Providing answers after a dementia diagnosis

Touchmark recently presented a memory care speaker series titled *Coping with a Loved One’s Diagnosis*. This series was designed to help support caregivers and family members whose loved one is living with Alzheimer’s or other age-related dementia. Open to the public, there were three separate presenters and topics (two last month and one still to come—see below).

At the first event, Dr. John Stetson, psychiatrist at St. Peter’s Behavioral Health, presented *Dementia: What’s Next?* For loved ones dealing with a recent diagnosis, Dr. Stetson provided valuable insights on the disease, treatment options, and coping strategies.

Join us for the last event in our memory care speaker series!

On Tuesday, May 5, we’ll host *Dementia from a Caregiver’s Perspective* with special guest speaker Laurie Gaffney, LCSW, counselor from South Hills Psychotherapy, as the final event in this educational series. Laurie has over 20 years of experience and specializes in providing individual and family counseling—and also has personal experience as a loved one’s caregiver.

During the presentation, she’ll share tips and coping strategies for caregivers, and will also lead a roundtable discussion with the audience. The event begins at 11 am. Lunch will be provided. Bring your questions and a friend.
Celebrating Centenarians

The Montana Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging has established a tradition of honoring Montana’s centenarians, those who have obtained 100 years of age or will turn 100 by December 31 each year. The 2010 Census indicated that Montana had 175 people age 100 and older—and that number continues to increase each year. Touchmark has submitted the names of five of our residents to be honored this year at a luncheon scheduled for May 12 at the Red Lion Hotel. Photos below: left to right.

**Dorothy Randall** was born on July 9, 1908 in Long Beach, California. She says the secret to her longevity is just her good health. The most amazing event of her life was the birth of her son.

**Charlotte Niklas** was born on July 6, 1911 in Helena. She states that she has led a very good life and she credits her parents for teaching her well. Charlotte is a people person and likes almost everyone she meets.

**Arvah Morton** was born on January 29, 1912 in St. Louis, Missouri. She says that her long life might be because she loves vegetables and for many years had her own garden. Arvah would like to be remembered as a caring mother.

**Anne VanSickle** was born on March 7, 1913 in Butte, Montana. She attributes her many good years to the great genes in her family—her father lived to be 91 years old. Anne is a faithful churchgoer and says her favorite quote is John 3:16. She hopes people remember her as a thoughtful person.

**Fritz Weed** was born on December 9, 1915 in Terry, Montana. He believes that the reason he has lived such a long, good life is due to hard work. One of the most important events of his life was when he met his “little gal,” his future wife Violet.

“We are very proud that all these great centenarians call Touchmark home!” says Nanette Whitman-Holmes, Life Enrichment/Wellness Director.

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**Worry less and enjoy more**

Imagine a {FULL} Life in a beautiful home surrounded by a friendly and enriching community—and let us take care of the cleaning and maintenance! It may be time to consider a move.

*Located at 913 Saddle Drive, this 1,340-square-foot home is currently undergoing renovations to make it feel like new. It features two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a fireplace, and attached garage.*

*Apartment 123 is a two-bedroom, two-bathroom home offering western exposure, convenient first-floor location, and a community sunroom right outside your door.*
“Balance is not something you find, it is something you create.”
— Jana Kingsford

Better physical balance can improve your ability to control and maintain your body’s position, whether you are moving or standing still. Strong balance promotes self-confidence, independence, and safety—and is important to help prevent falls and avoid the serious injuries they might cause. Often we are not fully aware that we have weak balance until we try balance exercises.

You can improve your balance, strength, and flexibility through a variety of exercises, including yoga, tai chi, and strength training.

Balance exercises can be done every day or as often as you like. Preferably, older adults at risk of falls should try to work on balance training at least three times a week, and should perform standardized exercises from a program demonstrated to reduce falls.

It might sound like a lot, but balance exercises are easier than you might think:

- Try standing on one foot while working in the kitchen, waiting in line, or brushing your teeth.
- Walk heel to toe around the house or office.
- Yoga and tai chi do not require expensive classes or equipment. Find an instructional book, DVD, or website to get started at home.

If you have concerns about your balance, contact a Life Enrichment/Wellness team member for more information. Let us know how we can support you as you aspire to better balance.

At our Purple People Party, residents were joined by the moms and youngsters from the Helena Mothers of Preschoolers group for fun games, crafts, and snacks—all in shades of purple!

Our Easter egg hunt drew an excited crowd of children eager to scoop up as many eggs as possible. Sales from lunch and ice cream cones raised over $1,000 and benefited the Angel Fund, which helps provide classroom supplies and clothing to children in need.

Students from the Tiernan Irish Dancers step-dancing school visited Touchmark for a spirited performance followed by a meet-and-greet where residents learned about the dancer’s hairpieces and intricate costumes.
The events listed below are just a sampling of opportunities offered to enhance wellness and new interests. Visit our {FULL} Life calendar at the link below for a complete list of this month’s events. For additional details of an event, including registration, transportation, and participation requirements, contact a Life Enrichment/Wellness team member.

**Wednesday, May 6, 11:30 am**  
**National Teachers and Nurses Day luncheon.** If you are a retired nurse or teacher, join us for a complimentary lunch and a gift of recognition. Four Seasons Dining Room.

**Thursday, May 7, 4 pm**  
**Siete de Mayo cocktail hour.** We’re celebrating the pride of Mexico—a few days later. Join us for margaritas, chips, salsa, and music! Forum.

**Friday, May 8, 2 pm**  
**Ladies’ springtime afternoon tea.** Come dressed in your spring best and enjoy tea sandwiches, scones, and tea as we toast to mothers, daughters, and granddaughters. Cost: $5 per person. Four Seasons Dining Room.

**Monday, May 11, 4 pm**  
**Dinner out at Jade Garden.** This local Chinese restaurant prides itself for creating innovative and original recipes beyond the traditional offerings. They were recently named one of the Top 100 Chinese Restaurants in America. Sign up.

**Tuesday, May 12, 11 am**  
**Governor’s Conference on Aging.** Hop on the bus and join us for this annual conference, presented in partnership with the Montana Gerontology Society, to learn more about several topics relating to Montana’s aging society from prominent speakers.

**Monday, May 18, 8:30 am**  
**Museum of the Rockies tour.** It’s International Museum Day, and we’re celebrating with a trip to this must-see Montana attraction, located just 90 minutes from Helena in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. Check out one of the largest dinosaur collections in the world. Cost: $13.50 admission, plus lunch.

**Friday, May 22, 2 pm**  
**Memorial Day program.** This year’s tribute will include a raising of the flag, moment of reflection, guest speaker, and a reading of veteran names. A coffee reception will follow the program. Front lawn.

**Wednesday, May 27, 12:30 - 4:30 pm**  
**Red Cross blood drive.** Giving blood helps in so many ways, and you never know when you or someone you love could benefit from a reliable blood supply. Sign up. Forum.

*View our {FULL} Life calendar online: TouchmarkHelena.com*