



## 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

**CONTINUED ON PG. 2**

## CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

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

## The benefits of fitness assessments

As we approach Active Aging Week, it has never been more important to take a look at the services the Studio and the community have to offer. Did you know that as a resident of Touchmark you are entitled to a complimentary fitness assessment?



Whether you already participate in classes or have been considering starting a fitness program, a fitness assessment is the first step that all clients take when looking to improve function and mobility.

These assessments provide critical information necessary for determining where to begin and what fitness areas on which to focus.

Every day during Active Aging Week, the Studio will be conducting assessments. Contact Tracy for more information and to sign up!

## Fun, adventure, and involvement—the perfect recipe for active aging

When Marion Travis, 62, decided to move to Touchmark almost two years ago, she was looking for peace of mind and a sense of community. “There are less worries here. If I need something, there’s someone who can help, and there’s always someone new to meet and talk to.”

Though she has eased into and enjoys the relaxation of retired life, she makes sure she remains active every day. “I take my 12-year-old-dog Kodi on long walks twice a day. I also just set up my Bowflex® gym and elliptical in my basement so I can improve my cardio and fight joint stiffness three times a week.”

Marion also still enjoys golfing once a week. “I am part of a golf league at the Stony Plain Golf Course, and I had a wonderful time participating in this year’s Texas Scramble Golf Tournament.”

While physical activity is an important part of Marion’s lifestyle, keeping mentally fit is equally vital to her routine. “It’s important to keep your mind healthy and active. I love trivia and games, and I volunteer in the Touchmark store and as a porter when residents living in the long-term care neighborhood go shopping. I also sing in the Touchmark Glee Club as an alto-soprano, though it really depends on the key as to which way I go.”

Her top tips for active aging? “Find something that you enjoy. Find something that gets you out. And find something that gets you socializing.”







# TEAM MEMBER *Spotlight*

**Name:** Marie Reader

**Position:** Building Services, Master Gardener

**How would you describe yourself?**

I am a human being who is trying to become a better person in all the aspects of life every day!

**Share a bit about your family and growing up.**

I was born in Quebec City, and I am the oldest of three children. I have one brother and one sister. Their English is not very good, ha ha!

**What are some of the most significant events in your life?**

So many; probably the births of my two beautiful daughters.

**How long have you worked at Touchmark?**  
About four months.

**What do you enjoy most about your job?**

People seem to appreciate my work. It means a lot to me.

**What Touchmark value do you most closely relate to and why?**

Being a Friend. To me, it is the primary purpose of the community at Touchmark. Isolation and loneliness contribute to health decline.

**Outside of work what are your favourite ...**

**Activities:** Anything close to nature.

**Food:** I like to try new things. Don (a resident) told me to try a Jamaican restaurant on Stony Plain Road; I definitely have to go and try it!

**Music:** I like Bruno Mars' songs.

**Movie:** I don't have one.

**Music:** When my husband plays acoustic guitar in the evening. It means harmony and calm.





*Communitywide events included outdoor yard games, happy hour, a ride on the Edmonton Funicular and walk along the promenade, a Garden Party en Blanc, and the annual Texas Scramble Golf Tournament.*





# Save the date!

## **MONTHLY BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY PARTY**

**Monday, September 10 • 2 pm • Marquis Room**

Entertainment provided by Val Abello.

## **DOG AGILITY SHOW**

**Monday, September 24 • 7 pm • Marquis Room**

Demonstration by the furry friends from Flashing Canines Agility Club.

## **TOUCHMARK'S ANNUAL CNIB WALK**

**Tuesday, September 25**

Registration at 9:30 am • Walk at 10 am followed by barbecue lunch.

## **MYSTERY AT THE SPEAKEASY**

**Friday September 28 • 4 pm • Grande Foyer**

Enjoy a cocktail while helping to solve the mystery

of “who done it.” Don your best roaring '20s garb (optional) and have some fun. The mystery will be followed by a buffet dinner at 5:30 pm in the Grande Hall Dining Room.

## **WILDLIFE OF THE ROCKIES PRESENTATION**

**Friday, October 19 • 2 pm • Marquis Room**

Join Ian Wilson and Jacinthe Lavoie, photographers and authors of several wildlife and wildflower books, for their discussion.

## **OKTOBERFEST PARTY**

**Friday, October 26 • 3:30 pm • Grande Foyer**

Entertainment by Button Box Bill followed by a buffet dinner at 5:30 pm.

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

## What others are saying ...

*“It has been a tremendous source of comfort over the past three years knowing that my parents are living at Touchmark. We are deeply grateful for the kindness and expertise of the staff who have been so supportive, especially during the inevitable life transitions. I have seen my parents develop friendships that I know they value, and the warmth shown to them by other residents has also included extended family. We feel so fortunate!”*

-Maureen Scott, daughter of residents



*In the Sapphire and Emerald neighbourhoods, we enjoyed a painting workshop and a beautiful afternoon on the patio.*

## **TOUCHMARK AT WEDGEWOOD**

*Full-service Retirement Community*

18333 Lessard Road NW • Edmonton, AB T6M 2Y5

780-577-5000 • Touchmark.com

