

# Village Living

Walnut Village Retirement Community

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Orange County's award-winning continuing care retirement community.

## Jet-Setter Joyce Kessler Loves Coming Home to Walnut Village

When Joyce Kessler was making the move to a retirement community, it was not an instant process. After visiting five different communities, she found that something important to her was lacking in each one. But when she decided to take a look at Walnut Village upon the recommendation of a friend, everything changed.

“From the moment I pulled into the driveway, I had a very warm feeling,” she said. “Even the exterior was very friendly, and it was exactly what I was

looking for – a smaller, intimate community where I felt like I would get to know most people.”

Now that Joyce has made Walnut Village her home, she is free to pursue one of her biggest passions: traveling. Joyce feels that her love for traveling has gotten stronger, since living at Walnut Village because it gives her the freedom to be able to leave the community and know that her household is being well cared for.



*Living at Walnut Village affords Joyce the opportunity to continue her passion for travel.*

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## The New Year Means New Opportunities at Walnut Village!

Call Walnut Village home in 2023 and experience its renowned spirit of community by either choosing an entrance fee option, with lower monthly fees, or our NEW month-to-month option with NO entrance fee. Call for details: **714-507-7003** or email us at **WVsales@frontporch.net**.



*Residents enjoy fine dining in Walnut Village's dining room.*

# Residents Get Involved with Disaster Preparedness

## Earthquake Committee teams up with researchers to test latest technologies

Residents are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of community life at Walnut Village, including the community's comprehensive emergency preparedness plan in the event of any emergency including an earthquake.

"We have residents from all professions and life experiences, said Walnut Village Executive Director Debbie Infield. "Their wealth of knowledge provides valuable input to Walnut Village."

That's why when researchers at the University of California, Irvine wanted to demonstrate new technologies to help vulnerable seniors stay safe during an earthquake and other common disasters, they turned to the volunteer, resident-run Earthquake Committee.

For several months, UCI researchers in computer science, geriatric medicine and nursing, as well as community partners in Orange County, the City of Anaheim and the Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing worked with Walnut Village as a community test case to develop CareDEX, a technology-enabled emergency response system. Both staff and residents were deeply involved and engaged with the project.

Months before the demonstration, the CareDEX team interviewed Earthquake Committee members about their procedures, specifically what worked in the past and what they felt could be improved. Interviewees included committee Chair Judy Phillips, who worked for years as part of a stress management team for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) where she supported FEMA employees deployed during natural disasters and other emergency situations like the 1994 Northridge earthquake.

"The biggest obstacle during drills was the time it took to identify missing residents and physically locate them on campus," Judy said.

During the CareDEX drill, which coincided with the International Great ShakeOut, a group of about 15 resident volunteers carried CareDEX electronic tracking devices the size of a cell phone for about a week leading up to the ShakeOut. Using GPS, it shows their current location, and helped establish quality control on the system. Their involvement helped the researchers learn how to digitally locate residents for staff and first responders. By the end of the drill, residents holding the devices were easily located throughout the campus, even in remote places.



Resident volunteers and staff participate in a recent emergency preparedness drill.

"Disasters create a unique challenge for staff caring for older adults," Debbie said. Medical and mobility issues create more complexity when trying to evacuate residents impacted by disasters and staff members benefit from the CareDEX technology for several reasons. CareDEX allows staff to quickly locate residents to get them to a safe location where medical care can be rendered if needed. Similarly, a resident with memory impairment may become further disoriented during a disaster, increasing the likelihood of an elopement. CareDEX would be a critical asset in staff quickly locating that resident."

The Earthquake Committee team of 35 volunteers holds regular drills alongside the Walnut Village staff. Both teams search for residents door-to-door during a stimulated earthquake, with the goal of finding everyone. CareDEX gives the staff and volunteers an extra tool.

"The CareDEX system has tremendous potential in locating individuals in a senior community following a disaster," Judy said. "It was a fun and educational experience. Our residents' involvement helped the CareDEX team refine the system."

Walnut Village offers dozens of opportunities for residents to share existing skills, develop new ones and experience a fulfilling retirement experience. Resident safety is a high priority at Walnut Village. Call or email us to schedule your tour today at **714-507-7003** or **WVsales@frontporch.net**.

## Dining Services Director Kim Norton, RD. and her Team Give Residents a Delightful and Healthy Culinary Experience

Dining Services Director Kim Norton, RD. and her team work hard to create a delicious and healthy dining experience at Walnut Village. As a registered dietitian, she understands the nutritional needs of residents and works closely with the executive chef to create inspired menus that taste great and allow people to eat healthy.

“The Walnut Village dining experience is about flavorful entrees, fresh salads and delightful desserts all presented in an appealing manner,” Kim said. “It’s also about healthy options that people may not be able to get on a regular basis at home. When choosing a retirement community, we hear that prospective residents consistently rank their dining experience near the top of their expectations. That’s why we always keep our residents’ requests in mind not only from a taste and presentation perspective but also from a nutritional one.”

Registered dietitians and dining services directors play key roles at retirement communities. In fact, both are so important to the community that usually one can’t exist without the other. As dining services director, Kim oversees all operations in the dining room and kitchen. And as RD., she has the clinical knowledge to provide guidance and care to residents, including those with special dietary requirements.

“It’s about balance,” Kim said. “We have many options at Walnut Village both in the main dining room and at Mosaics, our bistro. We’re not shy about serving ‘comfort food’ like fried chicken and meatloaf, but always want to have healthier options available like salads and lean meats and fish. I’m big into color. Usually the more colorful the plate (such as a variety of fruits and vegetables) the healthier it is.”

Kim started her career as a registered dietitian 35-plus years ago in the senior living field of service and gained experience working at various hospitals, including at St. Joseph Hospital of Orange County.

“I have come full circle in a sense,” she said. “I enjoyed my time in senior living early in my career and was thrilled when I got the opportunity to return. Getting to know residents is a highlight. I missed that part of the job.”

Kim makes it a point that all residents know she’s a registered dietitian so she can assist them if asked about nutrition information or dining choices. The dining room and bistro regularly offer low-sodium, gluten-free and dairy-free options.



*Kim Norton welcomes residents to the Walnut Village dining room.*

“One of the improvements I made when I arrived a few years ago was to label all gluten-free and dairy-free items directly on the menu,” Kim said. “We also make our menus available to residents in advance so they can choose their items well before coming to the dining room and bistro on any given day.”

Dinner at Walnut Village’s The Grove dining room typically includes soup and salad, two entrée choices and a pasta of the week. Sides include fresh vegetables and fruits and a desert of the day. There is also an alternative menu offering a variety of other choices at each meal as well.

The bistro menu, served at Mosaics during breakfast and lunch, includes omelets, a build your own burger, salads and a variety of hot and cold deli sandwiches, all made to order. Both the main dining room and bistro menus change with the seasons.

“No doubt about it, meals here are delicious and well-prepared but they are just as much about connecting with each other and enjoying time together,” Kim said. “In fact, quite often I see residents eating with different friends every day. I’m happy I can play a small role in their dining experience.”

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“I know that when I come back it’s going to be the same as I left it ... but cleaner!” she laughed. She travels one week every month, noting that her favorite place she’s visited is “the next one!” And at Walnut Village she has the option of traveling with her fellow residents to destinations far and wide, all organized by the community’s Life Enrichment department.

Despite her jet-setting hobby, Joyce knows that coming home to Walnut Village means she’ll be able to enjoy one of her favorite aspects of the community: the residents. She finds the friendliness and acceptance of the residents to be outstanding. “It’s a melting pot of different people of different backgrounds, and I can relate to many of them,” Joyce said.

Joyce has also helped share a part of her culture with her fellow residents. She is very involved with her temple and was instrumental in having Rabbi Miriam from Temple Beth Tikvah host Walnut Village’s menorah lighting on the sixth night of Hanukkah. “I was the one who contacted her,” Joyce said. “She is a friend of probably 45 years. We went to Israel together, so we go way back.”

Aside from making friends in her community, Joyce

finds time to reconnect with her neighbors from her previous residence by playing mahjong. And at Walnut Village, she enjoys her duties as volunteer, “block captain” of the community’s Earthquake Committee She loves all that Walnut Village has to offer, including the wonderful food and desserts.

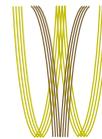
For those debating whether to move to Walnut Village, Joyce has just two words of advice: Don’t Wait. “Do it the minute you feel that you need to make a change in your life. This is a marvelous community and you can make it what you want,” she affirmed, noting that you can be as busy as you want or as solitary as you want. “The choice is yours.”

Bring your hobbies and passions to Walnut Village and experience new opportunities. Let us show you how great Village life can be. Schedule your tour today by calling **714-507-7003** or by emailing **WVsales@frontporch.net**.

## Happy New Year, Walnut Village!



Residents ring in 2023 with a  
New Year’s Eve Casino Night.



WALNUT VILLAGE

a front porch community

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