



Longevity and learning

by Marge Coalman, EdD

—Vice President of Wellness & Programs, Touchmark

In spite of the track record of the illustrious elder thinkers throughout world history, the myth of the media in our current culture is that old age is synonymous with intellectual and emotional decline. In addition to Hollywood's

“Brain research has dispelled the presumption that humans undergo a steady decline.”

—*Laura Carstensen, PhD, director of the Stanford University Center on Longevity Life-Span Development Laboratory*

and Madison Avenue's stereotypical image of sagging muscles, lowered energy, and impaired senses, there is a persistent belief that old age is associated with cognitive decline and brain cell death. However, experts around the world continue to gather hard data and compelling evidence about the abilities and gains associated with the aging process. Dr. Carstensen notes, “Most of what we hear about in the media and scientific literature is about the areas of cognition that decline. You hear very little about areas that improve.”

A number of experts are redefining aging by focusing on lifespan development not decline. Brain research shows that although some areas do diminish, others—notably general knowledge, vocabulary, and emotional-psychological regulation—improve over the years. If the goal is to teach the alphabet, numerals, and sight and sound recognition, the preferred age is two years. “But if you want someone to solve a complex cultural or political problem,

that calls for people who are 70, 80, 90, or beyond,” Dr. Carstensen explains. Neural investigators confirm that older brains operate differently, activate bilaterally, and solve complex problems that younger brains are unable to decipher. In addition to the scientific community, advocates and providers have confirmed that the desire and ability to participate in lifelong learning is consistent in both genders and all income levels of today's over-55 population. [MetLife study, 2005]

At Touchmark, we focus on how people want to live, what defines engagement and well-being for each person, and how the staff and residents can support those personal choices. Opportunities for new learning and shared experience provide the substance for the Life Enrichment/Wellness offerings provided both inside and outside the community. To join in planning, preparing, and participating in lifelong learning events and activities, contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Kathy Brown.

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A home for your lifestyle

by Greg Wilkes

—Sales Consultant

The past few weeks have been very busy with new residents moving into their bungalows or apartments. Several residents who have bungalows under construction have already started to enjoy the lifestyle of Touchmark by taking part in activities and special Friday night dining.

We now have five bungalows completed and 11 others under construction. Over the next six weeks, residents will move into five more bungalows as Charter Members of Touchmark.

In the apartment building, we have now leased or rented 30 percent of the independent units. While we have emphasized life lease of apartments over rental, the rental program is ramping up and has now become more popular.

If you'd like more information about living at Touchmark, please call me at 780-577-5000.

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Touchmark to connect to city trail system



Touchmark recently paved this ravine walk, which is approximately one kilometer and will connect with the city trail system.

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What others are saying



“When we first walked into the building, we knew this was the place for us. We liked what we saw with the openness and brightness of the community.”

Harriet and John Younic
—Residents

Welcome Kathy Brown to Touchmark

Kathy joins Touchmark as the Life Enrichment/Wellness director and brings with her 18 years of experience as an activity coordinator for the Good Samaritan Society in Edmonton, Stony Plain, and Spruce Grove, Alberta.

Born in Penticton, British Columbia, Kathy has always enjoyed an active lifestyle with interests in health and physical fitness. Kathy enjoys hiking with her husband, Bill, and her two dogs. Touring the art galleries, traveling, and creative arts have also been a part of Kathy's pastime.

“I'm looking forward to a rewarding and exciting career with Touchmark,” says Kathy. On September 5, Kathy is taking a group for a picnic at a beautiful day lodge at Peaceful Valley.



Left: Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Kathy Brown and resident Rae Packer both recently joined the Touchmark family.

Upcoming events

Thursday, September 7, 2 pm—Resident birthday party.

Friday, September 29, 5:30 pm—Autumn barbecue buffet.