



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 Update



A month of reasons to eat right

Did you know March is Nutrition Month? A proper diet, when combined with regular exercise, can make you feel more energized and also help prevent diseases like Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. The best diet is one you will enjoy and can adhere to for the long run, that also is nutritious and satisfying. Ideally, you should try to consume a diet rich in whole grains, fruits and vegetables, legumes (like beans and lentils), nuts and seeds, dairy, lean meats, and healthy fats. Try to avoid processed foods such as chips, store bought cookies, and sugar-filled beverages; these should be consumed in moderation and not as a part of your everyday eating plan.

Snacks can be a great part of a healthy eating plan, especially for those who may not have time for larger meals during the day. Just make sure you “count” them as a part of your overall intake.

Here are some tips for successful snacking:

- **Plan your snacks.** Keep a variety of healthy ready-to-eat snacks (like fruit and nuts) on hand.
- **Watch your portion sizes.** Instead of snacking straight from the jar of nuts, take one portion and put it on a plate. Then, don't eat more than that portion.
- **Snack healthy.** Include fruits, veggies, and protein rich foods as snacks to keep you fuller longer. Small amounts of healthy fats (like part of an avocado or low-fat cheese) can also help ward off hunger.

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



The balancing act of life

At a recent Lunch & Learn, Health & Fitness Director Michelle Sue discussed the pros and cons of resolutions and offered tips on balancing physical and mental health.

Michelle was also featured on KATU. Her segment, called 5 Ways to Stay on Track, shared tips to stay fit and motivated. Check it out at <http://katu.com/afternoon-live/lifestyle-health/5-ways-to-stay-on-track>.



TEAM MEMBER *Spotlight*

Name: Keri Donovan (on left)
Position: Life Enrichment/Wellness Director

How would you describe yourself? I am dedicated, curious, and coachable. Whether it's toward my family, my service to others, or in the goals placed before me, I'm unwavering in my pursuit to dive headfirst into the task at hand. I'm curious to learn where each person is coming from—to hear their story. I've found that when we take the time to learn our differences, we find a place to come together. Finally, I believe in constantly refining what I can do better. I take honesty and feedback to heart, and I strive to approach each day with gratitude.

Share a bit about your family and growing up. I am from Littleton, Colorado, and attended Colorado State University. (Go Rams!) My husband Mike and I have a 10-month-old.

What are some of the most significant events in your life? The two most significant events are the day we got married and the day my daughter was born. Everything else pales in comparison.

How long have you worked at Touchmark?
I started February 5!

What do you enjoy most about your job? I am excited to be part of the Touchmark experience from the ground up. It is a breathtaking building with an amazing location and passionate staff. I'm grateful to be on the team.

What Touchmark value do you most closely relate to and why? Compassion strikes a chord with me. We all have the ability to make connections with those around us, and true connection occurs when we have love and compassion for what others bring to the table.

Outside of work what are your favorite ...

Activities: Running, walking our dog, drinking tea, attending Portland Timbers matches, and writing.

Food: Honey from my uncle's bees, my mom's Dutch blanket, pasta, and the occasional Chipotle burrito.

Movie: *The Princess Bride*.

Music: Country and folk rock.



We have been keeping busy and building friendships through events like our Pitch Tournament, Culinary Passport: China event, which included dragon dancing, Culinary Passport: Greece, Mardi Gras Men's Group, a Lunch & Learn on love, and additional home selection celebrations!

Save the date!

MEET & GREET: TOUCHMARK HEALTH & FITNESS CLUB DIRECTOR

Wednesday, March 14, 4 - 6 pm

Join us for a happy hour filled with drinks and hors d'oeuvres, and meet Michelle Sue, the new Health & Fitness Director!

CULINARY PASSPORT: PERSIA

Thursday, March 15, 4 - 6 pm

We're celebrating the Persian New Year with delicious Middle Eastern food, festivities, and Persian wine.

DEMENTIA SEMINAR

Monday, March 19, 4 - 6 pm

Meet Dr. Marian Hodges and Anne Hill, authors of the *Help is Here* series of books providing practical support for caregivers of loved ones with dementia. Learn how these two women met and get important caregiving tips.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Thursday, March 22, 4 - 6 pm

Michelle Platter, Touchmark Development & Construction Development Manager, will lead us through the work that's been completed and what is left to be done. Location: Hilton Garden Inn Portland/Beaverton, 15520 NW Gateway Court, Beaverton.

MEET & GREET: EXECUTIVE CHEF DAX ERICKSON

Thursday, April 12, 4 - 6 pm

Bring a friend to this exclusive happy hour event with Touchmark in the West Hills Executive Chef Dax Erickson. Enjoy signature appetizers paired with wine from Swede Hill Winemaker Matt Vuylsteke.

Seating is limited. Call 503-954-1640 to RSVP.

Touchmark in the West Hills Information Center: 5150 SW Griffith Drive, Beaverton.

Construction Update

Even with a light dusting of snow, work continues with progress being made on both the interior and exterior finishes. Call 503-954-1640 for more information or to set up a tour.



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