

# NEWS RELEASE

## Waterford on South Hill



**For immediate release**

March 26, 2009

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### **Waterford on South Hill celebrates health benefits of National Humor Month**

SPOKANE, Wash. — According to research, laughter produces positive emotional states and can boost the immune system by elevating a person's antibody levels.

Marge Coalman, Ed.D., vice president of wellness & programs for Touchmark, Waterford's parent company, thinks April — National Humor Month — offers an ideal opportunity to reap humor's benefits.

“Laughter is a physical phenomenon,” she says, “while humor is a perceptive belief.”

“During these challenging economic times, humor and laughter play an especially important role,” says Jeff Bair, Waterford on South Hill executive director. “Older people have survived several recessions; some even lived through the Great Depression. They know how to take things in stride — and laugh about them.”

As one would expect, jokes are popular within the full-service retirement community. Waterford residents regularly communicate their favorite rib-ticklers, culled from the Internet, passed along at dinner and shared during exercise class. A sample of those favorites includes:

“Helium was up; feathers were down; paper was stationary. Fluorescent lighting was dimmed in light trading. Knives were up sharply. Pencils lost a few points. Hiking equipment was trailing. Elevators rose while escalators continued their slow decline.”

“The roundest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference.”

“A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.”

“No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.”

“A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.”

“Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.”

“Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.”

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## **Research backs up importance of humor**

According to Lee S. Berk, Dr. PH, an associate professor at Loma Linda University in California, researchers have mapped brain activity during joke-telling. What they found is that laughter involves the entire cerebral cortex. Moreover, Berk's research has shown that the experience of laughter appears to increase the number of cells that help the body fight infections.

The Mayo Clinic, Harvard Medical Clinic and national research program of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention all have studied the positive impact of laughter, humor and positive thinking on curative outcomes for people with cancer, heart disease and other potentially terminal illnesses.

Coalman considers laughter and humor among the best and most holistic "medications" people can use to stave off illness, reduce stress and increase positive immune system responses to the hazards of living in a stress-filled world.

## **Make humor work for you**

Coalman recommends the following tips for increasing an individual's experience of humor:

- Put fun in the fundamentals: Choose to laugh and modify your environment and habits to encourage a sense of lightheartedness.
- Spend time with people who support and care about you: Seek relationships with friends and groups full of goodwill.
- Smile: Those who look happy often feel happy.
- Be active and eat right. What's good for the body is good for the soul. You'll also sleep better and notice improved functionality.
- Simplify and choose: Emotional and physical clutter can weigh you down. Tossing out and tidying up will bring a sense of satisfaction, and lighten your schedule for things you enjoy.
- Laugh out loud: Turn a chuckle into a belly laugh. Watch and read things you find funny. Spend silly time with your friends.
- Choose joy: Strive to find people and things that bring you joy. Volunteer for a worthy cause. Have tea with a friend. Read an uplifting book. Hold a child's hand.

Coalman says Dale Carnegie had the right attitude: "If fate hands you a lemon, make lemonade."

## **About Waterford**

Waterford on South Hill offers a wide range of homes and lifestyle options — including home health and home care services. The full-service retirement community is located at 29th Avenue and Pittsburg Street. For more information, visit [WaterfordSpokane.com](http://WaterfordSpokane.com) or call (509) 536-2929.

## **About Marge Coalman and Touchmark**

Coalman is an internationally recognized speaker and writer. She oversees Touchmark's Health & Fitness clubs, Life Enrichment/Wellness program, and assisted living and memory care programs in eight states and Alberta, Canada. Touchmark was established in 1980 and is a leader in planning, building and operating communities for those 55-plus years.

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