

Building on an award-winning year

Happy new year to you and your loved ones! As we start another year, I'm excited to build on the achievements and growth of last year. During 2009, we were delighted to receive some honours, which underscored our mission—to enrich people's lives.

Touchmark received excellent marks for the audits and inspections of the Health Services Neighbourhood, Assisted Living, and Independent Living and received no recommendations from the audit and inspection teams. Our parent company, Touchmark, received a Best Practice award for Let Your Spirit Soar, a component of Touchmark's Life Enrichment/Wellness program, from The Health Promotion Institute, which is part of the National Council on Aging. In addition, three team members obtained their two-year certification as Geriatric Wellness instructors.

During this past holiday season, Touchmark gave team members the gift of giving to others. Each department received \$150 to use to help a nonprofit agency or family/individual in need.

With these team-built achievements as the foundation for 2009, I look forward to growing as a community and continuing to serve residents, their families, and the Edmonton community.

Join us for another exciting year!




Leanne Gugenheimer
Executive Director

Helping those in need



Executive Director Leanne Gugenheimer (left) and Housekeeping Supervisor Annette Wood pack nonperishable food into the Touchmark food hampers, which were distributed to people in need in the Edmonton area. Third-year nursing students from University of Alberta helped gather food from the donation boxes located in the Health Services Neighbourhood and the Grande, sorted food into the hampers, and helped pack and tape the hampers. "With the experience and guidance of Leanne and Annette, we distributed the food and were so thankful to all who helped donate food items," says Brenda Edmonds, Life Enrichment/Wellness assistant.



Residents and staff helped create 13 food hampers and a festive gift basket. The group donated the gift basket to the Baywood Seniors Outreach annual Christmas Dinner, which is attended by almost 20 people. "When we delivered the food, the executive director of Outreach, one of the board members, and a woman who receives support from this group invited us to stay for tea," says Brenda. "It was a heartwarming experience to spend time with the people who receive the food boxes and to know the donations are really appreciated."

Tour this suite and bungalow today!



Suite 215 offers 625 square feet and Assisted Living services. The suite includes a kitchenette, one bedroom, and one bathroom with a walk-in shower. Enjoy the view to the west from the private balcony of this second-floor home. The apartment is vented for air conditioning.



The Whistler offers 2,040 square feet, a covered entry and patio, an open floor plan, central stairs, and vaulted ceilings. Call today to learn more about custom options.

Celebrations!



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

We have declared 2009 as the year of “Celebrations!” in all Touchmark communities. What does the theme “Celebrations!” denote for a company of communities that provides home and lifestyle options to people ages 55-plus in the USA and Canada?

The intent is multifaceted. Of course, we’ll promote

the idea of parties, merriment, and revelry; these special events are fun to plan and attend and are scheduled in all Touchmark communities throughout the year. The theme of the 2009 Touchmark Full Life Wellness & Life Enrichment Program, however, is much more personal and more in keeping with what John Burroughs wrote about in his essays and books. The celebrations of life are those moments each day that bring pleasure, contentment, and connectivity to our wishes, hopes, and dreams—days that leave us wishing for more hours to have those personal desires fulfilled.

Celebration of the day can be as simple as a quiet moment of contemplation or as complex as a formal event to mark a special holiday, anniversary, *(cont.)*

(cont.) or milestone in the life of a friend or family member.

"I still find the day too short for all the thoughts I want to think, all the walks I want to take, all the books I want to read, and all the friends I want to see."

—John Burroughs, naturalist and essayist

In the broader scope of celebrations in 2009, the yearlong "author in residence" series will celebrate authors living in Touchmark communities who have published books. Part of Touchmark's ongoing Let Your Spirit Soar activities, the series will be featured in newsletters and on the Touchmark Web site (Touchmark.com).

Life Enrichment/Wellness staff and residents work together to plan and organize multiple opportunities to celebrate moments of pride and personal accomplishment. To be a part of the planning and promotion of the Celebrations! in 2009, contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Kathy Brown at 780-577-5000. The talents, time, energy, enthusiasm, and support of each resident and team member will highlight the 12-month emphasis on personal and community celebrations. ■

Build your brain. Solve a puzzle.

Unscramble the following letters to discover a new phrase. The topic is new year.

1. repay pay when = _____
2. a eyeliners town sour = _____
3. weathering rye inn = _____

*Answers:
1. happy new year 2. new year resolutions
3. ring in the new year*

Authors in Residence Series

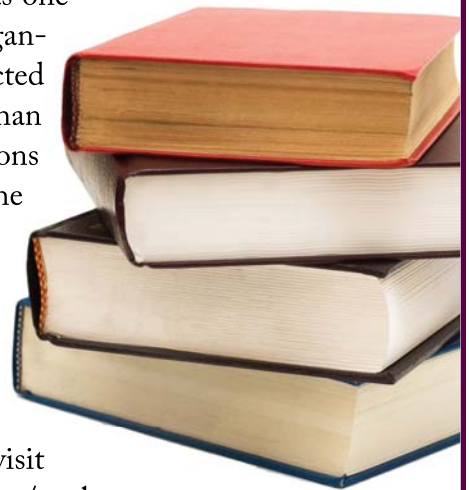
Throughout 2009, Touchmark is featuring stories about authors (and their published works) who reside at Touchmark communities in the United States and Canada. The year-long series is a new aspect of Touchmark's award-winning Let Your Spirit Soar—a component of the Life Enrichment/Wellness program. Now beginning its fourth year, Let Your Spirit Soar showcases the strengths, talents, and skills of Touchmark residents and staff in the area of lifelong learning and creativity.

Vice President of Wellness & Programs Marge Coalman, EdD, interviewed the authors. "I was surprised by the number of authors we discovered once we announced the project," she says. "Literally, there are dozens of published authors living at Touchmark communities."

Last year, the Health Promotion Institute—a part of the National Council on Aging—presented Touchmark with a Best Practice award for Let Your Spirit Soar. The award recognizes a program, initiative, or service that enhances the health and wellness of older adults.

Touchmark was one of three organizations selected from more than 100 nominations throughout the United States.

To read about all of Touchmark's resident authors, visit touchmark.com/authors-in-residence. ■



Edmonton Philharmonic Orchestra visits Touchmark

The Edmonton Philharmonic Orchestra kicked off the holiday season and filled the Grande Hall with beautiful music, creating a festive environment.



Celebrating the season



Touchmark Executive Chef Vinod Lohtia and his team created a breathtaking array of delectable food for the residents' Holiday Wine & Cheese Party. The afternoon included festive Touchmark Carolers, Maureen Tiedemann, Wayne Wappel, and Kim Bretkreutz.

Coming Events

Thursday, Jan. 22, 2 pm

Westend Seniors Choir. Marquis Room.

Monday, Jan. 26, 11 am

The Touchmark Book Club will discuss *Prisoner of Tehran* by Marina Nemat. Library. All are welcome.

Monday, Jan. 26, 5:30 pm

Robbie Burns Night. Grande Hall. Please RSVP by Jan. 21. Cost: \$12.99 for resident and \$25 for guest.

LET YOUR SPIRIT SOAR

Writers, photographers, and poets live and work in Touchmark communities, some of their talent and creativity is featured periodically in the newsletter.

A surprise gift

By **Donna Hayne**, Director of Care, Touchmark at Wedgewood

I WANTED TO SHARE A WONDERFUL TOUCHMARK CHRISTMAS STORY.

Last night, we were having our second-floor annual resident and family Christmas dinner. One of our fairly new residents came up to Renee and me and wanted to share her “Christmas secret” with us.

This resident had fallen at home in late October, fractured her pelvis and humerus, and was told that she would not walk again. Her daughter believed her to be wheelchair bound. She was admitted to Touchmark at Wedgewood at the end of November.

After her admission here at Touchmark, she began work with our occupational therapist on mobility and walking. Tricia and her worked very hard over the next four weeks. She told us that she had kept all of this work a secret from her daughter. She was so excited by the progress she was making, she decided to surprise her daughter when she felt she was able to “walk again.”

Last night was the night she revealed her secret to her daughter. When it was time to go, her daughter went to reach for the wheelchair, the resident pushed the wheelchair aside, stating “I don’t need that anymore.” She then grabbed her walker and began walking. Needless to say, there were a few tears of joy.

Her and her daughter are so happy with the care she had received here at Touchmark, that we had not given up on her, and that we had made her walk again. The smiles on both of their faces were priceless; it sure made my Christmas and reaffirmed the great work we do here.