



THE {FULL} LIFE

Touchmark at Wedgewood Newsletter

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FORGING CREATIVITY & CONNECTION

There's a distinctive feeling of joy at Touchmark, and it's more than just the summer season and the warm weather it brings. It's the sense of excitement and vibrancy that make Touchmark unique. With COVID-19 restrictions loosened thanks to the incredible efficacy of our community rallying together to take safety precautions, new events and activities have sprouted up like May flowers do after an April rain.

Contributing to this renewed activity is the community's newly opened art gallery. Created to help celebrate the artistic talent of residents, The Ravine is a place where residents, team members, and guests can come together, connect over handmade art, and share inspiration with friends or take a quiet moment to themselves to reflect. Every month, the gallery will feature the art of a different resident. Already, the gallery is providing a unique space to showcase, inspire, and tighten the community.

The bonds between individuals that create and strengthen a tight-knit community are being forged in numerous other ways. Residents are enjoying the gardens and patios of neighbours and taking advantage of the opportunities to socialize over coffee and happy hour. Touchmark's ability to create a welcoming environment in which to share experiences and meals depends largely on the people who make it their home. This summer, as you enjoy the events and activities, take a moment to be inspired by the friends around you!

RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

Sherry Sherwood

How long have you lived at Touchmark, and why did you choose to move here?

That's easy! When I walked into the lobby, it was quite lively with lots of laughter, and it looked like everyone was having fun. The community I lived in before was mostly the opposite. I made my decision quickly after seeing the suite. I will have been here three years in November; the decision has never been one of regret. It's like joining a large family.

What are the most rewarding parts of retirement in general, or retirement at Touchmark specifically? Blessed is a word that comes up more and more in my vocabulary.

When I met my next door neighbour, we clicked immediately—she makes home that much better! I love all of my new friends, who are so unique, and I look forward to sharing each day with them. The staff are also wonderful—I remember getting a knock at my door once and having them announce it was Rubber Duck Day with a drink. My little duck sits in plain view, always reminding me of the joy I felt on my arrival and to this day! I have a garden of flowers outside my suite and a garden box in the gardening area, and I'm excited to watch both grow.



Can you speak to the sense of community you've found at Touchmark? Due to a stroke, I made the move to Touchmark's main floor and can now enjoy painting in my suite and watching everyone walk by. When I come back after signing out at the front desk, it gives me a safe feeling of knowing that Touchmark cares and is aware of your whereabouts. I see us as a family—as a group of people who take care of each other when they are feeling poorly or just need a smile.

Your artwork is going to be displayed in The Ravine. Can you talk about your path as an artist? My painting began in 2009 when I decided to paint a picture of a flower. When I was done, it looked kind of like a flower, so I decided to do another one! I have been doing it almost daily for years since then. I find it very therapeutic for my fibromyalgia and chronic pain. It takes me to a place of magic: my pain disappears and I feel a peace in my body that gives me relief that most medication doesn't. I was thrilled to be asked to show some of my work in the new gallery. Back in 2009, I wouldn't have thought that was possible! It's such an honour.

I've always been drawn to arts and crafts but only recently had the sense that I could actually be the one making them, not just buying them. It just didn't occur to me, but now the most important thing in my apartment is my art table.

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

Enriching lives through fun and vibrant community events! Note: The photos below show The {FULL} Life at varying stages of provincial and federal mask mandates.



A WORK OF HEART



MICHELLE SUE
Director of Wellness
Operations

When you think of creativity, coloured pencils and paper may come to mind. And while many people choose to express themselves with such media, it can be limiting to think of creativity only in those terms. Whether you express your creativity through drawing, woodworking, clever problem-solving, or playing an instrument, chances are, you are much more innovative than you may know.

The benefits of spending time growing your skills are numerous. Most significantly, engaging in creative activities can inspire a sense of purpose, which is an essential aspect of aging well. If you've ever left a puzzle or knitting project halfway done and can't stop thinking about how excited you are to get back to it, you know the feeling. Starting a project and seeing it through to completion can have a powerful effect on the mind, which in turn influences the body.

Additionally, engaging with your creative side can help expand your social circle. When you find a group of like-minded individuals who are similarly passionate, you're not just making new human connections, you are making creative ones too. By sharing knowledge, tips, and tricks, you can hone your skills while helping others work on theirs.

Devoting time to creative pursuits also benefits cognition and focus. Even if it

might seem like the rest of the world has disappeared when you get into the creative zone, that feeling is actually helping your brain stay strong and able to make important neural connections. Though they may not transfer directly, the abilities you pick up while participating in creative pursuits can be applied to other aspects of life, making your experiences and interactions as a whole that much richer.

It's time to get inspired! The following activities provide low-key and whimsical ways to get to know your creative side:

- Paperfolding crafts such as origami can be delightfully complex and challenging to make, but you can start with simple designs.
- Take up a musical instrument or dive back into practicing one you once knew how to play. Where's that penny whistle ...
- Woodworking allows you to put your hands and mind to use to create items you will treasure—or put treasures into!
- Scrapbooking is an excellent way to put your creativity onto paper while creating a place to store lasting memories for family and friends.
- Knitting and crocheting are absorbing pastimes that can have very practical (and cozy!) results. It's not too early to start a project like a sweater now—it will be ready by the time the cool weather comes back.

For more ways to get creative, check out the monthly calendar of events offered at the community!

TOUCHMARK AT WEDGEWOOD
FULL-SERVICE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY
18333 LESSARD ROAD NW • EDMONTON, AB T6M 2Y5
780-577-5000 • TOUCHMARK.COM



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