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Southington Care Center rallies for Walk to End Alzheimer's

Southington Care Center staff and friends joined the Oct. 14 Walk to End Alzheimer's to support the Alzheimer's Association's mission to raise awareness and continue research of this disease affecting millions. The Walk, one of the largest in the state, attracted thousands of people to Rentschler Field in East Hartford.

With more than 20 supporters, Southington Care Center raised nearly \$2,400 through the Walk itself and various fundraisers. The Care Center has participated in previous years.

"Alzheimer's is a terminal disease. There is no cure – making it worse than many other diseases for which there are cures. More research and support is needed to reverse its rise," said Southington Care Center Executive Director William Kowalewski. "The staff at Southington Care Center – as well as all of us – can play a part in raising money to help find a cure. A huge note of thanks to the staff who participated in the Walk."

To support families who have loved ones with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, Southington Care Center and Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging host a free monthly caregivers group to provide communication tips, caregiving strategies and education.

(See information about the caregivers group on page 4.)



Standing, from left, William Kowalewski, Armondo Candelaria, Rocco Palladino, Vincent DeSanti, Marjory Palladino, Christine Dzierlatka, Fatima McComb; and Louise Gadd, seated.

Celebrate the holidays with Southington Care Center!

Families are welcome to sign up now for Southington Care Center's annual holiday party planned for Sunday, Dec. 9, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. A delicious buffet will be served. Tickets are \$15 adults; \$8 children; free for children under 2 years old. Reservations are required. To RSVP, call Southington Care Center at 860.276.1020. Wishing our residents, patients, families, friends and staff a very happy holiday!

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

On a scale of 1 to 10, retiree rates Southington Care Center as '1,000'

Southington retiree Raymond Lavoie has had more than his share of health challenges including a heart attack, three open heart surgeries, knee operations and most recently, a gall bladder problem.

However, this 85-year-old considers himself lucky because first, his life's journey is continuing; and second, several recuperations have taken place at Southington Care Center.

Lavoie's most recent stay was for two weeks in May following a medical procedure at the Hospital of Central Connecticut, New Britain campus. He said he was quite touched when some people greeted him by name upon arrival at Southington Care Center, even though it had been years since his previous rehabilitation. "They call me 'Grandpa Ray'," he recalled.



Raymond Lavoie, left, welcomes William Kowalewski, Southington Care Center executive director, to his home.

In addition to tending to his healing, the health professionals focused on increasing his strength and stamina through intensive physical and occupational therapy. Soon he could stand and move his legs; next it was climbing stairs, eventually progressing to two flights. "They didn't have me do anything that was unreasonable," he said. "They respected me and encouraged me. They were there for me."

Lavoie, who was raised in Waterbury, had a long career with First National Stores, including the Southington location, before he retired due to health concerns. His recuperations included stays at other area rehabilitation centers but the best is Southington Care Center, he said. "I never received treatment like that I received at the care center. Everyone is so kind. I'm talking from the heart."

When he was discharged to home where he lives with a son, Lavoie said it was bittersweet. "I felt so welcome there. I felt loved."

His recuperation continued at home with the assistance of Hartford HealthCare at Home. Lavoie exercises each day so he stays strong and is grateful for his quality of life. "I'm blessed more than ever, every year of my life," he said.

He credits Southington Care Center for his recovery. "I was really, really fortunate to be there. On a scale of 1 to 10, I'd say Southington Care was 1,000," he said with a chuckle.

Write a Google review!

Now is your chance to let the world know about your personal experience with Southington Care Center and write a review.

It's easy. Visit www.google.com and enter "Southington Care Center." On the right-hand side, you will see a box labeled "Southington Care Center" and a blue link to where you can write your review.

We'd love to hear from you! Your opinion means a lot to us and we thank you for sharing it.

3 corporation. All donations are tax deductible.

Southington Care Center welcomes new exercise physiologist

GoodLife Fitness at Southington Care Center has a proven track record of assisting older adults in incorporating exercise to improve their quality of life. Benefits of individualized exercise may include increased flexibility and mobility, more energy and vitality, as well as improved muscular strength, endurance, balance, cardiovascular health and self-esteem.

Lisa Murawski, exercise physiologist, has been working with GoodLife Fitness members since she joined the Southington Care Center staff in August 2018. "We focus on creating a personalized exercise program which help individuals achieve their specific goals such strengthening muscles, increasing energy, or improving physical ability to do everyday activities," she said.



Some of individuals that she guides through their exercise program were previously Southington Care Center patients recovering from surgery or injuries who received physical and occupational therapy. The GoodLife Fitness program supports them in their recovery and management of painful symptoms and conditions while improving the quality of life.

An East Hartford resident, Murawski holds her Bachelor of Science degree in exercise science from the University of Connecticut. She also completed the post-baccalaureate teaching certificate program from the Central Connecticut State University Department of Physical Education and Human Performance. Much of her previous experience has been in the physical education and health field, and she is a member of The Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. She is also an active volunteer in her community in Zwaizek Harcerstwa Polskiego, the Polish Scouting Organization of America, and Connecticut Invention Convention. Murawski is an English and Polish speaker.

GoodLife Fitness, a program of Hartford HealthCare, is offered at seven additional locations. For more information about GoodLife Fitness at Southington Care Center, call 860.378.1281.

Executive Director re-connects with former patient at her reunion



Executive Director William Kowalewski was invited to be guest speaker at the Lewis High School Class of 1946 reunion held on Oct. 19. He connected with the group through Norma Z., who was a short-term rehab patient at Southington Care Center earlier this year.

Pet visitor

Welcome to Casper, our newest pet visitor. Casper, who is owned by Jessilyn Kulikow-ski, brings smiles to all he meets.



Caregivers group welcomes families of those with dementia

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 (upcoming: Nov. 14 and Dec. 12), 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.

To register, call Patty O'Brian, Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging, 860.378.3830.

Dementia communication tip

For a person with dementia, it is harder to pay attention and concentrate. Break down the task into easy steps.

- Southington Care Center
Dementia Programming & Planning Committee

Southington
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