



Heart-healthy living



Message from
Jamie Ham
—Chief Operating Officer

When Roman Emperor Claudius II outlawed marriage around 269 AD, Valentine, a priest, passionately opposed the law and continued to marry people in secret. Valentine's concealed doings were eventually discovered, and Roman officials placed Valentine in jail.

Though some of the details of Valentine's life are unclear, it is believed that while waiting in jail he wrote a letter to his beloved, which was signed "your Valentine." Throughout the centuries, the story of this man has inspired people to celebrate love.

This month, we're celebrating Valentine's Day with several exciting events. On February 14, join us for a special dinner and lively music; the next day, we're hosting *A Heartwarming Talk on Hypertension* with Jeffrey Thompson, MD.

Another reason to celebrate this month—we recently received our license from the state for our assisted living neighborhood. Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible.

This month, come discover the heart-healthy lifestyle at Touchmark.

Follow your heart

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

In today's world there is a good understanding of the workings and function of the human heart. There is even a live television show that features surgeons doing open heart surgery (let the viewer beware; it is bloody). How is it then that we continue to attribute the heart with being the center of human emotions? In reality, the emotional data center for humans is the prefrontal cortex of the brain. This is where we discern pain from pleasure, friend from foe, gratuitous compliment from genuine praise.

It is an amazing and complex interaction of all of the lobes of the brain that integrates emotion and fact and allows humans to form opinions and make judgments about how to assess an incident or person as to whether there is danger in a given situation. The same automatic analysis can reveal a safe situation and often provides insight into who we can trust with our emotional well-being.

**"To understand
the heart and mind
of a person, look
not at what he has
already achieved,
but at what he
aspires to."**

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—Kahlil Gibran

So, although in the 21st century it is well known that the mainframe of the brain does generate the full range of emotions, our culture continues to use the heart as the universal symbol of the repository for emotions. Sage advice would be to take care of both of these important organs to have "good heart and brain health." In general, what is good for the heart is good for the brain. That ap-

plies to diet, physical activity, balanced work and play time, positive relationships, and good financial choices. It is the total combination of lifestyle choices that allows people to “follow their hearts and create their own future.”

At Touchmark, the Life Enrichment/Wellness program components are designed to support good heart and brain health. For information on the offerings and opportunities available, contact Director of Life Enrichment/Wellness Amy Connaway.

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Design your lifestyle

by Shelee Stewart
—Sales Associate

I hope everyone has started off the new year with a positive view on life. I am keeping some of my resolutions so far. With it being the new year and a good time to design your lifestyle, I invite you to come visit us.

With our assisted living neighborhood about to open, there are even more choices and services to help you create a personalized lifestyle. I’m excited about having new faces (residents and staff members) join the community.

Touchmark residents are fabulous marketers, and believe me, the Sales team really appreciate your kindness, smiles, and offers to show your homes when guests comes for tours. Thank you to our Housekeeping department, Building Maintenance department, concierge staff, and dining staff for always making a memorable and positive first impression. Amy’s Life Enrichment/Wellness calendar is superb, and when I get to introduce a guest to Linda, Judy, and Jamie, it’s even better.

It takes a lot to make a community “tick.” So thank you to each resident, family member, and staff for helping Miriam and me welcome new neighbors to our family.

Happy new year and God bless!

Upcoming events

Monday, February 5, 5:15 pm—Jerry Lee Tiner sings the golden oldies during dinner hours. Creekside Dining Room.

Wednesday, February 14, 1:30 pm—*Tea and Travel*. Marilyn from Gadabout Tours will discuss travel opportunities at great rates. Legends Private Dining Room. Please RSVP at the front desk.

Wednesday, February 14, 5:15 pm—Enjoy a special Valentine’s Day dinner and be serenaded by a string quartet. Creekside Dining Room.

Thursday, February 15, 2 pm—*A Heartwarming Talk on Hypertension*, presented by Jeffrey Thompson, MD. Grand Hall. Please RSVP at the front desk.

Tuesday, February 20, 5 pm—Come to the biggest Mardi Gras party north of Bourbon Street. We’ll have music, costumes, a parade through the lobby, and even crown a king and queen. See Amy for more details.

February packed full of interesting events

by Amy Connaway
—Life Enrichment/Wellness Director

I can’t believe the first month of the new year is over, but what a great month it was. February is looking just as good with Valentine’s Day and Mardi Gras celebrations as well as fitness and educational offerings at Touchmark. Day trips to the OmniDome Theater and antique shopping in nearby Guthrie will fill the Touchmark van quickly. So sign up right away!

New programs, such as winetasting at the Parkview model homes, seated yoga classes, sing-a-longs to 40s and 50s music, and Touchmark’s camera club, have been great additions to our existing offerings. As always, ideas on new activities are welcome.

Touchmark also has been offering a series of educational programs focused on better health. February’s event is titled *A Heartwarming talk on Hypertension*. This would be a great opportunity for residents and the public to learn more on about high blood pressure and heart-related issues. This event will be held on Thursday, February 15 at 2 pm

in the Grand Hall. RSVP today at 405-340-1975 to assure adequate seating. Looking forward to seeing you at the many events this month!



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 February is a Heart-to-heart/love story.

How we met

by Leaman D Harris
—Resident

Photography has been a hobby of mine ever since I was given a camera as a Christmas present in high school. By the time I had graduated from college and became an officer in the US Air Force, my photography skills had improved, and I had acquired a 35 mm camera with lots of controls, gadgets, and variable settings. In my spare time I enjoyed getting out with my camera and experimenting with the controls and gadgets. It was during one of these outings that I met the woman who has become the most important person in my life.

It was a crisp fall day on the Lake Huron shore of Michigan near the small town of Oscoda. I was stationed nearby at Wurtsmith Air Force Base as a navigator-bombardier on a B-52 bomber crew. It was October, and the color of the foliage in the trees was turning to a brilliant collage of reds, yellows, and oranges. I was trying to capture the beauty of these colors on film. At first, I shot scenes of sunlight reflecting through trees in the woods near the highway that skirts the coast along Lake Huron. But after going through at least one roll of film in this endeavor, I decided that I needed to get down to the lakeshore and get some scenes that included both water and foliage.

Most of the shoreline in that area, however, was privately owned. So, to reach some of the more choice spots, you had to know somebody. It happened that a few weeks before, I had made the acquaintance of a nurse at the base hospital. I had told her about my interest in photography and mentioned a desire to get some good shots of the Lake Huron shoreline. She then told me where her home was located. She and two other Air Force nurses rented a



“Have one,” she said. “It is a cinnamon roll.” Leaman Harris recalls the day he met his wife, Judith.

house on the shore of Lake Huron about four miles south of Oscoda.

“Please stop by someday,” she said, “I would be happy to show you around.” I thanked her and made a mental note to do that someday.

This fall day in October seemed to be the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the invitation extended by my friend. I was not exactly sure where the house was located, but after making some wrong turns and trying to remember how she had described the route, I found what I judged to be the correct place.

A brown colored bungalow with a cedar shake roof, the house sat in the trees on a small rise about 50 yards from the lake. The view was great. The blue water of the lake extended to the eastern horizon, and you could see up and down the lakeshore for several hundred yards. There was a sandy beach that must have been fun to play on during the warmth of summertime. It was deserted now, though, in the chilly October breezes.

The house seemed occupied; there were automobiles in the driveway. I walked to the door and knocked. A young lady who I did not know came to the door. I stated my name, the name of my friend, and why I was there. The young lady perked up and said, “Oh yes, she mentioned that you might come by. She is on duty today, but please come in. We have other company; I will introduce you around.” It turned out that I was not the only man to find this house of nurses on that day. A military doctor, who probably worked with these ladies every day, was also at the house.

After being introduced, the three of us spent some time getting acquainted. Then, the lady who met me at the door said, “Come, you should meet my other roommate. She is busy in the kitchen.”

I had already detected the fresh aroma of something baking and was wondering what it was. So, we entered the kitchen, and there she was. Another young lady—not petite, but full of bounce, eyes of blue and brunette hair, apron around the middle, smudges of flour here and there.

She had a pleasant voice, but I don’t know what she said. I think we were introduced, but I could not remember a name. I was somewhere on cloud nine, trying not to appear overly foolish. My reverie was broken with an offer of a pastry. “Have one,” she said. “It is a cinnamon roll.” I took it and sat at the counter.

The cinnamon roll was delicious, but it might have been hardtack, and I hardly would have noticed. We talked, and I liked what I heard. She even seemed to like what I had to say. My interest in photography was forgotten, at least for awhile. I remember wondering what happened to the doctor and the lady at the door. Before leaving that day, I managed to fix her name in my mind and secure a promise to talk again. We were married the following August. That was 42 years ago. We were given three children, two boys and a girl. Now we are grandparents of four boys and a girl.

For March, please submit a humor and laughter poetry feature. Deadline for this issue is February 10. For a list of the guidelines, monthly themes, and deadlines, please contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Amy Connaway.

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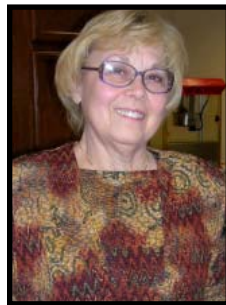
What others are saying

“I could not be happier with Touchmark at Coffee Creek. I enjoy the food, the daily walks that I have with Bob [Touchmark resident Bob Erler], and the proximity to my family.”

Charles Cusick
—Resident

Discover the Display Corner

by Liz Codding
—Resident



Liz Codding, who started the Residents’ Display Corner project, invites you to participate.

Touchmark residents, staff, and visitors have been enjoying the Residents’ Display Corner, which showcases the many talents of residents with a selection of items. Our first display was the Touchmark Art Exhibit, consisting of artwork by several residents and their family members. The beautiful paintings, oils, china paintings, and watercolors were loved and admired by everyone.

In late fall, we displayed some residents themselves—our US veterans! Poster-size photos of the veterans in their World War II, Korea, or

Vietnam uniforms were available for all to view, along with some framed military documents and medals. We are so proud of these brave men and women and have moved the posters to a permanent display in The Bunker.

In January, we exhibited the stitching talents of several of the Touchmark ladies. Embroidery, knitting, crocheted pieces, quilts, bedspreads, and even a knitted wool coat were enjoyed by all.

February’s exhibit is called *Touchmark Authors Showcase* and features writings of residents and/or their family



Paintings, knitting, writing, and other art creations are exhibited in the residents’ Display Corner. A future display will feature photos from Touchmark.

members. Included are books, calendars, poems, songs, and short stories. The talent never ceases!

Future exhibits planned are a photographers' display, vacation memories, career highlights, hobbies, and others. In April, there will be a large photo exhibit called *A Year at Touchmark*, highlighting many of the enjoyable events residents and staff have enjoyed over the past year. We've had a great year, and the photos will be the proof! To include your work in one of the exhibits, see the concierge.

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Gather cooking tips from Chef Jeremy

Touchmark Chef Jeremy Willis hosts cooking demonstrations for residents. At the latest class, everyone got a great view of the ingredients and the preparation for making tasty Chicken Marsala.

Chef Jeremy's cooking class is an ongoing activity with a rotating menu. So check your Touchmark calendar for the next demonstration. An added bonus—everyone who attends the class gets to try the finished product!



Chef Jeremy Willis gives directions on how to make Chicken Marsala while folks watch the process.



Parkview resident Judith Harris (left), Chef Jeremy, and Grandview resident Alice Snyder.

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Celebrate good times, come on ...

by Amy Connaway
—Life Enrichment/Wellness Director

Touchmark residents rang in the new year in the Grand Hall. The men wore top hats, and the ladies were all “belles of the ball” with tiaras. Champagne toasts at midnight were filled with good wishes for the new year.

A special thanks to all the residents who organized this event—and here's to a prosperous 2007!



Charles Roach (left) and Clarence Robison joined the new year celebrations.



Left to right: Juanita Rains, Marty Rose, and Dale Mullins all join in the fun.



Kathryn Blanks (left) with her dog, Patty, Charlotte Buchan, and Patti Robison.



Left to right: Dorothy Barber, Emma Joyce Broadrick, and Mary Haggood.

