



Follow your heart

by Marge Coalman, EdD

—Vice President of Wellness & Programs, Touchmark

In today's world there is a good understanding of the workings and function of the human heart. There is even a live television show that features surgeons doing open heart surgery (let the viewer beware; it is bloody). How is it then that we continue to attribute the heart with being the center of human emotions? In reality, the emotional data center for humans is the prefrontal cortex of the brain. This is where we discern pain from pleasure, friend from foe, gratuitous compliment from genuine praise.

It is an amazing and complex interaction of all of the lobes of the brain that integrates emotion and fact and allows humans to form opinions and make judgments about how to assess an incident or person as to whether there is danger in a given situation. The same automatic analysis

“To understand the heart and mind of a person, look not at what he has already achieved, but at what he aspires to.”

—Kahlil Gibran

the universal symbol of the repository for emotions. Sage advice would be to take care of both of these important organs to have “good heart and brain health.” In general,

can reveal a safe situation and often provides insight into who we can trust with our emotional well-being.

So, although in the 21st century it is well known that the mainframe of the brain does generate the full range of emotions, our culture continues to use the heart as

what is good for the heart is good for the brain. That applies to diet, physical activity, balanced work and play time, positive relationships, and good financial choices. It is the total combination of lifestyle choices that allows people to “follow their hearts and create their own future.”

At Touchmark, the Life Enrichment/Wellness program components are designed to support good heart and brain health. For information on the offerings and opportunities available, contact Coordinator of Life Enrichment/Wellness Beth-Ann Wesley.

Touchmark community grows

by Mattie Swanson

—Sales Manager

With the new year well under way, our Phase II construction continues apace. The Terrace Lodge will open in June with all the extra amenities to complete our resort retirement community, including a wonderful restaurant. The North Wing of the Cliff Lodge will be finished soon after the Terrace Lodge is completed. Both the Cliff and Terrace lodges have wide selections of lodge-style homes available, many with wonderful eastern river views.

There also is activity in the resale area! We have a lovely 1,800-square-foot cottage now on the market and two lodge-style homes in the River Lodge. Check out our Web page—TouchmarkBend.com—for information about Touchmark and to view floor plans of our new phase, or contact the Sales Office for information, appointments, or even a ski report by calling 541-383-1414/888-231-1113 or e-mailing MCS@Touchmark.com.

Residents take advantage of perfect ski day



Beautiful surroundings encircle Dave Thomas and Hilary Kenyon.



Dick Brewer



Kendra West slices through the snow.



Charlotte Miller



Left to right: Kendra West, Hilary Kenyon, and Wyatt Elder stop for a picture before hitting the slopes again.

Upcoming events

Wednesday, February 14, 11 am—Ladies' Valentine's Day Tea.

Monday, February 19, 10 am—Osher Lifelong Learning's Thinking Aloud II. *The Seven Deadly Sins - Wrath.*

Thursday, February 22, 7 pm—Movie night. *An Inconvenient Truth.*

Wednesday, February 28, 8:30 am—Women's Out to Breakfast at the Original Pancake House.

Fridays, 9 am—Hearty Walking on the River Trail.

Welcome new Resident Services/Security team member David Roepke



Born and raised in Chicago, David moved to Oregon in 1995. In 1998, he spent eight months in the Ukraine, England, and the Netherlands. Then in 2003, he relocated to Central Oregon and married Tamara. They have three children. David enjoys

traveling, creative writing, performing in plays, working on computers, sampling food from different cultures, hiking, and cheering for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team.

Touring Africa

by Annis Oetinger
—Resident

Ultimate Africa—what an intriguing name for a safari! There were elephants, lions, zebras, wildebeests, hyenas, huge herds of impalas, giraffes, hippos, and jackals—all the animals we've heard about since we were children. Many of us would consider seeing these creatures in their own habitat the ultimate safari.

Last November, Betty Kahl traveled with her daughter, Peggy, on such a tour with 14 others in a tour group. Betty flew to Chicago, where Peggy lives; then they flew to London with two other friends, then to Johannesburg, South Africa, and on to Victoria Falls. From there, transportation was by boat, Jeep, or small plane.

From their first camp, the group headed for Chobe National Park in Botswana, home to a large population of elephants, Cape buffaloes, and different kinds of antelopes, especially huge numbers of impalas. Since this was springtime in the Southern Hemisphere, it was birthing time, and many tiny impalas were learning their way around in the world.

Mornings came very early for the group—about 5:30 am for a game drive. Since the animals were most active early, late, or at night, game viewing coincided with that schedule. Occasionally, the group went out after dinner with spotlights to see what happens after dark in the animal world. Mostly, it's predators hunting for food, and prey trying to avoid being caught.

Most game drives were by van, but one day, the group went on a walking tour. A guide/guard carrying a rifle went with each small group. Around a corner, Betty's group suddenly came face to face with four Cape buffaloes. These animals are huge and have a reputation for being bad-tempered and mean. The humans and the buffaloes eyed each other for a time. Then the guide quietly told his charges to slowly back up. About that time, the animals decided they weren't interested and turned away. The guide said he had never needed to fire his gun, but if it ever became necessary, he would shoot to kill, since a wounded animal would only be more dangerous.

The tour included four camps, each offering various assortments of animals. The elephants were of all sizes—from little ones, who were small enough to run along under their mothers, to full-grown bulls. The food chain is very visible in the African wild. There are plenty of impalas, zebras, and wildebeests who survive to perpetuate the herd, while the lions, jackals, and other predators have enough food for their families, also. The hyenas clean up the remains along with the scavenger birds. For people interested in birding, the assortment of beautiful and unusual birds is amazing.

While viewing animals is the top reason to visit Africa, the group also learned much about the countries they saw. At each camp a local guide told them about the area and what they would be seeing. One day, they visited a school.

“It was extremely bare,” says Betty. “Just a large room with a blackboard at one end, and that was all.” They also visited a village, where the residents all seemed to be one extended family.

The transportation to one camp in Namibia was by riverboat. In Botswana’s Okavango Delta, the accommodations were tents on stilts. There they rode in dugout canoes with guides poling them along through an area similar to the Everglades in Florida.

In Zimbabwe, they visited Hwange National Park, which has a forest of teak and palm trees.

The countries that the group visited are working hard to protect the wild animals and to help the local people survive. As we’ve all heard, poaching is a problem in all the African countries. Ivory from the elephants and horns from the rhinos bring considerable amounts of money on the black market as well as numerous varieties being killed for meat. “In one country, they are implanting chips in the rhino horns,” shared Betty. “If an animal is killed illegally, the chip will point directly to the guilty party.”

Their first camp of little thatched-roof houses was in Botswana. Each of the camps varied; most were new, and all were comfortable with bathroom facilities for each house. The tour members stayed three days at each camp and made their game drives from there. Staff at the various camps came from the local tribes, often young people working to make money for college. After dinner, the guests were escorted to their accommodations and were told not to roam around the grounds after dark in case some predator-type animals were also roaming around.

Betty shared that the food was good, and they were able to eat whatever was served. “Most of it was fairly standard,” says Betty. “But we had impala kebabs one time.”

The temperature climbed to 90 degrees in the daytime, but the nights were chilly enough to need a blanket for sleeping.

It was in Zimbabwe that Betty’s daughter received word that her husband in Chicago had a stroke and was in the hospital. The tour company, Overseas Adventure Travel, immediately arranged flights for Betty and Peggy to leave the group and return home. Since they had some time before the flights, the two were able to make a quick trip to see Victoria Falls with the tour operator’s assistance.

Except for the abrupt and sad conclusion, Betty says it was

a memorable and exciting trip with much to learn and enjoy in a part of the world that not many of us have an opportunity to see.

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Let Your Spirit Soar

Writers, photographers, and poets live and create in Touchmark communities, and Touchmark is featuring some of this talent and creativity in each newsletter. The Let Your Spirit Soar theme for February is a Heart-to-heart/love story.

Valentine’s Day Poem

by Arloene Laskowski

—Resident from a Touchmark community in Bismarck, North Dakota



*Remember back when we were kids,
And “Sweetheart’s Day” meant fun?
We’d find a box and get some paste
And glue hearts by the ton!*

*We’d wear our “Sunday best” that day
With ribbons in our hair,
And run and skip and dance and sing,
Without a single care.*

*In high school, though we might be shy,
And dared not steal a kiss,
We’d hope that special beau
might pass
And fill our hearts with bliss*

*We’re older now, and things
have changed,
No longer can we run,
We still can pray and smile and sing,
Let’s have some “older fun!”*

For March, please submit a humor and laughter poetry feature. Deadline for this issue is February 15. For a list of the guidelines, monthly themes, and deadlines, please contact Life Enrichment/Wellness Coordinator Beth-Ann Wesley.

