THE CHRISTMAS STORM:
A Modern Parable as Read by Paul Harvey

"This is about a modern man, one of us, he was not a scrooge, he was a kind, decent, mostly good man, generous to his family, upright in his dealings with others. But he did not believe in all that incarnation stuff that the Churches proclaim at Christmas time. It just didn’t make sense to him and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just could not swallow the Jesus story about God coming to earth as man. I’m truly sorry to distress you, he told his wife, but I’m not going with you to church this Christmas Eve. He said he’d feel like a hypocrite. That he would much rather stay home, but that he would wait up for them. He stayed, they went.

Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier, then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. Then another and another. At first he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window. Well, when he went to the front door, he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They had been caught in the storm and in a desperate search for shelter they had tried to fly through his large landscape window.

Well, he couldn’t let the poor creatures lie there and freeze. He remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter -- if he could direct the birds to it. He quickly put on his coat and galoshes, trampled through the deepening snow to the barn, opened the door wide, and turned on a light. But the birds did not come in.

He figured food would entice them in and he hurried back to the house, fetched bread crumbs, sprinkled them on the snow making a trail to the yellow lighted wide open doorway of the stable, but to his dismay the birds ignored the bread crumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them, he tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms -- instead they scattered in every direction except into the warm lighted barn. Then he realized they were afraid of him.

To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature, if only I could think of some way to let them know they can trust me: That I’m not trying to hurt them, but to help them. How? Any move he made tended to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him. If I could only be a bird myself he thought. If only I could be a bird and mingle with them and speak their language, and tell them not to be afraid, and show them the way to the safe, warm barn. But I’d have to be one of them, so they could see and hear and understand.

At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sound of the wind. He stood there listening to the bells. Adeste Fideles. Listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he sank to his knees in the snow. Merry Christmas

—God’s Peace and Blessing

Editor's note: It has been brought to my attention that the original author was Louis Cassels called The Parable of the Birds written in 1959 and reprinted many times.

Linda’s Notes

Dear Activity Professionals,

I have exciting news for you. The National Association of Activity Professionals (NAAP) will soon have a page on The Activity Director’s Office website and a page in Activity Director Monthly. As you know, this is a big step in our dream of becoming a central hub for Activity Professionals. For many years Bob and I talked about having a place where Activity people can come for resources and references. It is only right that the people of our profession should be able to get together and share our ideas, experiences and concerns. We hope you will find The Activity Director’s Office a friendly place to do just that.

Also new to our site is The Activity Director’s Apparel and Gift Store located at: http://www.cafepress.com/theadoshop/970706. In this store we feature our own graphic designs for activity apparel and gifts. Christmas is coming...give is a visit.

Wishing you a joyous Christmas,
Linda Lucas, AD

Linda Lucas is the owner of The Activity Director’s Office website. She has been an Activity Director in Indiana since 1983.

Readers may contact Linda at: admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com

Visit Our Party Store

http://www.theado.makesparties.com
12 Days of Christmas

People often think of The Twelve Days of Christmas as the days preceding the festival. Actually, Christmas is a season of the Christian Year that last for days beginning December 25 and lasting until January 6 - the Day of Epiphany when the church celebrates the revelation of Christ as the light of the world and recalls the journey of the Magi.

From 1558 until 1829 people in England were not allowed to practice their faith openly. During this era someone wrote 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' as a kind of secret catechism that could be sung in public without risk of persecution. The song has two levels of interpretation: "the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the church." Each element in the carol is a code word for a religious reality.

1. The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ.
2. The two turtledoves are the Old and New Testaments.
3. Three French hens stand for faith, hope and love.
4. The four calling birds are the four Gospels.
5. The five gold rings recall the torah (Law) the first five books of the Old Testament.
6. The six geese a-laying stand for the six days of creation.
7. Seven swans a-swimming represent the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit.
8. The eight maids a-milking are the eight beatitudes.
9. Nine ladies dancing are the nine fruits of the spirit (Gal.5).
10. The ten lords a-leaping are the Ten Commandments.
11. Eleven pipers piping stand for the eleven faithful disciples.
12. Twelve drummers drumming symbolize the 12 points of belief in the Apostles Creed.

There you have it, the HIDDEN meaning of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" and the secret behind the song.

Received this from a friend and it gave new meaning to the song we sing this time of year. Hope you find this as "New/Old Meaning" to the season.

Thanks to our friends at Butler Webs
http://www.butlerwebs.com

(Continued on page 6)
Keeping the Home in the Holidays

The holiday season is usually a happy time. We look forward to spending time with family and friends, some whom we haven’t seen in ages. Attending parties and special gatherings, eating traditional foods and reminiscing about happy times is something we all anticipate with joy. However, for the elderly living in long term care facilities, the holiday season may bring feelings of sadness related to losses associated with facility living. The increased festivities may remind the resident they are not in the familiar surroundings of their home and cannot celebrate the holidays as they had in the past. Additionally, the changes in routine and extra activity often causes anxiety and more confusion amongst our elders with dementia.

In order to ensure residents are able to enjoy holiday celebrations, the facility staff can consider the following suggestions:

- Be ever mindful of residents who may not have a strong support network of family or friends. Creating a “Secret Pal” program or “Adopt a Resident” program can ensure all residents have special visitors and attention during this busy time of year. In this program, the staff select a resident as their “secret pal” prior to the start of the holiday season. This allows the staff member to pay special attention to their “pal” during this busy time of year. A “Secret Pal” social can be incorporated into the holiday schedule, where the “pal” is revealed to the resident.

- Consider opportunities to create new rituals. Although it may be difficult to practice each resident’s individual tradition and holiday practice - new rituals may provide residents with happiness. Shared emotions are at the root of every ritual. Facility staff can introduce an activity that can represent these emotions and begin new traditions involving the facility “family”.

- Monitor residents for subtle signs of depression. Increased depression during the holidays is not uncommon. Increased tearfulness, decreased appetite, or withdrawal from daily programming may be noticeable to the caregiver. Immediate interventions should be offered to provide support and comfort. It should not be assumed that once the holidays are over, the resident will return to normal.

- Involve the residents in program planning. Planning holiday events is part of the fun. Involving the residents in menu planning, selecting entertainment and creating decorations contributes to a sense of home. Anticipation and preparation are as important as the actual event.

- The facility should be cautious about over stimulation. The holidays are busy times with increased visitors, entertainment, and changes in routine. This may prove disturbing for the residents, particularly the cognitively impaired. Providing small and familiar programming on the units will contribute to a sense of continuity.

- Holiday programming offers the activity professional many opportunities for theme based activities. Crafts, cooking, discussion groups, reminiscence programs, word games as well as parties can focus on holiday traditions and practices. Planning ahead allows for ample time to enjoy each activity to it’s fullest. In some cases, it may be prudent to focus on fewer activities, enjoying them more - rather than (Continued on page 7)
MUSIC AND DANCING

It's Cajun Time!

Up to eight persons with early to middle dementia.

Benefits:

Promotes positive feelings; Reduces depression; Enhances social interaction; Provides opportunity for exercise.

Tip: Alzheimer's elderly have an increased risk of falling compared to other older adults. So, place the chairs along the wall, rather than in the middle of the room, and make sure the floor is free from clutter, and not slippery.

Materials needed:

A portable tape recorder A tape of Cajun music; Egg shakers Chairs, for elderly who have difficulty standing or wish to have some rest; Beverages and snacks, in accordance with the dietary requirements of participants.

Steps to follow:

Distribute the shakers and start playing the music (ensure that the volume is comfortable for everyone in the group). Encourage the elderly to move to the rhythm of the music and use their egg shakers. Let them dance for as much as they wish, but watch out for signs of tiredness.

After the dance, invite them to sit down and enjoy snacks and beverages while having a rest.

Notes: Have participants prepare in a separate, previous session—their own homemade egg shakers. You'll need plastic Easter eggs (two for each participant), Rice, barley, or salt. Next, invite the elderly to put a small quantity of rice in the bottom half of the eggs, and close with the top.

This is an adaptation of a music intervention developed by a team of researchers led by Dr. Alicia Ann Clair professor and director of music therapy at the University of Arkansas for use with older adults with middle dementia. It can be successfully implemented by non-music therapy staff who wish to promote active music participation among their residents.

Reprinted from Activities ETC 2006! Enjoy other activities, crafts, games, and calendars in this year's 150-page edition; visit http://www.care4elders.com now!

If You See a Fat Man

If you see a fat man ... Who's jolly and cute, wearing a beard and a red flannel suit, and if he is chuckling and laughing away, while flying around in a miniature sleigh with eight tiny reindeer to pull him along, then lets face it... Your eggnog's too strong!

Submitted by JoeP
SUPPORT GROUPS

Many facilities are seeing the need for support groups. There are many reasons to have a support group not only for the residents, but for family and care givers. There are two kinds of support groups in a facility. In-house support groups that are geared for residents and family members. The second kind, are support groups that utilize the space of the facility but are for the community only. The support groups for the community are a great source of referrals for your building and we encourage you to look into beginning a support group. Most important, you would be providing a needed service for your community. Some ideas would be Care Giver Support Group, Alzheimer's Support Group and Bereavement Support Group. A huge Support Group industry that is growing is Gastric By Pass. Many of the patients are in their 40’s to 50’s age group and that is the generation caring for their parents and grandparents. So, you may wish to look into starting that type of support group or host one in your building. Many of the Gastric Support Groups are an average size of 50 to 100 people and growing.

Some suggestions for In House Support Groups might be, Adjusting to Nursing Home Placement, Alzheimer's Units Family Support Group, Reminiscence Groups, Home-ward Bound-for those residents leaving Rehabilitation, Bereave-ment and Loss, Death and Dying, Spirituality.

Support Groups offer residents and their family, information and referral information. Acceptance, when they discover they are not alone in how they feel. Anonymity because they know that what they say in this group is confidential and it may be the only place they feel comfortable expressing how they feel. Its a place to help others and bring ideas on how to cope.

Most newspapers and radio stations allow you to advertise at no cost to you. Again, another way to promote your facility and at the same time provide community service. We advise you to look at the age group of who you are trying to attract to the group. If its the senior population, we recommend that you have the meeting in the early afternoon and provide lunch. Many seniors don't want to drive at night. If its for the 40-50 year old group, provide it in the early evening and again provide a light supper. They may be rushing from work or home and a light supper would be a welcome attraction for your support group. Don’t forget to post flyers, place in facility newspaper and local TV channel. If you start a new group for the community, make sure you are

(Continued on page 6)
listed in all the referral sources such as Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Adult Day Care, Geriatric Care Managers, Office on Aging, Self Help Clearing House, Non Profit Associations, AARP and the Library.

The support group should be run by a leader and a co-leader or co-facilitator. No one person can run a support group alone. The support group leader generally has other responsibilities and needs someone to share the workload of running a support group. Once you make the commitment to have a support group, you cannot easily cancel it. People are counting on you. There are many responsibilities to running a support group from providing information, setting up the group, mailing reminders, keeping a database of your participants, obtaining speakers and so on. You also need a co-leader who can fill in when there are vacations, emergencies or sick days. The co-leader cannot only fill in on these dates but share the responsibilities of the group.

There is information available through the Self Help Clearing House web site on many aspects of Support Groups. For New Jersey please go to www.njshc.org or call 1800 367 6274. The national web site is www.selfhelp.org and the phone number is 212-817-1822. At this time they do not have an 800 number for the National Office.

Electric Train
While working as a mall Santa, I had many children ask for electric trains. "If you get a train," I would tell each one, "you know your dad is going to want to play with it too. Is that okay?"

The usual answer was a quick yes, but after I asked one boy this question, he became very quiet. Trying to move the conversation along, I asked what else he would like Santa to bring him. He promptly replied, "Another train."

(Santa/Team - continued from page 2)
Christmas shopping.
For a few moments I just stood there, confused, clutching that ten-dollar bill, wondering what to buy, and who on earth to buy it for. I thought of everybody I knew: my family, my friends, my neighbors, the kids at school, the people who went to my church. I was just about though, when I suddenly thought of Bobbie Decker. He was a kid with bad breath and messy hair, and he sat right behind me in Mrs. Pollock's second grade class.
Bobbie Decker didn't have a coat. I knew that because he never went out for recess during the winter. His mother always wrote a note, telling the teacher that he had a cough, but all we kids knew that Bobbie Decker didn't have a cough, and he didn't have a coat. I fingered the ten-dollar bill with growing excitement. I would buy Bobbie Decker a coat. I settled on a red corduroy one that had a hood to it. It looked real warm, and he would like that. "Is this a Christmas present for someone?" the lady behind the counter asked kindly, as I laid my ten dollars down.
"Yes," I replied shyly. "It's ... for Bobbie." The nice lady smiled at me. I didn't get any change, but she put the coat in a bag and wished me a Merry Christmas. That evening, Grandma helped me wrap the coat in Christmas paper and ribbons, and write, "To Bobbie, From Santa Claus" on it -- Grandma said that Santa always insisted on secrecy. Then she drove me over to Bobbie Decker's house, explaining as we went that I was now and forever officially one of Santa's helpers.

Grandma parked down the street from Bobbie's house, and she and I crept noiselessly and hid in the bushes by his front walk. Then Grandma gave me a nudge. "All right, Santa Claus," she whispered, "get going."

I took a deep breath, dashed for his front door, threw the present down on his step, pounded his doorbell and flew back to the safety of the bushes and Grandma. Together we waited breathlessly in the darkness for the front door to open. Finally it did, and there stood Bobbie.

Forty years haven't dimmed the thrill of those moments spent shivering, beside my grandma, in Bobbie Decker's bushes. That night, I realized that those awful rumors about Santa Claus were just what Grandma said they were: ridiculous. Santa was alive and well, and we were on his team.

Author Unknown
trying to “do it all”.

-Make the most of all those volunteers and visitors who like to come in the month of December. Many will agree to return after the holidays - if we just ask. While thanking them for their visit, mention that community programs are welcome during the rest of the year. Have a ready list of suggested year-round programs such as sponsoring a bingo game, hosting a monthly social or game party to share as they leave. Even if only one third of the volunteers who visit in December agree to visit again in the New Year, you have increased your volunteer program.

-Finally, take care of yourself. Our departments often get caught up in decorating the facility, arranging parties and making sure we have enough gifts. The residents sometimes gets overlooked in the process. Celebrating the joy in the holiday moments with your residents is what it is all about.

“Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.”
William Shakespeare

Q & A

Q: If you're afraid of Santa Claus, what condition do you have?

A: Claustrophobia
I THINK SANTA CLAUS IS A WOMAN

I hate to be the one to defy sacred myth, but I believe he's a she. Think about it. Christmas is a big, organized, warm, fuzzy, nurturing social deal, and I have a tough time believing a guy could possibly pull it all off!

For starters, the vast majority of men don't even think about selecting gifts until Christmas Eve. It's as if they are all frozen in some kind of Ebenezerian Time Warp until 3 p.m. on Dec. 24th, when they -- with amazing calm -- call other errant men and plan for a last-minute shopping spree.

Once at the mall, they always seem surprised to find only Ronco products, socket wrench sets, and mood rings left on the shelves. (You might think this would send them into a fit of panic and guilt, but my husband tells me it's an enormous relief because it lessens the 11th hour decision-making burden.) On this count alone, I'm convinced Santa is a woman. Surely, if he were a man, everyone in the universe would wake up Christmas morning to find a rotating musical Chia Pet under the tree, still in the bag.

Another problem for a he-Santa would be getting there. First of all, there would be no reindeer because they would all be dead, gutted and strapped on to the rear bumper of the sleigh amid wide-eyed, desperate claims that buck season had been extended. Blitzen's rack would already be on the way to the taxidermist.

Even if the male Santa DID have reindeer, he'd still have transportation problems because he

(Continued on page 10)
Clipart for December

- Teddy bear wearing a Santa hat
- Santa Claus
- Christmas tree
- Christmas wreath with a bow
- Holly leaves
- Candy cane
- Snowy night with reindeer and sleigh
- Christmas ornaments
- Decorative bow
(Santa/Woman - continued from page 8)

would inevitably get lost up there in the snow and clouds and then refuse to stop and ask for directions. Add to this the fact that there would be unavoidable delays in the chimney, where the Bob Vila-like Santa would stop to inspect and re-point bricks in the flue. He would also need to check for carbon monoxide fumes in every gas fireplace, and get under every Christmas tree that is crooked to straighten it to a perfectly upright 90-degree angle.

Other reasons why Santa can't possibly be a man:

• Men can't pack a bag.
• Men would rather be dead than caught wearing red velvet.

• Men would feel their masculinity is threatened...having to be seen with all those elves.
• Men don't answer their mail.
• Men would refuse to allow their physique to be described even in jest as anything remotely resembling a "bowlful of jelly."
• Men aren't interested in stockings unless somebody's wearing them.
• Having to do the Ho Ho Ho thing would seriously inhibit their ability to pick up women.
• Finally, being responsible for Christmas would require a commitment.  

Author Unknown

Attention: Activity Professionals

You are invited to submit articles of interest, poems, humor, photos and just about anything else for publication in Activity Director Monthly. The only compensation we can offer you is credit for the submission. All submissions are subject to editing. We cannot guarantee that all submissions will be published. However, they definitely can't be published if you don't send them in. So be brave and fire your e-mail to us at: admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com.

Or you can mail your information to:

Attention: Editor
The Activity Director’s Office
113 Edgewood Dr., Ste. A
Attica, Indiana 47918

Main topic interests include: anything that will benefit Activity Directors; items which can be used in facility newsletters (i.e. original and/or public domain items); personal Activity Director/resident experiences. Please send only copies of your submissions.

About Activity Director Monthly

Activity Director Monthly is a FREE monthly publication of The Activity Director’s Office website. Activity Professionals across the nation and around the world are invited to visit the website and subscribe to this publication.

Please visit us at…
http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com

Our e-mail address is:
admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com

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Spare Change Can Make a Difference

In the Spirit of the Season, Kids Can Donate Coins to Help Those in Need

(ARA) – Teaching kids the value of helping those in need is an important part of raising a child. One of the keys is to frame the lesson in terms a child can understand, and to make it an enjoyable experience.

The Coins that Count donation program from Coinstar is a great example of a project that is fun for kids and helps others in the process. You’ve probably seen Coinstar’s self-service coin-counting machines in your local supermarket. But you may not know that the machines are not only a convenient way to count and redeem your loose change for cash, they are also a fast, easy way to donate to both national and local organizations.

The company’s founders recognized that its simple-to-use technology could lend critical support to charitable causes by collecting and counting donations of loose coins. Since its introduction eight years ago, Coins that Count has grown from processing approximately $200,000 per year in 1997 to processing more than $3 million in 2004. Most recently, the program collected more than $500,000 for the victims of Hurricane Katrina -- and the donations are still coming in.

“A big part of what makes this program successful is how easy it is, both for the charitable organizations and for the donors,” says Dave Cole, chief executive officer of Coinstar, Inc. With more than 12,000 locations, Coinstar has a machine within five miles of 75 percent of the U.S. population -- so you won’t have to go far to donate your change. The machines are easy to operate for children and adults; just select the “donate” option at the beginning of the transaction, and follow the on-screen prompts to select the non-profit partner of your choice from the list provided. Then pour in your change and Coinstar will count the coins and provide you with a tax-deductible receipt for your records.

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“A big part of what makes this program successful is how easy it is, both for the charitable organizations and for the donors,” says Dave Cole, chief executive officer of Coinstar, Inc. With more than 12,000 locations, Coinstar has a machine within five miles of 75 percent of the U.S. population -- so you won’t have to go far to donate your change. The machines are easy to operate for children and adults; just select the “donate” option at the beginning of the transaction, and follow the on-screen prompts to select the non-profit partner of your choice from the list provided. Then pour in your change and Coinstar will count the coins and provide you with a tax-deductible receipt for your records.

Using loose change to make a donation means that it is accessible for kids who want to use their allowance or money they may have collected specifically for this purpose. “We are always touched by the generosity of children,” said Kathleen Loehr, interim senior vice president of development at the American Red Cross. “One of the most heartwarming donations we received was a Coinstar donation receipt representing a single penny from a child who sent it along with a note that read, ‘When my house burned down, the Red Cross helped us, so I wanted to send you my lucky penny.’”

And if you think that your spare change won’t make a difference, the experts at Coinstar estimate that there’s more than $10.5 billion in loose change in jars and drawers -- and who knows where else -- in U.S. households. That’s a lot of lucky pennies. Imagine what even a fraction of that amount would mean to any of Coinstar’s charitable partners.

Coinstar Centers are the only coin counting machines that offer this service. Since 1997 Coinstar has collected more than $15 million for charitable organizations. The national nonprofit organizations that are part of the program are The American Red Cross, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, The March of Dimes, The U.S. Fund for UNICEF and World Wildlife Fund.

To find a Coinstar Center near you with the Coins that Count program, visit www.coinstar.com.

Courtesy of ARA Content

Having a Party?
The Activity Director's Office offers party items online to help you create memorable events & enhance your party themes. Browse our unique selection of novelties, accessories, gifts and favors at www.theado.makesparties.com
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Who was born on Christmas Day?

1642 - Sir Isaac Newton (mathematician)
1821 - Clara Barton (nurse; founder of American Red Cross)
1887 - Conrad Hilton (hotel magnate)
1899 - Humphrey Bogart (Academy Award-winning actor: The African Queen [1951]; The Maltese Falcon, Casablanca (Bogie's character never says "Play it again, Sam." He says: "You played it for her, you can play it for me. Play it!", while Ingrid Bergman says "Play it, Sam. Play 'As Time Goes By'.")
1907 - Cab (Cabell) Calloway ('Highness of Hi-De-Ho': bandleader, singer: Minnie the Moocher, Blues in the Night; films: Stormy Weather, St. Louis Blues; The Cotton Club Comes to the Ritz)
1914 - Tony Martin (Alvin Morris) (singer: It's a Blue World, To Each His Own, Kiss of Fire, Stranger in Paradise, Here; actor: Casbah, Hit the Deck; married to dancer Cyd Charisse)
1915 - Pete Rugolo (bandleader, arranger: Stan Kenton; scored TV's The Fugitive)
1918 - Anwar el-Sadat (Egyptian president; Nobel Peace Prize winner with Israel's Menachim Begin [1978])
1924 - Rod Serling (scriptwriter: The Twilight Zone, Requiem for a Heavyweight, Planet of the Apes, Seven Days in May)
1932 - Little Richard (Penniman) (singer: Good Golly Miss Molly, Tutti-Frutti, Long Tall Sally, Lucille, Keep A Knockin')
1937 - O'Kelly Isley (singer: Grammy Award-winning group: The Isley Brothers; It's Your Thing [1969]; Shout, Twist and Shout, That Lady, This Old Heart of Mine)
1945 - Ken Stabler ('The Snake': football: Oakland Raiders quarterback: Super Bowl XI)
1946 - Jimmy Buffett (songwriter, singer: Come Monday, Margaritaville, Changes in Latitudes - Changes in Attitudes; main 'Parrot Head')
1946 - Larry Csonka (Pro Football Hall of Famer: Miami Dolphins running back: Super Bowl VI, VII, VIII)
1948 - Barbara Mandrell (CMA Entertainer of the Year [1980, 1981], Female Vocalist of the Year [1979]; Standing Room Only, I Was Country When Country Wasn't Cool, Sleeping Single in a Double Bed, If Loving You Is Wrong)
1949 - Sissy (Mary) Spacek (Academy Award-winning actress: Coal Miner's Daughter [1980]; Missing, The River, Carrie, The Migrants)
1950 - Manny Trillo (baseball: Philadelphia Phillies)
1950 - Barry Pearson (football)
1953 - Dave Wasick (football)
1958 - Ricky Henderson (baseball: Oakland Athletics outfielder: Baseball Writers' Award, American League [1990]; NY Yankees)

Provided Courtesy of http://www.corsinet.com
Suggestions for the Effective Use of Your Newsletter

Thank you for downloading The Newsletter Shop’s free, 2-page newsletter Health Care Express. This newsletter concept is the result of several years of preparation and the generous support of the sponsors whose advertisements are contained within its pages. Because all of the material in the newsletter is copyright free, you may feel assured that the publishing and distributing of your free newsletter is legal.

PREPRINT
Now that you have downloaded your newsletter you have several choices to make before printing it.

1. On the mailing page insert your facility’s name and address in the upper left corner where it says “From:”.

2. Prepare any printed material you may have for insertion into the newsletter. At a minimum we suggest you prepare your monthly activity calendar on one side of an 8.5”x11” sheet or paper. On the other side you may enter residents facts and figures (new admissions, birthdays, residents who went home, deaths). Also, on the back of the calendar page you may want to advertise upcoming activities and events, a management roster and other items of interest specific to your facility.

PRINTING

1. If you decide to print your newsletter on your facility copier you may print the newsletter on 8.5”x11” sheets of paper. However, it is far more professional looking to use 17” x 11” sheets (this size is larger than legal size paper, but can be hand fed into most modern printers).

2. If you use a print shop have them print your newsletter on 17”x11” paper. They will have a variety of colors for both your paper and ink. You can expect to pay more for color ink. If you decide to print your newsletter on color paper, avoid using dark colors and extremely bright colors (e.g. fluorescents), they are too difficult to read.

3. If you take it to the print shop they will also print and insert your extra material and fold your newsletter for you. One fold makes your newsletter ready for hand outs. Two folds prepares the newsletter for mailing.

MAILING  (an excellent activity for your residents)

1. To prepare your newsletter for mailing, it must be folded twice so the mailing face is showing on the outside.

2. Each piece you plan to mail must be sealed twice on the loose page edge. Use 1/2” pieces of transparent tape (you can purchase seals at most office supply stores if you wish).

3. Write or stick your address labels where it says “To:”.

4. Place postage in the upper right hand corner. First class postage will pay for your newsletter and at least two 8.5”x11” insertions.

5. Your newsletter is now ready to mail. The Post Office appreciates it if you pre-sort your zip codes and bundle the newsletters with rubber bands.

BULK MAILING

1. With bulk mail you can save a bundle on postage. However, you must set up an account with the post office, mail at least 200 newsletters at a time, prepare a billing form and deliver the newsletters to the post office. Although it sounds complicated, it becomes routine after you have done it a couple of times.

DISTRIBUTION
For the most effective marketing of your facility, we recommend that you make an extensive mailing list including these listed below. The more newsletters you circulate, the more successful your marketing will be.

- All responsible parties
- Seniors at home
- Banks
- Hospital discharge planners
- Nursing homes
- Adult day care centers
- Churches
- Home health agencies
- Federal, State and local social service agencies
- Social organizations and clubs
- Business organizations
- Corporate headquarters
- Area schools
- Area radio stations
- Area television stations
- Area newspapers
- Area businesses

TIMING
For timely distribution, your newsletter will always be available to you at the first of the preceding month. It should be published by the last week of the month and mailed prior to the first of the month the newsletter is dated.
PERSONALIZE YOUR NEWSLETTER

I am a subscriber to Activity Director Monthly and I wish to take advantage of your special offer to personalize a 4-page, premium FACILITY newsletter. Enclosed is my check/money order for $12.95 in U.S. Dollars. I understand that this offer is not a subscription but a month by month offer, and that I am in no way obligated to make another purchase unless I choose to do so.

Please print/type the following information:

Your Name: ____________________________________________________________

Newsletter Title: ________________________________________________________

Facility Name: __________________________________________________________

Address 1: ___________________________________________________________________

Address 2: ___________________________________________________________________

City: State: Zip: ___________________________________________________________________

Facility Phone: ___________________________________________________________________

Facility Fax #: ___________________________________________________________________

Facility E-Mail: ___________________________________________________________________

Please enclose this order form with your check/money order made payable to The Newsletter Shop in the amount of $12.95 (USD)* and mail it to:

ADO Special
The Newsletter Shop
113 Edgewood Dr., Suite A
Attica, Indiana 47918

Your newsletter order will be processed upon receipt of payment.

*To pay by credit card and/or to download a sample, you may go to the Activity Director’s Office website:

http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com/TheNewsletterShop.html