

NEWS RELEASE



Touchmark at Coffee Creek

SPECIAL TO LIFE & LEISURE

April 9, 2010

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Touchmark showcases memory care with ‘friendship’ approach

By Carol Hartzog

David Troxel speaks not only from a professional perspective, but also from a personal experience with the disease of Alzheimer’s or age-related dementia illnesses, which affect one in four American families.

“It’s a terrible, difficult time. But, you can help them [those with the illness] to live the best life.”

An internationally known author of four books, Troxel has influenced how care is provided to people and created a model used at many memory-care centers. The “Best Friends” approach is centered on what people with dementia need most – a “best friend.”

Troxel traveled to Edmond last week from Sacramento, Calif., for an open house (Thursday) of the Touchmark at Coffee Creek Prairieview Memory Care Residences.

Speaking at the open house, Troxel provided numerous examples of what people can do when a loved one is diagnosed with Alzheimer’s.

“Take a deep breath and start with two important steps,” said Troxel. “First, make sure your parents legal/financial affairs are in order. Second, create a wonderful day for them. Compliment your loved one. Tell him he’s someone special, by remembering, ‘Gee Dad, I can’t believe you won Teacher of the Year twice.’”

Troxel advises, “Don’t fight their memory loss. Instead, journey with them.” Troxel’s mother had Alzheimer’s disease and passed away a year ago.

Vaccine a real possibility

“We’ll have a vaccine in the next decade for younger people,” said Marge Coalman, vice president of wellness and programs for Touchmark, who also addressed attendees at the open house. Coalman is based with Touchmark at its Beaverton, Oregon, headquarters and played a key role in designing Touchmark’s person-centered memory care program.

Touchmark broke ground last summer on a \$15 million expansion, encompassing the memory-care neighborhood and three-story addition to its current community. It is scheduled to be fully open in June.

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The opening couldn't be more anticipated than by Laura Castleberry, who spoke at the open house.

The Edmond resident watched her mother's habits change. She would say to her husband, "Oh Mike, let's go out to dinner tonight," masking the fact that she had forgotten how to cook.

"As mom's issues got more severe, dad had lots of guilt associated with it." Mike Crawley would tell his daughter, "I've been married to this woman for more than 50 years, and I should be able to take care of her."

Castleberry convinced them to move from Tulsa to Touchmark to be closer to Laura. Then three years ago, her mom was diagnosed with the progressive brain disease Lewy Body Dementia. Shortly thereafter, her daughter moved her mom to another center. Her father visited his wife three days a week on average, driving the 10 miles in the first couple of years with assistance from Touchmark during the last few months.

Now, Carolyn Crawley will be just around the corner from her husband, within 45 feet, as the high-demand memory care opens.

"Dementia is a disease that takes a person's dignity away from them," said Castleberry. "Touchmark treats everyone here with respect."

The Prairieview Memory Care Residences include 50 private studios, divided into four neighborhoods of 12-13 residences. Each neighborhood will have its own kitchen and dining area, living room, space for activities and access to a secure outdoor courtyard. A beauty salon/barber shop, spa bath, multipurpose room, family conference room and doctor's office will be shared by the four neighborhoods.

Touchmark is part of the Coffee Creek 638-acre planned residential development, which includes a golf course, recreational centers and walking and biking trails for Coffee Creek homeowners. Touchmark at Coffee Creek offers a wide range of homes and lifestyle options. For more information, contact Touchmark at (405) 340-1975 or visit edmondmemorycare.com.

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