



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

Welcome Calissa!

Calissa Palches has joined Touchmark as Health & Fitness exercise specialist. The new team member has provided fitness and exercise training in a variety of settings, including The Exercise Coach, Park View Health Center, Boys & Girls Club Oshkosh, RehabCare, the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Athletics, Oshkosh Senior Center, and Mercy Health System. She has also been active in the Weight of the Fox Valley Advisory Committee and other community endeavors. In addition, she has worked as an optician.

A graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, Calissa earned a Bachelor of Letters and Science in Kinesiology, with an emphasis on Exercise Fitness.

“I feel as if I have found a new family,” she says. “Since my first day, I have felt so welcomed by all the residents and staff, who have made it a point to introduce themselves.”

Originally from Illinois, Calissa is a fervent Packers, Badgers, and Cubs fan. Spending time with her family—and dogs—are at the top of her list when not working. “I am best friends with my parents and talk daily with them, and I love being an aunt to my brother’s new son.” She also enjoys taking walks with her German shepherd Jack and puggle/blue heeler mix Honey as well as cooking with her boyfriend. Recently, she has discovered a talent for making crafts with paint, barn wood, and burlap. “My goal each day is to get people to smile and laugh!”



Valentine 100th Birthday



We celebrated Helen Armstrong’s 100th birthday with a hoedown! We dressed in hats and bandannas as a tribute to Helen and one of her very dear loves—horses and riding. Helen moved to Touchmark five years ago. Knowing her mom is being cared for and loved by the community helped Lynn Barrett, Helen’s daughter, make the decision to leave her mom at Touchmark despite the fact she and her husband were retiring and moving to Indiana. Check out this fun story about the whole celebration at www.wbay.com/content/news/A-different-kind-of-love-story-474095613.html.



TEAM MEMBER

Spotlight

Name: Sandra Schroeder, CNA

Position: Assisted Living

How would you describe yourself?

I am happy, caring, and trustworthy.

Share a bit about your family and growing up.

I have six siblings. My dad worked as a truck driver, and I was able to travel with him throughout the country. One time, while I was traveling with him I assisted with a move for Farrah Fawcett. I still enjoy traveling and make a point to visit a different national park every year. My favorites have included Yellowstone, Glacier, Mount Rainier, and Redwood.

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

I have two daughters, a son-in-law, and a grandson. I am very proud of my daughters. I enjoy spending time with my family, going shopping, and just enjoying daily life events. I also like to spend time with my 4-year-old grandson. He likes spending time with grandma, because she always brings him lots of fruit!

How long have you worked at Touchmark?
Six years.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I love coming to work for the residents. I enjoy building relationships with the residents and their families. I also enjoy putting smiles on their faces and assisting them in living life to the fullest.

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

Compassion—it motivates me to go out of my way to help others. I put extra effort into trying to alleviate some of the stress of moving or the side effects from an illness.

Outside of work what are your favorite ...

Activities: Walking, fishing, spending time outdoors, flower gardening, spending time with family.

Food: Scallops and shrimp.

Movie: *The Jerk* with Steve Martin.

Music: Country.



For the Mardi Gras Party various departments made creative floats for the parade.



We had an interesting visit from Kingdom Animalia Exotic Animal Rescue.



At the Dynamic Dining event we sampled potential new foods coming to the menu.



In The Meadows neighborhood we made personal drums in preparation for a Drum Circle, led by Tom Gill of Rhythm For Unity.



During the Touchmark Olympic Games, teams of residents and Touchmark team members competed in a variety of games including curling, depiction trivia, and bobsled races.

Save the date!

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PUB CRAWL

Friday, March 16, 4 pm • Grande

Put on your green and grab your lucky charms! It's time to hit the Irish pubs ... without leaving Touchmark. We'll have a variety of pub stations throughout the community, each featuring a game and a special Irish drink to enjoy with friends and neighbors.

FILM SCREENING: *WRAITH*

Monday, March 19, 2 pm • Chapel

Join us for an exciting screening of this supernatural thriller about a family living in an old mansion and the ghost-like presence that is trying to communicate with them. The film features a special guest appearance by Touchmark resident Dorothy Allen!

RETROSPECTIVE AND CELEBRATION OF JO GEENEN

Saturday, March 24, 2 - 4 pm • Grande

Please join us as we celebrate Jo Geenen's 80th birthday and enjoy a selection of her pastel paintings.

ROCHELLE PENNINGTON PRESENTS: *THE EDMUND FITZGERALD*

Thursday, March 29, 2 pm • Chapel

This famous ship disappeared into Lake Superior on November 10, 1975, and today its sinking remains the biggest maritime mystery of the Great Lakes. Join us as author Rochelle Pennington delves into some of the top theories.

TEDDY ROOSEVELT SHOW

Thursday, April 5, 2:30 pm • Chapel

Join us for a legendary performance of Theodore Roosevelt by the country's leading re-enactor, Joe Wiegand. A common face at Medora and Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Joe takes his lively performance on tour to parks and historic events around the country. The show is a not-to-be missed opportunity to learn more about Roosevelt's impact on the country.

COMEDY AT TOUCHMARK

Tuesday, April 17 • Chapel

Get ready to laugh with this hilarious performance by Greg Willett and Roger Radley. It's going to be a riot!

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

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