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in CPR, the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses, Spinal Cord Specialist Certification and New England Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center. On a personal level, she is involved with the local emergency preparedness center, is a town park and recreational volunteer, and enjoys hiking, gardening and yoga.

“Cirie is a great addition to the Nursing Leadership team. She brings a vast array of nursing talent to the Care Center,” Kowalewski said. “Her background and her passion for post-acute care are assets that will greatly enhance the quality of care and quality of life for the residents who are placed in our trust.”

Internet connects resident with faraway family on special day



Resident Liette W. was excited that her grandson was getting married. However, even though she couldn't travel to the actual wedding, it was hoped that she could actually “attend” through Skype, a video telephone call. Unfortunately, an internet connection could not be established in the park where the marriage was taking place so she couldn't view the live event. Another grandson came up with the solution to videotape the ceremony.

Immediately following, Liette and her cousin were able to watch it on the computer in the office of Stacy Carleton, director of Therapeutic Recreation. “This is just another example how Southington Care Center provides resident-centered care,” Carleton said.

November/December 2016

Vol. 2 Issue 6

Music & Memory brings the healing benefits of music to residents

Music & Memory, a non-profit organization that brings personalized therapeutic music to seniors to enhance their quality of life, has been introduced at Southington Care Center.

“The premise is that our brains are hard-wired to connect music with our long-term memories. Think about a time when you heard a song and how that song took you back to a memory,” said Karen King, staff development educator. “Music fires up the brain, improving cognition, communication and engagement.”

Southington Care Center celebrated Music & Memory, officially rolling it out on Oct. 17 following a five-month pilot program. A grant from the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health provided the funding for 15 iPod Shuffles, chargers, headphones, and an iTunes gift card for the initial introduction. These were individually loaded with favorite music and genres that were suggested by families of the residents.

Furthermore, The Retirement Research Foundation funded the Brown University Center for Long Term Care, Quality & Innovation to work with Music & Memory and B & F Consulting to



At the Oct. 17 launch are, from left, Jessica Cordani, Karen King, Cathie Brady, Stacy Carleton, Barbara Frank and William Kowalewski.

learn how to effectively implement the program. Southington Care Center was chosen by the state of Connecticut as one of six skilled nursing centers to work with B & F Consulting to identify best practices in the implementation of Music & Memory.

The intent is to maximize the See **Music** on page 2

Hartford HealthCare celebrates milestone employees

Southington Care Center employees were among those congratulated by Hartford HealthCare Senior Services officials at the Longevity Celebration held Oct. 13. The event at Southington Care Center Courtyard gave the executive directors from the HHCSS communities the opportunity to honor those staffers who had achieved impressive milestones.

Southington Care Center honorees included: 25 years – Colleen Daddona, Cheryl Morek, Irene Stankus; 20 years – Krystyna Barniak, Sally Brennan, Margaret Gorski, Mary Klosek, Gina Melendez; 15 years: Carmen Castano, Wai Chung, Joseph Cordani, Astrid Edward, Linda Fournier, See **Kudos** on page 3

Southington Care Center welcomes Cirie Dorosh, assistant director of nursing

William Kowalewski, Southington Care Center executive director, welcomed Cirie S. Dorosh, RN, BSN, CRRN, as the new assistant director of nursing effective July 18. Dorosh has an extensive background in the nursing profession, serving as clinical nurse manager, nursing supervisor and staff nurse in various healthcare settings.



When she was a teenager, her mother had attempted to inspire her to be a nurse or teacher but it wasn't until Dorosh was married with a family that she decided to heed her mother's advice. "As my youngest entered kindergarten, I entered St. Mary's School of Nursing in Waterbury," she recalled, noting that it was a challenge at times to manage college and family.

In her first position as a registered nurse, Dorosh worked on the rehabilitation floor for

spinal cord, neurological and orthopedic patients. "It was then that I fell in love with my patients and my career," she said. She continued with her education, earning her bachelor of science in nursing and becoming a Certified Registered Rehabilitation Nurse.

Over time she decided "It was time for me to experience new change, and develop new interests and expertise in a new field," she said. Working as a clinical nurse manager for a short-term rehabilitation unit, she enjoyed the long-term care residents as well. Opportunity knocked when she applied for the assistant director of nursing position at Southington Care Center. "As this door opened, I found myself entering a positive, inspiring world of short-term rehab and long-term care, working with kind, caring sensitive and committed people at SCC," she said.

Dorosh holds professional affiliations and certifications See **Nurse** on page 4

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impact of the program, anticipating benefits including - but not limited to - the reduction in the reliance of anti-psychotic and anti-anxiety medications, reduced agitation and sun downing as well as enhanced engagement and socialization with family, friends, staff and peers.

As an appreciation for Southington Care Center's success in implementing the program, Barbara Frank and Cathie Brady of B & F Consulting announced that Music & Memory will donate an additional five iPods for residents. The information about how to implement the program effectively will be shared with others in a published guide, Frank said.

During the opening celebration, certified nursing assistant Jessica Cordani, who has worked at the Care Center for 12 years, spoke of her personal experience with Music & Memory. She recalled giving an individualized iPod to a resident to listen to her personalized playlist. She then responded by becoming restful and meditative. Cordani said

the music usually triggers a positive response. "I love music and believe in its benefits," she said.

Rotary Club of Southington is also funding Music & Memory. "I really think what this donation will do is much more than purchasing iPods. For residents, the music brings back those memories that have been long forgotten and provide a time of joy, clarity and peace even if it's only for a short time. It is a wonderful thing to give that gift to those who will most benefit," said Rev. Victoria Triano, Southington Care Center pastor and Rotary member, speaking on behalf of Robin Morrell, Rotary president.

In preparation for the launch, Music & Memory team members attended a three-day in-service. Members are: Executive Director Bill Kowalewski, Therapeutic Recreation Director Stacy Carleton, Director of Nursing Marje Palladino, Assistant Director of Nursing Cirie Dorosh, Marsha Jarush, Jessica Cordani, Rachel Wallace, Vinnie DeSanti and Donna Malicki-Gornicz.

The Fanelli Room erupted in applause when it was announced that the goal is every resident will receive a personal iPod loaded with his or her own favorite music.

Garden waterfall symbolizes McCartys' commitment to Southington Care

The soothing sounds of a free-flowing waterfall are enhancing the peaceful environment of the Southington Care Center Healing Garden. The Donna & Steve McCarty Waterfall was dedicated on Sept. 16 with family members, friends and staff attending. The funds for the new waterfall and complimentary landscaping were raised through the memorial golf tournament held this spring.

The McCartys, longtime friends of Southington Care Center, have been very generous in supporting the programs and features - including a Christmas tree - that enhance the lives of residents, said Executive Director William Kowalewski. "The new waterfall is a beautiful reminder of the McCartys' ongoing commitment to our community's residents, families and staff," he said.



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Dana Pardo, Jeanette Simonetta, Zofia Skalska, Elaine Stath, Maddalena Velez, Jolanta Wyluda, Anna Zajda; 10 years: Marlis Clingan, Donna Malicki-Gornicz, Erica Onofreo, Esther Rankine, Anna Russo, Michelle Silva, Zofia Kopacz; and five years: Penny Baker, Elzbieta Brzostek-Parciak, Charlotte Ineza, Kelsey Lang, Rebecca Martinez, Emily Parizo, Agnieszka Parzych, Rachel Pinter, Ramonet Rosario, Jonathan Sadusky, Jelisa Sampson, Victoria Smith, Milagros Vazquez, Shelby Verrone-Webb.

"Today we honor our milestone anniversary recipients who have worked between five and 35 years," said Lisa Connolly, NHA, MS, vice president, Hartford HealthCare Community Network, in remarks during the ceremony. "This is a testament to the culture of our communities, the extraordinary commitment of the staff, and their passion for seniors we are so privileged to serve each and every day."

Southington Care Center now offers a free Alzheimer's and dementia support group on the second Wednesday of the month, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Next dates: Nov. 9 and Dec. 14. Contact Stacy Carleton, 860.378.1286.