



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.

CONTINUED ON PG. 2

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

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 Club Updates

Exercise ... is it worth it?

Is time spent exercising really time well spent? Many feel they get plenty of exercise during a normal day. Others feel they don't need to lose weight and therefore don't need to exercise. Still, others just simply don't like it or don't feel they have the time. The excuses go on and on ...

According to the American College of Sports Medicine, regular physical activity prevents occurrences of cardiac events and reduces incidences of stroke, hypertension, Type 2 diabetes, osteoporotic fractures, obesity, depression, anxiety, and more. And, the Senior Fitness Association says that maintaining an active lifestyle helps control blood pressure, fosters a healthy heart, relieves stress, and increases energy levels, all of which help maintain your independence.

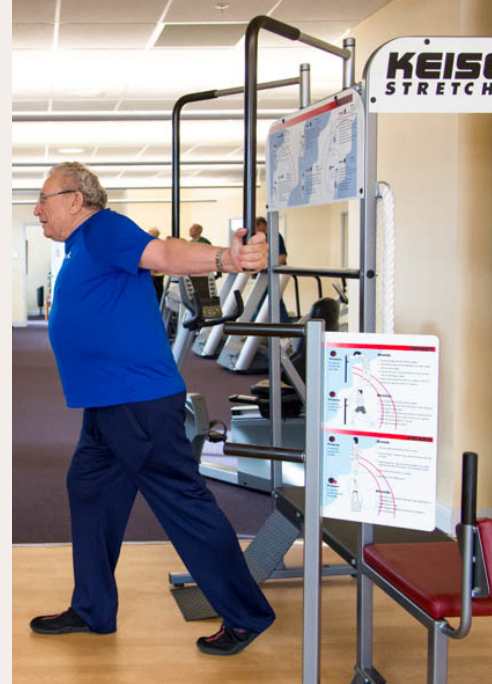
"After my husband passed away last August, I have to say that coming to Touchmark (Health & Fitness Club) each morning was my salvation. The wonderful people that I share time with always had me in their hearts and embrace. I was only attending classes three times a week, but now I go every day. I seem to need that person connection with friends, and the exercise relieves a lot of stress for me."

-Nina Gravel, Health & Fitness Club member

It's time to stop making excuses and get serious!

Upcoming Family Swims

Club members can bring their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to the Club for a fun family swim time. Snacks and refreshments will be provided at the end of the swim. Friday, March 23, 7 - 8:30 pm, RSVP by Wednesday, March 21. Friday, April 20, 7 - 8:30 pm, RSVP by Wednesday, April 18.



Cheers to St. Paddy's Day!

Don your green, grab your friends, and hop on the party bus as Touchmark celebrates its fifth annual St. Patrick's Day Pub Crawl! The fun day gets underway at 10:30 am when residents and guests head to lunch at the Blarney Stone, followed by a stop at Wurst. Then it's off to the HoDo for some Irish tunes by the band Poitin. The six-piece band has been sharing their Irish/Celtic-inspired music with crowds since 2001.

This is the second year Touchmark and the Hotel Donaldson have sponsored the Poitin concert, which is open to the public at no charge. The band will play two 50-minute sets of authentic Irish music starting at 2 pm.

"We invite others to join our busload of green-clad partygoers for this popular pub crawl of local hot spots," says Touchmark Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Anne-Marie Fitz. "It's a not-to-be-missed day filled with Irish drinks, food, and music!"

All guests will be entered to win a complimentary night in a guest room at Touchmark. Special T-shirts commemorating the event are available for \$10. Space is definitely limited. To RSVP, call 701-476-1200 by March 12.



TEAM MEMBER

Spotlight

Name: Kari Schwab

Position: Certified Nursing Assistant

How would you describe yourself?

Fun and energetic!

Share a bit about your family and growing up.

I am originally from Mahanomen, Minnesota. I have two stepbrothers and one stepsister. My family did lots of things outdoors growing up, including fishing and spending time at the lake in the summer and snowmobiling in the winter. Life was simple—we didn't have electronics to keep us entertained. We talked!

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

- The birth of my grandson, Emmitt. I love being a grandma!
- I've taken two trips for two weeks to Hawaii with seven cousins.
- Paying off my house.
- Adopting my son—he was the first open adoption in the state of North Dakota.

How long have you worked at Touchmark?

Six years.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

All the grandmas and grandpas who live at Touchmark and the enjoyment of helping them any way I can.

What Touchmark value do you most closely relate to?

I am a friend. I'm involved with the Touchmark choir and dress up for different holidays. Residents look forward to what I might have up my sleeve.

Outside of work what are your favorite ...

Activities: Bingo and Grandma Day with Emmitt.

Food: Coconut shrimp.

Movie: *The Goonies*.

Music: Aerosmith.



We made fun valentines with first grade students from Eagles Elementary.



Queen Elizabeth celebrated the 66th anniversary of her accession to the throne so we celebrated with a tea party of our own!



For our annual Valentine's Day celebration, residents, team members, and family members participated in the Not So Newlywed Game for fun and prizes.



League nights have included pingpong and shuffleboard. Next is air hockey!

Save the date!

LUNCH & LEARN SERIES

Thursdays at noon • Willows Dining Room

Join us for a complimentary lunch, and learn about a topic important to seniors and those considering a change. Seating is limited; call a retirement counselor at 701-476-1200 to RSVP by the Monday prior to the event.

- **March 22:** Understanding your long-term care insurance policy
- **April 12:** Elder law and preparing for the next step
- **May 3:** Changing the way we age

5TH ANNUAL ST. PATRICK'S DAY PUB CRAWL

Friday, March 16, bus leaves at 10:30 am

Put on your green and hop on the bus with us! For more information see the story on page three.

GET TO KNOW US

Monday, March 26, 7 pm • Silver Maple Room

Get to know the memory care and Life Enrichment/Wellness teams. Learn about their roles and how the Life Story project and Best Friends™ Approach benefit people living with dementia.

RED RIVER VALLEY ZOOMOBILE

Friday, April 20, 2:15 pm • Devonshire Morning Glory Dining Room

We're having a wild week. Join us as the Red River Valley Zoo presents Home Sweet Habitat. Learn how animals live and what they need to be happy and healthy in the wild!

GET CREATIVE WITH CREATIVELY UNCORKED

Thursday, April 26, 7 pm • Auditorium

Whether you are an avid painter or want to try something new, get your friends together for a fun evening of painting and laughing! Cost is \$40, and all supplies, beverages, and snacks are included. Call 701-476-1200 to RSVP by April 12.

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

TOUCHMARK AT HARWOOD GROVES
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