



# the Grapevine

## THE CAMBRIDGE HOMES

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August/September 2009

Newsletter Editor: Lisa Lambert, Program Director



### Upcoming Events at The Cambridge Homes

August 4

Art Matters  
Featuring the work, life and  
perspective of Marc Chagall

August 7

A Performance by  
Harvard MINHUET

August 14

Naturalist and Wildlife Expert  
Maya Ruttger-Cruciana  
will teach us about owls

August 14

Summer Sunset Concert  
"The Irish Guy"  
Kevin Farley

August 25

Derek Mann  
Presents....PARIS  
A slideshow and lecture

August 28

Summer Sunset Concert  
Cabaret Singer  
Sophia Bilides

September 13-19

Celebrate National  
Assisted Living Week  
(special events throughout the week)

September 17

Music Historian  
Jack Craig  
Featuring music, history and trivia

September 18

Our Annual Seafood Festival  
from 5 to 7 pm

September 24

Wine and Cheese Social  
with The Friends of  
Cambridge Homes

September 26

"Memories in Melodies"  
with Stanley Macht

## Preserving Your Memory: New Nutrition Program Launched at The Cambridge Homes



As we age, many of us have concerns not only about our overall health, but more specifically, our cognitive health, i.e. our memory! In fact, when asked, Americans rate Alzheimer's disease as their second most-feared illness, following cancer. The importance of proper nutrition to overall health is well established, but more recently the role of nutrition in helping to preserve memory function and reduce the risk of cognitive impairment has become more widely understood. At The Cambridge Homes we have recently implemented a specialized nutrition program to address this issue, the Memory Preservation Nutrition® Program. With a focus on brain health and overall wellness, the Memory Preservation Nutrition® Program is designed to help preserve memory function.

Senior Living Residences, which manages the day-to-day operations of The Cambridge Homes, places a strong emphasis on innovation, and in that vein developed the program in conjunction with internationally recognized expert Nancy Emerson-Lombardo, PhD, Associate Professor of Neurology at the Boston University School of Medicine and President of Health Care Insights. Senior Living Residences operates both traditional assisted living and Alzheimer's care programs and is the first assisted living company in the nation to have the Memory Preservation Nutrition® Program in its owned and managed communities.

The Senior Living Residences' approach utilizes a unique evidence-based program. Its strategy is based on incorporating foods and spices, specially selected for their nutrient-rich properties and linked in research to healthy cognition, into everyday diet to target overall brain health. Culling information from hundreds of studies looking at the connections between diet, cognitive health, aging, and Alzheimer's disease and its related risk factors, the Memory Preservation Nutrition® Program seeks to improve brain function, decrease the risk of developing Alzheimer's Disease, and slow down the progression of Alzheimer's Disease for an individual who has already been diagnosed.

This comprehensive program has resulted in many specific changes in the menu at The Cambridge Homes towards the preservation of cognitive health. Some of the main foods that are indicated through the program include fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, foods containing omega-three fatty acids, and specific spices. The Memory Preservation Nutrition® Program also focuses on reducing cholesterol, which has been linked to an increased risk of developing Alzheimer's disease, and therefore supplements lower-fat foods in place of highly saturated fats. All of these healthy foods in the right combinations provide the body with important disease-fighting antioxidants and nutrients with anti-inflammatory properties and also help to regulate blood sugar.



**Neville Cullen**  
Director of  
Dietary Services

Neville Cullen, Director of Dietary Services for SLR, has spearheaded the implementation of the new program at The Homes. He has worked tirelessly to adapt existing best loved recipes for a more "brain healthy" result and he has created many new recipes which have been received with rave reviews. Specific examples of how the Memory Preservation Nutrition® Program is implemented at The Homes includes:

- Reduction of refined white sugar in cooking and baked goods to control blood sugar levels. The hippocampus of the brain, an important region for memory and information processing which is documented to be affected early in Alzheimer's disease, is sensitive to changes in blood glucose levels. In place of refined white sugar we are using stevia, as well as molasses and brown sugar.

- Utilizing various spices noted for their potent antioxidant properties, such as ginger and cinnamon, in baked goods and other foods. Cinnamon is also known to regulate blood sugar and reduce cholesterol.
- Serving low-fat meats and dairy selections to reduce cholesterol, as well as replacing highly saturated fats, such as cream with yogurt in traditional recipes and ground turkey in place of hamburger in meatballs.
- Offering a larger selection of the darker fruits, such as raspberries and blueberries, which have high levels of antioxidants.

To date, the most comprehensive and compelling study that found a direct connection between diet and cognitive health was reported in the Archives of Neurology earlier this year. Researchers concluded that individuals who follow a “Mediterranean diet” may have a lower risk of developing mild cognitive impairment. The study defined mild cognitive impairment as a stage between normal aging and Alzheimer’s disease. Additionally, the study found that individuals with mild cognitive impairment who ate a Mediterranean diet had a lower risk of transitioning into Alzheimer’s disease.

The Mediterranean diet, as described in the study, emphasizes increased intake of fish, vegetables, legumes, fruits, cereals, and unsaturated fats while lowering the amounts of meat, dairy products, and saturated fats. The Mediterranean diet is also characterized by moderate alcohol consumption.

Robert Larkin, President of Senior Living Residences said, “This major study reinforced what we have been working on for the last three years in developing the Memory Preservation Nutrition® Program. Our Program, which is truly ahead of the curve, includes all of the basic elements of the well-known and well-documented Mediterranean diet and goes well beyond it with its cognitive health protective factors.”

“Our ‘Right Values’ commitment to Resident Quality of Life, as well as Innovation, was the impetus for our company to forge ahead and make an investment in developing a comprehensive nutrition program that would benefit all residents in all of our assisted living communities. It is very gratifying to have had this innovative program embraced by everyone at The Cambridge Homes – the residents, Helene Quinn and the Dietary staff, our supportive Board members and Corporators,” he concluded.



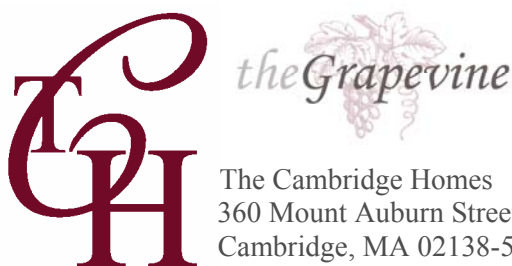
*Our Dining Room at The Cambridge Homes*

Nancy Emerson Lombardo says that the diet changes that are made through the Memory Preservation Nutrition® Program can benefit people of any age whether or not they have memory loss. She says, “Individuals researching Alzheimer’s disease believe changes and damage in the brain begins well before there are any symptoms of the disease. Following the program even if you are not noticing changes to your memory can be an important step to take to protect your own brain health. If you are seeing changes in your memory or you have been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, the Program may provide some protective effects and actually slow the progression of the disease. It is never too late to intervene and correct problems.”



*The Cambridge Homes is not-for-profit assisted living residence that has been serving the elderly community for over 100 years. Along with our wellness programs we also offer a wide variety of cultural, educational and social activities for our diverse population of seniors. The Homes is conveniently located next to Mt. Auburn Hospital at 360 Mt. Auburn Street. For more information go to:*

*www.TheCambridgeHomes.org*  
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