

Smooth sailing with friends

A group of bungalow residents just returned from a week-long cruise in the Mexican Riviera. Sailing on the Sapphire Princess, they visited the ports of Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, and Cabo San Lucas.

The group enjoyed first-class food, service, and entertainment while on the ship and exciting activities and sights while at port. Highlights included swimming with dolphins in Puerto Vallarta and hiring a private driver for a day-long tour of Cabo San Lucas and neighboring San Jose del Cabo. ■



From left: Doris Douglas, Carolyn MacLeod, Wendy Rempel, and Kathy Brown play with dolphins in Puerto Vallarta.



Wendy Rempel gives her favorite dolphin a kiss. "What an experience," she says. "We felt so blessed to have shared the afternoon with these wonderful mammals."



The group dresses to the nines for the formal evening. Back row: Don Smailes (left) and Al Rempel. Middle row: Gerry Smailes (left), Carolyn MacLeod, and Kathy Brown. Front row: Doris Douglas (left) and Wendy Rempel.

(cont.)

(cont.)



Above: Al and Wendy Remple (left) and Don and Gerry Smailes enjoy the sights in Cabo San Lucas. Their “home away from Touchmark,” the Sapphire Princess, is moored in the background. Right: Don Smailes learns how to blow glass in Cabo San Lucas. Lifelong learning, even on holidays!



Welcome home!



You'll find upgrades galore in this beautiful Robson home. This 1,524-square-foot home has ample room for living and entertaining as well as extra storage in the attached two-car garage. Offering two bedrooms and two bathrooms, the Robson boasts soaring vaulted ceilings, spacious walk-in closets, and a roomy master bathroom with two sinks. Enjoy seamless entertaining in the large kitchen, separate eating area, and dining room. Call today for a personal presentation of this ideal home.



Suite 221 offers 402 square feet of living space and access to Assisted Living services. Enjoy the sunlight and northwest view through the large windows of this second-floor home. Featuring a kitchenette, walk-in shower, sitting area, and a cozy space for dining, this home provides comfortable privacy with all the services and amenities Touchmark has to offer. The bedroom area in this studio apartment is separated by fold-out doors.

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. The following highlights Freddie Webb.

Freddie Webb—Poet Laureate

Winifred “Freddie” Webb has written stories and poetry all of her life as a way of expressing herself.

“I could be driving along as a passenger in a car when an idea would come to me and I’d scribble it down,” she says, “then I’d go home and write it.”

Then, she’d throw it away.

Since Freddie’s writing was simply a way for her to vent her deepest feelings (like journal writing), it didn’t occur to her to share what she’d written. Until one day a minister asked Freddie to write the Christmas story from Mary’s perspective and then read it in church. “After hearing it,” Freddie recalls, “the minister

liked it so much that he made me promise not to throw anything else away.”

The Circle and The Riddells

Her writings always have been of a deeply personal nature, which is why the two books she eventually authored were self-published for only a handful of people.

Her first book, *The Circle* (published in 1997), is the story of her life, written in prose and poetry. It has four chapters: “Youth,” “A Young Lady,” which covers WWII and her marriage, “The Busy Years” with children, and “The Golden Years,” which she says contains the most poetry.

Freddie composed and laid out the entire book on a computer, including text and photos. She included a lot of pictures she had taken of the home in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, where she grew up.

Her second book, *The Riddells* (published in 2004), is the story of her birth family. The youngest of seven children, Freddie decided to write their history after her family had all passed away, and she was left alone.

The story begins in England, where her mother and dad and the oldest of Freddie’s siblings were born. It follows the family

as they moved to the Canadian province of Saskatchewan, where two other sisters and Freddie were born.

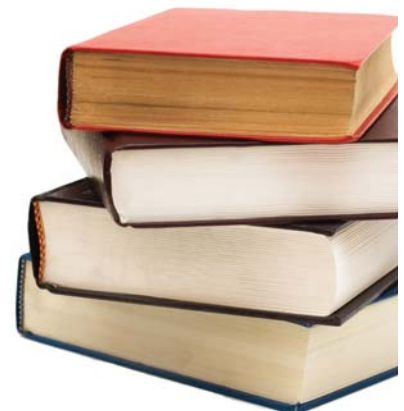
“In *The Riddells*, I wrote about everyone,” Freddie says, “including my husband and myself. And I put all of their pictures in the book.” It is a beautiful tribute to them, especially to her dad, who was always very supportive of his youngest daughter’s many talents.

After writing each book, Freddie made 25 copies and had them bound in black leather with gold lettering. They are not available to the general public, only to her close circle of friends and family. “They are just too personal,” Freddie explains.

Training and honoring her writing talent

In late 2001, Freddie discovered a correspondence course in poetry writing offered through the University of California.

(cont.)



(cont.)

Although she had been writing for years with little or no formal training, Freddie thought this course would be “interesting,” so she signed up.

Over the next year, Freddie worked her way through the course’s nine writing modules, completing the assignments, sending them off, and then waiting for her marked-up copies to come back.

“I quickly realized that most of my poetry that I thought was quite good wasn’t written properly,” says Freddie. She admits that the course was very difficult, but she worked hard and learned a great deal. Freddie ended up receiving a 95-percent score—and earning the title of poet laureate.

Freddie also traveled to writing conferences in Texas and California, where she read her

poems in front of judges. In Texas, she won The Shakespeare Trophy of Excellence and Poet of the Year (2002) medal from the Famous Poets Society. In California, she received the Poet of Merit medal.

A broad range of interests

While writing always has been an important part of her life, Freddie has had a broad range of interests. When growing up, she studied ballet. As an adult, she practiced tai chi for many years and took up the beautiful Japanese art form of washi chigiri-e, which uses colourful Japanese paper (washi) to create a torn-paper collage (chigiri-e) that can give the effect of oil or watercolour painting.

And, she still meets the first Monday of every month with the book club she helped found almost 50 years ago. “It’s pretty much the same group of people,” Freddie says, “and we have very open discussions.”

Although Freddie was an office manager by trade, she always wanted to be a teacher. So, in her spare time between job and family, she frequently volunteered her time in local schools to tutor children who needed extra help in reading or other subjects.

Learning new things at Touchmark

Freddie moved into her Touchmark apartment home in

(cont.)



Freddie Webb holds one of her published books and wears her two “writing” medals.

(cont.)

May 2007 “to share interests and learn from other seniors,” she shares.

“Physically, I am not well, but I am trying to get better, because my desire to participate in many things is still strong,” she says. “The things I once did are no longer possible, so I wish to learn something new.”

While health issues make it difficult for this author to write much anymore, she recently started taking Yoga classes twice a week and keeps her calendar filled with activities.

“I just go day by day, and I try to do as much as I can each day to help myself and other people.” ■

Bunny visits Touchmark



The Easter Bunny—also known as Life Enrichment/Wellness Assistant Brenda Edmonds—visits Touchmark.



Spring into fitness!

May is filled with fun and exciting opportunities to begin a fitness routine or add variety to your existing fitness habits.

Thursdays at 11 am: “Spring into Step” with the Stepping Out and Urban Poles walking groups.

Monday, May 11, 11 am: Personal Trainer Beatrice Hollinghead offers an introductory class—Healthy Mind & Body—and provides instruction on using the fitness equipment in the Heart Smart Gym.

Thursday, May 21: Alberta Active Living Challenge Day. Alberta residents are encouraged to commit to physical fitness by being active for 30 minutes or more. The Life Enrichment/Wellness staff will offer a variety of 30-minute exercise classes throughout the day in the Grande Foyer. Scheduled classes include Gentle Fit, Seated Yoga, Posture & Balance, Brain Aerobics, and Keep Fit. Residents also can participate in the challenge by walking or biking outdoors. ■

Celebrate activity—step into spring



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

May is Exercise is Medicine™ month, and the American College of Sports Medicine (www.exerciseismedicine.org) and the World Health Organization Move for Health campaign www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/ have developed an array of tools for both the public and health care professionals.

“Birth certificates do not come with expirations dates.” —*Walter M. Bortz II, MD, healthy aging expert and author, Dare to be 100*

The many benefits of physical activity have sparked a campaign directed at physicians. The campaign encourages doctors and other health professionals to prescribe physical activity—along with good dietary choices—as a first line of defense against obesity and chronic diseases prevalent in people over the age of 65.

Although physical activity is a well-known deterrent to obesity, the idea of physical activity combating and managing diseases and conditions common to older adults is less commonly known. Specifically, diabetes; osteoarthritis; osteoporosis; cardiovascular disease, and hypertension have been identified as conditions that can be affected positively by a specific program of physical activity. There is significant evidence that even starting late in life can improve pain management and enhance overall well-being.

Physical activity also has been shown to improve mental health and cognitive function and has been found to contribute to the management of disorders such as depression and anxiety. An individualized program of cardiovascular and strength conditioning, flexibility, and balance is important in reducing the risk of falls—a primary cause of disability for older adults. Lastly, an active lifestyle also provides new

opportunities for forming friendships, expanding social networks, and interacting more with the community and the environment.

Spring is an especially good time to get out the walking shoes, swimsuit, bicycle, gardening tools, and anything else you need to be active. Check with your physician as to recommendations and any restrictions for diagnosed conditions that may affect physical activity choices.

Featured classes and fitness offerings are listed in the Life Enrichment/Wellness calendar and highlighted in this newsletter. For additional information on appropriate physical activity choices, contact a member of the Life Enrichment/Wellness team. Step into spring with a renewed commitment to be physically active every day! ■

Mind your verbs

Fill in the blank using the letter provided as the first letter. Think of verbs for each letter provided.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| <u>Example:</u>
ASK _____ | N _____ |
| A _____ | O _____ |
| B _____ | P _____ |
| C _____ | Q _____ |
| D _____ | R _____ |
| E _____ | S _____ |
| F _____ | T _____ |
| G _____ | U _____ |
| H _____ | V _____ |
| I _____ | W _____ |
| J _____ | X _____ |
| K _____ | Y _____ |
| L _____ | Z _____ |
| M _____ | |

Alberta Caregiver features Touchmark

In a recent issue of Alberta Caregiver, you can find this story about Touchmark resident Bill Warner.

Peace of mind, contentment mark Bill Warner's new life at Touchmark at Wedgewood

Bill Warner confesses he has had a "pretty rough time" this past year.

But, thanks to a dedicated family and his supportive Touchmark community, Bill is looking forward to a life marked by easier mobility, enriching activities, and the company of good friends.

"Do my children and I have more peace of mind now?" he asks. "Yes, indeed!"

A year ago, Bill and his wife were in their own home. Bill's wife had been ill for some time; then Bill had a stroke.



One of Bill's favorite spots is Touchmark's library, where he reads the daily newspaper.

Realizing that they might soon need another type of living situation, their children and they began looking around Edmonton for communities that offered Assisted Living options.

They found Touchmark at Wedgewood, took a tour, and everyone immediately liked what they saw—the beautiful grounds and new homes; the friendly, caring staff; and the long list of all-inclusive benefits.

Subsequently, Bill's wife went into the hospital. He moved into Touchmark, but the same day his wife was scheduled to join him, she passed away. Within the month, Bill suffered a series of strokes, which sent him to the hospital for four months.

After returning from the hospital to his new home at Touchmark, Bill has continued to make progress, thanks to Touchmark's individualized care that is regularly assessed by the professional staff. "Recovery has been a slow process,"

he says, but he's glad he's where he is ... with just the right amount of assistance.

Bill Warner has been through a lot in the last year, but the enthusiasm in his voice affirms his optimism. He's looking forward to the positive things that life and his new community offer ...

including those great walking trails.

"I've made good progress. I have a goal, and I'm going to reach it," he says with cheery conviction. "Every day I improve." ■

Coming Events

Tuesday, May 12, 1:30 pm
New date and time for the SCAT meeting.

Monday, May 18
Victoria Day holiday.

Tuesday, May 19, 11 am
Trip to Beaverhill Lake Nature Centre in Tofield.

Monday, May 25, 2 pm
Birthday and anniversary party with entertainers Bernie & Millie.