

MARCH  
2026



**Markhaven**  
Home for Seniors

## Monthly Newsletter

### Message from our Executive Director



**Dear Families,**

February was filled with wonderful activities and special moments including Valentines Day as well as a fantastic time celebrating Black History Month, enjoying great entertainment, engaging trivia, and of course, amazing food. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped make the celebration so memorable.

March promises to be just as exciting, with many enjoyable programs and events planned. I encourage you to join us whenever you can—there is truly something for everyone.

With the change in season quickly approaching, we're getting closer to reopening our outdoor areas and preparing our garden beds for planting. Our annual gardening day is just around the corner, and we'll soon be inviting residents to join us in getting everything ready. Keep an eye out for more details! If you're interested in helping out, we would be delighted to have you take part. It's always a rewarding day filled with teamwork, fresh air, and community spirit—and we'll wrap it up with a delicious BBQ lunch to thank everyone for their efforts.

Long-term care is more than a place to live—it is a community built on compassion, dignity, and connection. Every day, we are reminded that what truly makes our home special is not just the programs or the building itself, but the people within it.

The long-term care sector continues to face challenges, particularly with staffing shortages and increasing demands on care. These realities can at times place pressure on teams across the industry. Despite this, I am continually inspired by the dedication, resilience, and heart our staff demonstrate each and every day. Their commitment to providing safe, respectful, and person-centered care does not go unnoticed.

Our nurses, Personal Support Workers, dietary staff, housekeepers, recreation team, and all support staff work tirelessly to ensure residents feel cared for, valued, and at home. They show up with professionalism and compassion, often going above and beyond in ways both big and small. For that, I am deeply grateful.

To our families, thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your understanding as we navigate both the rewards and the challenges of long-term care together. Your support and involvement strengthen our community.

We remain committed to continuous improvement, open communication, and creating a warm, supportive environment for everyone who calls our residence home.

Thank you for your continued support, participation, and community spirit. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and enjoying a wonderful start to the spring season together.

God Bless,  
**Janice Pitts**  
Executive Director

## MARCH PROGRAMS

**March 1 | 11:00**

Hymn Sing with Carol

**March 3 | 10:30**

St. Andrews Communion

**March 4 | 10:30**

Interactive Sing-Along

**March 4 | 2:30**

Catholic Mass

**March 5 | 10:30**

Welcome Tea

**March 7 | 2:30**

Balloon Volleyball

**March 8 | 10:30**

Music with Curtis (1N)

**March 9 & 23 | 10:30**

Backyard Stories

**March 11 | 12:00**

Diner's Club: Halibut House

**March 12 | 10:30**

Irish Soda Farls Making

**March 13 | 10:30**

Woodworking Time

**March 14 | 2:30**

Cooking with Carol:

Spinach & Potato Soup

**March 17 | 10:30**

St. Patrick's Entertainment

**March 17 | 2:30**

The Lucky Irish Cart

**March 18 | 2:30**

The Wise Walkers

**March 19 | 2:30**

St. Patrick's Arts & Crafts

**March 24 | 2:30**

Birthday Bash

**March 26 | 18:30**

Wine and Cheese

**March 30 | 10:30**

Travelogue Ireland

# Markhaven

## Staff Complete Intravenous (IV) Therapy Workshop

On February 20, 2026, Registered Staff at Markhaven participated in a comprehensive Intravenous (IV) Therapy Workshop aimed at enhancing clinical skills and ensuring safe, effective resident care.

This interactive session combined theory, live demonstrations, and hands-on practice to strengthen competencies in IV initiation, maintenance, and monitoring. By building knowledge and practical skills, the workshop increased staff confidence in administering intravenous therapies safely and effectively.

Through realistic practice scenarios and guided instruction, participants reinforced best practices in infection prevention, critical thinking, and safe IV initiation.

Ongoing education remains a key part of Markhaven's commitment to clinical excellence and resident safety. By continually investing in staff development, we ensure our residents receive the highest quality, compassionate care every day.

**Evangeline Rabena**  
Director of Care



# Spiritual Corner

## March: A Time for Renewal

March invites us to look forward with hope. As the days grow longer and nature begins to awaken, we too are given the opportunity to renew our spirit and relationships. It's a perfect time to let go of what weighs us down, open our hearts to gratitude, and plant small acts of kindness that can blossom into meaningful change. Together as a community, every step we take strengthens the bonds that unite us and reminds us that we never walk alone.

By: **Andrea Barco**  
Markhaven Home for Seniors

## A Prayer for This New Month

### Heavenly Father,

We place this new month into Your loving hands.

We ask You to bless our residents, staff, families, and everyone in our Markhaven home.

Surround us with Your peace, fill our hearts with hope, and guide our actions with kindness.

Help us to care for one another with patience and understanding,

to offer comfort to those who may feel lonely,

and to celebrate the joys we share together.

May this month be a time of renewed spirit, of gentle encouragement, and of small moments of happiness that brighten our days.

Let us walk together in faith and gratitude, trusting that Your love will guide and sustain us through every challenge and every blessing.

**Amen.**

# Markhaven Programs

Recreation programs in long-term care facilities play a crucial role in enhancing the overall well-being and quality of life for residents. These programs aim to provide meaningful and enjoyable activities that cater to the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive needs of individuals residing in long-term care settings.

## Volunteering With Our Recreation Team

Volunteers help our staff and provide assistance and companionship to our residents as they take part in our Programs.



## -What They Say-

I've been to four other homes and Markhaven is the best one. It is also the cleanest. The staff is very conscientious. It's not just a job for them. They seem to genuinely care about each resident. The PSW's work very hard especially when they're short-staffed.

There is a good variety of activities.

The Resident's Council meetings have been effective as I've seen positive changes made. Volunteers are excellent!

The food is better than in other homes and you are given a choice.

I would recommend Markhaven to anyone seeking a home for their loved one.

**Saundria Brown**  
Markhaven 2 North Resident



## Stories From the Heart: Our Resident's Life

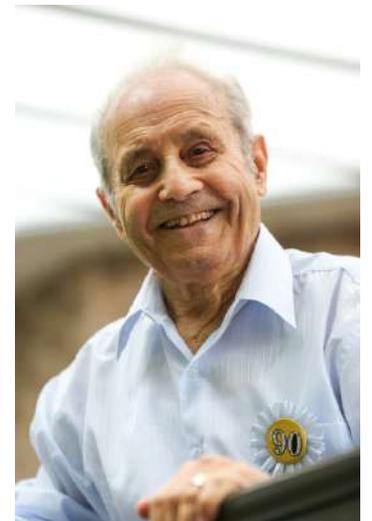
### The Life Story of Salvatore and Giuseppina Amato

*Salvatore and Giuseppina Amato's journey began in Sicily, Italy where they both grew up surrounded by family, traditions, and the strong values of hard work and perseverance.*

*Like many young men of his generation, Salvatore carried those values with him when, in 1955, at the age of 25, he made the courageous decision to leave his homeland and come to Canada in search of opportunity and a better future.*

*Two years later, in the fall of 1957, Salvatore returned to Sicily to attend his brother's wedding. That trip would change his life forever. While home, he proposed to Giuseppina, a young woman of 18 years, whose warmth, strength, and devotion would become the foundation of the family they would build together. They were married on December 18, 1957, and shortly after left Sicily and travelled to Canada to begin their life side by side.*

*Salvatore was 28 and Giuseppina 18—young, determined, and full of hope. They faced the challenges of a new country together, leaning on one another as they built a home rooted in love, sacrifice, and resilience. Salvatore worked steadily as a produce clerk and later as a manager, a role he held with pride until retiring at the age of 60. He was dependable and dedicated, someone who believed deeply in providing for his family through honest work.*





Giuseppina devoted herself primarily to raising their children, creating a home filled with care, warmth, and stability. She was the steady presence behind the scenes, ensuring her children were nurtured, supported, and guided. As the children grew older and some married, Giuseppina took on part-time work as a supermarket cashier to help contribute extra income for the family—always doing what was needed, never asking for recognition.

Salvatore would spend his days and weekends tending to his vegetable garden and watching his favorite Italian soccer team “Inter-Milan”. Mom's talent was in the kitchen, baking her delectable cookies and making a large batch of tomato sauce for our weekly family gatherings.

Together, Salvatore and Giuseppina raised four children, and through them their family continued to grow—ten grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren, with one more on the way. Their legacy lives not only in numbers, but in the values they passed down: respect, responsibility, loyalty, and the importance of family.

In their early retirement years, they enjoyed travelling together, taking yearly trips and making memories in places like Mexico, Florida, Punta Cana, and Italy. These trips were well-earned moments of joy after decades of hard work. As time went on and travel became more physically challenging, they embraced a quieter life, still surrounded by what mattered most—family, friends, and the comfort of familiarity.

Now, after 68 years of marriage, Salvatore at 96 and Giuseppina at 86, their life together stands as a testament to commitment, endurance, and love that has lasted through time. They are simple, hardworking people who built something extraordinary—not through grand gestures, but through consistency, sacrifice, and care for others. Rich in friendships, surrounded by family, and grounded in the values they never let go of, Salvatore and Giuseppina Amato have created a life that truly matters.



Their story is one of immigration and courage, partnership and devotion, and a legacy that will continue for generations to come.

This life story was lovingly written by their daughter and son,

**Mary and Domenic**

# Enhancing Comfort for Residents & Families

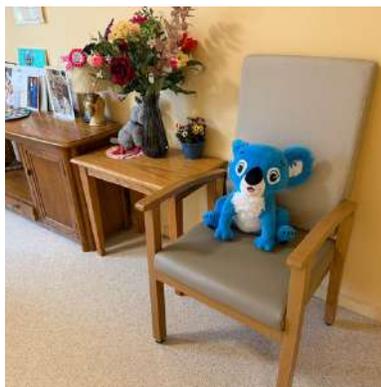
At Markhaven, our priority is always the comfort and well-being of our residents.

We are excited to share that each resident bedroom now features a brand-new, comfortable chair 96 in total designed with both safety and comfort in mind.

These chairs are more than just furniture they provide residents with a cozy spot to relax and enjoy their personal space. They also give family members and visitors a comfortable place to sit, making visits more enjoyable and allowing for meaningful moments together.

Small improvements like these make a big difference in daily life, helping rooms feel even more like home. We are proud to continue investing in enhancements that support our residents' comfort and strengthen the connections with the people who care about them.

**Jason Ramoutar**  
**Environmental Service Manager**



# U.S. POINTER: A Recipe for Mind/Body Health

By Brooke DeNisco



For several years, the National Alzheimer's Association and partner universities and medical institutions have been conducting a project called the U.S. POINTER. The name refers to a planned routine for healthy living that the researchers designed.

The goal of the study was to determine whether a specific set of lifestyle changes would help people not only manage issues such as heart disease and high cholesterol but also reduce their risk of cognitive decline.

About 2,000 older adults participated, some independently, and others in more structured groups. The volunteers represented a wide range of the general population, and all had some general health risks thought to increase the risk of memory issues, such as inactivity or high blood pressure.

Volunteers were randomly assigned to participate on their own or in a group setting. The U.S. POINTER “recipe” participants followed included:

- 30 minutes of moderate cardiovascular exercise four times a week
- Strength training three times a week
- 30 minutes of computer-based brain training three times a week
- Adherence to the MIND diet, which emphasizes eating colorful and Mediterranean-style foods, with plenty of olive oil, nuts, leafy greens, whole grains, and berries
- Frequent health appointments to check blood pressure, weight, etc.

Almost all of the study participants showed improved blood pressure regulation and reduced sleep apnea, both of which are potential risks for Alzheimer's disease, as they limit blood and oxygen flow to the brain.

People in the structured groups showed greater health gains than those who participated independently.

There are plans to continue the study with both current and new volunteers. For more information about the U.S. POINTER health plan and the study, check out their webpage.

You can read the [full report and study results in the Journal of the American Medical Association](#).

# Captured Moments

## January 2026



**The Octa-band Fun**



**Sweet Moments**



**Ring Toss**



**Balloon Volleyball**



**Backyard Stories with  
Ann Ward**



**Mardi Gras  
Arts & Crafts**



**Coloring Fun**



**Valentine's  
Magic Show**



**Chinese New Year**

# Captured Moments

## January 2026



**Wine & Cheese with  
Curtis**



**The Wise Walkers:  
Mardi Gras Bead Hunt**



**The Wise Walkers:  
Mardi Gras Bead Hunt**



**Wacky Wheelchair Racing  
& Games-Minute to Win it**



**Wacky Wheelchair Racing  
& Games-Minute to Win it**



**Wacky Wheelchair Racing  
& Games-Minute to Win it**



**Unit Programs  
2 South**



**Black History Celebration  
with Negus**



**Pet Therapy with Lola  
2 North**

# March 2026 Birthdays



*Congratulations!*

May your special day be filled with joy, laughter, and love. You are truly cherished today and always.

Edda Williams	Mar. 01	- Springdale
Maria Kalapodakis	Mar. 01	- Paramount
London Okpei	Mar. 03	- Paramount
Lai Sien	Mar. 06	- Paramount
Alberto Talens	Mar. 09	- Toogood
Ka Ting Lam	Mar. 09	- Toogood
Margaret Tapscott	Mar. 11	- Paramount
Barbara Stoffels	Mar. 12	- Toogood
Jianhua Zhang	Mar. 16	- Springdale
Jenette Majoran	Mar. 18	- Parkway
Ernesto Arevalo	Mar. 23	- Springdale
Donald Logan	Mar. 27	- Springdale
Pearl Miles	Mar. 28	- Toogood

# Employee of the Month



**Pamela Willems**

**February 2026**

# BPSO Update

## Nursing

### Champion Spotlight: Building Internal Training Capacity

We are proud to share that one of our Champions participated in the Train-the-Trainer Program this February!

This program is designed to strengthen internal capacity by equipping Champions with the skills and knowledge needed to deliver foundational Champion Workshops to their colleagues.

Through this initiative, participants deepen their expertise in evidence-based practice and implementation science, further advancing excellence across BPSO organizations.

This is an important step in building sustainable learning within our organization.

### What's Next?

We are excited to announce that two additional Champions are planned to attend the training session in June.

Upon completion, we will have a total of three certified trainers within our organization — significantly enhancing our ability to support ongoing education and best practice implementation.



As a proud BPSO-designated home, Markhaven continues to uphold and expand its commitment to implementing and sustaining evidence-based best practices in resident care. This is a key step in ensuring the highest standards of service and outcomes for those we support.

Best Practice Spotlight Organization Update

### Next BPG Focus: Transitions in Care and Services

Implementation of the Transitions in Care and Services Best Practice Guideline is scheduled to begin soon.

 Month of April- Gap analysis

This initiative will help enhance coordination and safety during transitions within and between Markhaven and other care settings.

# Seasons & Supper

## Traditional Irish Soda Bread

Irish Soda Bread is a classic, rustic bread with a golden crust and a soft, comforting texture. It is lightly sweet, easy to enjoy, and perfect for March celebrations and cozy moments.

### **INGREDIENTS: (Serves - 4)**

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 ¾ cups buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons sugar (optional)
- 2 tablespoons melted butter (optional, for a softer texture)
- ½ cup raisins or currants (optional)



### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C). Lightly grease a baking sheet or line it with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, mix flour, baking soda, salt, and sugar (if using).
3. Add raisins or currants if desired.
4. Make a well in the center and pour in the buttermilk (and melted butter if using).
5. Stir gently until a soft dough forms. Do not overmix.
6. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and shape it into a round loaf.
7. Place on the baking sheet and cut a deep cross on top of the dough with a sharp knife.
8. Bake for 30–35 minutes, or until golden brown and the loaf sounds hollow when tapped on the bottom.
9. Let cool slightly before slicing. Serve warm with butter and jam.

### **Tips:**

- Do not overmix the dough – mix just until combined.
- Use cold buttermilk for the best rise and texture.
- Serve fresh or lightly toasted for the best flavor

# St. Patrick's Day: Origins and Celebration

St. Patrick's Day, celebrated every March 17th, is a vibrant tradition that honors the life and legacy of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. Born in Britain in the late 4th century, Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave when he was just a teenager. After several years, he escaped and returned home, but he later chose to go back to Ireland as a missionary, spreading Christianity across the country.

One of the most famous legends about St. Patrick is that he used the shamrock, a three-leafed plant, to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—to the Irish people. This is why the shamrock has become a symbol closely associated with the holiday.

Over the centuries, St. Patrick's Day has grown beyond its religious roots to become a global celebration of Irish culture. Parades, music, dance, and traditional Irish food and drinks are enjoyed around the world, from Dublin to New York City. Green clothing and decorations are a must, symbolizing Ireland, the “Emerald Isle,” and good luck.

Today, St. Patrick's Day is not just about honoring a saint; it's about celebrating Irish heritage, community, and joy. Whether you join a parade, enjoy Irish music, or simply wear a splash of green, the day invites everyone to share in the spirit of Ireland.



# Black History Month Celebration

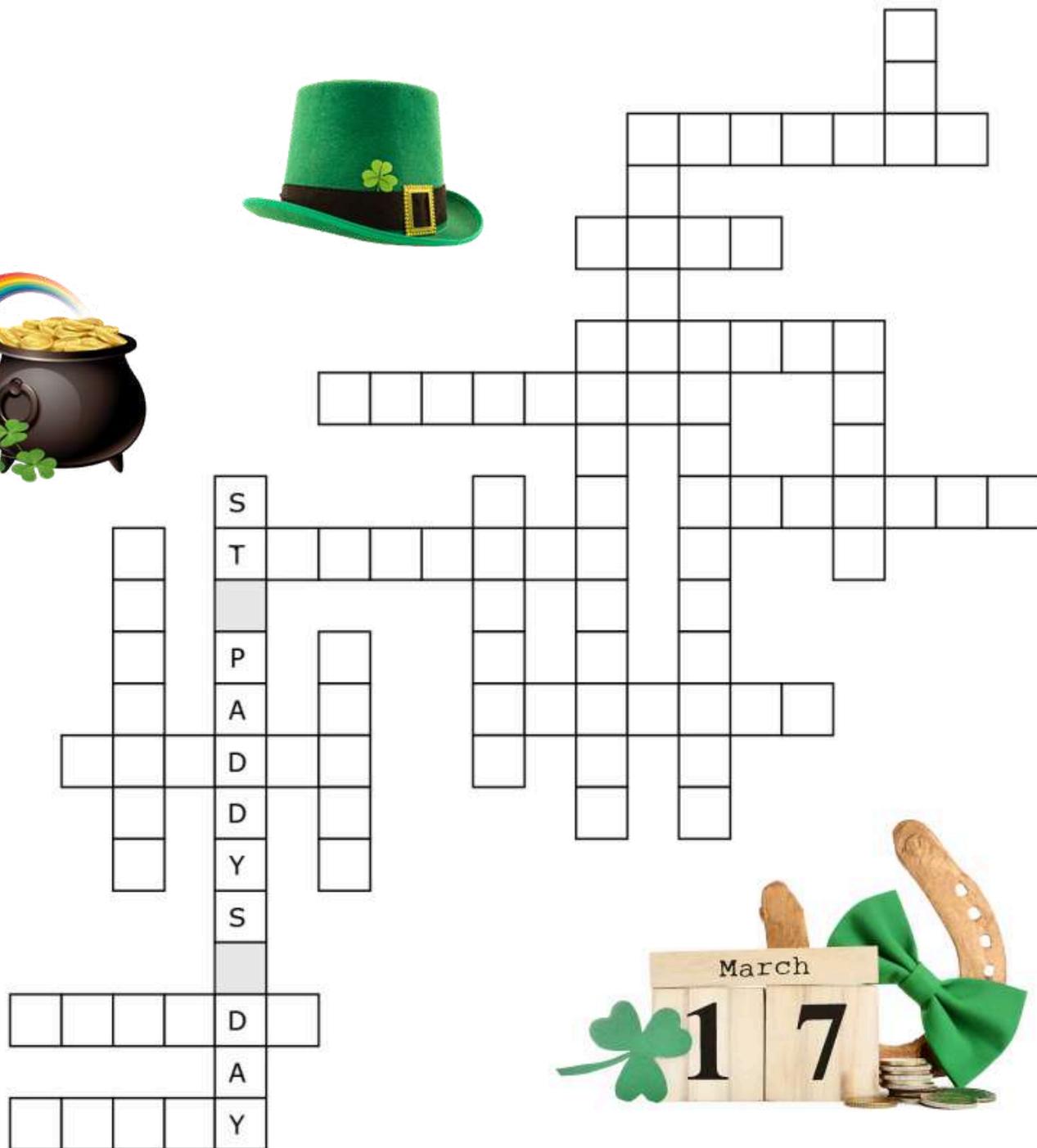


During February, we proudly celebrated Black History Month with a variety of meaningful activities for both staff and residents. Throughout the month, everyone had the opportunity to learn about and honor the rich history and contributions of Black communities.

A highlight of the celebration was the special lunch organized by the Black History Committee for staff, followed by an inspiring presentation by Negus for our residents. It was a wonderful month of learning, unity, and appreciation for all.

# St. Paddy's Day

Fit the list of words into the puzzle. Disregard spaces between words.



JIG  
GOLD  
COINS  
GREEN  
LUCKY  
CELTIC

CLOVER  
DUBLIN  
FIDDLE  
PARADE  
CABBAGE  
DANCING

IRELAND  
RAINBOW  
FOLKLORE  
TREASURE  
CORNERED BEEF  
LEPRECHAUN  
ST. PADDY'S DAY



# Highlights of Upcoming Events

*Welcome Tea*  
FOR THE NEW RESIDENTS

**5 MARCH 2026**  
THURSDAY  
2:30 P.M.  
NEELY AUDITORIUM

**DINER'S CLUB  
FISH & CHIPS  
FRY-UP!**

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11 • 12:00 PM

FRESH CUT, FRESH FOOD, AND FRESH TASTE!  
KING COD IN OUR HOMEMADE LIGHT BATTER  
SERVED WITH CHIPS

NEELY AUDITORIUM

**THE DENTIST IS  
COMING!!**

ON-SITE DENTAL DIRECT WILL BE ON-SITE AT  
**Markhaven LTC**  
On Wednesday, March 11th 2026

Please call the office directly to book an appointment at: 437-887-1134/905-607-2007 or email us at: [admin@onsitedentaldirect.com](mailto:admin@onsitedentaldirect.com)

*\*Note: we now accept the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP)*

*Irish Soda Farts & a  
Tour of Ireland*

**Thursday 12, 2026**  
10:30 a.m.  
Neely Auditorium

THE LUCKY  
**IRISH CART**  
*Around all Units*

**TUESDAY, MARCH 17** 2:30 P.M.

**JAVA GROUP PROGRAMS**

**End Loneliness  
Spread Happiness**

**JAVA MUSIC**  
Loneliness and social isolation are epidemic, affecting so many older adults. Research tells us that enhancing emotional connections is key to solving the problem. While that sounds easy—just go and talk to your neighbour—it isn't.

**JAVA MEMORY**  
Typical social programming addresses loneliness with entertainment and distraction. **Java Group Programs** bring people together with an interactive approach that ends loneliness and spreads happiness, through structured peer support and peer mentoring. Java participants uplift others and uplift themselves.

**JAVA CIRCLE**  
Our residents currently enjoy four Java sessions each month. For the month of March, the schedule will be as follows:

- Monday, March 2 at 10:30 a.m.
- Thursday, March 12 at 2:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 16 at 10:30 a.m.
- Thursday, March 26 at 2:30 p.m.

**Volunteers Welcome!**  
For more information, please contact: Andrea Borcia, Rec. Manager.

On February 27, our Recreation Staff completed their final training on the Java Group programs.

**JAVA SOCIAL**  
Java Social offers a unique and transformative experience that goes beyond traditional social activities, creating a safe and supportive space where participants can connect, share, and grow together. Through thoughtfully selected topics, inspiring quotes, and guided meditative reflections, residents are encouraged to engage in meaningful discussions, stimulating conversations, and personal insights. With this final session, we have successfully completed training in the last names of Java programs, further enhancing the quality and depth of engagement we provide to our residents.

Funded by the Government of Canada  
New Horizons for Seniors Program