

Southington Care Center



News

A newsletter for Southington Care Center residents and family members.

March/April 2020

Vol. 6 Issue 2

Southington Care Rehab team encourages residents' fitness goals

Meet Tom U., a Southington Care Center resident. Tom is a familiar face as he walks through the halls of Southington Care Center every day, exercising, putting on miles and smiles for those he passes. Knowing the value of exercise and mobility, the Rehabilitation Department presented Tom with his very own Fitbit to measure the number of steps taken each day. When he sees Rehab team members, he proudly shares his progress toward his daily goal.

Some informal competition is also happening. But, it's not about the numbers for the See **Tom** on page 4



Southington Care Center resident Tom U. stays fit through his daily walking regimen. He has many fans at the Care Center.

Southington Care Center shares its news

Sunshine Committee's mission: helping those in need

The Sunshine Committee is Southington Care Center's fundraising committee for employees in need. Throughout the year, the committee raises money through many fundraisers such as our Holiday Basket Raffle.

This fundraising is to assist our staff members who may fall on difficult times or experience a hardship. Every winter, we also provide soup for all of our staff as a "thank you" for all of the hard work they do throughout the year. On Wednesdays, they get to enjoy a different type of soup served by our Food & Nutrition Department. On See **News** on page 3



Above: Matthew Mazzone, director of Food and Nutrition, and Samantha Ramon, menu coordinator, chat over Wednesday soup.

Southington Care Center is a non-profit 501(c)3

Friendship becomes unexpected perk of recovery at Southington Care

Two Plantsville women knew they would recover well from their medical issues after having short-term rehabilitation at Southington Care Center. However, they never expected a special perk: making a new friendship that they hope will never be broken.

Jennifer Lopes and Betty Swist, who met in December while both recuperating from surgeries, found out they had a lot in common. As the youngest patients there, they started chatting and visiting each other's rooms several times each day between their occupational and physical therapy sessions. They soon learned that they lived less than one mile apart and were even at the same event held at a local tavern during the summer.

They also noted that they had similar outgoing personalities and they both like to laugh. One night, while many patients were sleeping, Swist brought chocolate pudding as a surprise to Lopes' room where they shared the treat.

See **Friends** on page 4



Above: From left, Southington Care Center Executive Director William Kowalewski chats with short-term rehab patients Jennifer Lopes and Betty Swist.

Snapshots of life at Southington Care Center



Above: Richard V. starts his painting project.



Below: Maria Tarantino enjoys visiting her mother, Rosina C.



Above: Resident Julia B. expresses her creative talents.

3 corporation. All donations are tax deductible.

News from page 1

those cold (and sometimes snowy) winter days, it is a treat to get to relax with a nice, hot bowl of soup!

Thank you to all who support the Sunshine Committee. - Tammy Michaud, Chair of Sunshine Committee

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

- 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 social work director, 860.378.1253.

Dinner with the Doc: Spring into Foot Health



Southington Care Center is hosting the free “Dinner with the Doc: Spring into Foot Health” on Tuesday, April 28, from 5 to 7 p.m. Presenter Adam Q. Ferguson, DO, orthopedic surgeon, of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Institute at MidState Medical Center, will discuss topics including causes of ankle and foot pain, the latest

treatment options, and the Connecticut Orthopaedic Institute at MidState Medical Center.

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.

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 (March 11 and April 8), 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., in the Anna Fanelli Room.

This group is an affiliated support group of the 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. To RSVP, call O’Brian at 860.628.3830.

Southington Care Center embraces therapy – the four-legged kind

Southington Care Center recently welcomed a new visitor. Jackson, the newest pet therapy dog will be visiting our long-term and short-term residents on a regular basis.

Some of the benefits of pet therapy include the lowering of blood pressure, decrease in anxiety, a measure of comfort and positive effects on motor skills.



Above: Rose G. enjoys getting to know Jackson, the newest pet therapy visitor.

Southington Care Center



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Friends from page 2

“It feels like I’ve known her forever. I’ve made a friend for life,” Lopes said.

The two women encouraged each other in their rehabilitation which focused on strengthening, balance and climbing stairs. Lopes, who had undergone extensive foot surgery and couldn’t bear weight, concentrated on being more independent so she could return home. They both were looking forward to recovering quickly to return to work, Lopes as a paralegal and Swist as a speech and language pathologist.

They made the most of their time there, not only encouraging each other but other patients as well. “We wanted to get to know everyone,” Swist said.

She’d like to become a volunteer at Southington Care where she received the therapy she needed to resume her active life. “It was wonderful there,” she said.

Now that they have both been discharged, they are staying in touch regularly. “Betty and I talk all the time and we are planning our adventures once we are healed,” Lopes said.

Tom from page 1

Rehab team - it’s all about encouraging Tom’s continued efforts to be mobile, as well as offering him the opportunity to interact with so many in the facility and to continue sharing his smiles. He’s an inspiration!