Beth Collins and Ann Polanski are hard at work on the custom-made wooden jigsaw puzzle on the coffee table in Ann’s elegantly arranged cottage. Though both women are very serious wooden puzzle aficionados, the two constantly engage in chitchat, banter and a wildly funny barrage of what they themselves admit are “really bad jokes.”

“People sometimes think you move to a community only because you have to,” comments Beth with her trademark infectious grin. “I moved to Ashlar Village because living here is fun!”

Ann agrees. “Forget worrying about laugh lines. Laughing is the best medicine and it’s good for what ails anybody.”

Both long-time Wallingford residents, Ann and Beth are in their 60’s and have been good friends for 30 years. After Ann’s husband Ed passed and Beth lost her longtime partner Charlie to illness, both women decided to take charge of their futures. Ann, a former marketing manager, recalls, “I had originally looked at Ashlar Village for my mother after my father died. It was extremely stressful...
Our new Director of Dining Services, Jules Martin, has always been curious about food and flavors. “My mother and grandmother always made great food.” Jules remembers. “Working in my grandmother’s garden and kitchen during summer vacation, I learned the importance of fresh food and classic cooking techniques. I think that’s where I first learned that ‘food is memory.’”

A graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Jules now brings his skill and love of great food and culinary management to residents of Ashlar Village. “I am privileged to give something back to the people who have given their lives to building this country. My goal is to provide good meals that taste good and consistently enhance the excellence of our kitchen.”

Jules and his staff also focus on staying in touch with residents’ tastes and preferences. “We want to make our residents a greater part of the dining experience here at Ashlar Village,” comments Jules. “Every third Tuesday of the month, we host a food meeting that all residents are welcome to attend. The group provides us with valuable feedback about the menu and offers...”
For over 40 years, professor Bob Knowles helped thousands of students unlock the mysteries of mathematics at the University of Connecticut. But when a stroke laid him low last March, Bob needed some help getting his health back. After leaving a skilled nursing facility in the area, Bob turned to Pond Ridge Assisted Living at Masonicare for a short-term residential stay and rehabilitation care.

“When I arrived here, I wasn’t sure just how much progress I could make,” recalls Bob. “But after just a few weeks, I felt my mobility and energy returning. I believe it was the incredible staff that made such a difference in my improvement. They are simply the best. Everyone here is so knowledgeable and helpful. Step by step, they are here to cheer you on and make sure you have everything you need to reach your potential. I frankly don’t think I would be where I am today without the support and care I have received here.”

Though Bob initially came to Masonicare to regain his strength, after living here for a few months, he is considering assisted living as a new way of life. “How can you argue with three wonderful meals a day and never having to worry about snow shoveling and home maintenance again? I also enjoy the incredible range of activities that are available such as The Great Cathedrals of Europe lecture series I’ve been attending here. Now that we’re in the cold weather season, I really like the fact that I don’t have to worry about transportation or becoming isolated this winter. I am surprised and pleased to learn that I really love living here so much. I think assisted living at Pond Ridge is a very smart choice for me.”

Many seniors and their families find that a short-term stay at Masonicare is an ideal way to experience the special lifestyle and caring staff we offer. Masonicare Assistant Administrator Jason Reiger concurs, “Choosing a community is an important decision to make, and for many people, having the chance to come to Masonicare for a short respite stay or longer recovery care provides a great way to ‘try us out’ and see if Masonicare assisted living is the right fit for them.”

Cooking Up New Food Memories

suggestions about new additions and changes they’d like to see. Residents also bring us family recipes they love and, whenever possible, we incorporate these into the menu.” Constantly looking for ways to enhance the resident experience, Jules is introducing “Dine with the Director” starting in early 2015. Each month, Jules will join residents for a meal. This will provide new opportunity to review food and continually enhance our dining services.

Jules and his team have also spiced up year-round dining with sumptuous holiday buffets, twice monthly Sunday brunch buffets and they have expanded Masonicare’s Eat Local campaign with the addition of a Farmer’s Market every week in the Duck Inn during summer months. “We are committed to bringing the freshest local food to Ashlar Village. Most of our produce comes from this region and some as near by as Farmer Joe’s right here in Wallingford.”

“I have one of the best jobs in the world,” Jules confides. “After all, eating is one of the great pleasures in life and making people happy in this way is always a treat for me!”
Health and Wellness

Cold outside? Stay in shape inside.

It may be freezing out there, but at Ashlar Village you won’t have to hibernate this winter. “Even when it’s snowing outside, there’s something to do all day long inside to stay fit,” says Masonicare Wellness Nurse Sue Larson. “Whatever your fitness goal, you’ll find all kinds of fun ways to stretch, strengthen or socialize all season long.”

“Every morning we offer an exercise class where you can get a great head-to-toe-workout and rev up your immune system, even while sitting down. On Saturdays, you can join in on a Tai Chi class that helps promote core strength and balance, a key to helping reduce your chance of a fall. For a feeling of increased peace and serenity, nothing beats our Yoga classes that are held twice a week. Our exercise room is also filled with the latest exercise equipment to help build cardiovascular and muscle strength. Our exercise instructor provides regular orientations and individual guidance.”

“And through our partnership with Gaylord, our residents can go for an invigorating swim twice a week. Many residents also enjoy daily indoor walks – with some folks going a mile or more. So remember, even though it’s cold outside, you can still work-out inside!”

You’re Invited to an Open House

Come see for yourself what life at Ashlar Village offers. Our Open House gives you ample time to tour a variety of housing options — including apartments, cottages and villas — as well as the shopping, dining and activity areas in The Hartog Activities Center. You’ll also hear from our residents why they chose Ashlar Village. Meeting and socializing with current residents provides valuable insight into the Ashlar Village lifestyle. So mark your calendar for one of our next Open Houses:

Thursday, February 19 · Thursday, March 5 · Thursday, March 19
Tuesday, April 7 · Thursday, April 23 · Thursday May 7 · Tuesday, May 19

11:00 a.m. · Presentation and Q&A
Noon · Lunch with residents
1:00–2:30 p.m. · Tour of residential options

For further information on attending an Open House, please contact the Ashlar Village Marketing Department at 800-382-2244.

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