

Village Insights

The Newsletter of Carleton-Willard Village

Fall 2010

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Carleton-Willard Village is a not-for-profit continuing care retirement community accredited by CARF-CCAC. Carleton-Willard is a teaching affiliate of the Boston University School of Medicine.

Dining at The Village: An Experience in Good Taste



Perfectly Prepared – The Village’s Dining Services team plans, cooks and serves food that combines fresh ingredients, great taste and high nutrition. The menu features a changing variety of resident favorites – salmon and lamb chops are popular entrées – and new creations tested in the CWV kitchens.

Tasty food, proper nutrition and a rewarding dining experience are all part of the program for CWV’s Dining Services.

Imagine preparing 875 meals – a number of them specially prepared for individual diner’s needs. Or cooking 80 pounds of summer squash, just one of the week’s vegetable side dishes. Then there’s proper nutrition and special dietary needs to be considered...not to mention making sure all those meals meet the taste-conscious demands of discriminating palates!

One thing is clear: Dining Services personnel go the extra mile – every day, at

every meal – for the residents of Carleton-Willard Village.

Residents will be the first to tell you that meals at *The Village* are special. The menu offers residents a wide selection of quality beef, chicken, lamb and seafood, along with fresh produce, much of it locally grown. Managing that menu, however, is not easy.

“The biggest challenge we face is keeping our menus new and interesting, while at the same time offering resident favorites,” says Matthew Hinkle, CWV’s Director of Dining Services. “Luckily, our residents feel very comfortable approaching me about meals, and that’s important. The

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Resident Input Essential to Great Meals

Meals at Carleton-Willard Village are not just about food. The dining staff and residents work together to create the optimum dining experience.



A small sampling of some of the delectable goodies prepared for last September's Food Expo.

According to CWV Registered Dietitian Cherie Asgeirsson, “We are sensitive to the fact that our community is ‘home.’ So in the last five years, we’ve increased the individualization at mealtime. For example, we order special products

and ingredients, or serve people early breakfasts or late lunches as requested.”

“The variety of our food at CWV is outstanding,” adds Asgeirsson. “We use seasonal produce. Multiple entrees are offered in the dining room every day.”

Greeted by a hostess, diners are seated at the type of table they prefer, whether it’s a club table with a group, or a smaller private table. Residents are encouraged to make reservations to ensure that their table is ready and waiting for them.

Taking cues from residents’ likes and dislikes, Dining Services rotates menus every five weeks. Chef’s specials are offered daily and may be added to the future menus if they’re a hit with residents.

Dietary restrictions can also be innovatively integrated into meal preparation. For example, some residents are gluten-intolerant. After further research and conversations with residents, Dining Services found that many residents who have no gluten tolerance issues were looking for ways to reduce gluten in their diets. As a result, simple changes – like substituting rice flour for wheat flour when making soup bases – benefit all residents.

Dining Services solicits input from residents during the spring and fall *Food Expos*, where new appetizers, entrees and desserts are showcased. “Our Food Expos are the perfect venue to get feedback from residents,” explains Matthew Hinkle, CWV’s Director of Dining Services. “They fill out ballots for each item, providing our chefs with information to test and tweak recipes.”

The *Food Expos* have become one of the most popular social gatherings at *The Village* – an indicator of just how much *Village* life revolves around mealtime.

Hinkle also hosts mixers during the winter months to further interact with residents and give new residents the chance to make new acquaintances. “We enjoy a cocktail social hour, and then dine together,” says Hinkle. “I seat attendees to give new residents an opportunity to meet people and expand their dining into relationships.”



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Colors, Shapes Help Define Dining Experience In Ross-Worthen Center

Mealtime is important throughout *The Village*, but perhaps no more so than at CWV's *Ross-Worthen Center for Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementia*. In keeping with the Center's innovative architectural design and groundbreaking therapies and treatment programs, cooking and serving meals to Ross-Worthen residents has been reworked from the ground up.

CWV's Dining Services staff and dietitians take cues from leading research from institutions such as Boston University's Alzheimer's Disease Center and incorporate pertinent findings into mealtime. Food is important, but so is what works best for the residents.

CWV Registered Dietitian Cherie Asgeirsson explains, "We want residents in the Alzheimer's Center to be as independent as possible, and there are certain study findings we've incorporated that facilitate this goal."

According to a Boston University dementia study, the rods – the parts of the retina which detect light and perceive color – are more sensitive in Alzheimer's patients' eyes, indicating they see colors better. These findings led to the use of new dinner settings.

"We use bright red china, bowls, cups and glasses in the Alzheimer's center," says Matthew Hinkle, CWV's Director of Dining Services. "Along with high-contrast tablecloths, the colored china makes it easier for these residents to see the definition between what they're eating and what their food is served on." Dining Services has found that patients not only see their food and dinnerware better, but consume 67% more food and 83% more liquid.

Like brightly colored dinnerware, square dining tables provide a more distinct edge than round tables. Definition of space is an essential part of helping residents stay positively oriented to their environment, and aids in maneuvering and performing tasks.

Trays aren't utilized in the Alzheimer's Center because too many food choices grouped together can be overwhelming to patients.

"Alzheimer's patients can be distracted easily," Asgeirsson explains. "We serve meals one course at a time, restaurant-style. This helps them focus better on eating."

During mealtime, residents in the Alzheimer's Center are also grouped with residents that have similarities because it helps them be more independent. "We seat residents with like abilities together so they can model each other's behaviors," explains Asgeirsson. "We prefer to give cues...we only want to jump in when necessary."

Individual's abilities are always taken into consideration. Some residents may be able to order for themselves, while others require the assistance of family, friends or staff. And, there are residents who require much more assistance at mealtime and a quieter setting.

Individual tastes are also accommodated whenever possible. According to Hinkle, "Our diet technician has the likes and dislikes of each resident in the Alzheimer's Center on file."

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(Top left, top right) Dining Services staff preparing meals for residents of the Ross-Worthen Alzheimer's Center; (bottom left) Registered Dietitian Cherie Asgeirsson regularly confers with residents on the dining experience; (bottom right) A typical meal presentation, illustrating the high-contrast dinner setting.



The Village Calendar

Oct. 11: She's a Witch!

Join us for a showing of *Three Sovereigns for Sarah*, the celebrated 1985 PBS film starring Vanessa Redgrave. *Three Sovereigns* documents the infamous Salem Witch Trials as never before. Showtime is 2:00 pm in the Auditorium. (See if you can recognize the Villager who had a small part in the film!)

Oct. 12: Wallach's Traveling Shoe Sale

Need new shoes? Larry Kirk brings a selection of many of the most popular brands and styles for you to try. Auditorium, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Oct. 22: VOTE!

Because CWV is a designated voting site, Bedford Town Clerk Doreen Tremblay and her staff will be on Main Street to assist residents with filling out absentee ballots for the upcoming November elections.

Oct. 27: Prepare for Laughter

Join your fellow Villagers for a theater experience the *New York Times* calls "absorbing, unblinking and sharply funny!" It's *Circle Mirror Transformation*, the off-Broadway smash, at the Huntington Theatre in Boston. It's creative drama at its best! We'll depart at 12:45.

Nov. 5: Fuller Craft Museum

Dedicated to the art of contemporary craft, the Fuller Museum is a fun and inspirational adventure. A special lunch out is included.

Nov. 8: From Gershwin to Broadway

Esteemed concert pianist Frederick Moyer comes to The Village for what's sure to be a performance you'll long remember. Moyer's enthusiasm, artistry, adventurous programming and delightful commentary have made him a favorite among audiences in more than 40 countries. Not to be missed! 7:15 in the Auditorium.

Nov. 16: The Snow Birds

Some of the rarest and most beautiful birds of winter are the raptors, eagles, hawks and owls. These amazing birds come from their northern breeding grounds to hunt over our forests, fields and salt marshes. Join Bill Gette, Sanctuary Director of the Joppa Flats Education Center, for a fascinating evening. 7:15 in the Auditorium.

Nov. 26: Pass the Potatoes

The Hovrath family forgives their trespassers – all but one. Sharp jokes and tough love drive *Vengeance Is The Lord's*, a searing and funny new drama at the Huntington Theatre. We depart for Boston at 12:45. Holiday dinners will never be the same!

An Experience in Good Taste

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residents definitely guide our menus. We also see what they are eating and change our menus accordingly."

CWV Registered Dietitian Cherie Asgeirsson echoes that sentiment. "*The Village* offers so many opportunities to interact on so many different levels, I hear from residents all the time. For example, we have lectures and discussions on current nutrition topics, which residents frequently request."

Maintaining a quality dining experience is the primary objective of Dining Services. To this end, the wait staff is the residents' link to the chefs. With such a large population, it's no surprise that some might like their green beans, for example, *al dente*, while others may prefer them cooked a little more. The wait staff relays information to the kitchen so meals can be cooked the way residents like them.

The nutritional experience is also given careful attention. Every meal is a collaborative effort between Dining Services and the Nutrition staff.

"We always exceed the (state's) nutritional guidelines," Hinkle emphasizes. "With the computer program our diet tech uses, and input from Cherie, our dietitians, chefs and cooks are able to prepare meals that are healthful and delicious, just as they've been ordered."

Dining Experience

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The dining initiatives adopted in CWV's Alzheimer's Center have proven to be successful. "A quality assurance study was done on the dining program in the Alzheimer's Center," notes Hinkle, "and it was found to be beneficial to the residents." To maintain effectiveness, CWV's medical staff

pays close attention to what patients are eating and how well they handle mealtime, charting each resident's progress.

"We absolutely want to make sure that each resident is properly managed, medically speaking," explains Asgeirsson. "But we want them to enjoy the food too." Hinkle agrees. "Mealtime should be fun!"

So Many Good Reasons Why There's No Place Like Home

by Barbara A. Doyle, President & Chief Executive Officer



Talk to just about any *Village* resident, or a member of their family, and it won't be long before you hear the word "community." It's obvious even to first-time visitors that there's a strong sense of community here.

Are communities like ours spontaneous, organic entities that "just happen"? Or can they

be deliberately planned and built? Does a community's character attract a certain type of person, or does it merely reflect the personalities of its inhabitants?

For those of us entrusted with responsibility of managing and operating *The Village*, we seek answers to these questions every day. What would make our community better? Stronger? A more desirable place to be? We ask because we know every one of our residents, and every prospective resident, has at one time had to seriously consider: "Is Carleton-Willard the community for me?"

We're continually investigating what makes people feel connected to communities, especially to ours. While some information comes from formal sources, we find that talking to our residents is far more enlightening:

- **An inherent sense of pride in the community.** Residents naturally resonate with the history, mission, values and aspirations of Carleton-Willard Village.
- **Quality of facilities.** Our facilities and grounds create a positive, nurturing place to live, interact with neighbors, engage in cultural, educational and physical activities, and when needed, assist with a patient's recovery. In building, we weren't going for "the look," but rather, to enhance day-to-day living for residents in meaningful ways.

- **Caliber of services.** More than just the range of services offered – which is considerable – the ultimate value of service is measured in ways such as high resident satisfaction and consistently prompt, courteous and helpful staff. Even seemingly small things – for example, one of our chefs meeting with a resident to determine the best way to prepare a meal – can have a huge impact on the quality of life.

- **Independence.** Residents love a sense of being "in control." They feel they can plan their day-to-day lives, organize get-togethers with fellow residents, start up an activities group...or simply relax at home or tool around in the garden. They enjoy determining things like meal selections and upcoming cultural events, or giving feedback on community issues such as recycling and energy use. And while there are plenty of opportunities offered for social interaction, no one feels pressured to participate. Residents engage on their own terms.

- **Quality of fellow residents.** We noted an equal appreciation by residents of those who shared common experiences as well as those with more diverse and unusual histories. This shows a desire to both share common ground and expand social horizons – and indicates sincere mutual respect among *Villagers*.

- **A feeling of safety and security.** The ultimate feeling of "being home."

In fact, I can't escape the idea that one of the main reasons our residents feel so good about living here is precisely because we do "feel like home." We might not look exactly like the community where they once lived, but those qualities – security, independence, shared values...social interaction when you wanted it, solitude when you needed it...appreciation of nature and one's surroundings... respect for others – these are some of the unique attributes of home and community. And, Carleton-Willard Village.





Golden – Resident and champion swimmer Morse Payne poses with Muire Flynn, CWV's Director of Aquatics & Fitness, showing off his four gold medals won at the Senior Games in Springfield, MA.



Sharing Expertise – CWV's Peggy Whiteley (left) and Valerie Gingras met with Rob Harkins, CEO of ECH retirement facilities in Australia. Rob visited to learn about some of CWV's innovative programs.



Sock It To Me – Village residents Anne Dawson (left) and Kaye Graff of the Knit Wits show off some of their handiwork. Hats and socks are donated to the Emerson and Bedford VA Hospitals.



A Sticky Wicket – Resident Mary Hastings discusses the finer points of proper play with Robert Kroeger, US Croquet Association Director of Instruction, during a well-attended clinic at CWV.



Natural Joy – Residents and visitors experienced The Village's many beautiful gardens during the annual Garden Tour June 8. After checking out our gardeners' creative efforts, participants gathered for a box lunch.



Master Horticulturist – Philip Kenney, CWV's gardener, landscape artist and creator of The Village's common gardens. Philip can often be found offering his extensive gardening expertise to residents.



Around The Village

The Village's Nursing Center Scores High Marks With State

Carleton-Willard Village received high marks in the latest satisfaction survey conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The Commonwealth has been sending surveys to family members and other responsible parties every two years to assess the care of residents living in licensed nursing centers. This was the third such survey conducted since 2005.

Out of 430 Massachusetts facilities surveyed, Carleton-Willard Village scored 4.8 out of a possible 5 in overall satisfaction, placing it in the top 3% of all facilities. Carleton-Willard's results were well above average in each category assessed, including administration, environment, activities, care provided, food, and residents' rights. Over 98% of respondents said they would recommend Carleton-Willard's nursing center to a family member or friend, and many took the time to provide written comments on some aspect of the care received.

Further, in August, the Department of Public Health performed its annual onsite survey of The Village. Conducted over three days – and without prior notice – the survey found CWV deficiency-free in every aspect of nursing center operations.