



## For the love of travel!

Since moving to Touchmark seven years ago, Fran and Ralph Brown have traveled by land, air, and sea to spots around the world. In addition to their recent four-month world cruise, they have taken a European river cruise, driven across the U.S. and Canada, and explored Hawaii, Alaska, India, Turkey, Namibia, Iceland, and Chile.

Fran says, “I love seeing this great big world, and what we love most about our trips are the animals and wildlife! We love seeing them in their natural habitat, especially on safari in Africa.”

While the Browns are away, they don’t have to worry about their home. They know Touchmark team members are collecting their mail, watering their plants, and taking care of everything. “Especially being gone for over 30 days, we are

so happy to know we have the staff at Touchmark and wonderful neighbours to help us out,” says Fran. Before their recent trip, one friend at Touchmark, who has travelled around the world four times, offered them helpful advice about excursions—“another Touchmark benefit!”

Once home, the couple always put together a presentation for the residents, who enjoy seeing the photos, artifacts, and keepsakes. Some have been inspired to travel to faraway places, such as Transylvania and Japan, or take a world cruise. “The presentations are stressful to prepare for, but it’s neat to have a full crowd of people who appreciate and can share in our experience,” says Ralph. Fran adds, “We’re working now on an ‘Around the World in 80 Minutes’ presentation, which is going to be challenging!”

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### Around the world in 113 days

As the couple searched for their next adventure, Fran saw a cruise itinerary for 29 countries and 39 ports. “I told Ralph, if I knew I only had a year to live, I’d go on a world cruise.” Ralph quickly replied, “Why wait? Let’s do it while we can!”

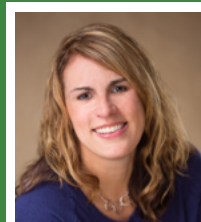
Every day offered a new venture. They swam with stingrays in Bora Bora, snorkeled in Thailand, toured Singapore, visited the Hobbiton in New Zealand, and explored parts of Angola, Gambia, and Cape Verde in Africa.

One of the highlights was Vietnam, where they visited the Cu Chi tunnels under Saigon. The tour focused on the ingenuity and resilience of the Vietnamese fighters, who lived and fought from the underground tunnels. “It was scary and yet fascinating crawling around in the tunnels, which were about 3 feet high,” says Ralph.

### Never a dull moment! Next up ...

At the end of this year, they will sail on a Caribbean Disney cruise celebrating the Christmas holiday with their family. In 2019, they will embark on a two-month road trip around the U.S. and Canada to keep in touch with family and friends. Beyond that, they are researching potential safaris to nurture their continuing love of the African wildlife. Eventually, they would love to go to Ireland and Scotland to explore Fran’s cultural heritage and roots.

Both agree that Touchmark is the perfect home base for their worry-free travels!



**Melissa Conrad**  
Vice President, Wellness & Marketing

**“All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware.”**

*– Martin Buber*

Summer is often a busy time marked by long days and warm evenings, kids home from school, outdoor activities, and trips—whether near or far. This time of year allows us ample opportunities to connect with the natural world and, in turn, ourselves and those we love.

Getting outside not only feels great on our skin but enriches our minds as well. Recent scientific studies have shown that spending time outdoors decreases stress and anxiety, relieves attention fatigue, improves creativity, reduces inflammation, and keeps your memory sharp. In short, being in nature simply makes us happier, better-functioning people.

Even if you don’t have the time, flexibility, or ability to travel to a distant destination this summer, merely taking a day here and there to go to an unknown place will rejuvenate you. Here are some tips for making the most of your upcoming trip or staycation:

- Approach each locale you visit as if you are a tourist, even if you’re in your hometown. Ask questions, stop to take in the sights and smells, and keep an open mind. Buy a local guidebook to research the best places to eat, stay, and visit.
- Stay present by disconnecting from technology as much as possible. Set your cell phone to ‘airplane mode’ if you go for a hike. That way, you have it if you need it but are not tempted to text, check Facebook, etc.
- Pick at least one activity you have planned each week and swap it out for something that takes you outside. For example, take your knitting or crocheting to the park or suggest exploring a farmer’s market with your friends instead of your typical Sunday restaurant brunch.

Treat your body and mind to some deep relaxation this summer; you deserve it!



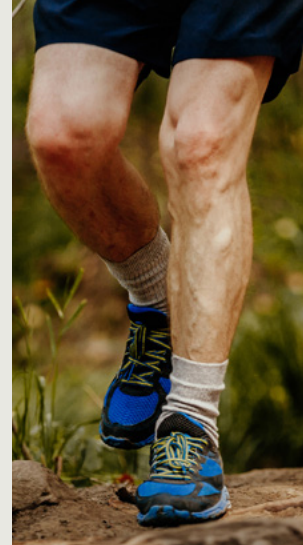
## Health & Fitness Studio

### Touchmark Trekkers update

Residents are now on their way to beautiful and sunny Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, our summer walking destination. We are approximately 200 kilometres away from Phoenix! Keep walking Trekkers! To help get us there faster, join us every Wednesday in the Grande for a walk around the community. For more information, see Health & Fitness Coordinator Tracy.

### Men's fitness

Although this is not a new program, it is continuously popular with male residents. We focus on flexibility, muscular strength, and endurance. We meet in the Group Exercise Studio every Monday and Wednesday from 11:15 am - noon.



## Quilting for a cause that warms the heart

When Ruth Frieser first joined Touchmark's Quilting Club, she didn't know what to expect.

"I had just moved in and didn't know anybody but found it was definitely a great way to make friends." The Quilting Club meets every Wednesday from 12 to 4 pm to relax, have coffee and treats, and, of course, quilt in a fun group setting. "While we each do our own projects, we also really enjoy working on charitable projects together," says Sheila Hiller.

In the past, the ladies have donated lap quilts to the Little Warriors Organization, helped to make placemats and table runners for a low-income housing project, quilted clothing protectors for long-term care residents, and even made tote bags for those who just need a lift in spirits.

"We're always looking for a way to give love and support to people in need," says Bev Yanchuk. "That's what we're all about."

That's why the ladies jumped at the chance to get involved with the Tender Loving Cloth (TLC) Project, quilting numerous cotton/flannel hearts for newborn infants in the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at the University of Alberta Hospital and the Royal Alexandra Hospital. "The baby and parents are each provided with a cloth heart to 'scent' and use as a comfort when they are apart," says Sarah Topilko with the Stollery Children's Hospital.

The cloths, switched regularly between parents and their baby, provide many benefits, including soothing the infant, increasing their sensory development, and providing increased bonding with the parents.

"My granddaughter had a premature baby, so this is close to my heart," says Francoise Byrne. "But he's going to be 4 soon, and he's a chatterbox and always on the go! I really wanted to give back, because this is special to me."

With the NICU at both hospitals using upwards of 300 hearts per month, the ladies have been quilting their 'hearts' out. In just two club meetings, they completed more than 200 hearts. "Everybody is doing something. It's an assembly line of cutting, sewing, ironing, and turning," says Muriel Buchkowski. "It's still our favourite hobby—but with a purpose behind it. Together we can accomplish a lot!"





# TEAM MEMBER

## *Spotlight*

**Name:** Asuncion (Onnie) Silla

**Position:** Assisted Living Health Care Aide

**How would you describe yourself?**

I am a simple, compassionate, trustworthy, caring, and positive person.

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

I am the eldest in a family of 10 siblings. We grew up in the countryside and had a happy family. I studied for my Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering in the Phillippines. I have been married for 10 years and do not have children. As of now I am happy working as a health care provider and have lived in Canada for 15 years.

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

I love travelling because I make more friends and have adventures.

**How long have you worked at Touchmark?**

Almost nine years.

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

Helping residents to be more comfortable at home.

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

Excellence, teamwork, hospitality, integrity, and compassion because our daily task is easy if we are good team players in every department.

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

**Activities:** Travelling, walking, swimming, and cooking.

**Food:** Faella/lasagna.

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

**Movie:** *The Notebook*.

**Music:** *Alleluia*.





*We enjoyed our 2nd annual planting day with Grade 4 students from Our Lady of the Prairies.*



*Yum! Quiche was on the menu for the Let's Make Lunch cooking class.*



*At the Fashion Show and Social, residents modeled the spring and summer collection from ALIA N Tan Jay located in Spruce Grove, Alberta.*



*Summer is here and each month throughout this past school year, Grade 4 students from Our Lady of the Prairies Elementary School and Touchmark residents have enjoyed getting together. We wrapped up the year with an afternoon of ice cream treats, floats, and good old-fashioned games like Plinko, Yahtzee, beanbag toss, and more.*





# Save the date!

## **DINNER AND THE RAT PACK TRIBUTE SHOW**

**Friday, July 13 • 5:30 pm • Yellowhead Casino**

Tickets are limited and cost \$55. Bring money for dinner. RSVP by July 9.

Play nine holes and enjoy a catered lunch. Those interested in coming for lunch are welcome. Cost: \$72 for nine holes, a shared golf cart, and lunch; \$18 for lunch only.

## **BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY PARTY**

**Monday, July 16 • 2 pm • The Marquis Room**

Join us to celebrate with The Old Smoothies!

## **BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY PARTY**

**Monday, August 13 • 2 pm • The Marquis Room**

Join us to celebrate with Wayne "O"!

## **GARDEN PARTY EN BLANC**

**Monday, July 23 • 2 pm • Back Patio**

Come dressed in white and enjoy a glass of lemonade or ice tea and treats. RSVP by July 19.

## **OPERA UNDER THE SKY WITH MICHAEL GREET**

**Wednesday, August 22 • 7 pm • Back Patio**

Dress summer formal and enjoy a wine spritzer and hors d'oeuvres. RSVP by August 16.

## **ANNUAL TOUCHMARK GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**Thursday, July 26 • 9:30 am tee time • Country Side Golf Club**

Join us for our annual Texas scramble golf event!

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

## What others are saying ...

*"It will be three years on July 1 since I moved here, and I love living here. I don't have any worries living here. If I want to go somewhere, I just close my door and go! I really enjoy the activities and outings and have made quite a few new friends since I moved in, and I really enjoy meeting the new people when they come. Touchmark is close to my family, so I get to see them a lot, too!"*

*-Pearl Quinney, resident*



*In the Sapphire and Emerald neighbourhoods, we enjoyed planting the patio flowers with students from Our Lady of the Prairies and a picnic at the park.*

**TOUCHMARK AT WEDGEWOOD**

*Full-service Retirement Community*

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