



Touchmark celebrates the season and anticipates growth



Message from
Leanne Gugenheimer
—Executive Director

With the hustle and bustle of the holiday season upon us, let's take a moment to reflect on the importance of this special time of year. It is my wish for us to take the time to think about the places we've visited, the people we cherish, and to be thankful for the many blessings in our lives.

These are exciting winter days at Touchmark! We will soon be announcing the opening of our assisted living housing component, where we can provide on-site care that will be able to meet a variety of health needs. The concept of assisted living focuses on residents maintaining a fairly independent, active, and healthy lifestyle, which would also address individual needs, such as medication assistance or reminders, bathing, dressing, hygiene, and grooming. We anticipate the first residents to move into the assisted living neighborhood in mid-December.

Our Health Services Neighborhood (HSN) is also in the midst of construction and can be located at the south end of the building. This project is a collaborative effort between Capital Health Authority and Touchmark. The HSN will be a topnotch premiere care neighborhood, which will address residents' needs beyond assisted living. Residents and families will have the reassurance that

Touchmark's "aging-in-place" concept means that residents may remain on-site with graduated care provided. I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season!

.....

In celebration of the spirit

by **Marge Coalman, EdD**
—Vice President of Wellness & Programs, Touchmark

In a world of continuous movement and sound it is almost impossible to embrace and stay in the moment. We're constantly interrupted, startled, and distracted by cell phones, Web cams, laptops, barcodes—the list is almost endless. It is a major challenge to slow down long enough to take in the beauty of the day, the fragrance of the flower, the softness of the dew.

“Attend to the moment-to-moment unfolding of the present, adding nothing, subtracting nothing, affirming that, ‘This is it.’”

.....
—*Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, Wherever You Go, There You Are*

But the moment is only here and available to each of us in the real-time experience of today. Thoreau, Gandhi, Buddha, Jesus, and multiple other teachers and spiritual leaders reminded their contemporaries and heirs

to be mindful and present. That is the requirement for experiencing the celebration of the spirit.

Instead of numbing ourselves with TV, magazines, e-mail,

videos, and thousands of other distractions, the challenge is to be still and go within to the spirit that makes us unique and connected; individual and shared community; person and family. The ability to achieve that focus is available to each person, but the skills needed to pursue mindfully each moment must be cultivated. Some ways to achieve that balance are outlined in all great spiritual texts:

- **Be fully present in the moment.**
- **Invite joy.**
- **Create your future.**
- **Surround yourself with those who love and support your dreams and hopes.**
- **Eliminate the unnecessary and unimportant.**
- **Choose hope.**
- **Breathe!**

As the season of celebration approaches, we invite you to participate in all of the celebrations and festivities Touchmark provides. We also invite you to share your spirit with others through our Let Your Spirit Soar program. For details of how to participate, contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Kathy Brown.

.....

Joining the Sales Department ...



by Catherine Douglas
—Sales Consultant

I was born and raised in Vancouver, and after marrying, my husband and I moved to Winnipeg, where we lived for five years. Our next move was to Regina, where we lived for four years. For the past 13 years, we called Kamloops, British Columbia, our home. We moved here three months ago and are very excited about living in Edmonton.

I have a long history of working in health care and older adult housing. My job is to find you some wonderful new neighbours. I think I have the best job in the world! I get to meet people and their families when they first come in the door and assist them through the moving process. Your life stories are always so fascinating to me.

My passions are many. I love spending time with my family. I'm married with three children, who are 16, 15, and 11. We have a very large dog and two cats. Once I get dancing, I can't stop. And, I'm a serious bargain hunter. I love anything Scottish, and my theory on life is that everything good started in Scotland and spread out across the world. Thank you to all who have made me feel so welcome. I look forward to all the great moments we will share together.

Upcoming events

Sunday, December 10, 10 am—Book club meeting. *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.

Thursday, December 14, 7:30 pm—Holiday gathering and entertainment by Colleen Lazaruk.

Friday, December 15, 2 pm—Christmas and holiday cookie exchange.

Monday, December 18, 2 pm—Birthday party with the Esso Tones.

Tuesday, December 19, 2 pm—Christmas and holiday open house.

Wednesday, December 20, 7 pm—Family sleigh ride.

A fondness for family—Meet Ted and Lillian Cimino

by Ida Kaliel
—Daughter of Ted and Lillian

Lillian was born in Rovito, Italy, in 1925—the fourth child of 10. Ted was born in the neighbouring town of Celico in 1923—the second of seven children. They were married March 15, 1942, in Celico. Lillian was 16, Ted 18. After the wedding, Ted worked in a lumberyard. They had three children in Italy: Mafalda (1944), John (1946), and Ida (1950).

Ted was not required to fight in the war. At that time if you had young children, it was not compulsory. However, as the war went on, he was called to service, but fortunately the war ended just before he had to go.

In March 1951, Ted left for Canada, choosing Edmonton because he had an uncle here. He lived with a cousin and

worked on the railroad for three months and then went to work for New West for four years. Lillian managed back in Italy with the money Ted sent her and the three children, who were living in a little house behind the church.

Later Ted sent for his family, and they arrived in Canada in September 1953. They lived in a house on 113 Street and 105 Avenue (They called it the New West house.) for one year with two of Ted's brothers, who came to Canada in December 1953. Then they moved to a two-story home on 107 Street and 106 Avenue (which has since been tore down), where they all lived together with seven other relatives and friends. It was a beautiful old house with a front veranda, a big old Maple tree in the front, and a huge garden on the side and backyards. The family was very close, always doing things together, going to the lake for picnics on Sundays with big pans of lasagna and stuffed peppers and to Jasper and Banff or Kelowna and Penticton for summer holidays.

Ted went to work for Imperial Oil at the Strathcona Refinery in 1955. In 1960, they moved to their own new home in Ottewell so Ted could be close to his work. Lillian also worked for many years. From 1957 to 1962, she worked as Capital Cleaners. Their fourth child, Donald, was born in 1962, and after six months, Lillian went to work evenings at GWG. She worked there for 12 years, after which she worked parttime in several hotels (the King Edward, the Plaza, and the MacDonald).

Ted retired from Imperial Oil in 1985 after 30 years of service. He kept active at home with gardening, cooking, winemaking, visiting with family and neighbours, entertaining 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, and always taking a winter holiday to either Mexico or Hawaii. The couple made two trips back to Italy to visit family and friends. Lillian kept herself busy cooking and cleaning house. (She loves to clean.) She was also very active with the women's auxiliary group at the Italian parish (Santa Maria Goretti).

After several years of coaxing, and after Ted was unable to drive, the children convinced Ted and Lillian to move from their home of 45 years to Touchmark in June 2006—a move made possible with much help from the staff of Touchmark, especially Greg Wilkes, who made the move as easy as possible for them.

With much relief to their children, Ted and Lillian have settled into Touchmark very nicely. They have much praise for all the staff and are quickly making friends, even



Ted and Lillian Cimino joined the Touchmark family this summer. How does their family feel about the move? “We are so happy to see Mom and Dad so happy and contented, and we are so relieved that they are in a safe place close to us so we can pop in anytime to visit or help out with anything they may need. We love visiting them; the facility is so beautiful and comfortable. We feel like Mom and Dad are on a vacation in a first-class facility with warm caring people surrounding them, and God willing, we hope they can enjoy many years here.”

though there is a slight language barrier. They love their suite, which their children decorated with all their nicest belongings from their home, and Touchmark has added the finishing touches. (Thank you so much, Cheryl. You are amazing.)

.....

Events keep everyone moving and learning

by Kathy Brown
—Life Enrichment/Wellness Director

A fun afternoon was had by all at the Healthy Aging Community Workshop. Leslie McEwan from the University of Alberta Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation presented the workshop.

We just didn't sit and listen, we were out of our seats moving, playing charades, and belly dancing.

We also kicked off our Stepping Out Program. The group will “walk” to Hawaii this winter, and when we have

walked our 3,212 miles, we'll celebrate by having a luau.



Residents learn to belly dance at the Healthy Aging Community Workshop.

.....

The rush of sales continues

by Catherine Douglas
—Sales Consultant

We have certainly been busy in the Sales department during the last month. As you will have noticed, you have some new neighbours! In the next month or two, you will be seeing more folks moving in.

More and more people are hearing about our beautiful community, and our phones have been ringing nonstop. Many of these customers have been hearing good stories from you, your families, and your friends. I want to take this opportunity to thank you. You are a very important part of the sales team! I'd also like to thank you for being so welcoming. When people visit, they often comment on how friendly everyone is here. Please feel free to stop and say hello as we tour the community. Who knows, you could be meeting your new neighbour!

Kathy, Life Enrichment/Wellness director, and I have been cooking up some ideas. I'd like some of my customers to experience Touchmark fun. So we're planning to do a few things together. Watch the calendar for some special events that you might never have seen before. I know you're curious how sales are going, so make sure to stop Carol or me for an update now and then. We're very excited about our work, and we love to share!

Let Your Spirit Soar

Writers, photographers, and poets live and create in Touchmark communities, and Touchmark is featuring some of this talent and creativity in each newsletter. The Let Your Spirit Soar theme for December is a poem and/or photo that "celebrates life."

Holiday Memories

by Dorothy Cooper
—Resident at a Touchmark community in Spokane, Washington

When I was a little girl living on a farm ... during the Depression, I remember putting out cookies and milk for Santa Claus. At about age 8, I realized it was only a myth. I was able to keep it to myself for a couple of years. It was a secret from my little brothers, and I needed to keep the mystery going for them.

At Christmas time, I remember well going to our small rural church and gazing with awe at the beautifully decorated Christmas tree lit with real candles and a pail of sand and one of water nearby in case it caught fire. My special treat was a bag of hard candy and a shiny red apple.

Christmas was special at our house. Our gifts were simple, but I had an aunt who always gave me a book, which fostered my love of reading, and another aunt who would give me a coat or a dress. My mother would make peanut brittle as a special treat. I never felt deprived of anything because I had wonderful parents, aunts, and uncles who loved me unconditionally.

For January, please submit a heartfelt, reminiscent story or "new year, new you" resolutions. Deadline for this issue is December 10. For a list of the guidelines, monthly themes, and deadlines, please contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Kathy Brown.