



Fall-reduction expert leads training

Debbie Rose strides through the water, demonstrating a balance exercise. Her body language radiates energy and intensity. Debbie is an internationally known fall-reduction expert and creator of FallProof H2O.

“We were fortunate to get Debbie and her assistant Jeana French, MS, to join us for our yearly national Health & Fitness Club training,” says Marge Coalman, EdD, Vice President of Wellness & Programs, Touchmark. “More than 14 people went through the training to receive their FallProof H2O certificates of completion, bolstering our current Fall Reduction and Awareness Program.”

Marge developed the Fall Reduction and Awareness Program to create a partnership with community residents to enhance balance and mobility, support independence, and thus reduce the risk of falls. The program was one of 10 recognized nationally last year by The Falls-Free Coalition as a creative program and practice in home assessment and modification.

FallProof H2O uses the comfort of the water to help improve balance and mobility and, in turn, helps reduce falls.

Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Michelle Swantek attended the training and plans to start using many of the techniques in current fitness classes at Touchmark. “It was fun to learn and practice the fall-reduction skills in the water and see how many of the same concepts apply to aerobic classes,” says Michelle. ■



Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Michelle Swantek (foreground) prepares to walk through the “gantlet” balance exercise.



Internationally known fall-reduction expert Debbie Rose (center) talks with Touchmark fitness staff about FallProof H2O before the group gets in the pool.

Destination Discovery— whole-person wellness



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

Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging, Dorsky Hodgson Parrish Yue, and Ziegler Capital Markets carried out the first National Whole-Person Wellness Survey. As outlined in the introduction, “This extensive Web-based survey sought to identify wellness program components in continuing care retirement communities by determining current and projected program features in six areas. These areas include programming, activities, space and campus design, and financing. In addition, respondents were asked to provide their perspective on the benefits of programs to their residents, staff, and organization.”

Their conclusion was that communities that have a deeply rooted culture of wellness share common characteristics:

- *“Wellness is fully integrated into the organization;*
- *Programming is comprehensive, including all six dimensions of wellness, and engages both residents and staff in the process;*
- *Benefits of the wellness program are extended to others (beyond the resident population).”*

The respondents were grouped into three categories. About half (51 percent) were identified as “tenderfeet,” with almost no culture of wellness. Twenty-eight percent were labeled “travelers”—communities that are moving toward a culture of wellness. The third group was referred to as “trailblazers,” because they had most or all of the components.

For several years, Touchmark has embraced the six components of wellness, and in the last five years has established the Touchmark Full Life Wellness & Life Enrichment Program in all 11 of its communities operated in the US and Canada. I work with the executive directors and Life Enrichment/Wellness directors to

implement and audit the program, and I can tell you with tremendous pride that Touchmark communities are in the trailblazer category. In fact, we outdistance most competing providers in the organizational components related to wellness that were used in the survey.

“Senior living communities are increasingly focused on cultivating a culture of wellness for their residents, staff, and community—to improve quality of life and to avoid illness and reduce health care costs.”

—*The National Whole-Person Wellness Survey (2008)*

The Touchmark program is dynamic and based entirely on the strengths, skills, and interests of residents. To learn more about our Life Enrichment/Wellness program, contact a member of the Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Michelle Swantek. ■

Coming Event

Monday, May 26, 9:45 am to 12:30 pm

Join your neighbors in honoring those who have given their lives in war. On Memorial Day, a group from Touchmark will visit the Veterans Cemetery. After returning from the trip, there will be a family barbecue lunch at the Grand Lodge.

Baking 40-plus dozen cookies



A group of resident volunteers gathered to make and bake 50 dozen cookies for the local chapter of the Kairos Prison Ministry International, Inc., which provides a variety of supportive services for men and women in prison and their families.



Residents Mary Kuxhausen (left) and Grace Bejda let the fun and flour fly.



Norma Stock (left) and Marilyn Heitzman mix a batch of cookies.

Health Services director honors caregiving team

The Meadows at Meadow Lake Village Health Services Director Matt Hoskin decided not to wait until September (National Assisted Living Week) to arrange an appreciation party for the caregiving team at the Meadows.

“I thought this would be a perfect time to honor this team,” says Matt. “They are dedicated individuals who strive to provide a caring touch when working with residents.” At the party, people enjoyed mini massages, hand treatments, and pizza.

“This team does a tremendous job of showing care and compassion to everyone, including other team members,” says Matt. “We are thrilled they have chosen to be part of the Touchmark team.” ■

Team members attend training

During April, members of the Life Enrichment/Wellness teams from around North America gathered for yearly training. The theme for this year’s training was *Destination . . . Discovery*.

Touchmark’s Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Michelle Swantek and Life Enrichment/Wellness Assistant Sandy Poe attended the two-and-a-half day training seminar, where they gathered practical information from speakers and made a presentation about Touchmark’s extensive volunteer program.

“The Life Enrichment/Wellness professionals across the company are a talented and energetic team with a common purpose—to enrich people’s lives,” says Marge Coalman, EdD, Vice President of Wellness & Programs, Touchmark. “The annual gathering promotes the exchange of new ideas.” ■

Recent events welcome spring



Staff and residents kicked off spring with the first-ever Spring Fling. Packed with fun and laughter, people socialized and danced on the new floor. The evening ended with giveaways. Here, resident Chad Bolender dances with Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Michelle Swantek.



Marilyn Heitzman (left) and Suzanne Dyvad dance at the Spring Fling party.

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Darlene and David Hansen break in the new dance floor.



Marion James plants a pansy.



Residents at the Meadows at Meadow Lake Village started a garden to welcome spring. Despite the unusually cool weather, the group planted the garden with help from some gardening professionals from Lowe's Home Improvement. Suzanne Dyvad, Louise White, Marion James, and June Thomas planted some of the three dozen petunias, pansies, and marigolds.



Spreading the spring spirit, a group plants potted flowers.

Thinking spring—and summer

Marge Coalman, EdD

Vice President of Wellness & Programs, Touchmark

Finally, the hallmarks of spring are visible. Crocuses, daffodils, budding fruit trees, and longer daylight hours invite us outdoors. We know summer is right around the corner, and the desire to dig out those walking shoes and head out for a walk or hike is strong. Resuming outdoor exercise is good for everyone. The benefits of sunshine and fresh air as well as the inspiration that comes from preferred sports and familiar trails are great ways to nurture one's body, mind, and spirit.

However, the commitment to a group-exercise class, strength-training regimen, and laps or aquatic classes in the pool is an important part of the formula for success when resuming or beginning outdoor adventures. The research community reminds us with the results of evidence-based studies every day that strength training and flexibility are important aspects of the equation to good health and functional fitness. Aerobic exercise alone—even with the well-known benefits of walking—will not provide the overall conditioning that prevents the onset of bone-thinning diseases, muscle loss (sarcopenia), and deconditioning.

Maintaining the discipline of a scheduled *(cont.)*

(cont.) class, personal training session, or workout on strength-training equipment overcomes interruptions or demands life might impose.

As the days lengthen and the golf clubs, bike, and walking shoes beckon from the hall closet, make sure to keep your health club or exercise class regimen among your list of daily to-dos. The total health equation is a formula for success in all of the varied activities and adventures that lie ahead. ■

Experience quality design throughout

Touchmark lodge and single-level homes include stylish design features that can add extra comfort and convenience. Many homes offer universal design features, like spacious bathrooms, easy-to-turn doorknobs, and single-level living with no steps.

“When constructing and designing homes, our goal is to meet the needs of people while adding style and comfort,” says Touchmark Vice President of Architecture Joseph Billig. “In all communities we aim to create homes that offer high-quality design features,” says Joseph.

If you'd like to see and experience a Touchmark home, call 208-888-2277 for your personal presentation. ■



Located in the Sun Valley Lodge, this 1,390-square-foot Birch lodge home includes two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and stainless steel appliances in the kitchen.



The Adams home, located at 875 S Hallenbeck Lane, offers 1,595 square feet, two bedrooms, and two bathrooms.