



## 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 Club



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. Won't you join us? 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.

**Let's bike across North Dakota!** It's time to get inspired—and moving! We are setting a goal to ride enough miles on our Espresso HD bike to get across the state. That's 340 miles during Active Aging Week. Staff will be available on September 24, 26, and 28 to help you get going on the bike if you're not familiar with it. Recruit other members to help us reach our goal!

**Blood pressure checks:** We will have blood pressure checks Monday through Friday for one hour each day during Active Aging Week, as well. A member of our Health Services team will be in the Health & Fitness Club each day from 9:30 - 10:30 am to take your blood pressure.



## 76 cars raced to sign up for our car show!







# TEAM MEMBER

## *Spotlight*

**Name:** Sasa Misic

**Position:** Building Services Painter

**How would you describe yourself?**

Happy, energetic, always positive.

**Share a bit about your family and**

**growing up.** I am from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I have one brother and one sister, both older than me. We lived through a war over there, and were lucky to be chosen to come to Bismarck in 1997 when I was 11 years old. It was pretty tough times over there; we had to live through tough conditions. I feel very fortunate to be here.

**What are some of the most significant**

**events in your life?** Coming over to America and surviving the war. Finding the love of my life, Audriana, getting engaged, and marrying her this month.

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

Since April 2018.

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

All the people: staff and residents. I've painted

at other jobs, and you're mostly working with four or five people. Here at Touchmark, I enjoy interacting with several people daily, and I get to brighten their mood.

**What Touchmark value do you most**

**closely relate to and why?** I wear a positive attitude and maintain a sense of joy. What I've been through, I live that value every day. I have been through the worst, so I don't take things for granted.

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

**Activities:** Snowboarding, mountain biking, kayaking, walking my dog.

**Food:** My mom's Bosnian food, of course, but other than that, I'm a burger guy. And eggs. I love eggs. I love the soup here at Touchmark: the soups, oh my gosh. The soups are great!

**Movie:** Bruce Lee movies and Marvel movies.

**Music:** I love jam bands. Umphrey's McGee is a band that I'm going to see soon again for the 10th time. I like any music.





*Fun community events included the Cheers & Beers Brewery Tour, blot art, s'more-making in the courtyard, and the Monthly Mystery Trip to the Dakota, Missouri Valley, and Western Railroad.*



*In the Pembroke and Yorkshire neighborhoods, residents enjoyed painting tiles that were used for a mural, a beautiful afternoon on the patio, and making yummy oven-baked s'mores!*

# Save the date!

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## **ALI FAMILY: FLEEING IRAQ**

**Tuesday, September 4 • 2 pm • Chapel**

We have the pleasure of hosting Abdullah Ali to hear the story of fleeing the Kurdistan region with his family while it was under the regime of Saddam Hussein. It was not an easy journey, but it was a necessary one. Listen to their story about repression and hardship, and how they've managed to make a life that they love here in Bismarck.

## **THIRD BREWERY TOUR DESTINATION**

**Thursday, September 20 • 4 pm • Stonehome Brewery Company rooftop**

Our third brewery stop is just before Active Aging Week, and we're kicking it off with a hearty beer at a brand new brewery in town! Join us to enjoy a beer and appetizers while overlooking a magnificent view of Bismarck. This new brewery and restaurant has an excellent reputation from its first location in Watford City, North Dakota. You won't want to miss this! Participants responsible for the cost of beer.

## **ACTIVE AGING WEEK MYSTERY TOUR**

**Tuesday, September 25 • 10 am • Leave from Touchmark**

Our Mystery Tour locations will hit all seven dimensions of wellness: emotional, environmental,

intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual—you just won't know where you're going until you get there! We will stop at three locations around Bismarck so we can exercise our bodies, minds, and more. Participant-paid lunch will be a part of one of the stops, as well.

## **PREMIER WORLD DISCOVERY TRIP PRESENTATION**

**Friday, September 28 • 10 am • Chapel**

Stop by and listen to Kelsey from Premier World Discovery tell us about the great trips coming up: Ireland in October and more domestic and international trips that they have in store for Touchmark residents and guests in 2019! It's never too late to explore your dream destination(s).

## **OKTOBERFEST**

**Thursday, October 25 • 5:30 pm • Kingsley garage**

Prost! Help us celebrate another annual Oktoberfest party. Plenty of beer and authentic food will be served alongside great conversation, authentic German games, and live music. Don't forget your traditional German garb—Lederhosen looks good on everyone. This party will be ausgezeichnet!

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

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## What others are saying ...

*"The people here are beautiful. They really care about me. There is nothing about Touchmark that I don't like. I see that with a lot of people who work here; they are so caring. It's not just one; it's everybody. All of it."*

- Edwin Ternes, resident

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