



THE {FULL} LIFE

Touchmark at Wedgewood Newsletter

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AGING THROUGH AN ACTIVE LENS

The coronavirus pandemic created quite a few changes for Touchmark at Wedgewood, many of them positive, especially regarding the Health & Fitness Studio offerings. The popular S3 balance classes have grown rapidly. Previously, the four-week program would often be full and didn't always give new faces in the community the chance to participate. That's why the Studio has adjusted its S3 class offerings to a drop-in style, which allows new and newly interested residents a chance to join without feeling like they have missed half the program. The results have been positive for instructors and attendees alike. "There's so much more energy and excitement in the room during classes," says Health & Fitness Director Tracy Divincenzo. Now, our classes are offered five days a week and attract many attendees, both new community members and ones who have attended for a long time."

With the weather changing, the Nordic pole walking classes that were a huge hit this summer and successfully transitioned into twice-weekly classes, and a new form of exercise class has hit the community by storm. Residents are now taking full advantage of the recently introduced circuit classes developed by personal trainer Allyson after she worked with a resident (Spotlight feature Donna Brown!) and noticed the improvements they made together. The class incorporates cardio, balance, and

stretching into the routine, which are all important and interconnected pieces to comprehensive wellness. Tracy says, “When the classes started, we expected to have a group of five or so people attend, but there are consistently 10 to 15 people in each class!”

Curious about getting involved but daunted by the challenge of undertaking a new skill? As the saying goes, the only person you should compare yourself to is the person you were yesterday. For more inspiration on the benefits of active aging and exercise, read about resident Donna’s inspiring fitness journey.

RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

Donna Brown

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

Four years! Before Touchmark, we lived in a home that required a lot of upkeep and we knew we had to downsize, so we started looking around and found the bungalows at Touchmark. I think they are the only place in Alberta, and certainly Edmonton, that has this style of home. We have care if we need it, but we like how we can be independent too. We were in the right place at the right time.

What have you found rewarding about retirement?

Retirement is what we all look forward to! Certainly here, it’s been very good. The convenience is great. Before we moved, I used to take classes at the YMCA. The process of getting to class could take two or three hours. Here, I’m at class and home from it in just over an hour.

Can you speak to the sense of community you’ve found at Touchmark?

We took the opportunity to get involved as much as we could when we moved here. We’ve made a lot of great friendships, and we watch out for each other. The bungalow residents gather a few times a year for potluck dinners and fellowship. Additionally, I’m the secretary of the resident committee. I think of us as the go-between residents and the team—we’re kind of the conduit for folks to

voice their opinions who might not have otherwise.

What have you noticed about your mental and physical fitness

over the course of time you’ve been taking fitness classes at Touchmark?

As soon as COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, I began working with a Touchmark personal trainer, Ally, three days a week. She introduced me to circuit training and then developed a program for the whole community. My sessions with Ally have truly been transformative. I wasn’t in good physical shape, and now I can keep up with the best of them!

How does Touchmark enrich your life?

Convenience! My family can come over for a meal, and it’s so much easier and nicer than going to a restaurant. It also offers us wonderful opportunities for cultural enrichment. Recently, Lord Strathcona’s Horse, an armoured regiment within the Canadian Forces, came to the community for a performance. It was incredible! We all enjoyed it so much.



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.



TAKE A TREK AND ADOPT THE PACE OF NATURE



MICHELLE SUE
Director of Wellness
Operations

“Just put one foot in front of the other and don’t worry about the length of the path. Once you get on that path, and the longer you stay on it, there eventually will come a time when you will not turn back.”

- Author Martina Navratilova,
former professional tennis player and author

Starting a fitness regimen—or any new thing—can be a daunting endeavour. We often think about what life would be like after our goals are met and therefore struggle to take the steps necessary to achieve the goal. Poet and naturalist Ralph Waldo Emerson shares insight on why the steps between starting something—like a hike outdoors—and finishing it are not only essential but are, in fact, the very point of the hike itself. His advice: “Adopt the pace of nature: Her secret is patience.”

This is one reason the Touchmark Trekkers walking group is so popular throughout Touchmark communities. The walking club shares varying routes and outings appropriate for different seasons and abilities. Simply by putting one foot in front of the other and going for a walk in the woods or desert, Trekkers are tapping into the larger community of the natural world. The Touchmark Trekkers group checks off many components of the seven dimensions of wellness, including social, emotional, spiritual, and environmental.

To ensure this valuable activity is as accessible as possible, Touchmark has created walking paths and maps for residents to move at their own pace and on their own time. As fall and winter settle in, walking outside provides more opportunities to engage with nature and the wildlife near your community. It may also serve as a time to self-reflect or simply enjoy nature in solitude.

When cold weather keeps us inside, indoor walking paths can get your blood flowing—and you are also likely to run into a few of the community’s many friendly faces as you follow one of the Trekkers’ indoor walking paths. The important thing is to keep active and keep moving each day!



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