



THE {FULL} LIFE

Touchmark in the West Hills Newsletter | Issue 2 • 2024



*Touchmark on West Prospect residents
at Community Clothes Closet*

Volunteering is Good for the Soul

April is National Volunteer Month, and there is truly an abundance of meaningful, heartfelt altruism happening in each Touchmark community year-round. A snapshot of the important work residents are doing includes:

At Touchmark at Mount Bachelor Village, Leslie Koc volunteers for The Giving Plate (TGP). Every other month, residents put their TGP-provided reusable bags filled with nonperishable food outside their homes for Leslie and her helpers to collect. At Touchmark at Pilot Butte, the “Doing Good” group volunteers twice monthly at the Bethlehem Inn shelter to make lunches for the people living there.

Elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest, residents and team members at Touchmark on South Hill recently broke into two teams to sort and pack food for Second Harvest food bank. There is a knitting group at Touchmark in the West Hills that meets weekly to make blankets for low-income and premature babies at the Oregon Health & Science University hospital. The resident-led “Doing Good” group at Touchmark at Fairway Village initiates volunteering in and outside of their community, including collecting food for the Clark Neighbors Food Project. So far, they have donated over 800 pounds of food to this organization.

Up north, a resident from Touchmark at Wedgewood has been volunteering once per week for over 20

years at the Mustard Seed homeless shelter and has recruited other residents to help out. At Touchmark on West Prospect, the “Touchmark Cares” volunteer group recently collected and donated 100 pounds of food to a local food pantry.

Residents at Touchmark on West Century create tie blankets every month that are donated to Ministry on the Margins, several homeless shelters, and MSA United Way. The “Random Acts of Kindness” (RAK) group at Touchmark at Coffee Creek recently hand-crafted Valentine’s Day cards for residents in memory care and have also written letters to children in foster care.

At Touchmark on Saddle Drive, resident Larry Gallagher regularly volunteers at the Helena Food Bank and has earned the nickname of “the egg guy.” In Meridian, residents at Touchmark at Meadow Lake Village create blankets for first responders to donate through the Linus Project. At Touchmark at The Ranch, resident and retired pastor Rebecca Riviere hosts bible studies for residents who are not able to attend outside church services.

Volunteering is a great way to stay sharp and busy in retirement. We are proud of how residents live our values every day in our local communities.

Resident Spotlight

Fran Warren, Touchmark in the West Hills

Fran Warren is a co-founder of the Treekeepers of Washington County, which communicates with property owners, developers, and the Washington County Commissioners. This volunteer organization covers the value of keeping large trees, keeps inventory of street trees, follows housing developments to see what’s planned for tree protection or destruction, builds communities of allies, provides educational materials about the cost benefits and climate mitigation benefits of existing trees, and provides a clearing house of information about urban trees.

How did you get started volunteering?

I’ve been volunteering full-time since I retired from Intel in 1999. First, I started with developing scholarship programs at some local schools, then I became a Foundation Board member of the Perry Center for Children—24-hour care for the most severe mentally ill children of Oregon. We developed a horticultural therapy center there,



which is now a flagship program.

A 10-year-old resident who hadn’t spoken in six years due to trauma, tugged on a volunteer Master Gardener’s dress and said, “Look at my strawberry! The leaves have to protect the strawberry so it doesn’t get sunburnt.” From that point on, therapists could work with the child to bring him out by talking about his strawberries. Where medications and other things don’t work, the touch and smells of working in the garden teaches children they are not “all bad”—it’s one of the most enriching things that can happen.

You did a lot of work in the Cooper Mountain neighborhood on transportation improvements since early 2000, including consideration for how

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Community Highlights

Enriching lives through fun and vibrant community events!



Resident Spotlight cont.

animals and foliage can continue to thrive and co-exist with development. Eventually this resulted in establishing the Treekeepers of Washington County in 2021. How's that going?

Our most popular offering is our webinar series called Tree Talks. They help homeowners protect and care for the trees on their property. We connect homeowners with arborists who can help them maintain their trees. Our next webinar will be on invasive pests. We also do guided Tree Walks, coordinated ivy pulls, and I'm working to get something scheduled at Touchmark in the West Hills.

What do you have planned next?

We're working on another program called "Cool Schools" with the Oregon Department of Forestry. We want students and volunteers to do watering on campuses since most school districts can't afford to water the trees and gardens in the summertime. It's also important that the trees are maintained so the children have somewhere to play in the shade. We're targeting low-income areas since school is often the only place these children have access to trees. I'm hoping some of my fellow residents and their grandchildren will get involved in that.



Angela Stewart
Vice President,
Clinical Services

Be Good To Yourself

"Nursing is one of the fine arts: I had almost said 'the finest of fine arts.'" – Florence Nightingale

May is National Nurses Appreciation Month, and this year's theme is "Nurses Make the Difference." At Touchmark, we are blessed with a strong team of dedicated and compassionate nurses and caregivers, and we feel their supportive presence every day.

They are the leaders that anchor the team to our mission. They lead us to actions of compassion, support, and service. They steady the emotions of uncertainty about the future while holding tight the dignity of the individual.

Teamwork is not optional, but necessary to sustain the mission as a nurse. Their success depends on their team, and their team depends on them. Their curiosity validates and affirms everyone around them, and their consideration of their team inspires cooperation and engagement.

Nurses have many career choices in front of them. There are many nursing specialties to contribute to, and a variety of populations to serve. Touchmark nurses choose advocacy for the senior population, as respected and honored friends and mentors. They use the stories they hear and interactions with residents to inspire one another to live their best lives. They don't see what is lacking or changed with age, but the remaining skills and abilities that bring joy to others or can be utilized to enhance quality of life. Therefore, we are very thankful they choose to work at Touchmark. We value their caring hearts, dedicated efforts, and clinical expertise.

