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- The Robinson Assisted Living
- Adult Day Program
- The Atwater Memory Care Assisted Living
- Long Term Care
- Post-Acute Center
- The Village Retirement Community
- Wellness
- Fresh Choices Program
- Home Care
- Hospice
- Rehabilitation
- Community Services
- Game Refuge
- Volunteering
- Auxiliary
- Giving to McLean

Family Newsletter

The McLean Family Newsletter is emailed to family members of the Health Center approximately every six weeks. If you are a family member and would like to begin receiving the Family Newsletter by email please send your address to vickie.dirienzo@mcleancare.org To view current and archived newsletters, please click on this link

July Newsletter

[Click Here to Download Our July Newsletter](#)

Activites for the week

[Click here for Activities for the upcoming week](#)

Understanding the Complex Role of a Hospice Spiritual Counselor

Bonnie Lillis, MA, LPC, McLean Hospice Spiritual and Bereavement Counselor, pens article for the American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine.

“The role of the spiritual counselor may be the most misunderstood due to the nature of this professional title”, writes Bonnie Lillis in the introduction of her article appearing in this month’s issue of the American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AJMPM). “The misconception for many new patients and their family members is a basic misunderstanding of the definition of spirituality.”

Expanding on the notion that “Spirituality is what provides meaning, purpose, connection, and transcendence in one’s life. This can take many forms and is found in a multitude of areas. It can come from organized religion, nature, family, friends, work, and frequently a combination of these.” The role of a spiritual counselor and hospice care “is holistic in that it meets physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the patient and their family.”

Upcoming Events

July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

There are no events scheduled for this month, please click next to see the next month or see our [list of all upcoming events](#).

As a Hospice Spiritual and Bereavement Counselor at McLean since 2008, Bonnie has been providing patient and family support at the end-of-life, as well as facilitating bereavement support groups. She is well-versed in the caring for individuals and families as they face end-of-life care and the intricacy of grief. In her article, Lillis offers four reflective case studies where a spiritual counselor provided solace, comfort and peace to those in need. Her examples talk about providing support as patients reflect on their lives, their choices and the distress they experience as they are facing at the end of their lives. By sharing her creative and sometimes unorthodox methods of reaching the patient, Lillis' case studies illustrate the unique support offered by spiritual counselors and the peace the patients find within.

Bonnie Lillis' full article may be found on the [*Sage Journal website, in the American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, June 2014*](#). AM J HOSP PALLIAT CARE June 2014 vol. 31 no. 4 353-355.

Bonnie Lillis is a Licensed Professional Counselor with a Master's degree in Community Counseling. She has served as a Hospice Spiritual and Bereavement Counselor for the New McLean since 2008. Bonnie provides patient and family support at the end-of-life, facilitates bereavement support groups, and hosts community outreach lectures.

Bonnie facilitates a Bereavement Support Group at McLean that is offered to the community free of charge:

Spousal Bereavement Support Group

2nd and 4th Monday of the month

10:00 am to 11:30 am

McLean

75 Great Pond Road

Simsbury, CT 06070

The Health Center, Cole Conference Room

For more information, or to register, call 860-658-3950.

"Got Confusion? Memory Loss. How Does that Feel?"

Alzheimer's Advocate, Mal Allard, spends the afternoon with McLean caregivers, staff and families to talk about Dementia.

"Go with the flow" was the message of Mal Allard, R.N., Alzheimer's consultant, Alzheimer's advocate and founder of a company called Their Real World, to a group of over 20 caregivers, staff and families at The New McLean on June 18.

As Mal began the meeting with a non-sensical agenda, talk of cancer and diabetes, and news of a dead bird and mention of being in the wrong room, many audience members looked around in confusion. Then as Mal walked over to

a table full of listeners and sat down, seemingly waiting for the speaker to begin, things got more awkward.

Once back at the podium, she asked, "Is anyone confused?" For those of us who had not left thinking we were in the wrong room, of course we were. "Well that's how I imagine someone with dementia or Alzheimer's feels on a regular basis."

Explaining that folks with memory impairment may comprehend half of the words that are spoken, so they are always feeling confused. They may also feel like they are constantly being tested, especially when we ask them questions they don't know the answer to, or unable to give the expected response.

She explained that our role as caregivers is to help re-route their confusion, even if it's only for a moment. We need to consider their immediate point in time and create a positive environment for them. A positive environment can be established in a matter of seconds, with mention of a loved one, or a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday." Creating this up-beat environment that may only last for a few seconds helps bring smile and positive emotions to those with dementia.

"Their care plan is us," Mal concluded. "We need to jump on board with dementia like any other disease – unlike cancer or diabetes, there is no medical cure, or surgery that might help. Their care plan is us. Help them live a seemingly normal life."

Megan Gill, Director of McLean's The Atwater Receives Two Certifications

Megan Gill of McLean joins the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP) and International Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (ICCDP) as a CDP® Certified Dementia Practitioner®.

Megan Gill, Director of McLean's The Atwater memory care assisted living community, recently completed extensive training and joined the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP) and International Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (ICCDP) as a CDP® Certified Dementia Practitioner®.

Created to promote standards of excellence in dementia education, the goal of the NCCDP/ICCDP is to develop and encourage

comprehensive standards of excellence in direct-care skills, education and sensitivity in the area of dementia care for professionals and other caregivers who provide services to clients with dementia.

“As Dementia care professionals, the more knowledge we have on the diseases, the better we can support those in our care,” says Gill. “This education enables me to share the skills and training I received with our residents and care partners.”

In addition to being the Director of [McLean Village](#) and Assisted Living communities, Megan facilitates a [support group](#) (PDF) sponsored by The Alzheimer’s Association, Connecticut Chapter, for caregivers of those with dementia on the first Monday of every month at 1:30 p.m. Call (860) 658-3941 for more information.

[Activities Calendar for the Upcoming Week](#)

[Click here for this week's Activities](#)

[Simsbury High School Music Honor Society shares their gift of music at McLean as part of The Harmony Bridge Project](#)

Members of the Simsbury High School music program had toes tapping and hands clapping as they performed well-known folk tunes for McLean residents on June 12 in the fireside lobby.

Many of the performers are part of the Tri M Music Honor Society, a program of the National Association for Music Education. The group participates in The Harmony Bridge Project, an initiative started by Michael Levine, founder of the Dallas Brass, which encourages student musicians to play for the elderly in their local communities.

[Activities Calendar for the Upcoming Week](#)

[Click here for this Week's Activities Calendar](#)

[McLean Auxiliary Awards Grants](#)

**McLean Auxiliary Awards \$20,000 in Grants at
Annual Annual Meeting and Strawberry Festival**

Directors from the benefitting departments accept their Grant Awards

For more than 40 years, the McLean Auxiliary has supported McLean by providing volunteer services and grants that directly benefit McLean residents, staff and visitors.

On Monday, June 2, the McLean Auxiliary awarded \$20,000 at their Annual Meeting and Strawberry Festival to benefit resident life and included music and horticultural activities, a Patient Special Needs Fund, specialized equipment for patient care, and a new server for residents in the newly-renovated dining room.

“The McLean Auxiliary is integral to our mission and success and their generous charitable contributions enhance quality of life and programs for residents every day of the year,” said David Bordonaro, McLean President. “

The McLean Auxiliary also awards an annual scholarship to an employee, or a child of an employee who will be attending college in the fall to pursue a career in a health care related field. Debbie Davis, RN, an evening supervisor at McLean, (pictured below) accepted the \$1,500 scholarship from Jane Stevenson, McLean Auxiliary Board Member and Scholarship Chairman.

The 2008 scholarship recipient, James Cody of North Granby, returned to express his continued gratitude and shared that he has now just graduated from American International College with a Doctorate in Physical Therapy.

The McLean Auxiliary raised the majority of funds through their Gift Shop, conveniently located in the Living Room of the Health Center. All purchases are tax-free and there is something for everyone – from cards to jewelry, scarfs, seasonal gifts, light snacks and other items of comfort and beauty.

For more information on the McLean Auxiliary, visit their website at www.mcleancare.org/auxiliary

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The New McLean ... So Much More

McLean does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in admission, treatment, or publication in its programs, services, and activities, or in employment. For further information about this policy, contact Human Relations 860-658-3700.

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