

Harmony Village

Happy retirement begins in a community

Freed from the responsibilities of work and family, retiring baby boomers now have an opportunity to set new goals and priorities. They also have to make some important decisions to support their new lifestyle.

A recent North American survey of 2000 baby boomers, *The New Retirement Mindscape*, found that two of the most critical retirement-planning priorities are staying connected with a community and accessing new outlets for developing social networks.

"The connection between social networks and longevity has been well documented by medical and academic research," says Larry Burke, executive director of St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Centre in Toronto, an established community centre that offers programs and services to seniors. "One of our volunteers just celebrated

her 100th birthday this summer, and she attributed her health and wellness to her active lifestyle and her strong sense of community at St. Paul's."

Choosing an active living environment is an important part of retirement planning. The large house in the suburbs, now with many empty rooms, may no longer be an ideal choice for retirees. Downsizing, however, does not mean downscaling. Part of the adjustment is simply finding the environment that offers new opportunities and abundant amenities to entertain friends and family as well as meet new folks.

Toronto baby boomers are about to find this kind of ideal environment in Harmony Village at Sheppard Avenue East and Warden Avenue.

Harmony Village boasts many firsts for Canada. It is the first-ever Canadian condominium project to partner with a non-profit organization.

The goal is to provide Harmony Village residents with compassionate caregivers as well as an immediate, pre-established community. Through a unique partnership with St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Centre, the new Harmony Village—St. Paul's Community Centre will offer a large variety of complimentary or affordable social, educational and health programs to Harmony Village residents as well as seniors in the neighbourhood. It's a wonderful way to establish a friendly and vibrant community.

"An active lifestyle with good company is critical to the well-being of seniors," says Jack Pong, president of Harmony Village. "With the right services and attention, many seniors can live independently for a long time. We want to offer people a home where they can age comfortably and happily."

Beyond providing opportunities and outlets for social networking, the trained volunteers and staff of St. Paul's will offer support services, including 24-hour emergency response and housekeeping. On-site health professionals are also available on demand.

Aside from these community programs, Harmony Village also offers residents exclusive, luxurious amenities to encourage and maintain an active lifestyle. Sports enthusiasts can enjoy their workout at the state-of-the-art health club. Arts lovers can take advantage of the exhibition space and the auditorium for their artistic endeavours. Gourmands will enjoy the extensive selection at the on-site restaurant.

Harmony Village is also proud to be Canada's first green retirement condominium. From the quality of the building materials to the use of geothermal technology, the goal is to ensure clean, green and healthy living for all residents.

"Many baby boomers are accustomed to high-quality, independent living and they demand that lifestyle in retirement," notes Mr. Pong. "Harmony Village is poised to provide residents a home for a serene and fulfilling life for many years to come."

For more information about Harmony Village, please visit: harmonyvillage.ca.



St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Centre: An Active Community for Baby Boomers

Harmony Village's community pillar

Life has probably never been busier for the seniors at St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Centre. Visit the centre on any day of the week and you will find groups of people taking classes, exercising, getting ready for a trip or simply helping others.

St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Centre is a not-for-profit organization in northeast Toronto dedicated to serving seniors by providing accessible, affordable and professional services and housing. The centre runs two facilities, collectively assisting more than 5,000 seniors and housing more than 500 residents.

Incorporated in 1976, St. Paul's mandate is to create a compassionate community to enable seniors to live actively and independently. The centre offers a wide variety of health and recreational programs to connect like-minded seniors to form their social networks. From arts and sports to cuisine and technology, the programs contribute significantly to forming St. Paul's vibrant community.

"We see how seniors benefit from having their own circle of friends here every day," said Zoe Yu, project director of St. Paul's. "They come to chat, to learn and to keep each other company. When they need any assistance or medical attention, we have trained staff at the centre readily available."

Residents of St. Paul's enjoy the additional benefits of having a state-of-the-art 24/7 emergency response system staffed by a team of on-site trained medical professionals, social workers and volunteers. Other support services such as transportation, housekeeping and grocery delivery are also offered for the convenience of the residents.

The success of St. Paul's is much indebted to the dedication of its 500 volunteers. In 2007, these generous individuals donated the better part of 50,000 hours of their time—the equivalent of roughly 25 full-time jobs—in their locales. Their generosity truly defines compassionate community living.