



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 humour 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 humour!”

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 favourite 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 neighbours 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, humour podcasts, and satellite radio comedy stations.

Schedule a weekly funny movie night. Invite friends or neighbours 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

A month of reasons to eat right

Did you know that March is Nutrition Month? When combined with regular exercise, not only can a proper diet make you feel more energized, it can also prevent diseases like Type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

The best diet for you is one that you enjoy and will adhere to in the long run. Ideally, you should try to consume a diet that is rich in whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, legumes (like beans and lentils), nuts and seeds, dairy, lean meats, and healthy fats, such as olive oil. Try to avoid a lot of processed foods, such as cakes, chips, cookies, and sugar-filled beverages; these should be a treat and not part of your everyday eating plan.



Snacking can be dangerous when trying to eat healthy. Here are some tips for successful snacking:

- **Plan your snacks.** Keep a variety of healthy, ready-to-eat snacks (like fruit or nuts) on hand.
- **Watch your portion sizes.** Instead of snacking right from the box of crackers, take a portion and place it on a plate. Don't eat more than that portion.
- **Listen to your hunger.** Eat because your body tells you it needs to, not out of boredom, such as while sitting in front of the TV.
- **Snack healthy.** Eat healthy carrot sticks, celery, or broccoli. Studies show that approximately half of all Canadians do not get enough vegetables in a day!

Remember—you are what you eat! So eat well.



Residents “show and tell” with students

In a twist on the traditional “show and tell” of classrooms, 50 fourth-grade students from Our Lady of the Prairies elementary school visited Touchmark to hear stories and learn from another generation.

Residents shared old photos, ancient artifacts, letters, antiques, collectibles, and personal treasures and told students why the items are so special to them.

“Mementos stir up memories, and residents have accumulated so many interesting keepsakes and stories over the years. This was truly a special time for both generations,” says Joan Drake, Life Enrichment/Wellness Director.

CBC News covered the event.





TEAM MEMBER

Spotlight

Name: Saadiya Moradi

Position: Housekeeping attendant

How would you describe yourself?

I'm an active, energetic lady who is happy with her work. I have two jobs, and I am very busy at work and at home.

Share a bit about your family and growing up.

I was born in Kermanshah, in Iran. I have five brothers and three sisters living in Iraq, Denmark, and Khurdistan. I grew up in a village and never went to school.

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

Coming to Canada set up my life and made it easier to live, find work, and survive. And having my children, who are very important to me. I am proud of my daughter, who will become a doctor.

How long have you worked at Touchmark?

Nine-and-a-half years.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The people and residents; also it's comfortable, and I feel like it's my own house.

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

I am an Ally. I try for excellence in everything I do at work, including helping my team.

Outside of work what are your favourite ...

Activities: I enjoy going out with my children to restaurants, shopping, and spending time with family.

Food: Dolma.

Music: Luke Bryan and country music.

Movie: *The Notebook*.



On Valentine's Day, we delivered 64 Heart to Heart Valentine singing telegrams and handed out chocolate roses with them. We raised \$245 for the Mazankowski Heart Institute.



It was a brisk afternoon for a stroll through the four botanical garden pyramids at the Muttart Conservatory.



At the Midwinter Gala we dressed in our finest gowns and suits for a black tie cocktail party featuring music by Paul Morgan Donald.



We celebrated the life and work of Scottish poet Robert Burns with a traditional event that included the Piping of the Haggis.



In the Sapphire and Emerald neighbourhoods we had fun racing boats across the tropical blue water at our Beach Party and snuggling up to furry friends during a pet visit.



Save the date!

ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION

Friday, March 16, 7 pm • Grande Foyer

Join us for green beer and toe-tapping Irish tunes by the Maritime Gospel Aires. RSVP by March 13.

TIMESLIPS STORIES DISPLAY

Tuesday, March 20, 2 pm • Sapphire & Emerald Neighbourhoods

Join us on World Storytelling Day to view our TimeSlips stories.

MUSICAL PERFORMANCE: CHARGED PARTICLES

Friday, March 23, 7 pm • Grande Foyer

Don't miss this exciting, high-energy musical performance. All the way from California's Bay Area, and playing the YardBird Suite and Touchmark, this eclectic trio blends jazz with elements of Latin, funk, classical, and more. This is truly jazz with a spark! RSVP by March 19.

TOUCHMARK TREKKERS VEGAS CASINO NIGHT

Tuesday, April 17, 7 pm • Marquis Room

We have walked the distance from here to Las Vegas! Join us for a destination celebration! Mingle with friends and neighbours, and try your luck at some games of chance. RSVP by April 15.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION TEA

Thursday, April 19, 2 pm • Grand Hall Dining Room

Watch your mailbox for an invitation. We will honour those who contribute their time and talents to enrich the lives of others.

GERIACTORS AND FRIENDS

Thursday, April 26, 3 pm • Marquis Room

Through hilarious and touching stories about family, history, love, dating, culture, downsizing, ageism, and maintaining health and independence, the GeriActors explore what it means to be a senior in Edmonton. Followed by happy hour at 4 pm. RSVP by April 23.

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

What others are saying ...

"My decision to move to Touchmark was one of the easiest decisions and best I have made over the last years. From the moment I entered and was greeted by Penny, I knew this was my home. It is a cheerful, happy, welcoming atmosphere where I can be as busy or lazy as I wish. A variety of activities, programs, and folks greet you each day; smiles surround you! New doors open, new friends are made. This is truly a wonderful home."

-Marion Tannahill, resident

TOUCHMARK AT WEDGEWOOD

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