

New year has gone to the dogs

To start the new year, Jack and Nancy Zolkowski will showcase the talents of their five dogs on **Saturday, Jan. 5**. The show will start at the end of the play-off game and include many demonstrations and audience participation.

Jack explains that each dog is named after a soft drink: RC, Mellow-Yellow, Sierra Mist, Squirt, and Dr. Pepper.

“The trend started with our first dog, who we named Pepsi,” says Jack. “We then named our second dog Cola. We thought it had a nice ring to it—announcing Pepsi and Cola.”

Jack built a course and equipment for Nancy to use to train the dogs. At the show, the three Pomeranians and two Shih Tzu dogs will perform their own tricks, including one dog entering on a miniature Hummer.

“I enjoy the dogs’ entertainment, and their tricks always make me laugh,” says resident Ralph Ballinger, who has seen the dogs perform. “They put on a great show.”

In addition to their careers in the entertainment industry, RC, Mellow-Yellow, Sierra Mist, Squirt, and Dr. Pepper have given back to the community as pet therapy dogs, visiting hospitals, retirement communities, and area nursing homes.

Studies have found that animals can help lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and help a person transition through a difficult time or new adjustment.

Moreover, pets are a popular part of the Life Enrichment/Wellness program. For example, Touchmark partners with the local Humane Association for monthly visits from pet therapy dogs. And when spring returns, people can enjoy a visit from the local 4-H club farm animals. ■



Jack and Nancy Zolkowski’s dogs are named after popular soft drinks. This photo shows RC, Dr. Pepper, Squirt, Mellow-Yellow, and Sierra Mist. On Saturday, Jan. 5, the dogs will perform in the chapel.

The mind-body connection affirmed

“When we first started presenting our findings, people laughed at us. Mainstream scientists, who have a tendency to look at anything new as kooky alternative medicine, wondered why we couldn’t just stick with traditional research.”

—Neurobiologist David Felten, Rochester Review

Award-winning researcher David Felten just set out to prove that our grandmothers were right. “Our grand-

mothers knew all along that our minds and bodies were connected, even if the scientific community didn’t. We’ve simply provided irrefutable data showing that it is true.”

Felten’s field of study is Psychoneuroimmunology (mercifully shortened to PNI) research.

Eighteen years ago, he and his team discovered for the first time the evidence of a hard-wired connection between the body’s immune system and the central nervous system of the brain. From then until now the research has grown and received scientific and mainstream acclaim as the pursuit to strengthen the body’s resistance to *(cont.)*

(cont.) illness and disease continues.

What does this mean to the average person? It means that purposeful exercise, nutrition, and lifestyle choices can help mitigate the chronic stress so abundant in our 24-hour world, which causes immune system dysfunction and increases susceptibility to illness and infection. The prescription from the American Academy of Family physicians is not to ‘just participate’ in aerobic, strength training, flexibility and balance regimens with the right frequency (at least 30 minutes most days of the week) but to participate with our whole body, including our mind and spirit.

Exercise—like dining—should be a celebration of the spirit that leads to increased energy, optimal body weight, and improved sleep and rest cycles. Instead of taking a pill, a dose of mind-body movement is recommended.

At Touchmark, our focus for January is *Experience Wellness*. The staff are participating in a total team effort to encourage one another and residents to be partners in wellness in choosing the Life Enrichment/Wellness offerings that will help support these goals. To obtain assistance and guidance for your personal wellness program contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Bobbie Thompson. ■



Fitness—a way of life at Touchmark

Ask a fitness expert about the benefits of exercise, and you’ll receive a plethora of information confirming that fitness equals enhanced well-being. You can strengthen your heart and other muscles. You can improve your balance and maintain a healthy weight. What’s more, you can socialize with friends while working out.

Touchmark’s Life Enrichment/Wellness program offers classes to enrich people’s life, including a new Posture and Balance class being introduced during the first quarter of

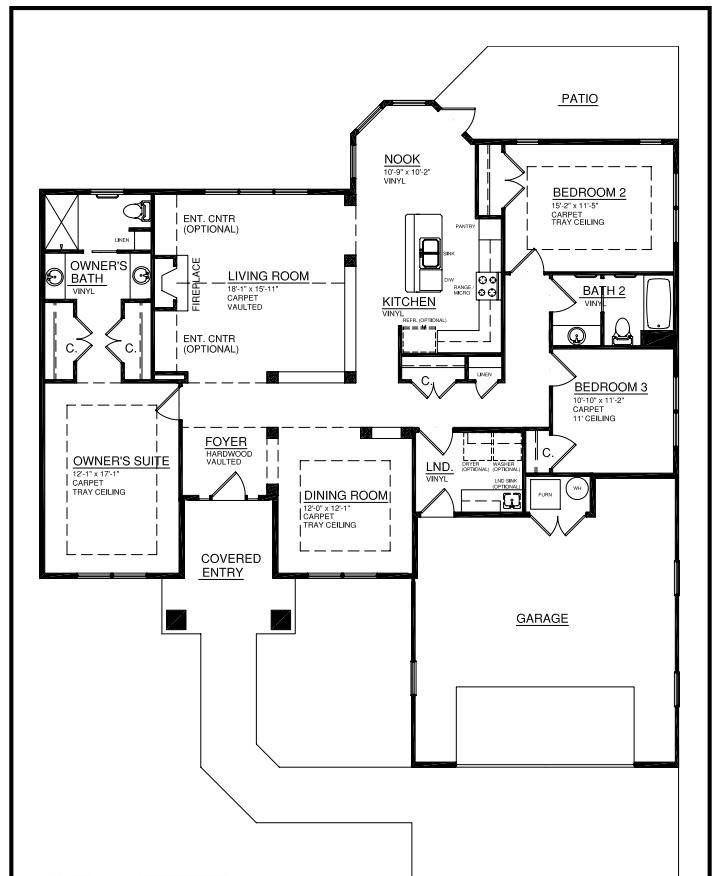
2008. Staff can work with individuals to create a personalized fitness program. Part of an initial assessment includes use of a new Web-based tool approved by numerous professional organizations, including the American College of Sports Medicine, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Council on Aging, and The Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging.

The Easy Exercise and Screening for You tool (www.easyforyou.info/index.asp) can help people decide if they’re ready to start an exercise program or should first consult with their health care provider.

To learn more about the many Touchmark services and amenities, visit or call today.

Take advantage of carefree living with this lovely Fox Pointe home: The Kennedy offers 1,939 square feet, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms.

The beautiful master suite includes two closets. The open-concept living creates a warm, spacious environment. The home features a gas fireplace, beautiful (cont.)



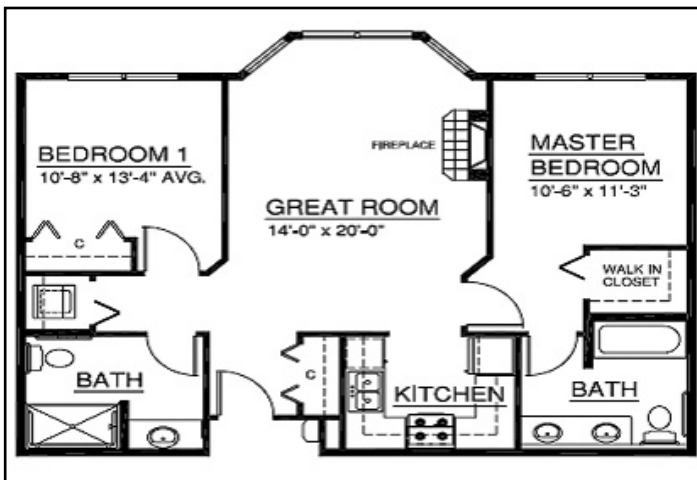
Call about this 1,939-square-foot Fox Pointe home, which features the Kennedy floor plan.

(cont.) woodwork throughout, and tray and vaulted ceilings in most rooms.

Not only does the Touchmark service plan take care of winter shoveling, but it includes an array of amenities and services that fit your lifestyle, leaving you free to participate in the many Life Enrichment/Wellness activities.

Located in the Grande, this superb two-bedroom apartment home is complete with a fireplace and vaulted ceilings in the living room. The home includes a large bay window, laundry hookups, and a walk-in closet in the master bedroom.

Discover camaraderie and a myriad of fun, interesting activities and events. Stop in and visit Touchmark. ■



The 887-square-foot apartment offers two bedrooms and two full bathrooms.

LET YOUR SPIRIT SOAR

Writers, photographers, and poets live and work in Touchmark communities, and Touchmark features some of their talent and creativity in the newsletter.

Our New Year's Resolution

By **Elwin Shutter**, Resident

MY WIFE LUCILLE AND I ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO CELEBRATING the new year in our new apartment home this year. We only moved into

Touchmark mid-November and are still checking the place out. Slowly but surely we are taking advantage of what's available here in our new home. We are gaining confidence in our new surroundings and feel that we made the right decision to move here.

When it comes to making a New Year's resolution, my wife and I each have a goal in mind. My wife would like to continue growing stronger, so that she can stop using her wheelchair. She hopes to use only her walker in the future. She has been going through therapy and is working really hard to keep herself strong.

A goal for myself for the new year is to be able to walk all the way around the outside of the building and into the neighborhood, once the weather warms up, of course. I like to be out in the fresh air and exercise as much as I can. Plus, now there is this new area to get acquainted with.



Lucille and Elwin Shutter

Overall, my wife and I remember to take each day at a time. We live by the motto to "do unto others as we would like others to do unto us." In 2008, we are both looking forward to meeting new friends, getting involved, relaxing, and enjoying our new home. ■

February's focus is a heartwarming story; the deadline is January 10.

Coming Events

Fridays, Jan. 4 and 18, 2 to 4 pm
Miracle-Ear® hearing-aid check and hearing screening. Cottage Room. No charge. Call 920-832-9100 to schedule a personal appointment.

Wednesday, Jan. 23, 12:30 pm
Ladies Spa Day. Savor a gourmet lunch followed by back, foot, hand, and head massage along with aromatherapy and other relaxation techniques. Enjoy a manicure and a paraffin wax for the hands. Cost: \$25. For more information or to register, call 920-832-9100. Check, cash, or credit card accepted.

Saturday, Jan. 26, 8 am to 5 pm
Sign up for Life Line Screening, which is offering screenings for abdominal aortic aneurysm, peripheral arterial disease, stroke, and more. Cost varies. To preregister, call 800-324-1851.

Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2:30 pm
The Health Benefits of Tea, presented by Sandy White from Botanical Indulgence. Sample a variety of teas and learn what makes them different and the health properties of each. No charge. Open to the public. Call 920-832-9100 to register.

Wednesday, Jan. 30, 4 pm
Special Asian Holiday: Hmong Dancers. Fourth grade to high school age dancers perform in traditional Hmong costume to a 30-minute personal choreographed Hmong dance, including traditional and contemporary versions. Lobby. No Charge. Following the performance, people can order a Chinese dinner from Confucius for \$10, which covers the meal, beverage, tax, and gratuity.

Destination ... Discovery



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

"If I can keep discovering things in my old age, I think you go on forever ... and I am discovering new things all the time."

—Ann Davlin, dancer at 93 years of age

This year, all Touchmark communities will focus on Destination ... Discovery. It sounds terrific, but what does it mean? For all of the dedicated staff, it means a renewal of our efforts to help every resident find that unique experience, opportunity, or challenge that will lead to new learning, meaningful relationships, and enhanced satisfaction.

Previously in this column, I've referred to the interviews I conduct in my travels to Touchmark communities. I ask residents what the most important elements of their lifestyle are since moving into the community. The answers vary, but here are two common comments.

"I didn't realize how lonely and isolated I had become until I moved in and started participating in the activities and events. I made new friends and found others that I had known over the years but lost track of." This particular conversation highlighted one of the most important and concerning aspects of living alone in our older years. Although active, this person recounted the challenge of keeping social contacts and dining with friends as being more and more challenging as skills in driving declined. With family members in other states, the opportunity for special connections was limited. Now, this person's days are highlighted by friends, event choices, transportation to shopping and other opportunities, along with private moments in the apartment home.

"There are so many things to do all the time; it's hard to choose one." It is hard to make choices when (*cont.*)

(cont.) there are many things competing for our time and participation. The Life Enrichment/Wellness program is developed recognizing that there is a lot of diversity in interests as well as preferences in times, days, and locations.

A great deal of planning, time, and consideration are spent developing Touchmark's various events and offerings. To support your development of new "destinations of discovery," contact Bobbie Thompson, director of Life Enrichment/Wellness.

May 2008 bring you good health and much happiness. ■

Editor's note: In many traditions, December 25 starts the official 12 days of Christmas, with celebrations lasting until January 5.

Memories

Dee Markley
—Resident

Hear the carolers come!
See their eyes shining bright.
Oh, Christmas, sweet Christmas is here!
See the trees full of lights
As the moon hangs so high this year.

Oh! dear Christmas morn
As we all gather near
And hear laughter, see joy everywhere.

And we oldsters look back
To previous days, and maybe we'll shed a small tear.

So we give thanks to God
For a year left behind,
As the New Year comes closer each day,
And we think of those gone, and we love those
friends near
As a "Happy Near Year!" we exclaim.

You said it!

"Touchmark offers the lifestyle that I wanted. It gives me everything I need."

Jean Poulson
—Resident