Ideas to Honor Your Staff During Activity Professionals Week

By Sandra Stimson,
Executive Director
Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care
( http://www.activitytherapy.com )

1. Make a banner and proudly display this in the lobby.
2. Have a table that displays all the things your department does. You could use a display board and place pictures of events and descriptive words that also describe the wide array of programs you provide and the impact it has on the residents. Words such as Bingo, Room Visits, Pet Therapy, Intergenerational Programs, etc. Descriptive words such as Empowerment, Therapeutic, spiritual, Depression, Enhance Communication, Independence, Self Esteem, Community Involvement, Benefits, Physical Condition, Wellness, Life Skills, etc.
3. Create a word puzzle of words associated with therapeutic recreation and activities.
4. Create a gorgeous poster in a frame that has descriptive words of your department.
5. You could create a winter wonderland of Trees and have a theme about what you provide. Instead of using Christmas decorations you could have snowman or skiers on the trees holding signs with descriptive words that describe events and activities. Use white lights. You could place deer around the trees, snowman, red cardinals on the trees, fake snow around the trees.
6. Issue a press release about what your department provides to the residents with a picture of the residents in a program. Remember to get permission from the residents for the photograph and to submit to the papers.
7. The administrator should take all of the staff out to lunch or have a formal luncheon at the facility.
8. The activity director could hold a private lunch either in the building but better yet, why not take them out to lunch.
9. Have a party with the residents and the activity staff to honor your week?
10. Have balloons for all the activity staff in their office.
11. Each morning, honor your staff with coffee, juice and donuts / pastries. The activity director can really make their staff feel appreciated during this week.
12. Provide promotional materials such as Activity Professional Pins.
13. At the formal luncheon read a Tribute to Activity Professionals found on http://activitytherapy.com web site.
14. Put up the pictures of your staff on a bulletin board with a short bio about them and how long they have been at the facility.
15. Place an article in the facility newsletter about activity professionals week and the history of the profession.

(Continued on page 10)
Bob’s Monthly Journal
By Robert Lucas, H.F.A. (retired)
Site Co-Owner, The Activity Director’s Office

A Tribute to Activity Professionals!

Thank You!

Thank you for all that you do to improve the quality of life for those who matter the most, your residents! They appreciate it!

Thank you for all your creativity. The residents are thankful.

Thank you for the extra effort you put into each day. Thank you for helping out in the dining rooms for meal programs. They need you! The nursing staff does appreciate it!

Thank you for all the special trips and community events. They love being a part of the community.

Thank you for all the effort you put into your volunteer program, it definitely does not happen without you!

Thank you for smiling even when you don't feel like it.

Thank you for spending time with those residents who can not come out of their rooms. They especially appreciate the pet visits.

Thank you for a great survey. It takes your entire team and a dynamic program.

Thank you for giving all of your self.

Thank you for filling the resident's days with meaningful activities.

Thank you for pushing so hard to get extra special programs approved. The extra effort paid off!

Thank you for all the extra hours you put into planning and implementing elaborate events. It was appreciated!

Thank you for attending seminars and association meetings, even when sometimes you have to use vacation days.

Thank you for supporting other activity professionals.

Thank you for taking a chance and trying something new.

Thank you for dressing up for all those holidays.

Thank you for all the hugs and love you give to them.

Thank you for developing all the children's programs.

Thank you for all the spiritual programs, because it means more to them at this point in their life.

But most of all Thank You for dedicating your life to this very special profession, Activity Professionals! We can't imagine any facility without you!

by: Sandra Stimson,
Executive Director
Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care

http://www.activitytherapy.com/
Used with Permission

We extend a special thanks to Megan Hill
Activity Director at Heritage Green Assisted Living Communities
for finding and sharing the following...

Activity Pest
by Suzanne Williams

Why do they come to my door and ask, "Do you want to play Bingo?"
No, I'll pass!
Can't you see I'm trying to sleep? Now leave quietly, without a peep!

Who is back the very next day?
"Would you like a manicure?"
I say, "Okay."
Or I tell her, "Maybe I will on another day."

Ah! She's gone - there is quiet - all right!
Now, its just me and The Price is Right.

Knock, knock! Can you guess?

(Continued on page 13)
The DH Special Services Page

By Debbie Hommel, BA, CRA, ACC
Executive Director of DH Special Services
http://www.dhspecialservices.com/home.htm

National Activity Professionals Week
January 22nd to 27th, 2006

Activity Professionals
Make Lives Rich

As an Activity Professional, we have a special day coming up. National Activity Professional Week is a time for our profession to share the good works we do on a daily basis. Professional recognition days can be viewed from various perspectives:

1. We can hope to be taken out to lunch.
2. We can hope to be surprised with a bagel breakfast or donuts.
3. We can dream of receiving flowers from the administrative staff.
4. Or we can view this week as an opportunity to communicate and share the meaning, value and benefits of what therapeutic activities has to offer.

Sure, it's nice to go out to lunch and get presents - but in many cases, this does not happen. Rather than sit back and wait for the "royal treatment", use this week as an excuse to "toot your own horn". Consider the following ideas to recognize and promote the value of therapeutic activities:

1. Create and display a photo gallery of activities and outline their benefits on a main bulletin board or thoroughfare.
2. Plan an "Activity Open House". Send out invitations and have display areas set up in your recreation room which emphasizes the value of therapeutic activities. Provide information regarding the benefits of activities and create displays with materials and photographs. Give out promotional items related to NAPW. Serve refreshments, decorate festively, and have door prizes.
3. Find some poems and writings about activities. Many of the activity sites, including mine, have poems devoted to our work and efforts. My favorites are "The Activity Pest" and "Activities are...". Display them in common areas, send them to the families or read them at activity groups.
4. Create a video emphasizing the benefits of each activity. Set the video up in the lobby, play it continuously with a poster, tri-board or printed materials explaining NAPW. Create posters and signs for display throughout the building. Use the NAAP theme - "Activity Professionals Make Lives Rich".
5. Conduct an "Activity Scavenger Hunt". Create a game card for staff/residents/families to complete certain tasks. To get credit for the tasks, the activity staff need to authorize the cards. Tasks may include bringing a resident to an activity, having a cup of coffee in the activity room, sitting and doing a 1-1 activity with a resident and other related, interdisciplinary activity tasks. After the game cards are completed, they are placed into a drawing. The drawing for a winner may be conducted at a party or reception at the end of the week.
6. Conduct an "Activity Trivia Game" which is similar to the scavenger hunt. Trivia questions can be related to your activity program, staff or the benefits of activities. Again, the completed game sheets are submitted, with possible winners being drawn daily.
7. Create an open mural where staff, families and residents can write their thoughts about activities. A large roll/sheet of white paper can be hung on a plain wall, with an attached marker on a string. The heading of the paper may be the theme "Activity Professionals Make Lives Rich". A question under the theme can encourage people to write what activities means to them.
8. Plan an "Activity Olympics". Each day of the week can offer various activities related to a particular activity domain. For example, Monday may be "Mental Aerobics Day"; while Tuesday may be "Let's Get Physical Day". Each day will focus on the various activities in that domain, with emphasis on the benefits. Interdisciplinary contests and challenges can be integrated into the program plan.

For more information related to celebrating NAPW - you can first contact our National Association. A free NAP WEEK information packet is available from the NAAP Office. You may call direct at (865) 453-9914 or E-Mail THENAAP@aol.com. The Packet (Continued on page 12)

ABOUT DEBBIE

Debbie Hommel is a Certified Activity Consultant on State and National level, with over twenty-seven years of experience in providing direct care and consultation to long term care, medical day care, assisted living, and ICF/MR facilities throughout New Jersey, New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

She is an experienced trainer and workshop presenter, conducting a variety of seminars throughout the Tri-State area for the Activity Professional, Administrator, and allied healthcare professional. She is ACC certified through the NCCAP.
Building With Spaghetti

Triangles are easier to build a tall structure with.

Materials needed:
- Spaghetti (toothpicks)
- Gumdrops
- Flat surface (picnic table)
- Tablecloth
- Creativity!

Steps to follow:
- Spread the tablecloth on the picnic table.
- Set out full-length spaghetti noodles and gumdrops in small bowls.
- Have the participant break the spaghetti noodles in half.
- Using the spaghetti noodles, show participant how to build a simple shape, carefully show them how to poke the spaghetti noodles into the middle of the gumdrops. Then ask them to imitate you. Help them when necessary.

If the simple shape is completed without any problems, increase the challenge by building a more difficult shape.

For fun, allow the resident and yourself to munch on the gumdrops as you go, as a sort of reward.

Preparation:

Decide what shapes and designs that you want participants to build. Some examples are:

- Triangle
- Square
- House
- Sun
- Box
- Tower
- Pyramid

Building these examples first yourself, as practice, maybe a good idea.
The Alternative Solutions Page
By Sandra Stimson ADC, CALA, CDP
Executive Director, Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care
http://www.activitytherapy.com

Sensory Rooms and FTAG 248

On a daily basis we receive emails from activity professionals around the country asking if they have to have Sensory Rooms? Is it Federal or State regulation? The answer we give is that it is not mandated by the federal government or state regulations that you have sensory rooms. But what is required is that you provide "Quality of Life" for all residents. Remember, that FTAG 248 is not the only federal guideline for nursing homes that apply to recreation. There are many others.

Sensory rooms are really for any population. But generally in long term care it is used for the very low functioning resident's. Sensory rooms provide a group activity in an environment that is success oriented, failure free, purposeful and meaningful. If you don't have programs to fit the needs of this very special population than the question would be, "how are you impacting their quality of life on a daily basis?"

As a consultant to many facilities across the country we do not see enough low functioning programs offered on a daily basis. Either it's not offered enough or not at all. We also see many residents in day rooms unable to participate in the scheduled event, left in their rooms, placed at nurses stations or left in the hallway. If you have a sensory room that is well staffed, it offers a place for the resident's to go that is stress free and stimulating. The sensory rooms can also be used for your NPO programs. As activity professionals you are required to have NPO programs for those individuals who are left in their rooms when meals are being served. During meal times the NPO residents can come to the sensory rooms. Think how hard it must be to smell the food when you cannot have it! In the sensory rooms the stress and anxiety over meal times is alleviated.

For the residents who are

Attention Activity Professionals...
You Can Win a $100.00 Gift Certificate

In honor of all that you do, we are having a contest. Deadline is February 14th 2006. Please submit by email to activitytherapy@aol.com. Please tell us the size of your building, how many staff members you have and how you honored your activity staff during activity professionals week. The winner will receive 100.00 gift certificate to be used towards party supplies at http://www.activitytherapy.makesparties.com Get creative! Here is your chance to not only show your staff you appreciate them but your community all that you do! Please include your name, title, email address, address of facility and phone number. We will be judging your submissions on creativity and the number of events and examples you give us about the ways you honored your staff and the recognition you brought to the Activity Professionals Week. You can also mail your submissions to Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care 103 Valley View Trail Sparta NJ 07871

Announcement from the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP)

Many health care professionals who are either certified or licensed have taken the steps to become certified dementia practitioners. The NCCDP has partnered with Alzheimer's Care Guide Magazine and Eldercare Activities Guide: The Activity Professional Magazine. If you are a CDP upon renewal you will need 10 CEU's in dementia related seminars. Both of these publications publish an article a month with a test. The test and CEU's are complimentary. You will need a subscription to either

ABOUT SANDRA

Sandra Stimson has experience as a corporate consultant, Corporate Trainer and National Speaker. Her experience is in long term care, as Activity Director, Director of Alzheimer's Units and Assistant Administrator of a 550 bed long term care county home. She is Co-founder of Pet Express Pet Therapy Club, is a Life Replay Specialist. Sandra implements dementia units nationwide. Sandra has written several books, Volunteer Management Essentials for Long Term Care and Pet Express Pet Therapy Program. Sandra has been a facilitator for Alzheimer's support groups and is the Awards Chair for the NJ Association of Activity Professionals. Sandra is the Executive Director of National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP).

http://www.nccdp.org

http://www.activitytherapy.com offers resources for health care professionals in many areas of dementia care, care plans, Snoezeen products, dementia activity calendars, adult day care calendars, sensory calendars, reminisce videos for dementia, activity books, and dates to remember, party supplies, resources and links.
How About Starting a Hobby Club?

January is National Hobby Month. What a great opportunity for you to start a new monthly activity for your residents...a Hobby Club. This can be organized in two forms: 1) a mixed gender group, or 2) a separate Ladies’ or Men’s group.

Things you need to consider before you get started:

1. A room which is the right size for the group. It would be best if the room was free from distractions like staff walking through, intercom announcements and pages, etc.

2. Invite staff members, family members or volunteers from the community to share their hobby with the residents. You need one volunteer per month.

3. Have the presenter bring a display of their hobby items. If possible have the presenter demonstrate how they create their craft or art items. Let the residents examine the items and make comments.

4. Finally, provide refreshments for the residents and volunteers who participate.

I am sure that the number of hobby items to be presented is limitless; but here are a few ideas to help get you started:

- Crochet
- Quilting
- Polymer clay crafts/sculpting
- Oil painting
- Water coloring
- Electric trains
- Coin collecting
- Stamp collecting
- Scrap booking
- Stamping
- Fly tying
- Beading
- Candy making
- Photography
- Computing
- Doll making
- Doll collecting
- Woodworking
- Musical instruments playing and/or collecting
- Glassware collecting
- Ceramics
- Cartooning
- Book binding
- You name it

Remember to keep it light, happy, interesting and a lot of fun.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Clergyman / Activist / Civil Rights Figure

Born: 15 January 1929
Birthplace: Atlanta, Georgia
Died: 4 April 1968 (assassination by gunshot)
Best Known As: Civil rights hero who said "I have a dream"

Martin Luther King, Jr. was an African-American clergyman who advocated social change through non-violent means. His writings and public appearances shaped the American civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. In 1963 (the 100th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation), King organized a march on Washington, D.C. that drew 200,000 people demanding equal rights for minorities. In 1964 King won the Nobel Peace Prize, becoming at the time the youngest recipient ever. He was shot to death by James Earl Ray in 1968 while visiting Memphis, Tennessee.

King married Coretta Scott on 18 June 1953. The couple had four children: Yolanda (born 1955), Martin Luther III (b. 1957), Dexter (b. 1961), and Bernice (b. 1963).

(Continued on page 11)
Being the Best Activity Professional You Can Be

by Diane Mockbee, BS, ADC, NAAP President

Are you a positive or a negative force in your facility each day? As an Activity Professional we need to be aware of the influence we have over each and every department. We depend on them to make our program successful by helping residents get to your programs, preparing food for special occasions, and cleaning up after your events. It takes a great deal of good, positive public relations for us to get done all we have to get done!

However, we must offer respect to those we work with in order to receive it. We must be shining examples of what “Quality of Life” for our residents is all about. If you want to be recognized, sometimes you have to “toot” your own horn and let people know all that your department is doing – from the best of the best special events to your continued education! Never stop educating others about the value of activities.

If you are not a part of the marketing team at your facility – you should be. Do you know anyone better than you to be a part of this team? You are the one who keeps our residents smiling, enjoying life.

NAAP Mission Statement

To provide excellence in support services to activity professionals through education, advocacy, technical assistance,

About NAAP

Founded by Activity Professionals for Activity Professionals...NAAP is the only national group that represents activity professionals in geriatric settings exclusively. NAAP serves as a catalyst for both professional and personal growth and has come to be recognized by government officials as the voice of the activity profession on national issues concerning long-term care facilities, retirement living, assisted living, adult day services, and senior citizen centers. NAAP is nationwide in scope with a growing membership in Canada and Bermuda. The National Association of Activity Professionals recognizes the following values:The quality of life of the client/resident/participant/patient served is the primary reason for our services. The strength of NAAP lies in the diversity of its members. NAAP recognizes the rich cultural, and educational backgrounds of its members and values the variety of resources represented. The strength of NAAP also lies in the development and promotion of scientific research which further defines and supports the activity profession. NAAP values the development and maintenance of coalitions with organizations whose mission is similar to that of NAAP's for the purposes of advocacy, research, education, and promotion of activity services and activity professionals. NAAP values members who become involved at the state and national level to promote professional standards as well as encourage employers to recognize them as professionals.

MEMBERSHIP WHY NOT JOIN NOW?

There are so many benefits when you belong to NAAP! Each member will receive a newsletter which will give the updated reports on Government Relations, Special Interests, International Updates, Professional Development, Nominations, Standards of Practice, Financial Updates and a Membership Report. Along with this comes an update from our President, Diane Mockbee, and our Executive Director, Charles Taylor. Members will also receive a discounted rate at the Annual Conference which is held in March/April of each year.

Membership dues are only $70.00 per year. If you are a student in the 90 Hour Basic or Advanced Courses, your dues are only $50.00 for the first year.

Email us for more information at membership@thenaap.com.

Join Now! You can download and mail in this application with your payment or use our new online registration.

NAAP affords Activity Professionals across the country the opportunity to speak with a common voice...NAAP successfully worked with members of Congress to secure a change in the nursing home reform title of the 1987 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA). Through our efforts, it became mandatory that an activity program, directed by a qualified professional, be provided in every nursing home that receives Medicare and/or Medicaid funds. NAAP was the only professional activity association to participate in HCFA's workgroups that revised OBRA's interpretive guidelines now in effect. NAAP provides assistance at the state level to promote certification of activity professionals, working toward uniform professional standards for activity practice.
Wacky Days of: January
Provided by Activity Directors Network
Pennie Bacon, Site Owner
http://activitydirector.net

MONTHLY OBSERVANCES

Baskin
Business and Reference Books Month
Chilly Month (as in cold)
Crime Stoppers Month
Human Resources Month
January Diet Month
March of Dimes
Birth Defects Prevention Month
National Book Blitz Month
National Candy Month
National Egg Month
National Eye Care Month
National Hobby Month
National Hot Tea Month
National Meat Month
National Oatmeal Month
National Prune the Fat Month
National Retail Bakers Month
National Soup Month
National Volunteer Blood Donor Month

National Wheat Bread Month
National Yours Mine and Ours Month
Prune Breakfast Month
Thyroid Disease Awareness Month
Whale Watching Month

WEEKLY OBSERVANCES

Week 1
Braille Literacy Week
Diet Resolution Week
National Law Enforcement Training Week
Silent Record Week
Universal Letter Writing Week
Universal Week of Prayer

Week 2
Cuckoo Dancing Week
Healthy Weight Week
International Printing Week
International Toy Fair
Manwatcher's Appreciation Week

Week 3
International Printing Week
Jaycee Week
National Thrift Week
Worldwide Kiwanis Week

Week 4
Celebrity Read A Book Week
International Green Week
Mozart Week (Austria)
National Activity Professionals Week
National Cross Country Skiing Week
National Glaucoma Week
National Handwriting Analysis Week
National Meat Week

http://www.theado.makesparties.com
16. Give the staff flowers. Who doesn't like to get flowers.
17. Have the mayor issue a proclamation proclaiming activity professional week?
18. Invite other activity professionals from other buildings to go out to dinner to honor this week.
19. Activity Staff should honor their director. You can purchase a plant or a small gift. Purchase a card. Many activity staff like to think the department can function without the director and maybe its true. But just maybe you can function without her because your director has done such a great job of training the staff. Everyone needs a leader and if you have a great leader, let him or her know.

You should meet with your administrator and have a document that clearly states what your plans are for this week. Some of the things on your list might need approval. This is our most important week and a time to show appreciation for all that your staff does for the residents. If you work in a toxic work environment and feel your not appreciated, don't let that stop you from throwing a huge party for your department. It will be appreciated and will send the message loud and clear that you're an activity director that values her staff. This will boost morale and energize your entire department for the coming year. And that matters!

(F-248 - Continued from page 5)
bed bound due to illness, a great program is a Sensory Cart. The sensory cart could be brought to the residents room on a daily basis. You could place fiber optics such as butterfly's above their bed. Sensory carts generally have but not limited to CD players, aroma therapy and fiber optics. Make sure you place the carts where the resident can see them. Otherwise what would be the benefit to the patient?

Anyone who is attending the sensory rooms should have care plans. The Activity Professional should be documenting how often they attend and what they do while in the sensory rooms. You should have simple attainable goals and approaches for each resident. You should have some kind of formal document that nursing would receive that states; which residents are attending the sensory room, time and days of the week.

For infection control, the activity professional should be washing each resident's hand as they are brought into the sensory room. At the end of the day, all of the sensory equipment should be disinfected.

We have implemented sensory rooms in many facilities in New Jersey. What a difference it made! One facility that had over 200 residents identified 43 residents who could not participate in scheduled activities and many of these residents were also on the quality indicator report. Before the sensory rooms opened on each floor, these residents could be found sitting idle with no stimulation. Now all 43 residents attend the sensory room in the morning or afternoon and of course as tolerated. There is a huge difference in a facility with a sensory room compared to those without one.

The sensory rooms also improves customer satisfaction among family members who feel their family member has no activity options due to their function level. With a sensory room you can offer a wonderful activity on a daily basis. When families visit they can also spend time with their loved one in the sensory room. When families visit with their children, the room provides a place for children to also engage in the sensory products. A sensory room is a fun and interactive place for a child.

Sensory rooms should be equipped with rocking chairs. High functioning residents should be encouraged to use the room and the rocking chairs. The rocking chairs are soothing and all of us who have ever sat in a rocking chair can agree how calming an activity the rocking chairs are.

The sensory rooms should also have things to do on each table. Tactile items, pat mats, activity mats, squeeze balls, etc. Also place flash lights on each table. Some residents enjoy turning on the flash light and pointing the light at the wall.

Watch the type of music and sensory stimulation you provide. Smells should not be overpowering. We recommend anything that is recommended for stress relief like lavender. Strong smells such as lemon should not be used. The type of music can also impact the mood. Use music that is soothing such as angel music. It is recommended that you not use music with nature sounds, as dementia clients may misunderstand the sounds of chirping birds or crickets. They misunderstand the sounds of crashing waves as water running and want you to turn it off. For the best outcomes, use soothing angel type music and stress relief scents.

Sensory rooms should have policy and procedures and these should be placed in the administra-
have a sensory room, nursing would not have to watch a confused resident which would free up more of their time for nursing duties. That example is sure to make a difference with a DON.

And if that does not work, try the "survey approach." Surveyors like to see sensory rooms because it means you have great programs for the low functioning residents and having a sensory room might possibly mean the difference between passing survey and not passing survey. Because again, you are required to have programs to fit all residents needs living in your facility. Sensory rooms can definitely help you with appropriate programming and survey outcomes.

So in answer to the question, is it required. No, Can you do without one with the changes to come next year and the answer is also No. Take the time to visit a facility with a sensory room and you will know how important a sensory room is to quality of life for the low functioning resident. And if your administrator still won't allot the money, than begin fund raising because in the end, you will be proud you raised the money.

Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care
http://www.activitytherapy.com carries a full line of sensory items, sensory room care plans, Sensory Room In-services and Sensory Room policy and procedures.

The Activity Director's Office offers party items online to help you create memorable events & enhance your themes. Browse our unique selection of novelties, accessories, gifts and favors.

http://www.theado.makesparties.com

Need Supplies for National Activity Professionals Week?

Visit Our Party Store

The MLK Papers Project
http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/
The complete package from Stanford University: personal papers, a timeline, and much more.

I Have A Dream
http://www.extension.umn.edu/units/diversity/mlk/mlk.html
Straight to the goods: his most famous speech.

The Time 100: Martin Luther King
http://www.time.com/time/time100/leaders/profile/king.html
Time magazine assesses his impact.

MLK Online
http://www.mlkonline.net/
Big fan page for King, with speech transcripts, links and a history of the holiday.
and trying things they’ve never done before! Don’t let your “busyness” interfere with being an integral part of the marketing team. Teach the admissions and marketing staff about your department so when they do tours they aren’t just passing by quickly saying, “This is the Activity Department and they keep our residents busy”, or “they do some really fun things!” Instead, train them to tell families about some of the specific, terrific programs you have created to better the lives of your residents. Write something up for them so they have bullet points to follow if you are not available. Offer to do tours – who can sell your facility better than you????

Make sure any community efforts are done con-jointly with Marketing so that you aren’t doing it alone, stressing the importance of everyone’s involvement.

During National Activity Professionals Week, who takes time to honor the Activity staff? Many times we honor other departments and oftentimes end up honoring ourselves! However, it is your time to be honored. Let people know when National Activity Professional’s Week is and put some helpful hints in your Administrator’s mailbox! Then watch what happens – and if all else fails, then by all means honor yourself. You deserve it. After all, we have the best job in the whole world. We are Activity Professionals!!! Celebrate NAP Week January 22-26, 2006.

Gifts Ideas for National Activity Professionals Week

Includes ideas about how to celebrate the week, sample proclama-tions and press releases. NAPW Balloons, Buttons, Water Bottles, T-Shirts, Pens, Hi-Lighters and more will be for sale from the NAAP Office, using the above contact information.

For promotional materials related to NAPW: There are free downloadable posters available on the NAAP web site. Sea Bay Game Company, Positive Promotions, Café Press and also the Activity Director’s Office apparel store sell items with Activity logos and sayings.

Before all is said and done, cele-brate as a department and with your professional peers. Have a luncheon or private celebration for your department. Activity Directors can purchase recognition materials as gifts for their staff.

And if you are going this alone - give yourself the gift of professional membership and affiliation. If you are not a member of your local, State or National Activity or Recreation Association - treat yourself to a membership in honor of our week. Membership in professional organizations provides the Activity Professional with support, current information, state of the art resources and validation for the work that we do.
magazine and many facilities are subscribing to the magazine. The NCCDP has received many calls about whether other organization will also accept the CEU's. It is up to each accrediting organization to answer that question and the NCCDP can not speak for them. To order this magazine, please go to www.nccdp.org and click on the magazine's logo. If you have questions about free CEU's for CDP's please contact 1 877 729 5191 or visit the web site. To apply for CDP, you must meet several criteria: 3 years experience in health care, Certified / Licensed in a health care profession or hold a Masters or Ph.D., Complete an approved Alzheimer's and Dementia Seminar that is approved by the NCCDP. A list of instructors who are offering these classes in your state are listed on the site. If you're an activity professional working in health care and are not certified, the NCCDP encourages you to contact National Council of Certified Activity Professionals at http://www.nccap.org for a list of courses in your area and to download their application to become a Certified Activity Director or Certified Activity Assistant.

(NCCDP - Continued from page 5)

Yep! She's back - the Activity Pest!
"We're having a party. Please won't you come?"
"If I go this time, will you leave me alone?"

She tries to get me in the mood And bribes me with a little food. So I tag along - to this party I go. There are people dancing, and what do you know? I'm talking and eating and enjoying the show!

I guess theses activities aren't so bad. In fact, the party helped me forget feeling sad.

So, if you get a knock on your door And it is the Pest, try not to ignore. Believe it or not, her intentions are right: To get us out of our rooms And into the spotlight.

The following item comes from Pennie Bacon of Activity Director Network (http://www.activitydirector.net)

Activity Professionals:

Conduct more interviews than...... Jay Leno

Do enough exercise to be on ...... Sportsworld

Put on as many specials as..... Bob Hope

Ad Lib as much as...... Joan Rivers

Play as many games as...... Sesame Street

Know as much trivia as the contestants on......Jeopardy

Live through as many family traumas as......Dallas

Deal with as much illness as...... General Hospital

Have as much compassion as...... Little House on the Prairie

Analyze current events like...... The Today Show

And - We are ready to go into re-runs..... At any time

Above and Beyond all This, We must...

Sing like ......Kate Smith

Play the piano like .....Peter Nero

Do stand up comedy like ...... George Burns

M.C. like......Georgie Jessel

Act like......Katherine Hepburn

Edit newspapers like...... William Randolph Hearst

Read like......Orson Wells

and...

do bulletin boards like...... Norman Rockwell

Adapted from a speech by Madge Schweinsberg, Sept. 1981
JANUARY BLUES

'T'was the month after Christmas, and all through the house,
nothing would fit me, not even a blouse;
The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I had to taste,
at the holiday parties had gone to my waist;

When I got on the scales there arose such a number!
When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber),
I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepared,
The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rare;

The wine and the rum balls; the bread and the cheese,
and the way I'd never said, "No thank you, please."
As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt,
and prepared once again to do battle with dirt,
I said to myself, as only I can,
"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"

So, away with the last of the sour cream dip.
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip.
Every last bit of food that I like must be banished,
'til all the additional ounces have vanished.

I won't have a cookie--not even a lick.
I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.
I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie,
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.

I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore,
But isn't that what January is for?
Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.
Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!

Author Unknown
Organize Your Medical History and Get the Treatment You Deserve

(ARA) - It’s a fact of life that medicine is becoming more and more specialized. That means that you and your loved ones probably see a wider variety of doctors than ever before. Family doctors once knew everything about their patients and provided a continuum of care from colds to immunizations to the most serious of medical conditions. Today however, because we see more doctors and specialists, our medical histories tend to be scattered and incomplete.

By organizing the many pieces of information that make up your or your loved one’s medical history, you will give your healthcare providers a more complete picture and save precious time in recognizing symptoms and diagnosing conditions accurately.

“Keeping track of my dad’s medications, telling doctors what other doctors had said or done, and answering questions over and over for specialists and ER doctors was extremely stressful, especially while working full time,” said Denise Pozen, an attorney and developer of the So Tell Me… medical information organizer. “Now I’m facing the same situation with my mother, which is what led me to develop this organizer. Her regular doctors love it, and so do the ER doctors and nurses. Whatever information they need, I have at my fingertips.” A journal-based system, the organizer has 15 tabs and 20 different forms to help keep track of future and past appointments, medications, consultation notes, tests, family history and more in a convenient three-ring binder. Beyond a journal, there are other preparations you can make to help everyone during this process.

When you visit a doctor, either in the office or in the emergency room, there are several things you can do ahead of time to make the visit more effective.

First of all, make sure you have the information that your doctor needs. Here are some things doctors need to know in order to understand your situation as clearly as possible:

* Medications: You should have an easily readable list of all medications you are currently taking, as well any medications you recently stopped tak-

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From Infancy to Elderly:
Top 10 Ways to Maintain Your Brain

By David Perlmutter, M.D., FACN

(ARA) – Time and again, studies have shown how important exercise, regular mental stimulation and balanced nutrition are to growing minds during childhood. In fact, scientists used to think all crucial development occurred between infancy and the teenage years. Current research, however, indicates that our brains continue to make new connections well into our senior years, and we now understand more than ever the value of nurturing our brains through every stage of our lives.

Babies, for example, are synaptic sponges. Each time you stimulate a baby’s mind -- with singing, talking or even cuddling -- its busy little brain cells make another of the synaptic connections so critical to healthy development. As a child grows and learns to walk, talk, read, do math and socialize, even more synapses, or connections, are made.

Amazingly, the same activities continue to build our brains as we age. People young and old can incorporate these 10 tips into their daily lives to help maintain better brain health and ensure peak performance:

Mentally stimulating activity strengthens brain cells and the connections between them, and may even create new cells. Children experience this almost constantly, but as we get older we need to deliberately challenge our brains. For example, don’t just read a book; join a book club to discuss what you’ve read and share your experiences with others. Also, try a new hobby, like knitting or doing crossword puzzles.

2. Get physical exercise: It’s about circulation.
Physical exercise oxygenates the blood, maintains good blood flow to the brain, and encourages the formation of new brain cells. If you can afford a gym membership or a personal trainer, then do so. Running or walking outside can also prove equally beneficial if you make it part of your daily routine.

3. Adopt a brain-healthy diet: Use your head while browsing the supermarket.
Shop the outer ring of your grocery store -- you’ll find yourself buying fresh foods, fruits and vegetables, and eating a more brain-healthy diet. A diet considered brain-healthy is one that reduces the risk of heart disease and diabetes, encourages good blood flow to the brain and is low in saturated fat, cholesterol and calories. Studies have shown that high intakes of saturated fat and cholesterol lead to a higher risk of Alzheimer’s disease.

4. Incorporate DHA into your diet: Get to know the good fats in your life.
While it is often said that Americans consume too much fat, we actually aren’t getting enough of the fats that are good for us. Adequate levels of Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA), the omega-3 fatty acid found in the brain, eyes and heart, is critical for optimal brain development and function in infants, and ongoing brain function in adults. DHA has also been associated with reducing the risk for Alzheimer’s disease, dementia and age-related macular degeneration, a major cause of blindness.

Fatty fish is the primary dietary source of DHA, making it difficult for most people to get enough of this important brain nutrient from diet alone. (Experts recommend about 220 mg a day for adults). There is also concern about the environmental contaminants found in some fish and fish oils. Fortunately, there is a non-fish, vegetarian alternative -- DHA from algae, also known as Martek DHA. Today dietary supplements and fortified foods with DHA from algae are becoming increasingly available.

5. Be aware of toxins: Keep your bloodstream clean.
Avoid exposure to environmental toxins, including tobacco smoke and stress. It is also important to be mindful of the toxins that may be in the foods you eat. For example, certain fish may be extremely high in mercury, leading the U.S Food and Drug Administration and Environmental Protection Agency to caution pregnant and nursing women, as well as children, to limit their fish consumption. All of these elements can contribute to the formation of free radicals that, if left unchecked, will damage brain cell membranes.

6. Make sure you get enough antioxidants: Eat your fruits and veggies.
Antioxidants help provide the body with tools to neutralize harmful free radicals, and are directly involved in the process by which the brain makes its energy.

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Good sources of antioxidants can be found in the produce, frozen fruit, vegetable and whole grains sections of your supermarket.

7. Monitor your homocysteine level: Ask your doctor about the state of your mind. Another area important to cognitive function is your homocysteine level. Homocysteine, found naturally in your blood, is an amino acid that can negatively affect your cognitive functioning if present in excessive amounts. Your physician can perform a simple test to determine your homocysteine level and recommend ways to lower it if necessary.

8. Prevent diabetes: Educate yourself about living a healthy lifestyle. According to the Alzheimer’s Association, there is overwhelming evidence linking high blood pressure and diabetes with dementia. Insulin resistance, high blood sugar and other unknown factors in people with diabetes lead to deposits in vessel walls that inhibit blood flow to the brain, heart and other parts of the body. The American Diabetes Association has found that 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity, coupled with a 5 to 10 percent reduction in body weight, resulted in a 58 percent reduction of type II diabetes.

9. Wear a helmet: Protect your head. It’s the only one you’ve got. It seems obvious, but too many people arrive in the hospital with irreversible brain injuries that could have been prevented if they had only worn a helmet. When participating in contact sports or riding a bike or motorcycle, always wear a helmet.

10. Seek out positive emotional experiences: Laughter is the best medicine.

Studies have shown that adults who lead stimulating lives -- are social, have lots of hobbies and laugh a lot -- develop more neurons, more connections between neurons and more efficiency in using their brain cells than those who lead sedentary lifestyles.

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(questions - continued from page 1)

Did Noah keep his bees in archives?

Do blind dogs have seeing-eye humans?

Do blind Eskimos have seeing-eye sled dogs?

Do cemetery shorts box?

Do crematoriums have a large yard shift?

Do clowns wear really big socks?

Do cemeteries give discounts to burn victims?

Do files get embarrassed when they get unzipped?

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(organize - continued from page 1)

Medication information should include not only prescriptions but also over-the-counter medications, herbal supplements and vitamins.

* Conditions and illnesses: Tell your doctor about any currently active condition or illness, such as diabetes, heart disease, mini-strokes (TIAs), HIV, etc.

* Things that “run in the family:” You should know your family’s medical history well enough to tell your doctor about anything that runs in your family. For deceased members of your family, it helps to know the cause of death as well as the age at which the person died. Generally, information going back two generations is sufficient. This will include siblings, cousins, parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents and great aunts and uncles.

Second, write down any questions you have for your doctor. List your questions in order of importance. Remember, you may have limited time to visit with the doctor and the most important questions should be asked and answered first. Having them written down will keep you on track.

Finally, write down what your doctor tells you. If possible, have someone with you to take notes while you talk to the doctor. If no one is available, take notes yourself during your visit or write a recap of what your doctor said as soon as possible after the visit. It’s often easy to forget some of the things your doctor says and writing it down will make sure that you don’t forget.

The more prepared you are for your visit, the more helpful and effective it will be. Compiling medical history information can be a tall order. However you can begin this process by talking to family members, doctors and pharmacists. Keep all the information you gather in one location. A combination of folders, charts, card holders, etc. will sometimes do the trick, but a more effective way to organize is to utilize a product like the So Tell Me… organizer. Because organizing medical history information is important for people of all ages, the So Tell Me… organizer has five different versions – Adult, Senior, Pediatric, Couple and Family. For more information about the So Tell Me… organizer or to place an order, contact Pozen Services Inc. at (888) TELLME2 (835-5632) or visit http://www.sotellmeorganizer.com.

(Courtesy of ARA Content)
January Observances

Business and Reference Books Month
Chilly Month (as in cold)
Crime Stoppers Month
Human Resources Month
January Diet Month
March of Dimes
Birth Defects Prevention Month
National Book Blitz Month
National Candy Month
National Egg Month
National Eye Care Month
National Hobby Month
National Hot Tea Month
National Meat Month
National Oatmeal Month
National Prune the Fat Month
National Retail Bakers Month
National Soup Month
National Volunteer Blood Donor Month
National Wheat Bread Month
National Yours Mine and Ours Month
Prune Breakfast Month
Thyroid Disease Awareness Month
Whale Watching Month

“Thar she blows, Matey!”
Suggestions for the Effective Use of Your Newsletter

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

After you have downloaded your newsletter you have several choices to make before printing it.

• First type or paste the title of your newsletter into the blank area of the front page mast.
• On the mailing page insert your facility’s name and address in the upper left corner where it says “From:”.
• 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

• 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).
• 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.
• 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)

• To prepare your newsletter for mailing, it must be folded twice so the mailing face is showing on the outside.
• 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).
• Write or stick your address labels where it says “To:”.
• Place postage in the upper right hand corner. First class postage will pay for your newsletter and at least two 8.5”x11” insertions.
• 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

With bulk mail you can save a bundle on postage. However, you must set up an account with the post office, 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.