



## 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

## Fall prevention

The Touchmark Health & Fitness Studio offers classes to improve your strength, balance, and coordination all while having a great time! Classes are held on Mondays and Wednesdays, with Level 0 and Level 1 options available! Talk to Hannah about getting started.

Every year, the National Council on Aging celebrates the arrival of fall with a Fall Prevention Awareness Day. According to the National Council on Aging, one in four Americans over 65 falls every year, and falling is the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries in older Americans. Falls can be prevented by removing tripping hazards in and around your home and being aware of your surroundings. To effectively decrease falls, one needs to exercise regularly with a focus on strength, balance, flexibility, and endurance.

As you look toward the coming holiday season and the year ahead, here are a few additional ways to build better balance and have a fall-free future:

- **Talk with your doctor.** Bring a list of your prescriptions and any over-the-counter medications with you to your next appointment to find out about any interactions that could cause dizziness or balance issues.
- **Visit an eye doctor.** Whether you wear corrective lenses or not, changes to your eyesight can make balancing or spotting obstacles more difficult.
- **Take balance-themed exercise classes.** Building the right muscles and staying limber can do wonders in helping you stay on your feet, and the right exercise class can make all the difference.
- **Pay attention to your shoes.** Wear the proper shoes for your activity or environmental condition.

Please consider your options for exercise to keep you healthy and safe!



*"I am a nature person, and what I love about Touchmark are all of the trees, shrubs, flowers, and the beautiful nature in general. This is my home, and when I drive in here, I just think of it as my great big house. I just love it here."*

-Mae Steves, resident



**Name:** Katelyn Spears

**Position:** Kitchen Line Chef

**How would you describe yourself?**

I am friendly, artsy, and a team player.

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

I grew up with my parents and one younger sister.

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

When my niece was being born, and when I started culinary school.

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

I have worked for Touchmark for almost a year!

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

The “sweetest” part about my job is creating new desserts.

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

I am a Giver. I want to give the residents the best possible food I can make.

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

**Activities:** Drawing, painting, and cooking.

**Food:** Italian and Asian food.

**Movie:** *Inside Out*.

**Music:** All kinds, but I’d have to go with country.





*Communitywide events included a large group for Wine & Paint Night; Pinot & Pendants; Girls Night In, where we created wooden signs; riding in the LibertyFest Parade; dinner out to Othello's; and an afternoon outing to Clauren Ridge Vineyard.*





# Save the date!

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## TRIP TO HAFER PARK

**Wednesday, September 5 • 2:30 pm • Hafer Park**

We will be traveling to Hafer Park to enjoy the late summer weather and to feed our favorite ducks, turtles, and fish.

## OKTOBERFEST PARTY

**Tuesday, September 18 • 6 - 7:30 pm**

Join us for Oktoberfest before Active Aging Week! Be ready to enjoy themed appetizers, beer, and an all-around festive time! Bohemian Knights will provide live entertainment. RSVP by September 15.

## WIFFLE BALL GOLF TOURNAMENT

**Thursday, September 27 • 10:30 - 11:30 am • Parkview**

Teams play one round of golf; at the end, the person with the lowest score wins! Transportation will be provided for those who would like to cheer on the players, and lunch will be provided afterward. RSVP by September 25.

## PUMPKIN PATCH VISIT

**Wednesday, October 17 • 2:30 pm • Santa Fe Presbyterian Church**

We will enjoy the autumn weather while strolling through a local pumpkin patch favorite at Santa Fe Presbyterian Church. For a minimal cost, we will each handpick a pumpkin to take back home with us while enjoying homemade pumpkin spice cookies!

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

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*In the  
Prairieview  
Residences,  
we enjoyed  
the company  
of our local  
clogging  
group The  
Cottonwood  
Creek  
Cloggers.*

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