



Proud to be an American



Message from
Kathleen Best
 —Chief Operating Officer

This summer season has provided us with several opportunities to celebrate the privilege of being Americans. One of these occasions came through a message given by retired Army Major Ed Pulido. Major Pulido’s message to residents, guests, and staff was inspirational on many levels. He told a story of perseverance through extensive injuries

that caused the amputation of his left leg.

Major Pulido gave the audience a perspective to challenge personal tragedies in life as opportunities to grow and change. He also taught us lessons of the price that is paid each day, and has been for hundreds of years, to give us all the privilege of being Americans.

As Major Pulido speaks throughout the United States to both large and small audiences, I encourage everyone to hear these messages. They made a profound impact on all of us at Touchmark, and I believe on everyone who listens with an open heart.



Have fun: It matters

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

Depending on one’s definition of “delightful,” leisure activities provide a chance to connect with people, look inward, enhance skills, get fit, and renew or strengthen relationships. The scientific literature reports numerous random studies that correlate things like nature, water, pets, poetry, music, hobbies, and the company of other people as enjoyable for a large number of people. The research also shows a correlation between pleasure and wellness.

Professor Blair Justice, PhD, at Texas School of Public Health has written extensively about the correlation of stress and illness—*dis-ease*. His latest book, *Who Gets Sick: How Beliefs, Moods and Thoughts Affect Your Health*, focuses on the immune system and the potential for individuals with cancer and heart disease to stave off disease progression and its debilitating effects. He contends that



Left to right: resident Katherine Blanks, Major Ed Pulido, and resident Virginia Morefield talk after the presentation.

the process and progress of disease can be mediated by the pursuit of and involvement in activities that generate pleasure, fun, and positive interactions.

“The crucial element is that you do something that is inherently delightful to you.”

—Dulce Zamora, writer and health researcher

While this is not new thinking in the world of psychoneuroimmunology (the body’s ability to heal itself), most of us put play and pleasure at the lowest level of priority in our harried lives. Yet, in order for something to be enjoyable, it can’t be done in a state of fatigue. For someone dealing with a chronic disease, the scheduling of moments of meaningful pleasure is even more of a challenge. Gina Dingwell, RN, coordinator of the Mind-Body Program at the Institute for Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Vancouver, BC, states, “It’s about checking in.” She suggests the following questions might help determine if an activity is the right thing to do in the moment: Is this going to energize me? Is this going to put me in a place where I feel better? Or am I just doing this because it is a “duty.”

At Touchmark, the Life Enrichment/Wellness program and the general milieu of the community are focused on bringing people together for moments—and more—of pleasure and fun. If you have ideas for events, activities, spaces, or groups that will add to the possibilities for fun and pleasure, share them with Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Amy Connaway.

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Residents get involved in summer activities

by Amy Connaway
—Life Enrichment/Wellness Director

The Grandmother and Granddaughter Tea was held in June in Legends Private Dining Room. Seventeen grandmothers and granddaughters attended the event and snacked on finger foods, while enjoying a variety of different teas. This was the first afternoon tea for Touchmark, and we look forward to many more in the future!

Stan Steele, a resident of the Parkview homes, brought

voter registration forms to the Grandview apartments in June. Stan currently serves as the House District 39 chairperson, and has been actively involved in public affairs for several years. Approximately 18 residents filled out the voter registration cards over the two-day event.



Ginny Morefield, Jennie Stinson, and her granddaughter, Lindsey Surrett, enjoy the Grandmother and Grand daughter Tea.



Stan Steele (right), House District 39 Chairman, assists Bill and Mary Jo Kessler with their voter registration forms.



Resident Mary Jo Kessler and her granddaughter, Katherine, enjoy the afternoon tea.

Upcoming events

Monday, August 14, 7 to 9 pm—Wire wrapping for beginners. “Make Your Own Pendant and Earrings,” presented by the Fine Arts Institute at 27 East Edwards Street, Edmond.

Thursday, August 17, 3:30 pm—“Closest to the Flag” Golf Competition.

Saturday, August 26, 2 pm—Dog and Cat Fashion Show.

Call Amy Connaway at 405-844-5901 for more information or to register.

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 August is a recipe with a story.

Wolf Huntin’ Potatoes

by **Mary Grigsby**
—Resident



Mary Grigsby shares a family favorite.

This dish was so named by the family members of my husband, Bill. Several of the men in our hometown liked to go out to hunt, and they would listen for the bark of their dog as they sat around the campfire. When they returned home, the women of the family would fix a dinner for them. The dinner always included this potato dish, which became known as Wolf Huntin’ Potatoes, because the men enjoyed them so much.

In a sauce pan, melt a stick of butter and add one cup of cream of mushroom soup. Set aside. Use four or five peeled potatoes, sliced thin. Place one layer of potatoes on the bottom of a Pyrex baking dish and sprinkle onion flakes and salt and pepper over that. Repeat potato slices, onion flakes, and salt and pepper until the baking dish is full. Pour the soup and melted butter mixture over all the potatoes. Place the baking dish on a cookie sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes.

For September, please submit a book review of “your favorite book.” Deadline for this issue is August 6. For a list of the guidelines, monthly themes, and deadlines, please contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Amy Connaway.

Awash in the artwork and adventure

by **P.J. Brenden**
—Winner of Touchmark’s 25th anniversary cruise

Since I was 17, I have dreamed of touring Europe. To take in the Mona Lisa, to view the brilliant colors of Greece, and to watch people scurry around a European market were things I hoped to do. And earlier this summer, my husband and I packed our bags for a 15-night cruise board the HMS Rotterdam, thanks to Touchmark.

The trip was truly an amazing, fast-paced adventure. We soaked in the ruins in Greece and Turkey (despite the heat), climbed down the stairs of Temple de la Sagrada Familia bell tower in Spain, ate heavenly food at the Dessert Extravaganza on the ship, and laughed constantly about the odd public restrooms throughout Europe.

My favorite adventures were visiting Claude Monet’s garden in Giverny (west of Paris) and viewing the Mona Lisa. I love art, and to see the handiwork of such masters was awe-inspiring. I cried in front of the Mona Lisa ... and, well, about every other artwork treasure.

The day I visited the Mona Lisa, I arrived at the Louvre early and made my way to the display. Other than the guards and a few tourists, there weren’t many other people around, and I was able to see her well (ignoring the fact that she was encased in protective glass). People stood there in silence, just absorbing the painting. Finally, an Australian tourist leaned over and asked me, “How long should I stand here?” We both had to laugh. You only dream of seeing the Mona Lisa, and when you finally do, you’re not sure how long you should stand there in reverence of the masterpiece.

I also enjoyed the quality of the artwork on the ship. They had some Dalis, Rembrandt etchings, and other famous pieces. I even attended several art auctions and purchased two pieces—one for my Italian-inspired wine room.

The ship itself was opulent, the food was great, and the



P.J. Brenden, Spokane-area resident and Touchmark's 25th Anniversary Life Enrichment cruise winner, soaks in the beauty of *The Fortress City* (Valletta) in Malta.

people on the ship were fascinating. My husband and I met some people who had been on 14 or 15 cruises! We just enjoyed the whole experience. Thanks, Touchmark!

Editor's note: Spokane-area resident and Touchmark's 25th Anniversary Life Enrichment cruise winner P.J. Brenden and her husband traveled throughout Europe on Holland American's HMS Rotterdam. P.J., who is an avid quilter, visited Waterford on South Hill in Spokane, Washington, during its popular quilt show last year and signed up for Touchmark's 25th Anniversary Life Enrichment cruise drawing.

