



Curiosity—and continued learning

Genealogy and astronomy are just two examples of educational classes Stanley and Carolyn Mitchell have participated in since moving to Touchmark three years ago. “Touchmark brings to us the opportunity to learn new things,” explains Stanley. “With classes held right here, attending is easy and accessible.”

“The astronomy class was one I was excited about, as I always wanted to learn more about it,” adds Carolyn.

Touchmark’s Life Enrichment/Wellness staff regularly schedule educational forums and classes for residents along with the many social and other activities reflecting seven dimensions of wellness.

Twice a year, Touchmark hosts a series of classes dedicated to guest speakers offering more in-depth classes on specific topics. Class offerings have included new media literacy, geology, and habits for healthy living. Often the presenters are professors or professors emeritus from the local university.

“There are lots of learning opportunities for a variety of interests,” says Stanley. “One of the classes we attended was on Alzheimer’s and mental health, which was very helpful.”

New experiences create memories

The couple admit they like to try new things and continually learn. “New experiences we share together create a ‘remember when’ of shared

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history,” says Carolyn. Recently the Mitchells attended a concert at the Meridian Symphony, saw a play at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, and have plans to visit the Starlight Mountain Theatre in a mountain community outside of Boise.

“The music of the area symphonies is a joy,” exclaims Carolyn. “It’s so uplifting and enriching. Now it’s so easy. The prearranged transportation to the concerts is much more enjoyable, because we don’t have to drive, and when we arrive at the venue, we are warmly greeted as ‘the group from Touchmark’ and led to our reserved seating.”

The surrounding area has no shortage of interesting activities for the Mitchells, whose key interests include art, human rights, geology, travel, and food. Exercise is another area of keen interest, and the couple work out nearly every day in the Touchmark Health & Fitness Club. “This has been vital to our health,” says Carolyn.

Like-minded people find each other

“We’re very social people, and we like to be with our friends,” says Stanley. “That’s what’s happened here at Touchmark. We’ve become real fast friends with people who are like-minded and enjoy new experiences.”

Carolyn adds, “We became involved in the Touchmark Thespians group. It’s fun, a lot of work, and quite impressive: The sound, lighting, and staging are amazing.” Both Carolyn and Stanley have served as stage managers, and Carolyn has performed in the show.

Married 57 years, Stanley and Carolyn moved to Touchmark from another state. The two agree they have found a new group of friends with whom they can enjoy learning new things, sharing a glass of good wine, and savoring a fine meal.

“It’s about having fun, laughing, and sharing,” says Carolyn. “It’s just what we do.”



Melissa Conrad
Vice President, Wellness & Marketing

“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.”

– Henry Ford

Because it’s back to school season, we’ve been thinking about the role learning plays in life, whether during our formative or later years. Learning can happen at any age as long as one has the curiosity and commitment to open his or her mind.

Not only does learning new things add more definition and enjoyment to your life, studies also show that it is particularly useful in keeping the aging mind sharp. Researchers from the University of Texas at Dallas recently experimented with adults ages 60-90 to gain insight into how learning new skills affects memory and mental cognition.

The results of the study showed that people who engaged in challenging new activities—such as digital photography and quilting—exhibited improvements in memory and problem-solving, whereas those who participated in activities with which they were already familiar—such as crossword puzzles and listening to classical music—did not.

Furthermore, the researchers observed that a hobby most improved individual brain function when it tapped the working memory, long-term memory, and other high-level cognitive processes at the same time. “The findings suggest that engagement alone is not enough,” says lead researcher Denise Park. “The three learning groups were pushed very hard to keep learning more and mastering more tasks and skills. Only the groups that were confronted with continuous and prolonged mental challenge improved.”

With that in mind, give yourself the gift of learning a new skill this autumn. There’s no better way to improve brain health while having fun at the same time!

Health & Fitness Studio

ACTIVE AGING WEEK

Monday, September 24 - Friday, September 28

Every September, Touchmark joins with the International Council on Active Aging and celebrates Active Aging Week. This year the theme is *Inspiring Wellness*, which encourages older adults to get excited about discovering new and engaging activities. By focusing on the seven dimensions of wellness—emotional, environmental, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual—everything we do benefits residents' overall health and well-being. Some of our events are listed below. Be sure to watch our online calendar for specific daily activities and more information.

- **Monday, 2 pm:** Hand Massages
- **Tuesday, 2 pm:** Fall Prevention & Recovery
- **Wednesday**
 - 9 - 11 am:** Senior Fitness Testing with nursing students from the University of Montana-Helena
 - 10:15 am:** Steve Minich demonstrating the Espresso HD bike
- **Thursday, 6:30 pm:** Dance Demonstration (tango, waltz, polka, etc.)
- **Friday, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm:** Local Tour



What others are saying ...

"The CNA staff is happy, friendly, and caring. They greet everybody by name. They aren't afraid to give the residents a caring touch. They have smiles on their faces. The other support staff are just as friendly and patient. The surroundings are wonderful. The building inside and out is meticulous. It is beautifully cordial. It feels welcoming and warm when you come in the front door. It is well-maintained. The cleanliness is marvelous. The decorations on the tables and the walls are interesting. The seating is placed for resting as well as visiting areas. The apartments are roomy. There is certainly a variety of activities offered. There is something for everyone. The bulletin boards highlighting the major events helps plan schedules. The weekly list with the more detailed schedule is also terrific. The special musical performances are very enjoyable and memorable."

-Loretta Miller, daughter of resident Marge Brown



TEAM MEMBER

Spotlight

Name: Connie Conley

Position: Life Enrichment/Wellness Assistant

How would you describe yourself? Busy, active, musician, love to sing, love to work with children as well as adults, sharer of music in all realms.

Share a bit about your family and growing up. I grew up on a farm outside of Hazelton, North Dakota, and started music lessons in the fourth grade. My mom bought our first piano with her egg money and paid for lessons. I am the sixth of eight children. My siblings and I were always expected to help out on the family farm.

What are some of the most significant events in your life? Having two daughters, marrying the man of my dreams and losing him after 32 years of marriage, recently walking my daughter down the aisle.

How long have you worked at Touchmark?
Five years as of this July.

What do you enjoy most about your job?
I love the challenge of using music in many different ways to involve those who love music just as much as I do.

What Touchmark value do you most closely relate to and why? Excellence, because it's important to do your best all the time. There's no shame in hard work; you always try to do your best.

Outside of work what are your favorite ...

Activities: Watching TV, movies, knitting, online games, and word games.

Food: I love to make cinnamon rolls and caramel rolls, and I love to cook healthy foods.

Movie: *Mamma Mia!*

Music: Classical, traditional, choir music—everything but country and rap. I am a member of the Symphony Chalet.



Community events included a night out to the Helena Brewers game and barbecue dinner, an ice cream social, dancing to the music of Seldom Paid Jammers, and a wine and cheese social.



Residents of the Sapphire and Garnet neighborhoods enjoyed Conductorcise® class and an afternoon visit to the beautiful Cathedral of Saint Helena.

Save the date!

AGELESS LADIES OUT FOR TEA (ALOFT)

Friday, September 7 • 2 pm • Forum

Featuring a different speaker each month, ALOFT offers attendees the opportunity to be inspired by female speakers from a variety of backgrounds while connecting with other women and enjoying tea and treats. This month's speaker is Elsie Arntzen, Montana's Superintendent of Public Instruction. Sign up to attend.

HELENA WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S

Saturday, September 8 • Carroll College

Registration and festivities begin at 9 am, opening ceremony at 10:30 am, walk begins at 11 am. Join us to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support, and research. Every resident, staff member, and all families are encouraged to join the Touchmark team and be part of the event.

MASTERWORKS CONCERT I: OPENING NIGHT

Saturday, September 15 • Bus leaves at 6:45 pm • Helena Civic Center

HSO Concertmaster Stephen Cepeda opens the season with Benjamin Britten's Violin Concerto complete with motional virtuosity and beauty that was once deemed "unplayable." With music of Respighi, the HSO romances The Fountains of Rome and the "Eternal City" depicted in the mighty Pines of Rome. Tickets \$35 - \$55. Sign up in advance at the Front Desk.

NEW RESIDENT WELCOME PARTY!

Thursday, September 27 • 4 pm • Forum

Everyone is invited to a chocolate-themed event where people can get to know their newest neighbors and visit with friends. Chocolate-covered strawberries and chocolate martinis will be served!

FLU SHOTS

Thursday, October 11 • 9 - 11:30 am; Friday, October 12 • 9 - 10:30 am • Forum

The CDC recommends anyone over the age of six months have a flu shot. Experts say if you won't do it for yourself, get a flu shot for loved ones with compromised immune systems.

CECIL THE MAGICIAN SHOW

Friday, October 12 • 2 pm • Forum

Cecil has been delighting audiences across the Great Northwest for the past 25 years. This magician and illusionist displays a consummate artistry and southern charm that will leave you spellbound.

[View our {FULL} Life calendar online for a complete list of events: TouchmarkHelena.com](http://TouchmarkHelena.com)

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