



Laughing ... “It gives you life!”

When Bev Kuhn is asked why she’s always smiling and laughing, she quickly answers, “It’s a good release and makes things go well.”

She says she laughs at any humor she finds. Pausing, she thinks about an example and then lights up as she describes her “fun table” of six women who enjoy eating dinner together each evening. “One woman brings a book of Yiddish phrases to share with the group. They’re common phrases we all know, and that sets the stage for a fun dinner.

“We’re all different and may not agree on everything, but we can talk about anything, laugh, and have a great time.”

Research has shown there are many real benefits of laughter, from managing pain to reducing stress, and Bev acknowledges laughter played a

big role helping her cope with the many demands of caring for her husband for five years as his Alzheimer’s disease progressed. “It was such a difficult time. I tried crying, but that doesn’t work, so I thought I might as well laugh about it. He had a great sense of humor!”

Before her husband’s diagnosis, the couple spent 20 years traveling across most of Canada and throughout the U.S. and Mexico in their RV. “He was a jokester! I’m not a joke-teller, but I love laughing at jokes when others share them.” Born in North Hollywood, California, Bev has lived most of her life on the West Coast. She and her husband owned a metal engraving business and raised three daughters. With her flair for design, Bev also was an interior decorator. Plus, she was a district manager for Avon, overseeing 150 representatives.

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Life—and laughter—at Touchmark

“I’ve had more culture here at Touchmark since I moved in almost three years now,” she says throwing her head back with a laugh. “The music is amazing, but that’s not all. You can’t do everything there is to do ... there’s lots and lots to do.”

In addition to all the cultural events and activities, you can find Bev bubbling with enthusiasm at happy hours, chatting with people while she walks her dog, and signing up for “most anything.”

At the top of her list is the A-MAY-Zing Race, an activity patterned after the popular TV show, the *Amazing Race*. “I love it! That is the most fun! It’s a challenge, and I didn’t realize I was so competitive, but I jumped into it.” Her team (the Sweet Chicks) has won for the past two years. “And we plan to do it a third year: We’re tough!”

That competitive spirit also shows itself when she plays Wii Bowling, another favorite pastime.

Having crisscrossed North America with her husband, Bev still enjoys traveling and appreciates Touchmark’s organized trips. “We went to Cape Cod last fall, and we plan to go to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, later this year. I’m excited to go to the Panama Canal next year.”

But ask Bev what she likes the most, and she quickly says, “The people! Not only the residents but the staff, too: They’re wonderful and very caring.”

When she’s not talking and laughing with friends and neighbors or playing Pegs and Jokers, Bev is busy with projects in her home. “I adore quilting and have an embroidery machine and a pretty extensive collection of quilts.”

Whether she’s bent over her sewing or raising a glass and toasting life with friends, the one common thread running through Bev’s full and fascinating life is laughter. “It gives you life!”



Melissa Conrad
Vice President, Wellness & Marketing

“Humor is mankind’s greatest blessing.”

— Mark Twain

Most people have heard the saying “laughter is the best medicine,” and while that may be an overstatement, laughter does offer some profound benefits.

In fact, recent studies have shown that laughter has the power to reduce stress and anxiety by shutting down stress hormones like cortisol and triggering dopamine production. It also increases oxygen intake by stimulating the heart, lungs, and muscles, and it is a natural pain killer.

Here are a few suggestions for increasing your laughter levels:

Laugh when others laugh. Sometimes your body just needs to get warmed up, and a few false chuckles can help you get started on the real thing.

Learn to laugh at yourself. Laughing instead of getting angry at yourself when you make a mistake will give you more reasons to laugh and may help you be a happier person overall.

Browse YouTube. Type in “funny videos,” and you will find thousands of opportunities to tickle your funny bone.

Change up your radio stations. There are a variety of ways to listen to recorded comedy, including CDs, humor podcasts, and satellite radio comedy stations.

Schedule a weekly funny movie night. Invite friends or neighbors and suggest taking turns hosting and selecting the film. When accompanied by others, many people are 30 percent more likely to laugh than when on their own.

Embrace every opportunity to laugh: after all, our health can be a laughing matter.

Health & Fitness Studio Update

The Touchmark Health & Fitness Studio now offers 15 exercise classes catering to four different fitness levels. Classes are offered six days a week at various times throughout the day. Here's a look at our current classes:

Men's Strength and Conditioning

This class teaches movements that increase muscular strength and conditioning.

Seated Strength and Stretch

Learn to improve your muscular strength and endurance while increasing your flexibility. All levels of mobility and physical fitness are welcome.

Afternoon Aerobics

Through a continuous low-impact cardio circuit, participants of this class will engage in exercises designed to increase their heart rate and improve cardiorespiratory endurance.

Functional Fitness

Train your muscles to work together and

prepare them for daily tasks by simulating common movements you might do throughout the day, like climbing stairs and rising from a seated position. These exercises also emphasize core stability.



Aspire to Better Balance

This class will help improve abdominal and back strength, stamina, and flexibility as well as improve balance and posture.

Gentle Yoga

This yoga class begins with proper breathing before moving on to soft, slow-paced, well-supported seated stretches.

Stop by the Health & Fitness Studio today and find a class that's right for you!

Residents enjoy house calls for pets



Each month, Dr. Scott Isaacson and his wife Amy visit Touchmark to provide nonemergency veterinary services, such as trimming cats' and dogs' nails and providing vaccines.

The couple started Home Veterinary Care to serve people who find it difficult to take their pets to a clinic. "Having Dr. Isaacson come in and perform services in residents' homes is wonderful," says Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Nanette Whitman-Holmes.

Rose Bertoglio agrees. She appreciates the in-home service for her beloved cat Lucy, noting without a car, it is difficult to take Lucy anywhere.

Last month, KTVH and KPAX featured Touchmark and Dr. Isaacson's services in a news story: <http://www.ktvh.com/2018/02/local-vet-provides-house-calls-for-elderly>



TEAM MEMBER

Spotlight

Name: Ryan Pierson

Position: Dining Services server, host, and bistro attendant

How would you describe yourself?
Easygoing but also outgoing!

Share a bit about your family and growing up.

I was born in Helena and raised in East Helena, went to Helena High School, and I have one sister.

What are some of the most significant events in your life?

Becoming a parent of humans and animals. I have three kids: 2 boys (ages 15 and 11) and a girl (13). I also have two minischnauzers, Johnny and Walker, and a cat named Bella.

How long have you worked at Touchmark?
I joined Touchmark in December of 2016.

What do you enjoy most about your job?
The people! I love seeing and helping residents every day. I also like that my job is varied ... I get to work as a server/host in the dining rooms and as the afternoon attendant in the bistro!

What Touchmark value do you most closely relate to and why?

Hospitality, because taking care of people is my highest priority.

Outside of work what are your favorite ...

Activities: Reading and computers.

Food: Häagen-Dazs Crème Brulee Ice Cream.

Movie: *Goonies!*

Music: Eclectic mix/almost everything.



We kept busy and had fun with (from top left) vet visits, community games, a Resident Council Meeting, Senior Fitness Testing, winetasting, a Knit 4 Peace meeting, French class with Carroll College students, and roses at the February Birthday Dinner.

Save the date!

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Monday, March 12, 12:45 - 5 pm • Forum

Residents, families, and Touchmark team members are encouraged to sign up at the front desk to donate blood. The need is constant, and volunteer contributions are important.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION

Thursday, March 15, 4 pm • Lobby

Don the colors of the Emerald Isle and join us for a wee bit o' celebration. We'll drink green beer and snack on Irish nachos, get inked with an airbrushed Celtic tattoo, have fun photos taken with props, tap our toes to the music, and collect some glitzy shamrock party favors. For dinner, we'll dine on delicious corned beef and cabbage. Cost: \$11. RSVP by March 14.

BEYOND SCHOOLMARMs AND MADAMS: MONTANA WOMEN'S STORIES

Friday, March 23, 2 pm • Forum

Join presenter Martha Kohl, a Historical Specialist

at the Montana Historical Society, for this in-depth look at the women who shaped Montana.

4TH ANNUAL DICK MORGAN MEMORIAL EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, March 31, 11 am • Lobby

Friends and family of all ages are invited to this popular event featuring over 6,000 eggs hidden throughout the community. There will be prizes for each age group, face painting, music, and an inflatable bounce house. Enjoy a complimentary hot dog lunch after the hunt. Donations welcome. All proceeds benefit The Angel Fund.

AARP SMART DRIVER CLASS

Tuesday, April 17, noon • Forum

Refresh your driving skills, learn about updated traffic rules, and stay safe behind the wheel. Plus, get a discount on your car insurance for completing the class! Cost: \$15 for AARP members, \$20 for others. Sign up.

View our {FULL} Life calendar online for a complete list of events: TouchmarkHelena.com

What others are saying ...

"Dear Steve,

Nanette Holmes, Wilma Tabaracci, and Cory Budak did a fabulous job for my mom's birthday party on January 23. They had a very short amount of time to get the room ready. The room was transformed with beautifully set tables, flower and picture decorations, a lovely presentation for the food and drinks, and a well-designed layout for the room so everything flowed smoothly. Nanette, Wilma, and Cory ensured the party was a huge success with all of their hard work and attention to detail and making sure every guest felt welcome and special. Chris Bullard and his staff did a great job preparing the hors d'oeuvres and ensuring it looked so pretty. I so much appreciate their extra effort and everything they did. Please pass on my heartfelt thanks for a job well done. Your advertisements are correct ... it really is the people that make Touchmark such a great place."

-DD Imeson Clearman, whose mother Jennie just celebrated her 96th birthday

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