



Together residents and staff make Touchmark great



Message from
Amy Jo Powers
—Executive Director

Touchmark is filled with “movers and shakers.” You will find several of these energized residents in the Hoyle Room for the monthly Resident Council meeting on the first Tuesday of each month. You may wonder what is their primary function?

The purpose of the Resident Council is to provide a channel of communication between residents of Touchmark, administration, and staff with the objective of enhancing the quality of life for all residents while maintaining a supportive and harmonious relationship with administration and staff.

Jean Ormson, president during 2005-2006, recently compiled a list of council accomplishments, some of which include:

- Organized the Touchmark library, complete with a check-in/check-out system
- Hosted a quarterly “mixer” dinner in the Four Seasons Dining Room to facilitate socialization for all residents
- Upgraded Touchmark Garden

- Installed a light sensor in basement storage area
- Participated in dining service upgrades, including additional staffing and requested menu changes

It is said that “many hands make light work,” and this is certainly true at Touchmark. With the assistance of the Resident Council and many other helpful residents, our community is consistently monitored for excellence. Each year, we raise the bar and keep increasing our services, amenities, and resident satisfaction.

I would like to thank all members of the current and past resident councils for their dedication and commitment to making Touchmark the premier retirement community in the Fox Valley. Thank you for being involved and lending your expertise and knowledge to further our mission of excellent service. We couldn’t ask for better partners!

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New year ... new you

by Marge Coalman, EdD
—Vice President of Wellness & Programs, Touchmark

In a world of quick fixes and New Year’s resolutions, it is important to pause and realize that there is no one prescription for physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Each of us is a unique human being made up of common human genomes but entirely different in personality, strengths, weaknesses, and preferences. The message of the media that there is a universal solution for achieving improved health may fit cereal boxes, bumper stickers, and 30-second ads, but in order to achieve individual goals an individualized “prescription” is essential.

“If we all ran at the same pace, we’d always be in each other’s way.”

—Gary Stanley, author

As 2007 arrives, it is a good idea to do a personal inventory of one’s highest priorities and evaluate what choices and resources are needed to achieve goals. According to Kenneth Cooper, MD, MPH, founder of the Cooper Institute, there are a few very important goals for all of us over the age of 50:

- **Adequate sleep.** This can often be achieved by having a good level of activity/exercise during the day; eating earlier in the evening to aid digestion before going to bed; avoiding excessive alcohol or caffeine; and attempting to fill the mind with good thoughts before retiring for the night. A good bed and pleasant company also are helpful.
- **Balance in activities.** Physical activity needs to include cardiovascular, flexibility, strength, and balance regimens. Depending on individual needs, there may be more of a need in one area than the other. Stretching and flexibility are often ignored, but they are critical to overall physical fitness.
- **Socialization.** Good company, conversation, and humor affect overall health.
- **Continued learning.** Remember: We create new brain cells every day of our lives.
- **Healthy food choices.** These are good for the body and soul.
- **Volunteerism.** The importance of giving back is essential to good health.

At Touchmark, we focus on the unique needs of each person. For support and assistance with an individualized wellness program, contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Bobbie Thompson. Make the new year your best year.

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Let Your Spirit Soar

Writers, photographers, and poets live and create in Touchmark communities, and Touchmark is featuring some of this talent and creativity in each newsletter. The Let Your Spirit Soar theme for January is a heartfelt, reminiscent story or “new year, new you” resolutions.

Home economics class for boys?

by John “Jack” Danz

—Resident at a Touchmark community in Sioux Falls, South Dakota

My best friend, Larry Hunt, and I were in high school in Ashland, Wisconsin. We wanted an all-boys cooking class started at our school. With much persuasion, we convinced our principal to start this course. Our high school was the first school to start an all-boys home economics class in Wisconsin.

The press caught wind of this, and before we knew it, the *Milwaukee Journal* came to our school to write an article on this new course [that Ondossagon High School] started. After the article ran in the newspaper, I received a call from a man who ran a resort. He saw the newspaper article and wanted me to come to work at the resort for the summer. I accepted!

When the summer was done, I received another offer in Madison, Wisconsin, at a restaurant. There, I cooked for the University of Wisconsin Men’s Basketball Team after every home game. I received an hourly pay and three meals a day. My experience being a cook even came into use in the Army, where I filled in for the full-time cook.

For February, please submit a heart-to-heart/love story. Deadline for this issue is January 10. For a list of the guidelines, monthly themes, and deadlines, please contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Bobbie Thompson.

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Usher in a happy new year

by Bobbie Thompson

—Life Enrichment/Wellness Director

Celebrating the holidays

More than 350 people attended the fifth annual Friends and Family Holiday Party at Touchmark in early December. Chef Steven and the Dining Services staff amazed guests and residents with three specialty food themes: Hometown USA, French Cuisine, and Italian Fare. We hope all of your holiday celebrations were a joy!



At the end of the Friends and Family Holiday Party, many of the management staff, who stayed to clean the common areas, gathered for a picture.

Welcome 2007 with us!

On New Year’s Eve, December 31, a special celebration of the new year will take place. The evening is entitled *New Year’s Eve—New York Style*. Dancing to the Live Weyers three-piece band will start the festive evening with energy. At 10 pm, we’ll show a slide show, commemorating many of the memorable events and faces of 2006 at Touchmark. This picture review of the year will be followed by scrumptious hors d’oeuvres and more music.

At midnight New York time (11 pm), party favors will pop while champagne bubbles. It’s a great way to send off the old year and welcome in the new year with New York style.

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Enter photo(s) for Touchmark 2008 calendar

As part of the Life Enrichment/Wellness Let Your Spirit Soar program, Touchmark is planning to create a 2008 calendar featuring photos taken by staff (team members) and residents. The calendar theme is “creating intentional community,” and it will convey pictorially the Life Enrichment/Wellness areas: physical activity; mind/body/spirit; community outreach; intergenerational; friendship; growing together; lifelong learning; special events/holiday celebrations.

All photos must be in color; taken with a digital camera or 35 mm camera, show current staff/residents, and have a completed permission form of all people pictured. Check with your Life Enrichment/Wellness office for complete guidelines. All photos must be submitted by July 31, 2007 to be considered for the calendar.

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What others are saying

“Every one of the staff here are so wonderful. They treat me like I am their own grandmother, mother, or aunt. They really are exceptional!”

by Maxine Bathke
—Resident

**Purchase a card,
support a cause**

The *Let Your Spirit Soar* note card collection, featuring the artwork of talented artists who live in Touchmark communities throughout North America, is now available. A set of eight cards and envelopes costs \$10, and individual cards cost \$2. Your purchase will support the Touchmark Foundation’s work to help seniors receive needed support and services. To learn more about the Foundation, please visit TouchmarkFoundation.org or call Executive Director Janet Plummer at 800-796-8744.

“Laura Ingalls Wilder” visits Touchmark

Many children grow up reading the stories of Laura Ingalls Wilder and life in pioneering days. Few get to actually ask questions of Laura and hear her stories brought to life. Children and adults alike, many whom have read the author’s works, were mesmerized to hear the stories of Laura Ingalls Wilder come alive (as presented by impersonator Pat Day) at Touchmark. The clothes, the daily chores, tales of siblings and marriage, the way the holidays were recognized, and even how pioneers brushed their teeth were some of the fascinating topics covered as Pat told both well-known and researched details to a group of 30 who gathered to enjoy a holiday tea.

“One of the best things about cold weather is hot tea ... and a good book!” one lady exclaimed.



Pat Day, acting as Laura Ingalls Wilder, shared stories and interesting facts about pioneer days at a holiday tea.

Upcoming events

Sunday, December 31, 8 to 11 pm—*New Year’s Eve—New York Style* party with live music, a 2006 photo show, hors d’oeuvres, favors, and champagne. Evening meal separate or meal ticket. Guests: \$10. Four Seasons Dining Room and lobby.

Monday, January 1, 3 pm—Has the new year gone to the dogs already? Jack Zolkowski’s trained and trickster dogs perform to impress and make you laugh. No charge. Chapel.

Saturdays, January 6, 13, 20, 27, 10 to 11 am— Caregiver’s Bible Study. Come find hope and encouragement as a family or friend caregiver of another. Six Saturdays in a row. January 6 to February 10. No charge.

