



The Cedarwood Express



Message from The Principals:

December 2025

Welcome to the December edition of Optima Daily. As the year comes to a close, this month invites us to reflect, gather, and enjoy the traditions that bring light and meaning to our communities. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa, each occasion offers a chance to honour hope, renewal, and togetherness while sharing time with the people who matter most.

Thank you for bringing warmth and kindness to our communities. We wish you a peaceful, joyful December and look forward to welcoming a bright new year with you.

Optima Living
Let us welcome you home.™



Message from Andrew's Desk

Dear Residents,

The Christmas season has arrived at Cedarwood Station! Some of my favorite personal Christmas memories drift back to growing up on our acreage in Stony Plain with the anticipation of waking up early and finding the tree surrounded by presents. My brothers and I would tear into the gifts and share with excitement the thrill of new toys. Big family meals and the sound of laughter from relatives who gathered only once a year created a world that felt safe and magical. Those childhood mornings still shape the way I feel about the holiday today.

Here at Cedarwood Station, the holiday season brings great events, meals and celebration. Our Resident Christmas Concert on the 12th will be a highlight of the month as our own talented group of residents prepare to entertain and delight us all once again. Bhushan and his team have an amazing dinner planned for the 18th when the Leadership team and I are excited to serve you! Some other seasonal highlights include Marcello joining us again with his beautiful music from the Andes, enjoying the Airdrie Christmas Lights and of course a send off to 2025 on New Year's Eve!

I hope you are all ready for an amazing month of joy and cheer.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to All!!

Fun With Recreation



Cedarwood is delighted to
welcome home our
November residents:

Beverly R.
Tom & Sally M.
Bernard & Beatrice C.
Bob. C



Cedarwood is Celebrating the following birthday's this month!



Julie. S - December 11th
Isabelle. S - December 13th
Dolores. C - December 14th
Lloyd. B - December 15th
Jim. F - December 20th



December Events

**Dec 3rd- Music With
Marcello**

**Dec 7th - Kids Christmas
Music Recital**

**Dec 12th - Resident
Christmas Choir**

**Dec 18th Cedarwood
Christmas Dinner**

**Dec 29th - December
Birthday Party**

**December 31st - New
Years Eve Party**

Bus Outings



Cross Iron Mall: Dec 4th

CPKC Holiday Train: Dec 9th

Rose Bud Theatre: Dec 14th

Sage Hill: Dec 16th

Walmart: Dec 18th

December 20th Nose Creek Theatre

December 20th Airdrie Lights Tour

Airdrie Errands (Lunch): Dec 30th



Introducing Spark: Your Path to Brain Wellness

What Is Spark?

AtOptima Living, we believe wellness means living fully and finding happiness and purpose every day. That's why we created Spark—a supportive approach designed to nurture your whole self with simple, daily choices that keep your brain active, strong, and resilient.

Spark isn't just a program to follow—it's a lifestyle tailored to you. Whether you participate in a gentle movement class, choose a brain-healthy meal, or spend time connecting with friends, each Spark choice you make helps build a stronger, healthier brain.

Understanding Brain Health and Cognitive Reserve

Your Brain Is Dynamic. As we age, our brains naturally change—but they also respond to the choices we make every day. That's where cognitive reserve comes in: it's the network of neural pathways and brain strength we build over time.

Your Brain Is Like a Cup. Picture your brain as a cup of water. Aging and conditions like dementia act like a straw, slowly reducing the water. Here's the good news: brain-healthy choices act like a faucet, refilling your cup. There's no upper limit—the more you fill your cup, the more cognitive reserve you have to support memory, focus, and independence as you age.

Spark is designed to help you fill that cup!

What Does Spark Include? The Three Pillars

1. Brain-Healthy Eating.

Enjoy meals and snacks that nourish your brain, reduce inflammation, and support long-term cognitive resilience. Look for Spark-labeled options on your dining menu!

2. Dynamic Movement.

Participate in simple, easy exercises that combine movement with thinking—whether it's stepping patterns, coordination activities, or rhythmic cues. Research shows this “dual tasking” helps build new neural pathways.

3. Brain Boosting Activities.

Have fun with activities and challenges that stimulate your mind and help develop new neural connections.

Together, these pillars strengthen your cognitive reserve and bring more energy, joy, and confidence to your daily life. And at the heart of it all? Social connection—engaging conversations, shared activities, and time spent with people you enjoy. Social connection is one of the most powerful contributors to lifelong brain health.

Ready to Spark Your Wellness Journey?

Embrace Spark every day—your way—and discover how small choices can make a big difference in your brain health and overall well-being!

What's New In Recreation?



Lighting Of The Christmas Village: Wednesday: Dec 3rd Join us as we kick off the holiday season with the Lighting of the Christmas Village! We'll gather together to turn on the lights for the very first time, enjoy some holiday snacks, and take in the cozy atmosphere. It's the perfect way to welcome December and celebrate the creativity of our Cedarwood community.

Crafty Corner: Making Christmas Ornaments Monday: Dec 8th

Join us for a festive Crafty Corner session where residents can design and decorate their own Christmas ornaments using clear plastic baubles and seasonal materials. Finished ornaments will be proudly displayed on our community Christmas tree.



Ginger Bread House Decorating Thursday Dec: 11th

Join us as we kick off the holiday season with the Lighting of the Christmas Village! We'll gather together to turn on the lights for the very first time, enjoy some holiday snacks, and take in the cozy atmosphere. It's the perfect way to welcome December and celebrate the creativity of our Cedarwood community.

École Edwards: Cocoa & Story Time: Monday Dec: 15th

A class of Grade 2 students from École Edwards will be visiting to share hot chocolate and sweets with our residents. Seniors and students will enjoy story time together, including holiday classics like The Night Before Christmas, along with some caroling.



Door-to-Door Caroling: Monday Dec: 22nd

We'll be spreading holiday cheer throughout the building with a special door-to-door caroling event. Residents are invited to join us as we visit each floor, gathering more singers along the way, and finishing together on the main floor for a festive sing-along. In the spirit of old British tradition, if you're staying in your suite during the caroling, you're welcome to have a small treat ready to offer the singers—just a fun way to share in the celebration!

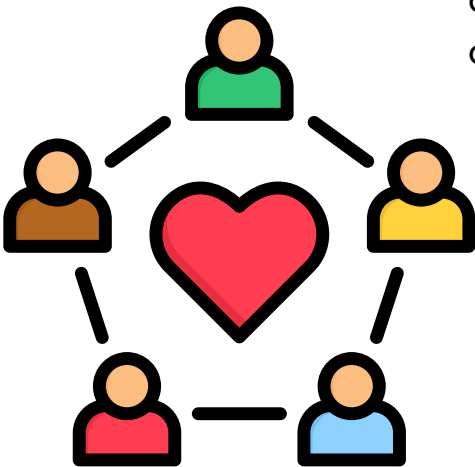


Community Conversations



Thursday December 4th – Chat with Nurse Tania
A chance to sit down with Nurse Tania and ask any health-related questions. She is doing a special presentation about winter preparedness, please join in the theatre for more information.

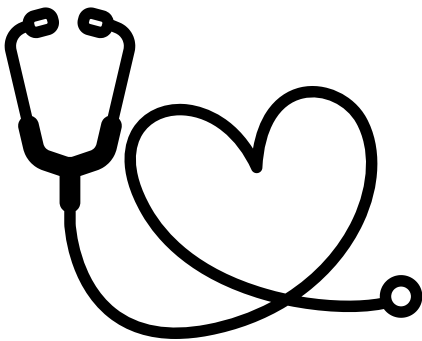
Thursday December 11th - Meeting with Andrew
Join our General Manager, Andrew, for an open conversation about policies, building updates, and anything else on your mind. A great opportunity to ask questions and share suggestions.



Thursday December 18th-Recreation Chat with Tristan

Join Tristan to review next month's calendar, explore new activities, and share your thoughts on programs. Your ideas help shape our recreation fun!

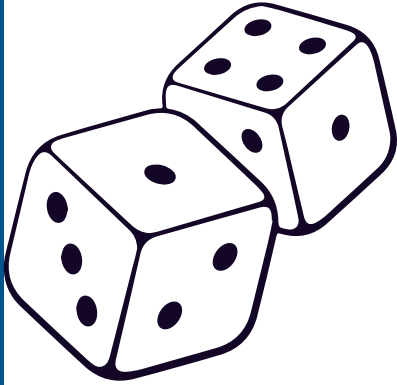
Monday December 22nd- Coffee with the Chef
Chat with our amazing chef Bhusaun over a cup of coffee. Share your feedback, compliments, and suggestions. Get a sneak peek at upcoming menu updates, too!



Community Meeting Update: Due to the increased activities and preparations for December, there will be no community meeting this month! Our next community meeting is scheduled for January!

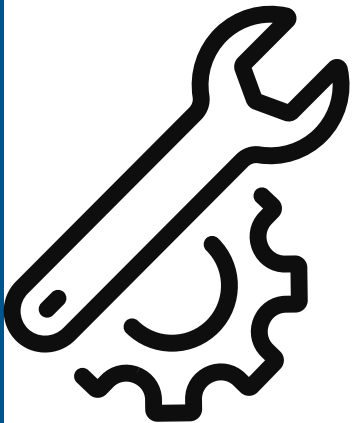


Updates from our Teams:



Recreation: Happy December, everyone! I want to extend a big thank-you to all of you for taking part in the programs we ran throughout November – your energy and enthusiasm make every month a success.

We have an exciting lineup planned for December, so keep an eye out for plenty of sing-alongs, visits from community partners, a special visit from Santa, and even an outing to our sister site, Sage Hill!



Maintenance Update: Hello everyone,

Even though I've only been here a couple of months, I want to thank you everyone for the incredibly warm welcome. It's truly been a great experience so far.

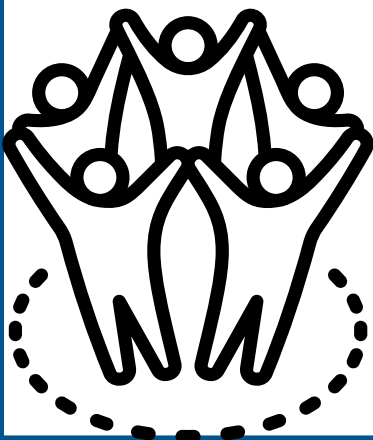
With winter arriving, I'll be working hard to keep our sidewalks clear and salted—please be careful when heading outside. In your suites, remember to give your rooms time to warm up and avoid turning your thermostat below 15°C to help prevent heating issues.


Community Update:

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the Sugarplum Market – it was a wonderful event and a great success thanks to your support.

This month, we said goodbye to two cherished members of our community: **Harding Braaten**, a resident of nine years, and **Gail Imler**, our casual front desk administrator. Gail's family is deeply grateful for the kind words and condolences shared.

We are nearing **100% occupancy** and are seeking new **Resident Ambassadors**. If you'd like to help welcome new residents, please connect with Heather.





A November to Remember

November danced in softly, with stories to be told,
With poppies made and memories shared, both heavy-hearted,
bold.

We gathered for Remembrance Day, a service filled with grace

Cadets stood proudly by our side, honour shining in the space.

Then off we went to India, without leaving home at all,
A feast of fragrant flavours lined our Harvest Dining Hall.
Chef whisked us off on spices' breeze, a plate-bound holiday—
An international buffet to chase November's chill away.
The Music Makers filled our halls with harmonies so bright,
Thirty voices strong enough to warm the coldest night.
And sweet young homeschool kiddos came dancing through
our door,

With gifts and treats and jingles that left our hearts wanting
more.

Our Sugar Plum Market sparkles bright in every stall—
Vendors selling treasures, residents sharing crafts with all.
Cookies, soaps, and jewellery, a festive little spree,
A perfect glimpse of Cedarwood's warm creativity.
And still the month's not over! The fun is rolling on—
Police Joined our Happy Hour before November's gone.
Then off we head for buffet bites (Chinese, of course, the
best!)

A perfect way to end a month that's truly been our guest.
So here's to joyful moments and memories made together—
Cedarwood's spirit shining bright in every kind of weather.
As winter whispers on its way with sparkles, cheer, and light,
We step into December with our hearts merry and bright.





MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Staying Mentally Strong as We Age

Aging is a natural process that brings both joys and challenges. While physical health often gets attention, mental wellness is just as important.

It helps to promote independence, dignity, and quality of life.

“Mental wellness is not just the absence of illness—it’s the presence of meaning, joy, and connection.”



Common Mental Health Concerns

- Depression - Often underdiagnosed, especially when symptoms are mistaken for "normal aging."
- Anxiety - Can increase with health changes, loss, or financial stress.
- Loneliness & Isolation - A major risk factor for both mental health decline.
- Cognitive Decline - Early signs may include memory loss or confusion.



Recognize the Signs of Mental Health Issues

Recognizing signs can help you seek appropriate support and interventions.

- Be aware of potential warning signs, such as changes in sleep patterns, anger, headaches, unusual behavior, memory loss, and social isolation.

Seek professional help if you or someone you care about:

- Shows lasting sadness/mood changes or hopelessness
- Withdraws from others
- Experiences confusion or forgetfulness
- Has trouble sleeping or eating regularly

Early intervention makes a difference.

Ways to Support Mental Wellness

Stay Socially Connected:

Participate in recreation events and activities. Join social clubs, faith communities. Set up regular calls with family and friends.

Engage in Healthy Habits:

Balanced nutrition, hydration, and good sleep hygiene are essential for emotional stability.

Keep Moving:

Light exercises like walking, stretching, yoga boost both mood and mobility.

Engage the Mind:

Engage in mental activities. Read, do puzzles, learn a new skill, or play a musical instrument. It can help keep the mind sharp and improve cognitive function.

Speak Openly about Emotions:

It's okay to talk about sadness, fear or grief. It's okay to ask for help. If you're feeling down, anxious, or overwhelmed, seek support from a doctor, counselor or peer group support.

Practice Gratitude: Daily reflection on things you're thankful for can uplift your mindset.



Health & Safety:

December Emergency Code: - Hazardous Materials/Spill

At our Optima Living Communities, the safety and well-being of our residents is always our highest priority. Each month, we highlight one emergency code to ensure everyone is informed and prepared should a situation arise.

Code: - Loss of Services/Contingency Planning

Code: **Loss of Services/Contingency Planning**

What Is a Loss of Services Event?

A Loss of Services event occurs when an essential service or utility in the community becomes unavailable or disrupted. These services are important for daily comfort, safety, and smooth operations. When something is affected, the community activates Contingency Plans to ensure residents remain safe, supported, and informed. Each type of disruption has a specific response plan designed to keep the community operating safely.

Loss of Services may include:

- Loss of Team Members or Labour Disruption
- Loss of Essential Services (laundry, housekeeping)
- Loss of Utilities (water, power, heat)
- Loss of Technology Systems (information technology or nurse call system)
- Extreme Hot or Cold Weather Conditions

How Residents Can Help:

1. Listen for announcements or instructions from employees. Updates will be provided as soon as possible.
2. Remain Calm - These events are anticipated and planned for. Employees will put procedures into action to maintain safety and comfort.
3. Follow Instructions

You may be asked to limit water use, reduce electricity use, remain in your suite, or temporarily relocate within the community - please follow all guidance provided.

4. Report Any Concerns

If you notice a disruption (e.g., no heat, flickering lights, low water pressure, or a non-working call bell), notify an employee right away.

5. Support Safety Measures

During service interruptions or reduced employee availability, some routines may be adjusted.

Our Commitment to You

The community has detailed Contingency Plans for each type of service disruption. These plans ensure that essential needs—such as comfort, communication, safety, and care—continue without interruption. Your wellbeing remains our highest priority.

December Shining Star



Eliza

Shining Star Recognition

We are proud to recognize Eliza for her exceptional dedication and the wonderful energy she has brought to Cedarwood since joining our team. Even in a short time, she has quickly become a reliable and valued member of our Dining Staff.

Eliza is a remarkably versatile worker, always willing to step in wherever she's needed—whether serving residents, assisting with food preparation, or helping with dishes. Her positive attitude, strong work ethic, and willingness to learn make her a true asset to both the team and our community.

Thank you, Eliza, for your hard work, kindness, and commitment to excellence.

Your efforts truly shine!

Congratulations — well deserved!

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