

**Welcome to
our new hires**

Southington Care Center is pleased to announce that these individuals have joined our staff.

Welcome!

Sue Macary, CNA

Racquel Lunser, BSW,
social worker

Beata Mniuch, LPN

Elizabeth Benoit, CNA

Carol Reyes-Delgado,
CNA

Keishalue Francis, CNA

Sarah Ruggiero, BSW,
social worker

Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Group

Southington Care Center offers a free Alzheimer's and Dementia support group on the second Wednesday of the month, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., in the Anna Fanelli Room. (Upcoming dates: July 12, Aug. 9, Sept. 13.)

This group is an affiliated support group of the Alzheimer's Connecticut Chapter, which is hosted by Southington Care Center. This is a caring and understanding support group to learn more about the disease, to share caregiving ideas, to express their feelings, to hear about advances in research and advocacy, and to help other caregivers who are in need. Facilitators are Robin Segal, Southington Care Center Interim Director of Recreation Therapy, and Patty O'Brian, patient and family engagement coordinator, Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging. All are welcome.

To RSVP, call O'Brian at 860.276.5399, ext. 4403.



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Southington Care Center News

A newsletter for Southington Care Center residents and family members.

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Southington Care Center receives Main Street Community Foundation grant

For the second consecutive year, a generous donation from the Main Street Community Foundation is funding dementia training for all Southington Care Center staff. The education is intended to enable employees to better relate to and effectively care for those with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. The program is facilitated by Michelle Wyman, LSW, GDP, and Patty O'Brian, dementia specialists with Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging.

A portion of the \$58,682 grant also funded similar training at Mulberry Gardens of Southington, an assisted living and memory care community, as well as the new resource library at Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging at The Hospital of Central Connecticut, Bradley Memorial campus.

In addition, It's Never 2 Late® (iN2L) touch-screen computer system will be introduced at Southington

See **Grant** on page 3



Photo by Rusty Kimball

Above: At the check presentation are, from left, Mary Ellen Hobson, Main Street Community Foundation; Kate Kerchaert, Main Street Community Foundation; Susan Sadecki, president and CEO, Main Street Community Foundation; Lisa Connolly, Hartford HealthCare Community Network; Wendy Martinson, program director, Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging; and William Kowalewski, Executive Director, Southington Care Center.

Longtime employee receives LeadingAge Award

Mary Gelella, who enjoyed a 30-plus year career in nursing, was well regarded for her professionalism, dedication and compassion. She started with Southington Care Center when it opened in March 1990 and retired on Dec. 1 after 27 years serving patients, families and staff. She held many roles and was the infection control nurse upon retirement. The accolades flowed at the party held in her honor on Nov. 29.

See **Award** on page 3



Left: During the LeadingAge award presentation are, standing from left, William Kowalewski, Southington Care Center Executive Director; Mary Gelella; and Molly Savard, The Bradley Home Executive Director; seated, Ari Santiago, President, IT Direct and the sponsor of the Aging Services Award of Excellence.



See you at our these summer concerts: July 6 Kevin Scarpati; Aug. 17 Paul Millard and Sept. 14 Shine - 6 p.m.



Emergency Preparedness at Southington Care Center

By Vinnie DeSanti, Director of Plant Operations

Southington Care Center has emergency disaster plans in place that address many possible natural or man-made events. The plans we have in place include: Fire safety, Security, Severe Weather, Loss of Utilities and Services, just to name a few. One of the newest initiatives here at Southington Care is Plain Language Emergency Communication. Plain Language is communicating events through our overhead paging system without the use of colors of special codes, as previously used.

A few examples of Plain Language are:

- Fire: "Fire Alarm Activation" + Location

- Severe Weather: "Severe Weather" + Description
- Active Criminal Event: "Armed Intruder" + Description + Location



Southington Care Center's employees strive every day to ensure that our residents, patients and coworkers have a caring and safe environment. Southington Care Center provides its staff with annual in-services and training on fire safety, abuse prevention and dementia as well as many other topics.

For more information, call me at 860-378-1245.

Introducing Kim Landeen, Director of Transitions

Kim Landeen, RN, Southington Care Center's director of transitions, has had a heart to care for others since she was a child. She became a caregiver at the early age of 7 when her mother was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. By the time she was 15, she was a CNA which provided her with skills to better assist her mom.



healthcare field, care has become more complicated by more acute health problems, an aging population, and a complex insurance system, all which she and the team navigate. The care center sees approximately 40 discharges each month.

It's vital to treat patients as "one of your own," said Landeen, who joined Care Center staff in July 2016.

The discharge plan could include a home health aide, physical or occupational therapy, and physician follow-ups. When someone is discharged, she makes sure she calls them after three days then 30 days. "If I hear a problem in their voice, I may make referrals, call physicians and contact home care," including Hartford HealthCare at Home and Hartford HealthCare Independence at Home. If necessary, she also connects the patient or family members with Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging or one of the several assisted living communities in the Hartford HealthCare Senior Services system.

Whatever the issue, the end goal is to enable the person to return home. She and the team members are proud of making that transition successful.

After 23 years as a CNA primarily in long-term care, she earned her RN degree and worked in skilled nursing facilities in infection control, staff development, as assistant director of nursing and most recently, as director of nursing. "I love working in a skilled nursing facility. You develop personal relationships; after all, you live in their home," she said.

The Southington Care Center transitions team works with the patients and family and/or caregivers to develop safe discharge plans whether it is to the individual's home or an assisted living community. Southington Care Center's transitions team includes Cheryl Morek, LPN, and two social workers, Delina Coviello, BSW, and Sarah Ruggiero, LMSW.

Landeen observed that since she entered the

Licensed practical nurse's efforts result in official state recognition



For the past 10 years, Lisa Pinter, LPN, has cared for others at Southington Care Center. After developing neuromyelitis optica, a relatively unknown chronic neurological disease that can cause blindness and even paralysis, she extended her care beyond to those who have the same condition, seeking to educate others to improve patient outcomes and advocate for a cure. The cause of NMO is unknown.

Her persistent efforts resulted in Governor Dannel P. Malloy recognizing April 2017 as Neuromyelitis Optica Awareness Month. "We need more awareness in the medical community to improve patient care and and save lives," Pinter said.

"We are quite proud of Lisa – her persistence is bettering the lives of people with NMO," said William Kowalewski, Southington Care Center Executive Director.

Above: William Kowalewski, Southington Care Center Executive Director, left, and Lisa Pinter, LPN, display the Official Statement designating April as Neuromyelitis Optica Awareness Month.

Grant continued from page 1

Care Center and Mulberry Gardens. iN2L brings adaptive computer technology to the resident population to introduce them to computers, engage them in mind-stimulating activities and enhance physical coordination. Staff members have been trained to work with residents to show them how to use the iN2L computer and achieve rewarding results.

The grant from the Bradley Henry Barnes & Leila

Upton Barnes Memorial Trust at the Main Street Community Foundation was presented at the official library ribbon-cutting May 24.

"SCC is proud and honored to partner with the Main Street Foundation on this very important endeavor. Dementia disease is a critical component of all the Care Center does and with this support our capabilities will expand," said William Kowalewski, Southington Care Center Executive Director.

Award continued from page 1

However, the recognition wasn't over yet. In May, Ceella received the LeadingAge Connecticut Aging Services Award of Excellence. Southington Care Center Executive Director William Kowalewski had nominated Ceella for the recognition based on the theme, the "Power of Purpose."

LeadingAge Connecticut is a partner of Leading Age, a national association with 6,000 not for profit organizations dedicated to expanding the "world of possibilities" for the aging. Together, the member organizations advance policies, promote practices and conduct research that supports and empowers people to live fully as they age.

"Mary's purpose in life was to care for the elderly in a way deserved by all she cares for and that would keep her out of the limelight. She serves humbly and without any expectation of recognition," he wrote in the nomination. "As Mary enters retirement, we all know that the Care Center is a much better place as a result of the many purposeful years she worked here."

Ceella said that even as a child she wanted to become a nurse. In reflecting upon her career, she said, "I loved patient care – the hands-on, the relationships you build." Now her life has a new purpose: spending as much time as she can with her grandchild, with a second on the way.

"Her footprint will remain with the Care Center for many years to come," Kowalewski remarked.

Thank you to all who made the Steve McCarty Memorial Golf Tournament a great success! See our photo gallery on Facebook!