



## Irish eyes are smiling on you



*Message from*  
**Amy Jo Powers**  
—Executive Director

“When Irish eyes are smiling, sure they’ll steal your heart away!” You probably recognize these lyrics to the popular Irish tune. St. Patrick’s Day has always been a special day in my family, and whenever I hear the familiar songs, it reminds me of singing to my Irish grandparents when I was still in the single digits of age.

My mother taught me all the words to many Irish songs, and then she would shuttle me over to grandparents’ house to sing my little heart out for them. Grandpa would always say, “You’ve got the luck of the Irish, kid!”

Well, I suppose he is still right after all these years. I am lucky ... and so are you. Why are we lucky? Whether you work at Touchmark, call Touchmark your home, or are somehow involved with Touchmark, you have the luck of the Irish. It feels great to be part of a community that is caring, genuine, and fun! Everyday, I feel lucky to be a part of Touchmark, and I certainly hope you do, as well. The month of March is a perfect time to invite your friends, family, and neighbors over to Touchmark to celebrate your luck. We are lucky to have found you and you are lucky to have found us. Coincidence that the Touchmark logo is green? I think not. Erin Go Bragh!

## Optimism affects global wellness

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

In the last five years, a whole new field has developed in the world of psychological research. It is the study of positive psychology. While that may sound like something New Age or “soft” in the annals of research study and outcomes, it is in fact becoming very important in trying to figure out how the global population can cooperate and work together for the greater good of all.

A study of positive emotion, character, and institutions by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi in 2000 included data from around the world and over time. From the studies of the ancient Greeks to the Psychology departments

**“I think we are our memories more than we are the sum total of our experiences.”**

—*Martin Seligman, psychologist and writer*

in today’s universities, the conclusions turned out to be the same. Scientific evidence verifies long-held beliefs—key strengths in the optimistic personality—are linked to

life satisfaction in regard to a life well lived and are a high index of self-esteem and good mental health. In addition to individual influence, there is a great impact on the world culture when these principles and strengths are applied to leaders and learners.

A 2005 Time magazine cover story, “The New Science of Happiness,” featured Seligman and highlighted eight

simple steps to lift your level of happiness, based on the research of University of California psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky:

1. **Count your blessings.**
2. **Practice acts of kindness.**
3. **Savor life's joys.**
4. **Thank a mentor.**
5. **Learn to forgive.**
6. **Invest time and energy in friends and family.**
7. **Take care of your body.**
8. **Develop strategies for coping with stress and hardships.**

Look for additional information and scientific investigation of the phenomenon of positive psychology in an upcoming article I wrote for the International Council on Active Aging's *Journal of Active Aging*. (A link on the Touchmark Web site will be available following publication.)

Talk with Touchmark Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Bobbie Thompson for immediate access to support and opportunities to implement positive influence. The possibilities for optimistic results are unlimited.

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## Talent abounds at Touchmark

**by Bobbie Thompson**  
—Life Enrichment/Wellness Director

It may be cold and foreboding outside until spring arrives, but the residents and staff at Touchmark found a creative way to keep themselves entertained, warm, and filled with laughter. It was the first Touchmark Resident and Staff Talent Show, and it was a huge success. The idea came from Sales team member Chad Strong (seen juggling in photo).

Fourteen separate acts went on the Touchmark stage to show a great variety of talents, skills, and interesting abilities. Some of the performances were by individual presenters, for example, creative dance, piano, viola, stand-up comedy, juggling, singing, sign language, and whistling. A few residents and staff shared their talents by demonstrating a portion of a hobby, such as sailing, photography,



**Sales team member Chad Strong juggles at the Touchmark Resident and Staff Talent Show.**

pastel artwork, oversized color-poster making, and jewelry making.

There were even group performances. One such group—the nursing and caregiving staff—had the entire room rolling with laughter as each unique verse of *The Twelve Days of Winter* unfolded. This creative song spoke of 12 methods to prevent getting a cold or the flu, and although you'd recognize the melody, you could never have anticipated the lyrics.

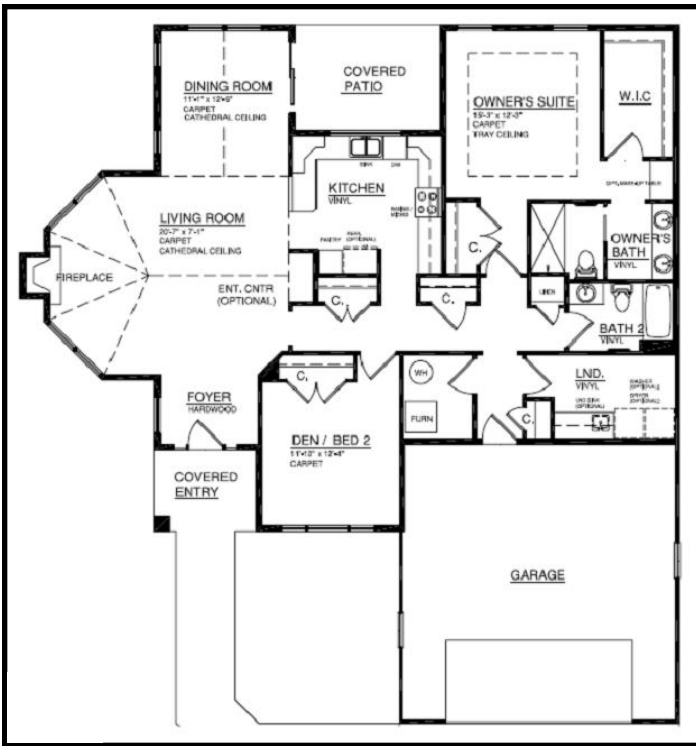
At a time when most of us might rather stay snuggled up with hot coffee or cocoa in our homes, this event brought out nearly the entire Touchmark community. Additional chairs were necessary as the excitement began to build before the event, and the attendance just kept exceeding the original sign-up. Afterward, residents said they can hardly wait for the next time new members of our community get to “strut their stuff” and show some of their wealth of talent.

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## New homes available

**by Jen Thompson**  
—Sales Associate

Excitement for the 10 new Fox Pointe homes going up around the property is buzzing around the Sales office! We have eight unique floor plans that are being constructed and are going to be completed this month. The lines are already forming to see these finished homes, as they are sure to sell quickly!



### The Roosevelt floor plan

Pictured here is one of the most popular floor plans—the Roosevelt, which has two bedrooms, two baths, and more than 1,700 square feet of living space. We have seven more layouts in various sizes.

The Sales team would be happy to meet with anyone who'd like to learn more about the homes. Call Chad, Amy, or me (Jen) in the Sales office at 920-832-9100.



### 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 March is a humor and laughter poetry feature.*

## Laughing and Living

by Betty Larson  
—Resident

I don't consider myself a funny person, but somehow when I am with my friends, they usually end up laughing at me or with me, as I am laughing at myself. I think that if people can't look at the funny side of situations, then that may lead to feeling overwhelmed.

While I was growing up, my mother used a lot of humor. For example, instead of yelling at me for something I did, she would just laugh and point out the stupidity in the situation. I can't think of any examples now, but I'm sure that my mother could have named a half dozen or so for you. Laughing and humor make my life more interesting and not as serious, for which I am very thankful.

I believe that humor occurs best in a group that is comfortable with each other and relaxed. When I was a nursing professor, I would attempt to use humor in my lecturing to lighten the mood of the room and ease the tension. Well, let me tell you something, the students were so serious about my class and what I was saying that they wouldn't even catch my joke. I actually had to tell them, "This is where you're supposed to laugh; I just told a joke, and I was being funny." Most of my humor, as in the classroom, is not planned but is more about my deciding to seize the opportunity.

The role that humor and laughter play in my life is essential to my well-being. When I hear laughter, I think of being relaxed, enjoyment, and happiness and recognize that most people are just looking to have a good time. I've done a lot of laughing throughout my lifetime and have enjoyed every second of it.



**Betty Larson learned the love of laughter from her mother and continues to share this joy with others.**

*For April, please submit an intergenerational story—current or from the past. Deadline for this issue is March 10. For a list of the guidelines, monthly themes, and deadlines, please contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Bobbie Thompson.*

## Healthy living keeps the heart happy

Registered nurses Barb Carlson-Towne and Janet Meyer make sure that residents get quality health monitoring on a consistent basis. Barb was featured on the 1150



**Janet Meyer, RN, (in red) checks a resident's blood pressure at a Touchmark blood pressure clinic. Residents are able to have their blood pressure checked at no charge and can talk with the nurse about health or medical questions and concerns.**

WHBY remote radio show at Touchmark in February when she shared tips for healthy living and maintaining your heart health.

Residents enjoy the peace of mind that Touchmark offers with 24-hour care-giving staff and two registered nurses to aid them in maintaining a healthy lifestyle or assisting with changes as needed.

## Upcoming events

**Thursday, March 1, 3 pm**—Asian Festival. Learn about other cultures as the 15-day festival of Chinese New Year comes to an end. Enjoy Hmong dancers, Chinese music, Asian-inspired food, Japanese calligraphy, and a Good Fortune presentation. Fee for food. Please call 920-832-9100 for reservations. Lobby.

**Saturday, March 17, 2 pm**—Celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Jeff Pockat will play the Gaelic harp. Irish coffee at 3 pm. Wear green! No admission charge. Lobby.

**Wednesday, March 21, 3 pm**—Houseplant basics. Natalia Bjorklund, director of Horticulture at the Gardens of the Fox Cities, will show how to add green plants to your life. First 10 guests from the Fox Cities area to sign up will receive a plant. Please call 920-832-9100 for reservations. No charge. Lobby.

**Monday, March 26, 1:30 to 3 pm**—Don Burdick presents *Gilbert vs. Sullivan*, a musical partnership characterized by hilarious melodic operas and contentiousness. Get a behind-the-scene view. Please call 920-832-9100 for reservations. No charge. Chapel.



**The Touchmark nursing and caregiving team are ready for the winter season and are available to help you stay healthy and strong.**

