



# THE {FULL} LIFE

*Touchmark at Wedgewood Newsletter*

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## RESIDENT-DRIVEN PROGRAMMING

Touchmark's core philosophy focuses on enabling every community member to live The {FULL} Life. While that may look different from person to person, we provide as many opportunities as possible for residents to have engaging and exciting experiences. The result? Passionate residents ensure that unique events are always on deck. Many residents participate in or lead activities inspired by their interests and a desire to connect with their neighbours.

Touchmark on Wedgewood's bridge group exemplifies this spirit of connection. Over 16 residents come together anywhere between one to three times a week to play bridge and socialize. These casual gatherings inspired two of the group's regular participants, a husband-and-wife team, to share the fun by bringing a bridge game to the Health Services Neighbourhood every Sunday morning. Residents also meet regularly to play mahjong and knit together. Another popular program is the sing-along group, which gathers together to sing favorite classic songs and build friendships one melody at a time.

The success of these programs depends on the passion residents have for sharing

their experiences and knowledge. By empowering individuals to pursue activities that interest them—and having a full calendar of events that includes the seven dimensions of wellness—Touchmark stands out as a place where hobbies can be discovered and flourish. Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Patricia Davidson explains the effect such programs have on the community: “More and more residents are taking the reins and leading special programs in our community. They take pride in sharing their skills and knowledge, and they quite enjoy having the opportunity to bring like-minded people together.”

## RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

### ELIZABETH DUKE

**How long have you lived at Touchmark, and why did you choose to move here?** I've lived here since December 2020. My son's stepmother lives here, and it was a lot for him to make two trips, one to visit me, and one to visit her. So he asked if I would be willing to move!

**What are some of your favourite aspects of living here?** I'm quite impressed by how personalized and carefully planned everything is. I live on the third floor, which is for people who can manage by themselves. The other two floors have assisted living and memory care. It's comforting to know that I'd get care appropriate to my condition if something else developed. Also, the staff are the most remarkable people I've ever encountered. I've yet to find someone in this building, regardless of who it is, who doesn't call me by name. I don't know how they do that! I would love their formula—I've had trouble remembering names throughout my life. Usually, if there is a big enough group of people like this, someone is irritating in it, but I've yet to find that person. I also appreciate how they let me be me! They don't force things on you, but they are always aware of you, if that makes sense.

**How did you get involved in facilitating the sing-along group?** I played the organ in the Anglican church for the past 12 years. I used to play hymns, and I

accompanied the choir. I like to accompany singers, which is what I do for this group.



**What does an average sing-along look like?** This weekly get-together is very laid back—nothing official about it! I don't even count how many people come, but someone told me that 17 people attended a recent one. We sing everything from “Home on the Range” to “Twilight on the Prairie.” I just can't get over the enthusiasm of the group. The last time I played, I was having some trouble with my vision, and at the end, someone got up and thanked me. They were all so understanding. They didn't mind at all—they just want a place to come together and sing! That's the goal: I didn't want this to be something formal. I wanted it to feel like singing around a campfire when you are relaxing out in the middle of nowhere.

**What other interests have you had more time to pursue after moving to Touchmark?** Well, I've got a Ph.D. in taking it easy! But what I've really been enjoying is doing things in the library. Everyone knows that's where to find me. Right now, I'm reading a biography of Pierre Berton, but I also enjoy novels.

# COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

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



# WHOLE-PERSON WELLNESS: ENGAGING EVERY DIMENSION



**MICHELLE SUE**  
Director of Wellness  
Operations

Wellness is multidimensional and nurturing. It depends on accessing all the aspects that contribute to the whole. In addition to physical fitness and proper nutrition, mental health is a significant component of whole-person wellness.

At the heart of mental health are the feelings of being engaged with a community or involved in a meaningful pursuit and being able to make changes. Countless studies have shown that when people engage with each other and their community, their overall wellness improves.

Engagement may seem like a straightforward goal, but achieving it is more complex. What makes someone likely to be engaged? The key is offering up an activity that creates a spark of enthusiasm. At Touchmark, we help create these sparks by incorporating residents' feedback and interests into our programming. If you've ever taken a resident-led class or even spoken with a neighbour about one of their hobbies,

you know what it is like when people get to share their passions—it's exciting for everyone! Because wellness starts with individuals and extends outward, we always welcome feedback and suggestions. Share yours in 2022 to strengthen the vibrancy of your community and inspire whole-person wellness among friends and neighbours.

## BODY SCAN MEDITATION

Body scans can be performed in almost any posture. The steps below will guide you through a seated meditation designed for every level of experience. You can also visit [www.uclahealth.org/marc](http://www.uclahealth.org/marc) to find other recorded meditations to try.

1. Begin by sitting, bringing your attention to your body, and closing your eyes.
2. Feel the weight of your body on the chair and take a few deep breaths. Envision the oxygen revitalizing your body. As you exhale, have a sense of relaxing more deeply.
3. Now, bring your attention to your feet and how they are touching the floor. Next, focus on your legs and how they feel (heavy? light? pulsing?).
4. Bring your attention to your back and how it feels on the back of your chair.
5. From there, move your awareness to your stomach. If your stomach is tense or tight, let it soften. Take a deep breath.
6. Mentally trace your mind to the tip of each finger on the right side, then left, and then up to your arms.
7. Soften your shoulders and enjoy the feeling of your body relaxing. Notice how your neck and throat respond to your awareness of soft shoulders.
8. Visualize your ears, then move on to your face: consciously relax your facial muscles and soften your jaw.
9. Take a breath or two, then open your eyes.

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