Celebrate You during National Activity Professionals Week!

Debbie R. Bera/ADC
NAAP Public Relations Trustee

NAP Week is January 21 - 26, 2007. The theme is: 25 Years of Creating Heartfelt Memories. Don’t forget to celebrate your role as an activity professional and to promote the profession. Take this time to celebrate your successes and your contribution to your residents/clients quality of life! NAAP offers items to purchase to give as gifts in celebration of you – the Activity Professional. You can order from the website or from the NAAP Office. Let me take this opportunity to extend a wish for a – Happy Activity Professionals Week to each of you! Do something extra special that you enjoy during this week. Activity Professionals fulfill a very important role. We’ve always known that, but now other staff recognizes that as well with the rewrite of the Guidance to Surveyors for F248/F249. Finally Activity Professionals are recognized for their worth – we “Create Heartfelt Memories” by providing quality of life for our residents so that they continue to feel needed, useful, part of the community and receive daily enjoyment from life. We create moments to remember and give purpose and meaning to our residents/clients. We are blessed because we can honestly say we love our jobs and have the greatest job in the world! I’ve included “25 Ways to Celebrate National Activity Professionals Week”, one of NAAP’s “Lists of 25” that they have compiled in celebration and honor of NAAP’s 25th Anniversary in 2007. Become a NAAP member and you can have access to all of NAAP’s “lists of 25” and help us to celebrate Activity Professionals and NAAP’s 25th Anniversary!
Dear Activity Professionals,

In case you haven’t noticed it, January is National Activity Professionals Week. The celebration is the 21st through the 26th. When we suggested possible article topics to our writers we had no idea we would get so many NAP Week articles. However, that is absolutely wonderful.

I remember the years I didn’t even know about NAP Week. I wondered why all the other department heads were honored during the year...yet my department got nothing...not even a pat on the back. Then I found out about NAP Week. I learned I had to “toot my own horn” if I wanted us to get recognition. Therefore I started celebrating in a big way every January after that. You need to do that too! Have a great month.

Best wishes,
Linda Lucas

We Are Activity Professionals!
By Sandra Stimson CALA, ADC, CDP

We Are Activity Professionals!
Big hearts, huge bright smiles and enormous compassion, Creative, innovative and dynamic personalities. We are blessed to have found this profession!

We Are Activity Professionals!
We don’t know how to say “no”! We aim to please at personal sacrifice. Long days, hectic schedules and stressful events. We love all of this!

We Are Activity Professionals!
Regulatory changes, tougher surveys and changing populations. As a group like no other, we evolve, learn and adapt. We are a tough group and can handle this like no other profession!

We Are Activity Professionals!
They say, “I could never do what you do” and you know what, They are right! “They, could never do all that you do!”

We Are Activity Professionals!
Phones ringing, many interruptions and endless demands. But we demand more of ourselves and ask for little in return. No one can handle all that we do in one day!

We Are Activity Professionals!
Humanity, compassion, humor and strong moral work ethics. We are the memory creators and the heart of every community. We are the photo albums filled with new memories!

We Are Activity Professionals!

I did something different this month. National Activity Professionals’ Week is January 21 - 26, 2007. The theme is: **25 Years of Creating Heartfelt Memories**. NAP is celebrating its 25th Anniversary. Many nursing facilities and Activity Departments give special recognition to their Activity Directors during this time. I suggest that you copy the poem below (by our friend Sandra Stimson), paste it on to a page in **Word**, change to a fancy font, print it out on a fancy paper and frame it. On one of the days during NAP Week have an Activity Department recognition party and present it to the Activity Director. Have a wonderful NAP Week! - Linda
Each January, facilities across the nation pause to honor members of the activity profession for the important role they play in enhancing the residents’ quality of life. The 2007 celebration of National Activity Professionals (NAP) Week begins January 21st and ends January 26th. Normally it is the activity department’s job to plan celebrations, but in this case the activity professionals are the honorees, and someone else, such as the administrator, should take charge of this tribute. Plan now to meet with the interdisciplinary staff to explore ways to honor the activity staff and to educate the entire team about the importance of activities in the residents’ lives.

For those who would like some assistance in planning to honor your activity professionals, a free National Activity Professionals Week information packet is available from the National Association of Activity Professionals (NAAP). Call direct at 865/429-0717, or fax at 865/453-9914 or e-mail THENAAP@aol.com. The packet includes ideas about how to celebrate Activity Professionals Week, sample proclamations and press releases. Activity Professionals Week balloons, buttons, clocks, therapy wands, and more are samples of items for sale from the NAAP office, using the above contact information. You can also order directly from the NAAP web site, http://www.THENAAP.com. Some of the Activity Professionals Week celebration ideas include:

- Create a giant greeting card incorporating the theme and have the residents and families sign it. This card can be presented to the activity professionals during a special social in their honor or during the Resident Council meeting in January. Have the Resident Council president present each activity professional with a Certificate of Appreciation that specifies what is uniquely special about each.
- Encourage the residents and families to write something special about what activities and the activity staff mean to them and then publish excerpts in the facility’s newsletter. The original “manuscripts” could be matted, framed and presented to the activity staff or hung in a prominent spot in the facility.
- Invite the activity staff to share information about the importance of activities during a scheduled staff in-service or interdisciplinary team meeting. The focus of the presentation should be the role of the interdisciplinary team in promoting leisure and recreational pursuits for the residents.
- Take individual pictures of the activity staff and mount the pictures on poster boards with the title, “Someone You Should Know.” Inscribe each activity professional’s name beneath his or her picture and add a short story about each of them.
- Present the activity professionals with corsages or bouquets of flowers during an Open House, serving special refreshments, and thanking them for what they do for the residents and families. Ask selected guests to share what activities means to them and/or something special about each of the activity professionals.
- Take the activity professionals to lunch.
- Invite the activity director to speak to the Family Council about the importance of leisure and rec-

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

25 Years of Creating Heartfelt Memories  
National Activity Professionals’ Week – 2007

Submitted by Debbie Hommel, ACC

As we pack up the trees and put away the holiday videos – let’s not forget there is one more celebration. The good news is - this one is for us: the activity professional. January 21 through 26th is National Activity Professionals Week. National recognition days serve many purposes – to educate, to acknowledge, to draw attention to something and to celebrate. National Activity Professionals Week can serve all these purposes, depending on how your department approaches the week.

Educating staff, families and the community about the values and benefits of therapeutic activities is a daily responsibility for every activity department. As a profession, we are still “paying our dues” because we are a rather new profession. People need to understand there is a “method to our madness” and that all our programs and approaches have a purpose. NAPW is a perfect time to conduct in-services, offer to speak at family meetings or go out into the community and conduct informative talks about the benefits of activity involvement. Creating informative posters or tri-boards can be displayed during this week as a means to communicate the benefits of each activity offered in the long term care community.

While education is essential, acknowledging the work and the success of the profession is also an important goal for the week. Many an activity professional has heard the phrase “I wish I could be paid to have fun all day”. Yes, most of us do enjoy our work and it is to our credit, we make it all look so easy. But, we all know the hours of preparation and planning that go into our daily, weekly and monthly programs. Acknowledging the activity staff during this week provides an opportunity to thank the department and individual staff for their hard work and efforts throughout the year. Our National Activity Association (NAAP) offers recognition gifts with this year’s logo and there are a number of other “activity” stores which offer activity clothing and gifts which could be presented during this week as a form of recognition.

National recognition days can also be used to draw attention to the profession or cause. As mentioned early, the therapeutic activity profession is a new profession, having been a paid profession in long term care since the late 1960’s. The first individuals who worked in the activity department were nice enough, but many were initially untrained and unskilled. Today’s activity professional must have specific training and certain skills. We have national, state and local professional organizations which represent us. We have standards of practice, ethics and regulations which define the scope and parameter of our work. As a new profession, we are still gaining respect and earning our place at the “big table”. National Activity Professionals’ Week would be an opportunity to convey that this is an established profession which has professionals who do professional work. Creating a bulletin board, a tri-fold board or a simple brochure which outlines the history of therapeutic activities and our growth as a profession would communicate this well. Information which could be utilized for the board is available to members of NAAP.

Finally, let’s do what we are known best for – have a celebration. Celebrate with your fellow activity professionals, cele-

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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.
Big Dice

Materials needed:
Basketball hoop/large plastic garbage can
Masking tape
Paper
Black marker
Note cards with scoreboard on them

Steps to follow:
If using a large plastic garbage can, then securely set that up against a wall. If using a regular basketball hoop, no setup is required until the next step.

On the pieces of paper, clearly write numbers 1-9. Then secure them with masking tape on the floor near the hoop following either of the diagrams at the bottom of the page.

Each number has a certain number of shots a player can try to make. If they don’t make the shot by that number, then that is their score. These need to be determined before play begins.

Before starting, have participants do warm up exercises to stretch their arms, neck and stomach muscles. Explain to players that each number represents a station, and each station has a shot limit. When a player has reached the shot limit before making a basket at that station, their score is the shot limit number and then they move on.

### Name | Par | Score
--- | --- | ---
#1 |  |  
#2 |  |  
#3 |  |  
#4 |  |  
#5 |  |  
#6 |  |  
#7 |  |  
#8 |  |  
#9 |  |  
Total: |  |  

At each station, the player is responsible for keeping his or her own score. Go to all the stations in order and tally the total score when completed. When all participants are complete, compare scores and honor the winner with a prize.

Note: It would be helpful to have a volunteer for every participant.

For more activities, please visit [www.activities4elders.com](http://www.activities4elders.com) and get your subscription! All subscribers get free online access to calendars, Alzheimer’s activities, person-centered activities, monthly activities, easy print-offs from the magazine, and much much more!
Activity Professionals Week
January 21-26 2007

Now is the time to order your promotional items either to honor your staff and / or your Activity director. The Activity Director should plan some special ways to honor the activity staff. The Executive Director should also plan something special to recognize all that the Activity Director does for the community and residents. The following are some suggestions for celebrating this very special week.

**First Day:** Balloons and Banners Up
Word Search Puzzles with words that describe the activity department placed around facility.

**Second Day:** Coffee / Tea and Breakfast Items for the Activity Staff.

**Third Day:** Lunch out with the Executive Director is always appreciated!

**Fourth Day:** Resident party and entertainment. Department heads serve food items.

**Fifth Day:** Activity staff provided with promotional items, such as pins, calculators, bags. These items are available through www.positivepromotions.com

At www.activitytherapy.com we have a special tribute poem for activity professionals that you could print out on pretty paper and read during your resident / facility party.

The Executive Director could purchase one item off of the Activity Department wish list as there are always items the director would like to purchase for the residents, such as overhead projector, pop corn machine, DVD players, sensory equipment, gift cards to video stores and craft stores, etc. Activity Director’s like to receive books and there are many books on our web site that you could purchase. One valuable tool is the Care Plan Cook Book.

The best gift of all is education. Why not send your Activity Director and are staff to some seminars or if she is not certified, to the 90 hour activity courses. You can find an instructor at www.nccap.org. For NJ classes begin in February and will be held evenings 5:30 to 9:00 at Daughters of Miriam in Clifton NJ. See http://www.activitytherapy.com for details.

Another idea is to pay for membership in state or local activity associations.

**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 http://www.nccdp.org

http://www.activitytherapy.com offers resources for health care professionals in many areas of dementia care, care plans, Snoezelen 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.

**Contest Deadline January 2, 2007**

Write your own tribute to the Activity Profession. Winner will receive an award of $100.00 to be used for party supplies at http://www.activitytherapy.makesparties.com. Please include the name of your facility, Activity Professionals Name or health care professional name, phone number, email address, city and state. The tribute must be original. Must be at minimum 12 lines long but no longer than one 8 1/2 by 11 page. All entries will be posted on the web site and will not be returned. Winners will be notified on January 3rd 2007. Email your entries to activitytherapy@aol.com attention: Sandra Stimson
Celebrate Some Untraditional Holidays

Visit any healthcare facility in the US during July and you’ll see colorful red white and blue flags and decorations in the building. During October, assisted living centers across the country celebrate Halloween. Nothing special about that.

How about celebrating National Dress Your Pet Day or International Puzzle Day? Let’s face it. Celebrating untraditional holidays provides a new and unique activity for your residents. For example, on April 22, there’s not too much going on in the way of special events. However, if you are celebrating National Jellybean Day… you just might get some curious residents to participate. Ask staff to dress in bright, solid colored clothes to look like jellybeans. Have a “Guess the Number of Jellybeans” contest at the front desk. Give members bags of jellybeans (if Doctor approved) as they visit the activity center. Ask children to visit and plan a jellybean hunt. Fill small plastic eggs with jellybeans and hide them for the youngsters. Try a jellybean tasting contest. Blindfold staff and see if they can distinguish between root beer flavor and French vanilla.

Your residents will also create positive word of mouth publicity as they tell their family about the unique holiday they celebrated while living in your facility. These untraditional holidays are all easy to celebrate.

Try some of these:

**June 1,** Superman’s Birthday: Ask residents to display their super-hero skills such as tossing Q-tips (instead of a javelin). Superman is only thwarted by green Kryptonite. Invite everyone to a green Jell-O eating party. Pass out Superman comic books to everyone.

**July 8** is Be A Kid Day. Have a contest to see who can tell the silliest knock-knock joke. Ask staff to dress like kids with overalls and pigtails. Get silly (like a kid) and award a rubber chicken to the person that does the best chicken imitation. (To order inexpensive rubber chickens (and rubber pigs!) check out S&S Worldwide. [www.ssww.com](http://www.ssww.com) They also sell novelties such as glow in the dark bouncing balls and inflatable saxophones… perfect for National Saxophone Day of course!

**April 29** is National Hairball Awareness Day…well, maybe that’s one day you don’t want to celebrate!

If those holidays are too wild for you, then try something more “sophisticated”.

**May 12** is National Limerick Day: Encourage residents to write limericks. Stage a Limerick Reading evening with a coffee house atmosphere, complete with staff wearing berets and looking like beatniks. Display all the limericks on a bulletin board where everyone can read the literary masterpieces.

The last Tuesday in August is Touch A Heart Day. Provide opportunities for your residents to make a donation to a local charity. Get staff involved in a project. How about everyone chipping in to sponsor a child in a developing country for $30.00 a month? Select a child from Childcare International’s website at [http://www.childcare-intl.org](http://www.childcare-intl.org) (Note: Childcare only spends 4% of their budget on administration.)

**June 19**, Butterfly Day: Invite your residents to help plant a small garden with butterfly-attracting plants such as Queen (Continued on page 15)

**About Silvana**

Silvana Clark began her activity/recreation career 20 years ago as a spotter for kids on a trampoline. Every Saturday, for four hours, she’d watch kids bounce up and down, up and down, up and...you get the idea. Since then she's written eleven books and is a popular speaker at conferences around the country. She was a keynoter at the British Columbia Activity Professionals conference and recently gave a keynote for the Wisconsin Activity Professionals Conference. Her sessions are filled with humor, practical information and small group activities. She is recovering from her appearance on the Fox reality show, Trading Spaces, where she spent a week living with a family that saw no need for any kind of fun activities. Contact her at [http://www.panicbuttons.com](http://www.panicbuttons.com) or [http://www.silvanaclark.com](http://www.silvanaclark.com)
The NAAP Page
National Association of Activity Professionals
“Founded by Activity Professionals for Activity Professionals”
http://www.thenaap.com

Mission Statement: To provide excellence in support services to activity professionals through education, advocacy, technical assistance, promotion of standards, fostering of research, and peer and industry relations

25 Ways to Celebrate
National Activity Professionals Week

NAAP Public Relations Trustee
Debbie R. Bera/ADC

1. Treat yourself to a manicure, pedicure or massage.
2. Have a party, social or special event with your residents and all other staff.
3. Take your staff out to lunch.
4. Get together with other Activity Professionals for a special luncheon or activity just for you.
5. Send out an email blast to all Activity Professionals you know wishing them a great week and reminding them how great they are and how you are glad to know them.
6. Thank your staff and remind them how glad you are to have them as an employee.
7. Purchase NAP Week items/gifts for yourself, your staff and other staff who help to make the activity program great.
8. Remind staff from other departments you couldn’t do your job well without them – it takes a team! (Maintenance to help set up events, dietary to provide treats, CNA’s/Nurses to get residents ready, housekeeping to keep your area clean – you get the picture.)
9. Thank your boss for being supportive.
10. Plan daily special events or a theme week with your residents to celebrate all week long.
11. Hang up the NAP Week poster throughout your facility.
12. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done. (Sometimes you just got to do it!)
13. Write a list of why you do what you do. (It’s a good reminder to have on hand during those stressful times i.e. when state is in the building. It will serve to remind you of your gratitude.)
14. Do something just for you. Take some extra time for yourself to reflect, relax and to have FUN!
15. Start a FUN project you have been putting off for when you have time (the present is never better) i.e. start that new hobby, take those piano lessons, etc.
16. Take a Paper Work Vacation and spend 100% of your time with

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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. 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
A Whole New Year!
Kathy Hughes, ADC
NCCAP President

It is a whole new year of planning, programs and interesting challenges for all of us. We make resolutions for ourselves and rarely make it to Valentines Day! How about making resolutions for your department and stick to them! It can make your job a whole new experience and you might even get to sit back at year’s end and think of how much you accomplished for yourself and your staff!

Resolution #1:
We will organize our working space!

This is #1 because it’s the hardest thing to do, believe me there are pictures all over the universe of my office. Spend these winter month’s clearing out your supply cabinet and your desk. Yes, you can now shred the attendance logs from 2000 and shred anything that you have from before the new millennium! You know that you have those files and now would be a GREAT time to purge them. Get rid of supplies, don’t throw them out, but instead donate them to that facility down the road or the Adult Day Care program in your area. Ask their staff to come and help for an afternoon and share the wealth.

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**Monthly Observances**
For activity idea nuggets visit us at: [http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com/10OCT.html](http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com/10OCT.html)

**Monthly**
- Business and Reference Books Month
- Chilly Month
- 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**

**Week 1**
- Braille Literacy Week
- Diet Resolution Week
- National Law Enforcement Training Week

**Week 2**
- Silent Record Week
- Universal Letter Writing Week
- Universal Week of Prayer

**Week 3**
- Cuckoo Dancing Week
- Healthy Weight Week
- International Printing Week
- International Toy Fair
- Manwatcher's Appreciation Week
- National Book Week
- National Bowling Week
- National Pizza Week
- National Word Processing Transcriptionist Week
- Printers Ink Week
- Someday We'll Laugh About This Week

**Week 4**
- International Printing Week
- Jaycee Week
- National Thrift Week
- Worldwide Kiwanis Week

**About: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was the most famous leader of the American civil rights movement, a political activist, and a Southern Baptist minister. In 1964, King became the youngest man to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (for his work as a peacemaker, promoting nonviolence and equal treatment for different races). On April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. In 1977, he was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Jimmy Carter. In 1986, Martin Luther King Day was established as a United States holiday, only the fourth Federal holiday to honor an individual (the other three being in honor of Jesus of Nazareth, George Washington, and Christopher Columbus). In 2004, King was posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal. Considered by many as one of the greatest public speakers in U.S. history,[1] Dr. King often called for personal responsibility in fostering world peace.[2] King's most influential and well-known public address is the "I Have A Dream" speech, delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C..

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**Activity Director Apparel & Gift Store**
[http://www.cafepress.com/theadoshop](http://www.cafepress.com/theadoshop)

**Visit Our Party Store**
[http://www.theado.makesparties.com](http://www.theado.makesparties.com)
Clipart for the Month

Happy New Year

Activity Director Apparel & Gift Store
http://www.cafepress.com/theadoshop

Visit Our Party Store
http://www.theado.makesparties.com
MEMBERSHIP
WHY NOT JOIN NAAP TODAY?

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.

(25 Ways to Celebrate - Continued from page 8)

your residents for the week. It will remind you of all the joys in your job – and it can be done – who does the paper work when you are on a regular vacation? (Trust me, the department will not fall apart!)

17. Try a new activity with your residents – think outside the box of “traditional” activities.

18. Thank your residents and remind them how much they mean to you.

19. Thank your family for being supportive of you and for having to sometimes “take the backseat” when you need to put in long hours.

20. Share your expertise with others – why reinvent the wheel?

21. Spread joy with an attitude of gratitude!

22. Purchase something new and fun for the activity department.

(Hey, it doesn’t have to cost a lot of money to be fun. Here is just one idea: “20 Q” electronic hand held game. Costs just $9.99 at local discount stores i.e. Target. It will not only fascinate your residents, but staff as well. It is very intriguing! It can be used for 1:1 or adapted for a group. It is very fun to do as a group, there will be lots of interaction and laughing, and all will have just a generally good time. My residents love it! It holds their attention for an hour and a half – time flies when you are having fun!)

23. Do a fun Inservice with staff that stresses the importance of activities for Quality of Life.

24. Jot down some testimonials from volunteers, family members, residents and staff to share with others regarding positive responses to the activity program. (Again this would be a good mood lifter on those stressful days.)

25. Most importantly – remind yourself how lucky you are to truly love your job and to have the greatest job in the world!

(25 Year Tradition - Continued from page 3)

reaction, not only for their loved ones in the facility but also for them. This provides an opportunity to highlight the activity program and invite the family members to assist with the structured program by bringing in their pets, participating in an activity with their loved one, inviting their church choir to visit and sing for the residents, playing a musical instrument for a special event, leading a craft class, etc.

These are just a few ideas that have been used to celebrate NAP Week over the years. For additional ideas or more information about NAP Week or the products available through the NAAP office, contact Irene Taylor at the NAAP office, 865/429-0717. No matter how NAP Week is celebrated in your facility, the administrator should “take the lead” in recognizing the contributions of the activity professionals. It’s the one week of the year when someone else is responsible for “throwing the party.”

Activity Director Apparel & Gift Store
http://www.cafepress.com/theadoshop

Visit Our Party Store
http://www.theado.makesparties.com
(A Whole New Year - Continued from page 9)

would like to do this year and make them a part of your team.
Plan the educational needs of your staff and yourself. Remember that the NAAP Conference is in April, in Columbus, Ohio and that you need to start making arrangements so that you can attend. Your state associations have conferences as well and perhaps your staff might want to go this year, so go to your state website and get the dates. Amazing things happen when activity professionals get together and planning ahead will make it happen.

Resolution #3:
Take a Trip to Your Town
Many places have exciting things happening all the time. We just have to know where and when. Fill a van with some of your staff and residents and take a trip through your town for the afternoon. Stop at a hotel and scour the pamphlet rack. Take all of them and see if you can contact them for a free tour. There are more things to do than you know and the residents will enjoy the trip through their town to see what’s new and what’s still there!

Then schedule a long weekend for yourself and your family. Take off Friday and Monday and do your own scavenger hunt of what’s going on in your town. You are so busy making memories for your resident’s that sometimes you forget that you need to make memories with your family and friends. Go to Garage Sales and attractions that you have been meaning to do all these years!

Then schedule a day for yourself and go somewhere you have always wanted to go, but didn’t have the time. A spa day, shopping day, craft class just for you or learn something new just for you. Better yet, plan a PJ day and just play games on the Internet!

Resolution #4:
Read a Book
There are a million books out there for anything, but reading one book a year on management will help make your job easier. The library has many topics on management and they are not all as stuffy as you might think. Management books come in all shapes and sizes and taking time to read just one a year will assist you in learning techniques that will help you grow.

Resolution #5: Plan a Special Event
you haven’t done before
Plan a program that you have always wanted to do, but couldn’t find the time to do it. Something special for your residents that is unexpected and fun. Enlist the help of others and enjoy the process. Take residents on an overnight at a resort or go for a “Mystery Trip” for the day. Just do something that you have always wanted to do. You might find that your enthusiasm for your job will encourage others to think beyond the regular stuff.

You have 330+ days ahead of you to plan and explore. Take this year to change and grow as an Activity Professional. Planning ahead makes the job go smoother and involves creative thinking. You have 330+ days to learn something new and wonderful for your staff, your residents and yourself. Now enjoy 2007 and see what you can make happen.

Visit Our Party Store

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/
T'was the month after Christmas

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'd 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 rared;
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 be banished, 'til all the additional ounces have vanished.
I won't have a cookie--not even a lick.
I'll only 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

A Cardiac Specialist...

A cardiac specialist died and at his funeral the coffin was placed in front of a huge mock up of a heart made up of flowers. When the pastor finished with the sermon and eulogy, and after everyone said their good-byes, the heart opened, the coffin rolled inside and the heart closed.

Just then one of the mourners burst into laughter. The guy next to him asked: "Why are you laughing?"

"I was thinking about my own funeral" the man replied.

"What's so funny about that?"

"I'm a nose specialist."

A Large Variety of Items are Available Including...

Activity Director Apparel & Gift Store

http://www.cafepress.com/theadoshop

Activity Director Certified Baseball Jersey
Activity Director Black T-Shirt
Activity Department Baby Doll T-shirt

http://www.theado.makesparties.com

Visit Our Party Store

(Untraditional Holidays - Continued from page 7) Anne’s lace, yarrow or snapdragons. A local garden club could help. Get more information on http://www.butterflies.com

The holidays never end: Donald Duck’s Birthday is June 9th, the third week in July is National Avoid Boredom week, and don’t forget National Mustard Day on the first Saturday in August. Even if residents choose not to participate, they will still remember that the activity department celebrated a unique holiday.

Don’t forget to celebrate National Bubble Wrap Day!

Resources:
Naturally I’m partial to the book *Every Day A Holiday*, (by Silvana Clark) which gives activities, craft and food ideas for over 320 holidays. Available at major book stores and on http://www.Amazon.com

Chases Calendar of Events lists thousands of holidays, anniversaries and special events. http://www.chases.com

(NAP Week - Continued from page 4) brate with facility staff and of course, celebrate with the residents. Getting the department together for a celebratory meal, formally or informally should be a part of the week for all activity departments. Whether you are able to all go out to a local restaurant or order in pizza, a shared meal creates a sense of community. Celebrate with your facility staff. Bring donuts or Danish to the department head meeting during the week. Give out the informative brochure that you created for your department and involve the department heads in our celebration. Schedule an “activities” open house, with refreshments, balloons and games. Send out invitations to all departmental staff and invite them to join the celebration. While they are visiting your department and sharing in those refreshments, there is opportunity for them to review the informative posters or tri-fold boards you have created and displayed. Lastly, schedule a party with your residents and their families. Give out “activity awards” to the residents for highest attendance, earliest arriver, or best bingo player. Give out “staff awards” for the best craft leader, best bingo caller and the like. Like the theme for this year says, make the week full of “heartfelt memories”.

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.

Main topic interests include: anything that will benefit Activity Directors; items which can be used in facility newsletters or as activities (i.e. original and/or public domain items); personal Activity Director/resident experiences.

Please send only copies of your work for submissions. The material will not be returned.

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 download this publication. (Download requires Adobe Reader which is free software from: http://www.acrobat-hq.com)

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

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

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http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com
January 2007
Following is Your Free Facility Newsletter

The following four pages contain a pre-written facility newsletter which you may use as your own. It is intended to help make your departmental responsibilities time saving and cost effective. All you need to do is put your title on the front and your address on the back.

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”x11” 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. fluorescent colors), 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, mail at least 200 newsletters at a time, presort your mail, 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.
Resolutions for a Healthy New Year

(ARA) - You've resolved to live a more healthy lifestyle in 2007. But where do you start? The American Medical Association has some advice on the most important resolutions to make -- and keep -- for a healthy New Year.

"The start of another new year provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the past 12 months and look ahead to changes we can make today to improve our health tomorrow," said AMA President-elect Ron Davis, M.D. "It is important that we develop healthy lifestyles and behaviors that we can carry with us throughout our lives."

The AMA offers these resolutions for 2007:

1. Avoid Smoking -- the leading preventable cause of death -- as well as exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS). Released earlier this year, the U.S. Surgeon General reported that there is no risk-free level of exposure to SHS, and the California Environmental Protection Agency estimates that SHS kills 50,000 Americans each year.

2. Eat Your Fruits and Vegetables: As recommend by the USDA Food Guide Pyramid, eat about two cups of fruit and two to three cups of vegetables daily to reduce your risk of developing heart disease, cancer, stroke and high blood pressure.

3. Cut Back on Salt: Limit your salt intake to one teaspoon per day (if you are 50 years of age or older, cut back to about half a teaspoon per day) to help lower blood pressure and decrease your chances of getting heart disease or having a stroke.

4. Limit Fat in Your Diet: Eat a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and trans fats to reduce cholesterol levels and the risk of developing heart disease.

5. Check Cholesterol: Have your blood cholesterol checked regularly by your doctor and keep your cholesterol level under 200 mg/dl to reduce your risk of developing heart disease.

6. Reduce Amount of Soda You Drink: Per capita soft-drink consumption has increased by almost 500 percent over the past 50 years. Limit your consumption of regular soda pop and other sugar-sweetened drinks to help you avoid weight gain and obesity, and to also decrease tooth decay.

7. Check Blood Pressure: Have your blood pressure checked regularly by your doctor to help reduce your chances of heart attack or stroke. If you have high blood pressure, make sure that you keep your blood pressure under 140/90.

8. Get a Colonoscopy: If you are 50 or older, ask your doctor about getting a colonoscopy to screen for colon cancer to improve your chances of early detection.

9. Get a Mammogram: If you are a woman 40 years or older, get a mammogram every one to two years to help detect breast cancer early and if diagnosed, improve your chances for survival.

10. Protect Your Skin from the Sun: Use sunscreen (with an SPF of at least 30) or protective clothing when you're in sunlight for a prolonged period. If you frequently get a suntan or sunburn, have your doctor check your skin regularly to detect early signs of skin cancer.

"These resolutions are just a few of the things you can do to make positive, healthy lifestyle changes. In 2007, continue to look to the AMA for a wide range of health information and continue to turn to your physician for the highest quality of care for you and your family," said Dr. Davis.

For more health advice, visit the American Medical Association at www.ama-assn.org.

Courtesy of ARA Content
When It's Time to Take the Keys Away

(ARA) - How would you react if you were sitting in the back seat, one of your parents were driving, and they became slightly confused when it came time to take an exit? Or if they brushed a curb while driving down the road?

Most people wouldn't consider either situation alarming, but what if your loved one got lost on the way to the grocery store or some other place they had been to dozens of times before?

It happened to 84-year-old "Mary" of Charlotte, N.C., about two years ago. She was supposed to drive herself to a dentist appointment, but somehow ended up about 10 miles away at a post office. Fortunately she remembered her home phone number and was able to call her husband for help. When he arrived, he hugged her and with tears in his eyes told her it was time to take away the keys.

As the baby boomers age, taking away the keys is a decision more and more of their children and spouses are going to have to make. Safe driving is no longer possible once a person's vision, hearing and/or reaction time have become impaired by old age; or once diseases like Alzheimers and dementia have robbed them of such cognitive abilities as memory, judgment and understanding.

"In Mary's case, it wasn't the first time she had taken a wrong turn. Fortunately, her husband found the strength to take away the keys, but a lot of people are reluctant to do so because they fear their loved one will see it as a loss of their freedom and dignity. We make sure that is not the case," says Pat Drea, vice president of Visiting Angels, the agency hired to help Mary just days after she lost her keys.

Some days the Visiting Angels would play cards with Mary or help her do housework and make dinner; other days she'd drive Mary to doctors' appointments or the store, or just take her to the park for an afternoon stroll. "Our Visiting Angels did everything possible to make life seem normal that year before Mary entered the nursing home which I'm sure both she and her husband appreciated," says Drea.

In addition to helping out at home, Visiting Angels can also be hired as companions for people in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Their services are covered by most long term care insurance plans.

Visiting Angels is the nation's fastest growing franchisor of non-medical senior homecare. The company now has 275 offices across the country. To find the one nearest you, log on to www.visitingangels.com or call (800) 365-4189.

Courtesy of ARA Content

Warning Signs of Unsafe Driving

* Abrupt lane changes, braking or acceleration
* Reacts slowly to changes in driving environment
* Has close calls or more fender benders than usual
* Fails to use turn signal or keeps signal on without changing lanes
* Drifts into other lanes
* Drives on the wrong side of the road or in the shoulder
* Appears fearful or scared of driving or excessively tired after driving
* Has trouble reading signs or navigating directions; gets lost more than usual
* Notices the irritation and honking of other drivers but doesn't seem to understand, or seems oblivious to the frustration of other drivers
* Fails to pay attention to signs, signals or pedestrians
* Misses exits or backs up after missing exit
* Experiences physical difficulty or range of motion issues (looking over the shoulder, moving hands or feet, etc.)
How to Relieve Sore Muscles and Achy Joints

(ARA) - Cooler weather, sore muscles and achy joints seem to be a common combination for many people. Shoveling snow, outdoor activities and cooler winter nights are only a few of the culprits. Many have asked themselves and their friends, "How can I get rid of my muscle soreness and joint pain?"

Fruit Advantage Cherry Prime may be the solution many are looking for to enjoy a reduction in muscle soreness and achy joints during the cooler winter months. What’s the secret of this product? Cherry Prime is the result of over three years of research and is a patent-pending formula. In addition, it is the first product to combine the vital ingredients of glucosamine, chondroitin and tart cherries. This new product delivers the essential compounds of these three natural ingredients.

Recent research conducted at the University of Vermont showed that cherry juice reduced muscle soreness in participants. The results indicated that the individuals who drink a tart cherry juice blend had reduced symptoms of normal muscle damage caused by physical exertion. The study recorded isometric elbow flexion strength, muscle tenderness and pain prior to the study and four days following exercise.

Muscle strength loss and pain were significantly lower in the cherry juice drinkers versus the placebo. The most notable finding of the study was that muscle strength loss was only four percent for those drinking cherry juice compared to 22 percent strength loss for those on the placebo.

Fruit Advantage has combined tart cherries with pharmaceutical grade, triple strength glucosamine and chondroitin. Each serving of Cherry Prime delivers the equivalent of approximately eight glasses of cherry juice, without the sugar, based upon the antioxidants (anthocyanins). Not only does Cherry Prime deliver the benefits of tart cherries, it also provides 1500 mg of glucosamine and 1200 mg of chondroitin. These amounts have been safely used in clinical trials.

Cherry Prime is the perfect balance between joint comfort and the natural health benefits of tart cherries. If you are searching for natural relief from sore muscles and joint pain due to an active lifestyle, Cherry Prime is for you.

To obtain more information or to purchase the product, visit www.fruitadvantage.com. Fruit Advantage Cherry Prime can also be obtained at www.cvs.com, www.amazon.com, Fruth Pharmacy, Busch’s Grocery stores or by calling (877) 746-7477.

*Courtesy of ARA Content*
ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

An elderly couple were driving across the country. While the woman was behind the wheel, the couple was pulled over by the highway patrol.

"Ma'am, did you know you were speeding?" the officer said.

The woman, hard of hearing, turned to her husband and asked, "What did he say?"

"He said you were speeding!" the old man yelled.

The patrolman then asked, "May I see your license?"

The woman turned to her husband again, "What did he say?"

The old man yelled back, "He wants to see your license!"

The woman then gave the officer her license.

"I see you are from Arkansas," the patrolman said. "I spent some time there once and went on a blind date with the ugliest woman I've ever seen."

The woman turned to her husband again and asked, "What did he say?"

The old man replied, "He said he knows you!"