

# Dining Room and Bistro Welcome Back Residents

## *Residents say dining experience is just as much about camaraderie as it is about the food*

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, one of the first precautions Walnut Village took was to close its dining room and bistro to indoor dining. Although residents enjoyed the same well-prepared meals delivered to their homes, for many, the food was only part of the dining experience residents loved about the community.



*Chef Jason chats with residents in The Grove dining room.*

“Dining here definitely goes beyond just the food,” said resident Eve Silverman. “It’s also about the camaraderie, the fresh flowers on the table, the linens and the smiling faces around you.”

But now with the pandemic waning, both the bistro and dining room are open again to provide the dining experience residents missed.

“Most residents are thrilled they can once again share a meal with friends in our dining room and bistro,” said Walnut Village’s Dining Services Director Kim Norton. “Bit by bit, we’re getting back to living as we did pre-pandemic. Dining together is a major step in the right direction.”

Indoor dining at Walnut Village has been available since late February, but with limited capacity and social distancing. Except during the height of the pandemic, outdoor dining was always an option for residents but many chose to have their meals delivered to their homes.

“Despite some of the remaining restrictions, it’s like residents never missed a beat returning,” Kim said. “Many still sit at their favorite tables and enjoy being served by the friendly faces they’ve missed.”

“Although staff has done a good job delivering our meals to our homes, it’s nice to get out and back to the dining room,” said resident Ed Moore. “It’s enjoyable to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner with

others again.”

Residents are particularly thrilled with the return of themed and holiday dining, which was scaled back during the pandemic. Now, residents can enjoy the festive decorations, music and cooking demonstrations unique to the dining room and bistro. “One of the things that we know from experience,” Kim said, “is how much the residents really enjoy holiday and theme celebrations. So far we have celebrated St. Patrick’s Day, Easter, Mother’s Day, and resumed our Chef’s Table, where residents eat with our chef.”