" was a spiritual outreach of Southington Care Center's Pastoral Care, which provides ongoing spiritual support for residents and families. For more information about the program or to support its work, call Triano at Southington Care Center, 860.621.9559.



Victoria Triano and William Kowalewski

### Happy Holidays



Southington Care Center hosted a wonderful holiday brunch on Dec. 8 for more than 100 people including, from left, John and Maria Tarantino, and her mother Rose. C.

# Southington Care Center



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provides the optimum transition between the hospital and home, and outpatient rehabilitation services. Specialties include physical, occupational, speech, aquatic, lymphedema and other therapies.

U.S. News & World Report rates short-term rehabilitation and skilled nursing facilities to assist consumers in selecting the best options, provide more about the care and quality where a loved one already lives, and more.

To view the U.S. News & World Report summary, visit <https://health.usnews.com/best-nursing-homes/area/ct/southington-care-center-075336>.

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Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter, and is hosted by Southington Care Center and Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging. The facilitator is Patty O'Brian, CDP, patient/family engagement coordinator and certified Alzheimer's/dementia specialist, of Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging.

Seating is limited and registration is required. For more information or to RSVP, call O'Brian at 860.628.3830.

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