



Good wishes for 2007



Message from
Leanne Gugenheimer
—Executive Director

December and January: What a wonderful time of year. Outside, white diamond snowflakes dust trees, spiced eggnog and shortbread are familiar indoor scents, and people gathering together to share stories and laughter. These are truly special moments where warmth and joy can be seen and felt.

Touchmark offers these moments and more as seen throughout December and now into the new year. In December, we celebrated with singing of Christmas and holiday carols, an old-fashioned sleigh ride, and our Christmas and Holiday Open House.

I want to thank and acknowledge residents and family members for becoming engaged in the events at Touchmark. It is with your help of spreading the good word about Touchmark that we will continue to have a growing community of friends and neighbours in the new year.

I wish all residents, families, and community members a healthy and happy new year. May the new year renew us and inspire us to be a people of joy, harmony, and understanding.

New year ... new you

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

In a world of quick fixes and New Year's resolutions, it is important to pause and realize that there is no one prescription for physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Each of us is a unique human being made up of common human genomes but entirely different in personality, strengths,

**“If we all
ran at the
same pace,
we’d always
be in each
other’s way.”**

—Gary Stanley,
author

weaknesses, and preferences. The message of the media that there is a universal solution for achieving improved health may fit cereal boxes, bumper stickers, and 30-second ads, but in order to achieve individual goals an individualized “prescription” is essential.

As 2007 arrives, it is a good idea to do a personal inventory of one's highest priorities and evaluate what choices and resources are needed to achieve goals. According to Kenneth Cooper, MD, MPH, founder of the Cooper Institute, there are a few very important goals for all of us over the age of 50:

- **Adequate sleep.** This can often be achieved by having a good level of activity/exercise during the day; eating earlier in the evening to aid digestion before going to bed; avoiding excessive alcohol or caffeine; and attempting to fill the mind with good thoughts before retiring for the night. A good bed and pleasant company also are helpful.
- **Balance in activities.** Physical activity needs to include cardiovascular, flexibility, strength, and balance

regimens. Depending on individual needs, there may be more of a need in one area than the other. Stretching and flexibility are often ignored, but they are critical to overall physical fitness.

- **Socialization.** Good company, conversation, and humor affect overall health.
- **Continued learning.** Remember: We create new brain cells every day of our lives.
- **Healthy food choices.** These are good for the body and soul.
- **Volunteerism.** The importance of giving back is essential to good health.

At Touchmark, we focus on the unique needs of each person. For support and assistance with an individualized wellness program, contact director of Life Enrichment/Wellness Kathy Brown. Make the new year your best year.

.....

Interested in living here?

by Catherine Douglas
—Sales Consultant

Greetings from the Sales team! As you will have noticed, we have been very busy responding to the tremendous interest in our community. At present, all three-bedroom suites are occupied. All two-bedroom suites, except one, have been booked. We are now keeping a waiting list for the larger ones. We still have a selection of one-bedroom suites available, but they won't be for long!

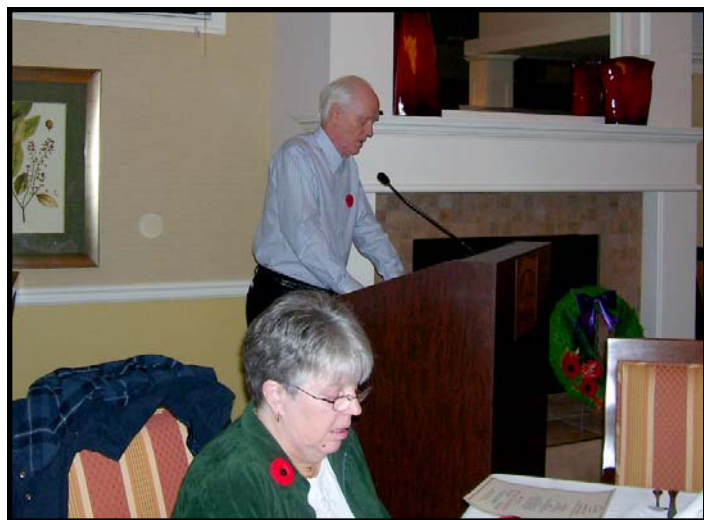
A big thank you goes out to the Kremeniuks, who have encouraged all their friends to join us. Walter is talking up Touchmark everywhere he goes! I'd also like to thank the Ravine Bistro crew, who welcome all the visitors at the front door. Sometimes we are so busy, and it's wonderful to know that you, the Ravine Bistro team, greet the customers and make them feel comfortable. You are the best part of the Sales team!

The next few months will be filled with lots of "move-ins." I know you will enjoy meeting all of your new neighbours. Each one of them has a fascinating history to share. Their interests are varied, but the one thing they have in common is that they are really terrific people. Touchmark is growing—growing bigger and better!

Honoring wartime heroes and recalling memories



A Remembrance Day wreath was displayed at Touchmark during a Remembrance Day service in memory of veterans who have passed away. A number of residents shared their heartfelt stories. Francis Ruiter told us what it was like living in Holland during World War II, and Wendy Rempel read a poem entitled *Peace*, written by a grade-five student. Everyone joined Bob Adams in reciting the poem, *In Flanders Fields*, which was followed by a minute of silence.



Bob Adams recites *In Flanders Field*, which was written by Canadian Army Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD, in 1915.

Upcoming events

Monday, January 15, 10 am—Book club meeting.

Friday, January 19, 10 am—Catholic Mass.

Saturday, January 20, 2 pm—Birthday party with the Vissia Sisters.

Thursday, January 25, 2 pm—Bryan Gutteridge shares his inspiring life story of living without eyesight. Marquis Room.

Friday, January 26, 10 am—Belly dancing.

Monday, January 29, 6:30 pm—Robbie Burns event. Enjoy Highland Dancers and bagpipes.

Strokes of success. Meet Gwen Smith.

by Susan Halak

—Daughter of Gwen

Lorna Gwendolyn Smith, fondly known to her friends and family as Gwen, Gwenie, Gran, Granny Smith, Mom, and T.O. (The Organizer), was born to Clifford and Evelyn Lewis in 1925. Born and raised in Toronto, she was the third of four children.

Like her parents before her, Gwen met her future husband, Don Smith, while attending the University of Toronto as a physical-education undergraduate. Gwen worked hard to put herself through university on academic scholarships. In her final year, she graduated with the highest academic standing in her class, earning the coveted gold medal.

Looking back on it all, it wasn't surprising that Gwen went into teaching. She once again followed her parents' footsteps by going into the education field. At one time, Gwen's father had been the dean of the Ontario College of Education while her mother was the principal of the Prince Albert High School in Saskatchewan. "I certainly understood the value of a good education at a very early age," says Gwen.

After graduating, Gwen went on to become the first Women's Physical Education director at McMaster University of Hamilton, Ontario, and after a two-year stint, she married and resigned her position to follow her husband, Don, west to Edmonton. Don joined the

University of Alberta's Physical Education faculty while Gwen became the Women's Physical Education director at the YWCA before starting a family.

"It was extremely difficult to leave my friends and family in Toronto and move out west where we were virtually on our own. There wasn't a whole lot of support around here at the time," says Gwen. From 1949 to 1961, Gwen gave birth to eight children—four boys and four girls. "We had planned to have 12, but ran out of steam and called it quits at eight."

All of her children were relatively healthy growing up. She attributed this to a healthy lifestyle and getting them into



Gwen Smith has forever left an imprint on Canadian athletics. Gwen is an inductee in the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame and Museum and McMaster University Hall of Fame for her contributions to swimming, is a past president of Sport Alberta, is the mother of eight national-ranked and international-ranked swimmers, and was the first Women's Physical Education director at McMaster University of Hamilton, Ontario.

swimming. “It seemed like a good idea at the time,” says Gwen. “Particularly since there was a swimming pool right across the road from us, and seasons tickets went for 10 dollars a family. From there, the children joined a competitive swim club, where they swam year round.” Don got into coaching, and Gwen taught the young ones how to swim. They made a great team.

Gwen has many accolades to her credit. She was the first Alberta Masters Swim Official to officiate at international games: the 1967 Pan-American Games and 1978 commonwealth Games in Edmonton, where her son, Graham, won an unprecedented six gold medals swimming in the pool named after his late father.

She has held voluntary positions as Swim Alberta president, secretary, treasurer, chairmen, recorder, and meet director. Swim Canada has honored her with an honorary Life Member Award. Gwen is an inductee in the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame and Museum and McMaster University Hall of Fame for her contributions to swimming. The Rotary Club recently honored her with the Integrity award for her contribution to the community at large.

Few people realize that Gwen Smith funded swimming scholarships for University of Alberta swim team members. Although she was once the president of Sport Alberta, to swim team members, Gwen is probably best known as the matriarch of the Swimming Smiths. With 33 international medals, 792 provincial records, 83 national age-group records, 18 Canadian records, and two World records, the “Smiths could be the greatest swimming family the world has known,” according to the Edmonton Journal. All eight Smith children competed nationally, six competed internationally, and four represented Canada at the Olympics, winning one silver and two bronze medals.

When asked what she was most proud of, Gwen quickly replied, “Raising eight productive, independent children who are good citizens. My job is done. You never stop worrying about your kids, even when they’re adults, but my job is done.” She now has 21 grandchildren to worry about if she feels the need to worry. As for regrets, she has none.

“One of the hardest things I have had to do was move from my home of 59 years. The staff has made the transition as easy as can be expected. The people at Touchmark are thoughtful, caring, and respectful. It’s a great place to be when all is said and done,” says Gwen.

She looks forward to the walks, fitness program, and walking trails. As an active member of the Stepping Out club,

Gwen has a great appetite and is Chef Winston’s number one fan. “I’ve gained 15 pounds since I moved in,” she giggles. Gwen enjoys the food, entertainment, celebrations, and field trips Touchmark has to offer. Her family is most grateful for everything that the staff do for their mother and that she is settling in so well.

.....

Purchase a card, support a cause

The *Let Your Spirit Soar* note card collection, featuring the artwork of talented artists who live in Touchmark communities throughout North America, is now available. A set of eight cards and envelopes costs \$10, and individual cards cost \$2. Your purchase will support the Touchmark Foundation’s work to help seniors receive needed support and services. To learn more about the Foundation, please visit TouchmarkFoundation.org or call Executive Director Janet Plummer at 800-796-8744.

.....

Always teaching and learning— Meet the MacCallums

by **Liliane and Bill MacCallum**
—Residents

Liliane and Bill MacCallum purchased an apartment at Touchmark in fall 2006. They have traveled a lot. Photographs and artwork on their walls testify to their wanderlust. But their real pride is that most of their working lives have been devoted to teaching.

Liliane has a bachelor’s degree in arts and education from a New Hampshire college, a master’s degree in arts from Boston College, and advanced courses in American Literature and Children’s Literature from the University of

Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, and was an associate professor at University of Alberta's Faculté Saint-Jean. Bill, who has a bachelor's in education from the University of Alberta, taught English and Social Studies with the separate school system in Edmonton. The couple has been responsible for the education of hundreds of young people through their many years in the classroom.

Born in the 1920s to poor families, they were both encouraged by their parents to work hard to acquire an education, which is the only wealth of lasting value for life. Retirement for them has been an opportunity to complete that education by exploring the globe.

Relaxed cruising was out. Energetic self-guided tours were in.



Liliane and Bill MacCallum joined the Touchmark family in fall 2006 and have brought rich, exciting stories of travel and life to the community.

Organized tours sponsored by the University of Alberta Alumni and Ederhostel followed. Their first visit was to the Paradores of Spain, and so began a long-term adventure covering most of Western Europe. Since those weeks in 1987, they have traveled by car, rail, plane, ship, and river craft. They've crawled into caves, caverns, and catacombs. They've visited hospitals and schools on several continents, absorbing history, economics, politics, culture, and geography along the way.

The MacCallums belie their age by their vitality and interest in people around them. They ponder every day the frailty of life but believe very sincerely that every ounce of life must be lived fully to the very end. There can be joy in discovering a new world every day, as long as there is life,

music, books, caring people, and the light of joy remains bright, cheerful, and full of hope.

Enter photo(s) for Touchmark 2008 calendar

As part of the Life Enrichment/Wellness Let Your Spirit Soar program, Touchmark is planning to create a 2008 calendar featuring photos taken by staff (team members) and residents. The calendar theme is "creating intentional community," and it will convey pictorially the Life Enrichment/Wellness areas: physical activity; mind/body/spirit; community outreach; intergenerational; friendship; growing together; lifelong learning; special events/holiday celebrations.

All photos must be in color; taken with a digital camera or 35 mm camera, show current staff/residents, and have a completed permission form of all people pictured. Check with your Life Enrichment/Wellness office for complete guidelines. All photos must be submitted by July 31, 2007 to be considered for the calendar.

Yum! Making cookies



Residents bake cookies that were exchanged at a Christmas and holiday party in December.

Loving and living life without sight

Would you still play golf if you couldn't see? Bryan Gutteridge plays the game, even though he is blind. Bryan, a Senior Development Officer at the University of Alberta, will share about living a full life despite the loss of his eyesight on **Thursday, January 25 at 2 pm** in the Marquis Room.

"I usually tell my story as a person who has been sighted for 45 years and a successful businessman who became blind overnight."

Bryan doesn't let his lack of eyesight slow him down. He has even played golf with retired Alberta Premier Ralph Klein, Walter Gretzky, and many of the Edmonton Oilers. Come and join Touchmark for this inspirational event!

.....

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 January is a heartfelt, reminiscent story or "new year, new you" resolutions.

Longevity

by **Dorothy Dee Workman**

—Resident at another Touchmark community

At the age of 73,

I developed an interest in longevity.

Then at the age of 74,

I began to hanker for more, much more.

Finally, at 75,

Profound gratitude for being alive.

At 76, ineffable loss,

No more spouse, I'm now my own boss.

Seventy-seven, walking is slow,

Though generally speaking I'm still on the go.

No time to waste at 78,

Doesn't make sense to leave life to fate.

Now 79, 99 the goal,

I'm captain of my fate, master of my soul.

For February, please submit a heart-to-heart/love story. Deadline for this issue is January 10. For a list of the guidelines, monthly themes, and deadlines, please contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Kathy Brown.

.....

Tai chi for your mind and body



Instructor Camille Lipford leads residents in tai chi movements. Touchmark thanks Instructor Camille Lipford for sharing the graceful and health-giving exercise of tai chi. In the new year, Camille will continue teaching tai chi on Saturdays at 10 am. Anyone is welcome to join her class at any time. If you have any questions regarding this class, please contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Kathy Brown at 780-577-5008.