The Legend of Punxsutawney Phil
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punxsutawney_Phil

Punxsutawney Phil is a groundhog and the most famous resident of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. On February 2 (Groundhog's Day) of each year, the town of Punxsutawney celebrates the beloved groundhog with a festive atmosphere of music and food. During the ceremony, which begins well before the winter sunrise, Phil emerges from his temporary home on Gobbler's Knob, located in a rural area about 2 miles east of town. According to the tradition, if Phil sees his shadow and returns to his hole, the United States will suffer six more weeks of winter. If Phil does not see his shadow, spring will arrive early. The date of Phil's prognostication is known as Groundhog Day in the United States and Canada. During the rest of the year, Phil lives in the town library with his "wife" Phyllis.

A club of Phil enthusiasts, known as the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club, take care of the famed rodent year-round. A select group, called the Inner Circle, also plan the annual ceremony. Members of the Inner Circle are recognizable by their top hats and tuxedos. "Groundhogese", which only the Inner Circle appear to understand, and then his prediction is translated for the entire world.

In reality, groundhogs (widely known as woodchucks) have a maximum lifespan in captivity of 10 years, much shorter in the wild. Thus it is likely that Phil has been replaced dozens of times. The actual method whereby the Inner Circle makes the "prediction" is unknown.

Borrowing from an ancient European legend, "For as the sun shines on Candlemas Day, So far will the
Dear Activity Professionals,

This month is full of special recognitions and holidays. Our contributors have covered everything but Presidents Day. This is one of the largest issues of Activity Director Monthly we have ever published; and the circulation is constantly on the increase.

In this issue you will find articles on Groundhog’s Day, Valentine’s Day ideas and trivia, Documentation suggestions, Black History month and a bevy of helps for you to plan your February Activities.

Be sure to check out our Activity Planner pages on the website at (http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com). I guarantee you will find something to help you out and keep you up to date with what’s happening in the Activity Professional world.

Thank you for looking at our little e-magazine. It is our work of love and devotion to our exciting discipline.

Best wishes,

Linda Lucas

Linda Lucas: co-owner of The Activity Director’s Office website. Linda has been an Activity Director in Indiana since 1983.

Readers may contact Linda at: admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com

Valentines for Seniors

Valentine's Day usually means chocolates and roses to say "I Love You"—in a romantic setting. Or it means giggly cards to give to schoolmates and eating tons of those little candy hearts with sayings stamped on them. But all of that may mean leaving out people who are very loved and who are an important part of our families and society: our seniors.

Grandma, Grandpa, good old Uncle George, an elderly gentleman who never gets any visitors at an assisted living facility, or that kindly neighbor lady across the street who always looks after your cat while you are on vacation.

Cards with romantic sentiments, or even humorous sentiments, may just not be the most appropriate thing to give a senior, and many seniors have restricted diets that don't include candy or may have medical problems that are irritated by live flowers (or may be in a facility where flowers aren't appropriate). How can you say "Happy Valentine's Day" to them, just to let them know that they are thought about and have a place in your life?

Of course the best way to say it is to go to visit them! An hour of your time is probably the most precious "gift" you can give to any senior, whether that senior is a parent, another relative, the sweet old lady across the hall from your grandmother's room, or an older neighbor down the block who always smiles and waves from his porch when you drive by.

However, no matter how old you are, it's always wonderful to open a card or a small gift. So if you want to take something to give as a small gift, then take something that suits the person you are visiting!

Using free printables offered by Mom's Break Valentine, you can print and make small Valentine gift bags that are just perfect for a whole range of "small gifts." Is your senior a tea drinker? Then put in a few individually wrapped tea-bags of various types (like Earl (Continued on page 15)
Black History Month


Black History Month is celebrated annually in the United States in the month of February.

Carter G. Woodson chose the second week of February for Negro History Week in 1926 because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the black American population, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. Later on in 1976, as the nation reached its bicentennial, the week was expanded into an entire month. However, February has much more than Douglass and Lincoln to show for its significance in black American history. For example:

- **February 23, 1868:** W.E.B. DuBois, important civil rights leader and co-founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), was born.
- **February 3, 1870:** The Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was passed, granting blacks the right to vote.
- **February 25, 1870:** The first black U.S. Senator, Hiram Rhodes Revels, took his oath of office.
- **February 12, 1909:** The NAACP was founded by a group of concerned and moder-ate black, Jewish and white citizens in New York City.
- **February 1, 1960:** In what would become a civil-rights movement milestone, a group of black Greensboro, North Carolina, college students began a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter.
- **February 21, 1965:** Malcolm X, the militant leader who promoted Black Nationalism, was shot to death by three Black Muslims.

History books had barely started covering black history when the tradition of Black History Month was started. At that point, most representation of blacks in history books was only in reference to the low social position they held, with the exception of George Washington Carver. Black History Month can also be referred to as African-American History Month, or African Heritage Month.

In the United Kingdom (UK), Black History Month is celebrated in the month of October. The official guide to Black History Month in the UK is published by Sugar Media, Ltd., who produce 100,000 copies nationwide.

Black History Month exposes the harms of racial prejudice and cultivates black self-esteem following centuries of socio-economic oppression. It is an opportunity to recognize the significant contributions people with African heritage have made and continue to make in such areas as education, sports, medicine, art, culture, public services, economic development, politics and human rights.

The Debate

Black History Month sparks an annual debate about the continued usefulness of a designated month dedicated to the history of one skin colour. While some agree that it's more of a reminder and prevention from the past. Critical op-ed pieces have appeared in the Cincinnati Enquirer and USA Today.

Many black radical/nationalist groups, including the Nation of Islam, have criticized Black History Month.

On the December 18, 2005 episode of 60 Minutes, actor Morgan Freeman criticized Black History Month as inadequate, noting that there is no White History Month. "I don't want a black history month. Black history is American history." Free-

(Continued on page 15)
The process of documentation can be a stress provoking process for many activity professionals. We know it is important, but who has the time? Entering information about the resident or client is a responsibility many professional caregivers share. It is also a privilege to be a part of the team, which is involved in assessing the resident, or client's needs and developing treatment plans to provide appropriate care and services. Knowing this is important for anyone involved in the documentation process. Knowing why we document - is the first step.

Communication: It would be wonderful if we could sit down with all involved professionals and discuss resident/client care at length, on a daily basis. However, that's not possible in most cases. The medical record can be a communication link between professionals. This is a major reason why all entries should be accurate, timely and written in a professional manner.

Justification: Although the profession is guided by standards of practice, each resident/client is an individual. Sometimes interventions work and other times they do not. Documentation, which chronicles interventions offered, and resident/client response provide the department with justification as to why the current plan of care is in place.

Continuity of Care: Our main goal in caring for our residents/clients is to ensure quality care and services. In some cases, multiple staff cares for the resident/client within a department. Documenting pertinent information, treatment plans and response to care can act as a guide for staff to follow. This prevents repeating unsuccessful efforts, maintains successful approaches and permanently records individualized information the resident/client provides upon admission.

Accountability: "If it isn't documented, it isn't done!" is a common response as to why documentation is important. There are regulatory requirements defining certain entries, which is what this common perception is based upon.

What guides the documentation process? Who makes the "rules"?

There are two supporting factors, which define and direct required entries.

Legal Factors: Regulations! Healthcare settings are defined through and State regulations. The activity professional should become familiar with the regulatory agencies that govern their facility. The regulations will clearly define which entries are required, time frames for completion and in some cases, actual content.

Professional Factors: Each profession is guided by Standards of Practice. The established professional organizations (National Association of Activity Professionals, to name one) have written Standards of Practice. They clearly define documentation standards and content. Being affiliated with a professional organization provides access to this information, which can further guide the professional in appropriate documentation content.

General Medical Record Guidelines

- Sign all entries with full name, job title, and date.
- Never use white out. When an error is made, cross it out with one line, write "error" and initial & date.
- Use only approved medical abbreviations.
- Write legibly; and ensure spelling and grammar is correct.
- Use black ball point pen.
- Do not skip lines. If open lines are left, they need to be crossed out before the next entry.
- Be accurate, concise and factual. Stay away from generalized judgments which are vague.
- Be aware of facility policy regarding medical record guidelines, use of forms and individual entries.
Arm Circles
Up to five persons with mild to moderate Alzheimer’s

Exercise/Music Activity

A randomized, controlled study by Southern Cross University, Lismore, New South Wales, has found that when performed regularly, gentle exercises involving joint and large muscle group movement, combined with music, are effective at slowing down cognitive deterioration in patients with mild to moderate dementia.1

Such exercises are suitable also for frail older persons, including those in wheelchairs, and are a good way to stay active during the cold months when outdoor exercise activities such as walking are not always possible.

Materials needed
- A spacious room
- Armless chairs for all participants
- Audio equipment
- Age-appropriate music

Note: Consult medical personnel before the activity to make sure that all participants can exercise safely.

Steps to follow
Start the music, and with the participants sitting in front of you, give the following instructions:
- Sit with feet flat on the floor and arms down at sides;
- Slowly lift arms to shoulder height;
- Rotate arms forward five times;
- Hold;
- Rotate arms backward five times;
- Slowly lower arms to the side; and
- Rest.

Repeat the exercise a few times, making sure participants don’t become fatigued.

Adaptation for persons with severe Alzheimer’s: Have each participant exercise in a pair with one helper or volunteer they can watch and copy.

Tip: Give plenty of verbal clues while demonstrating the movements.

Reference
The Alternative Solutions Page
By Sandra Stimson ADC, CALA, CDP
Executive Director, Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care
http://www.activitytherapy.com

Winner of Activity Professional Tribute Contest

In honor of Activity Professionals week, January 21 - 27 Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care www.activitytherapy.com held a nationwide contest for an original tribute honoring Activity Professionals week. Many inspirational tributes were submitted by activity professionals, administrators, social workers, consultants and residents. The winner was judged on originality in which the tribute captured the essence of the activity profession. The 2006 winner is Susan Winder-Rivera ADC who is the Director of Therapeutic Recreation at Grand Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center located in Bronx New York. The winner received a cash award. All of the entries are posted on the www.activitytherapy.com web site. For more information please visit our web site.

Susan Winder-Rivera, ADC Director Therapeutic Recreation Grand Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center Bronx, New York

Our call is one most extraordinary
First we try to figure out
What it is a resident’s truly about-
Involving the body, the mind, and the soul
We fill the assessment, develop a goal.

We look at the person and not the disease
We don’t want to label we want to perceive
In the calm of the storm one can usually see
what a person can manifest and what they can be,
beyond limitations, unwanted adulterations
beyond morbid fascinations and unheld screams
A higher calling cries to be heard in the melancholy scenes.

It may be the heart
It may be the bones,
It may be the blood or the brain’s chemicals.

when the dancer stops dancing through the loss of a limb
we map out and modify for the resident to win.
the original thrill returned to its source
back to the fork in the road before things went off course…

We enlighten and energize the lost and forgotten fan their flames, call their names deny their Armageddon.

We are teachers, counselors, a healing balm
The soother, the smoother of things gone wrong
We overcome obstacles beyond comprehension
our course need be steady, beyond apprehension

Our purpose is higher than the eye can see and although we do appear quite commonly
Our call is one most extraordinary.

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
Check Out These Free Community Groups

If you are like most activity professionals, you enjoy an unlimited budget to buy expensive recreation equipment, hire Tiger Woods to give lessons to retired golf enthusiasts and order top-of-the-line craft supplies. In reality, you probably collect lessons to retired golf enthusiasts and order top-of-the-line craft supplies. In reality, you probably collect empty toilet paper rolls to stock your craft closet. No problem! Here are some ways to stretch your activity programming dollars. Try looking through the yellow pages of the phone book or a local Chamber of Commerce for a number of creative resources.

- Older Girl scouts could provide craft classes or lead sing-a-longs as part of a service project. One Boy Scout troop made 12 birdhouses as a badge project. Then they installed a birdhouse outside twelve resident’s windows. The houses attracted a variety of birds and sparked many a discussion about birds.
- 4-H Club members love displaying their skills. They may even set up a petting zoo at your facility. One 4-H Club regaled the residents at an assisted living center by displaying their pet tarantulas! Another big hit are fainting goats. These goats appear “normal” until they hear a loud scream. At that point, they actually fall over on their sides and faint! (Hey, we all know activity professionals look for creative activities!)
- A large dance studio welcomed the chance to do their dress rehearsal at a senior center. Residents loved the dancing and fancy costumes, while the young performers got another chance to perform before an appreciative audience.
- Check if a local college offers recreation or physical education degrees. Those students could gain practical experience by coming to your facility and leading low-key physical activities.
- Many senior centers have square dance groups that enjoy performing. See if they’ll visit your facility. One senior center had a harmonica band that was booked four months in advance because they were so popular at nursing homes and assisted living centers.
- Toastmaster clubs are located in communities across the country. Members often participate in the “Tall Tales Contest” where speakers tell outlandish stories. Toastmasters also compete in national humorous speech contests. Toastmasters look for opportunities to practice their Tall Tales before contests, and your facility could be the perfect place. Toastmasters also compete in local and semi-professional storytelling for your residents.
- The National Spelling Bee is now broadcast on ESPN! Many local elementary schools offer preliminary spelling bees. Invite them to use your facility to give young spellers experience competing in front of an audience.
- Is there a college with a Summer Stock program near by? Call to see if the director would bring his performers to your facility for a performance or as a dress rehearsal.
- Ask staff to let you know when their high school students are having a dance. Then call the high school and find out who is in charge of decorating. Students spend hundreds of dollars decorating their gyms for their dances...then throw everything away afterwards. Offer to help take down decorations and you’ll end up with an amazing amount of decorations to use in your programs.

With a few phone calls, your activity programs could range from tap dancing two year olds to 4-H exhibits of fainting goats. Have fun!

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 keynote speaker 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 or http://www.silvanaclark.com
Ah, a new year, a fresh start – a chance to reflect on the past, review how far we have come and seek to improve in this next year. For many people the New Year brings hope and happiness, but for others it brings sadness and is a reminder of the hurts, sorrows, failures, and mistakes of the past. We cannot control everything that happens to us, but we can control how we react. We essentially have two choices each day – to see the glass as half full or as half empty. We can decide to have a positive attitude or a negative attitude. The difference between being a victim and a survivor is this – if you’re a victim, you allow things to happen and do nothing. If you’re a survivor, you take what happened and you make a change. We can all be survivors. We can all bring more success and happiness into our lives. We can all choose the positive attitude and we will all be much happier for it!

We can learn a lot from our children (or grandchildren) about happiness. Here are a few things:

We can “pick happy” – we can choose our mood. Observe children at play, they usually “pick happy”. Try to remember to be like children and “pick happy” as often as you can.

We should love generously. Have you ever played the game, “I love you more” with your child? It goes like this with a discussion back and forth between parent and child – “I love you” “I love you more” “I love you the most” and so on. Each time professing to love the other more. The path to happiness is appreciating those you love and telling them as often as you can.

We all should skip a little. Children skip because it makes them happy. It is hard to be mad and skip – try it for yourself and see.

Turn your to-dos into to-enjoys. Remember some chores can be pleasures if we choose to look at them that way. Have you ever raked a yard with your small children?

(Continued on page 13)
The NCCAP Page
The National Certification Council of Activity Professionals
http://www.nccap.org

Mission Statement: The National Certification Council of Activity Professionals is a credentialing body, which sets standards and criteria to ensure that those we serve have optimal life experiences

Remember When?
By Heide M. Cornell, ADC
NCCAP Board of Trustees – Special Projects

Do you remember when "Activities" was fun? Come now, I'm sure you do. Do you remember when it was o.k? in fact it was even exciting to say "I'm an Activities Director!" Do you remember the time of simplicity, when you were not embarrassed to say "I provide fun and entertainment to the seniors in my community”? I do, and let's face it; I'm not that old so it wasn't that long ago.

When I started in this field (at the wee age of 14), I was a volunteer in an ALC unit of my local hospital. When I inquired what that meant, I was told these were people waiting for nursing homes. I remember thinking to myself, "those poor people are probably sad, and just need somebody to make them smile". Turns out I was right. (Ah, the wisdom of youth!) The residents of the unit were not that interested in the actual events held, even though they attended them, they were only looking for "something to do" or "something to make them forget for a while". So we did just that. We had lots of fun just "hanging out" together, me and my 25 grandparents.

Of course there was paperwork. I had to fill out slips every program indicating who attended. I think it took me a whole ten minutes to write down names of people on a piece of paper and file it in a book. I had to "meet the new folks" every week. My supervisor made a program out of it called "Getting to Know You". I brought our new residents a goodie bag filled with puzzles, magazines, snacks, an activities calendar, and something else although I forget what that was. (Come-on it's been 16 years now) When I went in to their room, or to the lounge, I introduced myself and gave them the bag. Then I asked them some questions about themselves like, "what do you like to do?" and after about 15 minutes, I was on to the next person. I had to put all of their answers on another piece of paper that my supervisor filed in a pink book behind the nurse's station. I now know that the "pink book" was the resident's

(Continued on page 16)

Why Become NCCAP Certified?
1. Federal Law, OBRA, states that an activity department must be directed by a “qualified professional.” One of the ways to become qualified is to become a Certified Activity Professional.
2. NCCAP certification is recognized by HCFA (Health Care Financing Administration) as an organization that certifies activity professionals who work specifically with the elderly.
3. NCCAP certification assures administrators and surveyors that you have met certain professional standards to become certified.
4. Many administrators will only hire activity professionals who are already certified.
5. Some administrators offer a higher salary to a certified professional.
6. Become NCCAP certified so others will know that you are nationally qualified and giving quality activity service to residents/clients.

QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTION:
A. ACADEMIC EDUCATION May derive from a wide variety of curricula: Social Work, Recreation, Education, and Business degrees. These are a few of the educational backgrounds that represent our certified members.
B. ACTIVITY EXPERIENCE Activity work experience with elderly populations, where at least 50% are 55+ years of age. Some volunteer work with elderly clients may be applied.
C. CONTINUING EDUCATION Current education (within past 5 years):

For further information visit http://www.nccap.org
Monthly Observances
For activity idea nuggets visit us at:
http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com/ActPlannerIntro.html

Monthly Events

Potato Lover's Month
Vegetation Month
American Heart Month
American History Month
American Music Month
Biorhythm Health Month
Black History Month
Canned Food Month
Celebration of Chocolate Month.
Creative Romance Month
Great American Pies Month
Human Relations Month
International "Boost" Your Ego Month
International Embroidery Month
work).
International Friendship Month
International Twit Award Month
National Cat Health Month
National Cherry Month
National Children's
Dental Health Month
National Fiber Focus Month
National Scottish Culture Month
National Snack Food Month
National Weddings Month
National Wild Bird Feeding Month
Responsible Pet Owner Month
Return Shopping Carts To the Supermarket Month
Sleep Safety Month

Famous Weeks in February...

Week 1
Agricultural Week
National Pay Your Bills Week

Week 2
Big Brothers/Sisters Week
Boy Scouts Week
Celebration of Love Week
Circle K International Week
Dietary Managers' Pride in Food Service Week
Hero Week
International Forgiveness Week
National Cardiopulmonary Week
National Crime Prevention Week
National Future Homemakers of America Week
National New Idea Week
National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week

Week 3
Brotherhood Week
Health Education Week
Home for Birds Week
International Friendship Week
National Condom Week
National Engineers Week
National Pedestrian Toll Week
Pay Your Bills Week

Week 4
International Friendship Week
National Engineers Week
Pancake Week
Truth Week

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

Visit Our Party Store
http://www.theado.makesparties.com
Valentine Record Breakers

Source: http://www.corsinet.com/braincandy/valtrivia2.html

Earliest sex manual

Vatsyayana's Kama Sutra is believed to be the oldest sex manual in existence. Generally considered the standard work on love in Sanskrit literature, the book is thought to have been written around 300 A.D, or the "Classical Age" of India.

The book is best known to Westerners as an instruction manual for acrobatic sex because most translations use only a portion of one of the 35 chapters, the famous index of sexual positions.

In Sir Richard Burton's classic translation of 1883, other chapters have more innocuous headings such as: Of Creating Confidence In The Girl, On The Arts And Sciences To Be Studied, The Life Of A Citizen and About The Business Of A Go-Between.

Longest Engagement

Octavio Guillen and Adriana Martinez from Mexico finally got married in June 1969, after a 67-year engagement. Both were 82 years old when they wed.

Longest Kiss

Karmit Tzubera and Dror Orpaz kissed for 30 hours 45 minutes, on April 5, 1999, to win a kissing contest held at Rabin Square, Tel-Aviv, Israel. They remained standing and went without rest breaks. They were later treated for exhaustion. For their efforts, the couple won a trip around the world and US $2,500 in cash.

Longest Marriage

Cousins Sir Temulji Bhicaji Nariman and Lady Nariman from India were married when they were both five years old in 1853. Their marriage lasted 86 years, until Sir Temulji's death aged 91 years, 11 months in 1940.

Most Kissing Couples

The greatest number of couples to have kissed in the same place at the same time was 1,420, at the University of Maine in Orono, Maine, US, on Feb 14, 1996.

Oldest Bride

At the age of 102, Minnie Munro became the world's oldest known bride when she married Dudley Reid in Point Clare, Australia, on May 31, 1991. The groom was 83.

Oldest Divorced Couple

The highest combined age of a divorcing couple is 188, by Ida Stern (91) and her husband Simon (97) of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, US, in Feb 1984.

Oldest Groom

Harry Stevens was 103 years old when he married 84-year-old Thelma Lucas at the Caravilla Retirement Home, Wisconsin, US, on Dec 3, 1984.

Oldest surviving love poems

Written in a clay tablet from the times of the Sumerians, who were the inventors of writing, around 3500 B.C. It was unromantically named Istanbul #2461 by the archaeologists who unearthed it.

Oldest woman to become a sex symbol

Mae West has been portrayed as one of the very few stars who was "self-made and self-sustaining," owing her success to herself alone, not to a director, scriptwriter, makeup artist, or photographer. What is perhaps most remarkable about her is that she first arrived at Hollywood when she was forty years of age - "grotesquely late to begin a film career".

Youngest Married Couple

In 1986, it was reported that an 11-month-old boy had been married to three-month-old girl at Aminpur, Bangladesh. The marriage had been arranged in order to end a 20-year-old feud between two families.

15% of U.S. women send themselves flowers on Valentine's Day.

73% of people who buy flowers for Valentine's Day are men, while only 27 percent are women.
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.

(Motivation - Continued from page 8)

They take delight in the crunching of the leaves and jumping into the piles. Take the time to notice the joys in the chores.

Redefine success. Take pleasure in what you have accomplished instead of being disappointed by what you haven’t. Surely you have seen the joy in your child’s eyes when he completes something he is proud of?

Recapture your childhood bliss. Remember the look of pure pleasure on your child’s face when she was doing something she enjoyed? Remember to experience complete freedom and sheer pleasure in doing what you enjoy doing.

Go on impulse. Remember how it felt to be carefree? (O.K. this one is hard for some of us!) We can again observe this trait in children at play. They know how to be totally carefree in the moment. So give yourself permission to cut loose and enjoy yourself more.

Be a best friend. Observe children with their friends – watch the way they care for each other, copy each other and even fight and make up. Remember to always take care of your friendships.

Spread joy! Remember “show and tell” in school? Remember happiness comes from sharing something we love with others.

Pursue your passion. Ever observe a child with a passion for something? They put their heart and soul into it. Remember to have a passion for something and to pursue it in earnest!

Savor joy while it lasts. Remember the joy on a child’s face opening presents on their birthday? They take it all in with great glee. Remember not to cling to moments of perfect joy, just relish them and have faith that more will come.

So forget those New Year’s resolutions (most do not stick anyway) and instead just resolve to be your best you and do your best. (I bet those other resolutions will fall into place with just this one goal.) Get confident, happy and the life you want. Here are some hints to be your best:

Figure out what your best looks like. Get a mental picture of your best self by recalling a time when you felt at the top of your game. Those memories can keep you focused on what fulfilling your potential means to you.

Picture success. Write down specific characteristics of what your best self from the past looked like. Then write down how you can develop those parts of yourself that you value most. Once you have a clear vision of what your maximum potential looks and feels like, it is easier to create.

(Continued on page 14)
Rewrite your future. Look for self-defeating behavior patterns you repeat with objective curiosity. (Yes we all have them and as Activity Professionals we should be good at finding them.) Many of these stem from our childhood and carry over into our adult life. These are often our reflex reactions to things. An example is always saying yes to requests even when they are not in our best interest. (As a child we always aimed to please a parent and get attention.) A better reaction is to take a time out to consider it, weigh the pros/cons and decide if it fits in with your greater goals. (How many of us have this self-defeating behavior pattern as Activity Professionals?)

Quiet your inner critic. (Oh that ugly little guy that sits on our shoulder!) The most basic to reaching your maximum potential is the ability to hold yourself in high regard. That inner critic is often our most debilitating factor that prevents us from reaching our potential. Make a commitment to stand by yourself without judgment. Stop berating yourself so you have the freedom to really change and grow.

Keep your perspective. Most of us have something unsettling going on in our lives, while other parts are going really well. Very rarely is everything all good or all bad. (It is hard to remember this when going through a rough patch, as human nature is to focus on what is going wrong.) Gratitude for what is right in your life goes a long way toward keeping a healthy perspective on the big picture.

Stay connected. Once you have discovered how to be your best self, the trick is staying centered there. You know you are at your best when you can easily live in the moment because you are engaged with what is going on in your life. You need to follow your instincts and do not overanalyze decisions. Take risks that could move you ahead in life.

Being your best self is about always reaching to grow and evolve. We never really reach our maximum potential – it’s the process that makes life meaningful. Strive to be your best you and to do your best in 2007 and beyond – Happy New Year!
Grey, Chamomile, or perhaps something exotic like Green Tea). Maybe your senior enjoys scented candles, so put a nicely scented votive in the little gift bag (and include a pack of matches!). Does Uncle George like to fish? Then slip in a fishing fly or other small fishing tackle box item.

These little bags are also perfect for giving gift cards (the "credit card" type gift cards that are now available for just about every restaurant, department store, and specialty shop).

Remember that the best gift you can give a senior is your time and attention... but you'll enjoy the smiles when Aunt Jessica opens up that little bag with a scented closet sachet in it!

To see some of these ideas for Valentines for Seniors, along with a sample gift bag, go to:

http://readingroom.janktheproofer.com/seniorvalgiftbag.htm

For the free printable gift bags featured in this article, go to Mom's Break Valentines, at:

http://valentine.momsbreak.com/valentine-candybags-candywrappers.html

Jan K., The Proofer is a freelance copyeditor and proofreader. Visit http://www.jansportal.com for more information about Jan's free crafts, recipes, tutorials, other resource sites, and free content articles, as well as Jan’s business services. Be sure to visit Mom's Break (http://www.momsbreak.com/) for free printable crafts and projects. © Copyright 2005 to present. All rights reserved.

VALENTINE TRIVIA

About 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are exchanged each year. That's the largest seasonal card-sending occasion of the year, next to Christmas.

About 3% of pet owners will give Valentine's Day gifts to their pets.

Alexander Graham Bell applied for his patent on the telephone, an "Improvement in Telegraphy", on Valentine's Day, 1876.

California produces 60 percent of American roses, but the vast number sold on Valentine's Day in the United States are imported, mostly from South America. Approximately 110 million roses, the majority red, will be sold and delivered within a three-day time period.

Cupid, another symbol of Valentine's Day, became associated with it because he was the son of Venus, the Roman god of love and beauty. Cupid often appears on Valentine cards holding a bow and arrows because he is believed to use magical arrows to inspire feelings of love.

During the late 1800s, postage rates around the world dropped, and the obscene St. Valentine's Day card became popular, despite the Victorian era being otherwise very prudish. As the numbers of racy valentines grew, several countries banned the practice of exchanging Valentine's Day cards. During this period, Chicago's post office rejected more than 25,000 cards on the grounds that they were so indecent, they were not fit to be carried through the U.S. mail.
chart, and the "piece of paper" was an initial assessment.

Then the day came when my supervisor told me that I should really think about becoming an "Activities Person" because I seemed to enjoy it so much. When I was 14, I was going to become a teacher. I didn't even dream that "Activities" was a real job. It was a way to have fun. Still, I logged it into the back of my head and continued on "hanging out" with my "senior folk" as I called them. At 16, my parents told me I had to get a paying job, so I applied to work at the hospital in the dietary department.

Two years without my "friends" in the ALC made me sad. I went to college and started my teaching track, and somehow never seemed happy with that choice. I saw a job posting on the hospital board for an activities person in the ALC unit. (Seems the hospital union didn't like the idea of volunteers doing real person jobs) It was part-time and fit in with my college life very well, so I bid on it and got the job. In two years, some of the regulations have changed, but the job was still fun. Instead of just "hanging out" with the seniors, I now had to plan at least a month in advance what I was going to do every day. That was o.k. With me because I just gathered a whole group of them up and asked "What do you want to do this month?" I even put it on the calendar and called it "Cruise Director's Club". The residents thought it was funny, and we would make paper hats to wear to the meeting, sometimes we would have goldfish crackers. I never had a problem filling my calendar with things to do; the residents had lots of ideas.

There were a few months when I had small attendance at the meeting because the dentist or doctor was there, or there were empty rooms because the residents had moved to nursing homes. I didn't stress over it because I had those "Getting to Know You" papers to look at for ideas. When people would ask me what my job was all about, I'd say "having fun with the old people at the hospital." I meant it too. My job was about having fun. After a year back in the field of fun, I changed my college major and decided that I really wanted to grow up to be an Activities Director. Wow! What Fun!

Something happened in those 16 years, activities professionals discovered a new emotion besides happiness called stress. As I entered into the world of activities directing, I began networking with people who forgot about fun. In fact I began meeting people who would even say, "I'm an activity professional!" and give a nervous, almost embarrassed laugh afterwards. Soon after people started saying "I provide diversional programming for people in alternate levels of care." Soon after that the going phrase was "I provide recreational therapy and life enrichment services." Why did that happen? Did I miss something? Oh, I know the
whole push to be "more than just the Bingo girl" and truly I support it, but you don't have to hide behind a title to do that. I have never felt embarrassed saying, "I'm an Activities Director". Sometimes people say to me "wow, your job must be fun." I've never been insulted by that. In fact I always say, "yep, but you're jealous!"

Maybe it is just my personality, but I just can't find it in me to get all caught up in the fight to be the "best" program director. As long as my residents think I am, what do I care what they do at the ABC nursing home down the street. I think technology is great, and knowledge is power. I use those things every day to develop new programs, but it all boils down to "is this fun?" Ladies and gentlemen, you can have the most sophisticated "Specialized Sensory Program for the Cognitively Impaired" but is it fun? Do you enjoy implementing your "mandatory 15 minutes or more room visits with the socially isolated?" Do you even know what that means? Do your residents enjoy having you force your "you must attend 2-3 social groups per week" rule on them? Have you ever stopped to think that it is ok to want to be left alone?

An activity is supposed to be fun. It is something for the residents to help them "forget" for a while. All of these fancy sophisticated products and programs have made us forget that. All of the importance placed on following the rules and having state survey compliance have distorted a once wonderful and important field. Activities are for the residents. Nobody else. They are not to make your boss happy, or to serve as a way for families to avoid guilt for not visiting. They are not even about what your government wants. They are about the residents.

People post on the bulletin boards every day about needing new ideas, keeping things fresh, stressing over how much paperwork there is, not having time to do the room visits or the extra weekly sensory programs, needing ideas to get responses from those sensory programs. It makes my head spin. Those are all indicators you have forgotten about the resident's. You have forgotten about what they want and need. You have forgotten that it is all about fun. Let your physical therapist worry about declining ADL’s. Let your speech therapist concentrate on meaningful responses to stimuli. You should be concentrating on meeting recreational needs. That is all, there is no more.

Keep on providing your room visits, but only visit people who want you to. If you write that in your notes, you won't get a dreaded deficiency. Keep providing sensory programming, but instead of being "fancy" be real. Actually look at your resident’s assessments for your programming ideas. That's why you filled them out in the first place. Modify those interests to meet the ability levels of your folks. Don't ask a perfect stranger what your residents want to do for "Cinco de Mayo", ask your residents. Heck, you may find out that they don't even know what it is, and would have been just as happy not celebrating it at all!

When you start to feel the "stress" of the activities profession, take a step back and look at your resident's faces. Are they smiling? Happy residents make all the difference when it comes to surveys and administration. Trust me. It's true. Remember it is not about what you want the outcome to be, but whether or not the residents are enjoying themselves. The next time somebody asks you what you do for a living, tell them "I make a lot of lonely people happy". If a co-worker says, "your job must be fun" don't get offended. Tell them the truth. Tell them "Can you believe I get paid for this?"

I am Heide Cornell, nationally certified, and I have fun at work. Do you?

NCCAP

Membership

Kathy Hughes, ADC
NCCAP President

NCCAP would like to thank all of our members for their continued professionalism and their dedication to the field of activities. As a NCCAP certified activity professional, you have chosen to become a member of the largest organization of activity professional in the world. Our membership now exceeds 6,300 members.

Our dedicated staff has been working extremely hard these past few months to process hundreds of applications and renewals. This process involves the processing of applications and mailing them to trained reviewers who are activity professionals just like you. They also send out renewal packets to activity professionals who review 20-40 packets a month. They volunteer their time and talent to keep things running smoothly. They are the unsung hero’s of the activity profession.

(Continued on page 18)
2007 MERGERS, INVEST NOW!

For all of you with any money left, be aware of the next expected mergers so that you can get in on the ground floor and make some BIG bucks.

Hale Business Systems, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Fuller Brush, and W.R. Grace Co. will merge and become: Hale, Mary, Fuller, Grace.


3M will merge with Goodyear and become: MMMGood.

Zippo Manufacturing, Audi Motors, Dofasco, and Dakota Mining will merge and become: ZipAudiDoDa.

FedEx is expected to join its major competitor, UPS, and become: FedUP.

Fairchild Electronics and Honeywell Computers will become: Fairwell Honeychild.

Grey Poupon and Docker Pants are expected to become: Poupon Pants.

Knotts Berry Farm and the National Organization of Women will become: Knott NOW!

Source: http://suddenlysenior.com

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.

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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All rights reserved.
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” 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, 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.

Activity Director Apparel & Gift Store

http://www.cafepress.com/theadoshop

Visit Our Party Store

http://www.theado.makesparties.com

Vol. 03, No. 2

http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com

February 2007
Hot Chocolate Anyone?

(ARA) - As Valentine's Day approaches, the search for the perfect gift looms large. This year, think chocolate -- but not the kind you eat, the kind you wear. Brown-toned gemstones are the hottest jewelry trend going, and make the perfect gift -- and this chocolate is calorie-free, so she can enjoy it without guilt.

"For many people, it's hard to think beyond the traditional diamonds and pearls when it comes to gemstones," says Natalie Parman, vice president of merchandising at Jewelry TV. "But the options are endless ... especially since colored gemstones are increasingly popular. Brown-hued stones are gorgeous and many gem varieties are available in this versatile, earthy tone."

If "Valentine's Day" and "diamonds" are synonymous for you or your sweetheart, you can still catch the chocolate wave. Brown diamonds, from the lighter champagne to the darker cognac brown are more rare than colorless diamonds, yet fairly easy to find. They look stunning in a cocktail ring setting or a pair of dangle earrings.

Another gemstone available in brown is Zircon. Known for its brilliance and luster, Zircon is often compared to diamonds. However, it is very brittle, so it needs to be treated with care when worn and cleaned.

Smoky quartz is also part of the trendy brown gemstone family. Its color ranges from brown to black to smoky gray and often comes in large sizes, making it a perfect gem for pendants and brooches.

Another gemstone that is also part of the brown gemstone family is Citrine. This quartz can be found in a range of yellows to golden brown and is a very popular stone for jewelry designers. Hollywood stars like Gloria Swanson helped popularize this gemstone in the '30s and '40s. Once again, big, bold gemstones are in vogue.

For a truly unusual gem, look no further than cat's eye rutile-related quartz, which displays unusual optical properties. Most varieties of quartz are well-liked because they have few or no inclusions. But cat's eye quartz is prized because of its inclusions, golden needles of rutile that form different patterns inside the stone.

Topaz, the birthstone for December, also comes in wonderful brown hues from red-brown to champagne. Topaz can be costly and rare when it occurs naturally in unusual colors. Smoky quartz and Citrine are sometimes mistaken for Topaz.

Finally, Tourmaline can be found in almost every color, including brown. It looks beautiful in any jewelry setting.

Jewelry TV makes shopping for the perfect Valentine's Day gift easy. Just visit www.JTV.com to see the entire collection of brown-hued gemstones and all the quality jewelry selections.

Courtesy of ARA Content
Be a Savvy Senior: Tips for Staying Happy & Healthy This Winter

(ARA) - Ice and snow. Colds and coughs. The upcoming winter months can be a tough time for anyone, but for older adults this time of year is not only treacherous, but stressful. According to the American Psychological Association's 2006 Stress Survey, the number one stressor is a sick family member. And, stress can lower your resistance to infection and increase the intensity of illness. But don't stress yet! Now's the time to prepare to fight the effects of the upcoming winter season. Be a savvy senior and use the following tips.

Practice an Ounce of Prevention

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 35 to 50 million Americans get the flu each year. And of the 20,000 deaths associated yearly with the flu, the elderly are the most susceptible. Make this year different by adding an ounce of prevention.

* Flu season runs from mid-October through mid-March, with the height of the season from January through March. So be sure to get a flu shot before the season arrives. You can easily get the vaccination at your doctor's office or check with your local Board of Health for flu clinics offered at community locations.
* With the windows and doors sealed tightly to keep cold drafts out, it also keeps cold and flu germs inside the home. Utilize products that are focused on stopping the spread of germs safely and naturally, such as the Germ Guardian UV-C room air sanitizer. This product helps eliminate potentially harmful airborne germs from your home and is proven effective against 99.9 percent of targeted airborne cold and flu-causing viruses and other germs. It harnesses the power of naturally occurring UV-C light technology, the same technology used in hospitals, making it a safe way to kill germs without the use of chemicals. For more information, visit http://www.germguardian.com.
* Consider quitting smoking as it can make you more prone to bacterial and viral infections. Since smoking damages the linings of the nose and throat, smokers tend to have more frequent and severe colds than nonsmokers. Second-hand smoke can also lower one's natural defenses, so breaking the habit will not only help your health, but those around you as well.

Avoid Slips and Falls

Walking in a winter wonderland can be a dangerous excursion for seniors. According to the National Safety Council, falls are the leading cause of unintentional injury in or around the home for Americans 65 and older. And the ice and snow associated with the winter months are definite causes of many falls. Take some precautions this year to make the outdoor walks a bit safer.

* Always wear flat, rubber-soled shoes to gain tread on slick surfaces.
* Maintain a safe outdoor walkway that is clear of ice and snow. However, since snow shoveling can be a strenuous exercise, be sure to take many breaks or ask a neighbor or local teen to help out. Also, applying sand or salt to surfaces can help thaw the ice and create a safer surface.
* Purchase a walking cane designed for icy surfaces for added assistance.

Keep Warm and Safe

More home fires take place dur-
ing the winter months than any other time of the year due to the increased use of wood-burning fireplaces and space heaters. Eliminate risks while you're staying warm and toasty by taking into account the following:

* Have your chimney professionally cleaned and always use a sturdy fireplace screen to protect your home from flying embers that could catch fire.
* Portable heaters are the leading cause of home fires in the winter months. Be sure that electric space heaters have significant room around them so they do not catch fire to nearby blankets, couches or curtains.
* Indoor humidity can be extremely low in the winter, which can dry out your skin and mucous membranes, making you more susceptible to getting sick. Germ Guardian's new Digital Ultrasonic Humidifier senses the humidity in the room and automatically adjusts to a pre-set level to maintain the proper amount of humidity at all times.

By following these simple tips, you'll be on your way to a healthy, happy winter season. If you do happen to catch a cold or the flu this winter, remember to stay hydrated, don't skimp on sleep and call your doctor if your symptoms last longer than 10 days.

For more information on Germ Guardian's full line of safe and natural germ-killing products including price and availability, visit www.germguardian.com or call (866) 603-5900.

Courtesy of ARA Content

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**Why do we celebrate Valentine's Day?**

"We celebrate Valentine's Day, because until 1969, it was one of the many Saint's Days observed by the Catholic Church. It was dedicated to the patron saint of romantic causes, St. Valentine.

Although it was removed from the Church's calendar in 1969, the religious meaning coupled with Valentine's Day's roots in Roman paganism have allowed it to continue as a holiday for everyone.

Early Christians saw Valentine's Day as a way to honor St. Valentine, of whom there were actually three. The Catholic Church recognizes three saints by that name, all who were martyred on February 14.

The St. Valentine the day is named for was, most likely, a priest in the 3rd century who performed secret marriages when the Roman Emperor Claudius II thought single soldiers were more likely to enlist in the army. That St. Valentine was imprisoned and executed on February 4, 270. It is believed he sent the jailer's daughter a note saying, "From your Valentine." The phrase is still widely used on valentines today.

In 496 A.D., February 14, was declared in the name of St. Valentine by Pope Gelasius. It remained a Church holiday until 1969, when Pope Paul VI took it from the calendar.

On February 14, the ancient Romans celebrated the Feast of Lupercalia in honor of Juno, the queen of the Roman gods and goddesses. Juno was also the goddess of women and marriage so honoring her was thought to be a fertility rite.

At the feast held the next day, the women would write love letters and stick them in a large urn. The men would pick a letter from the urn and for the next year, pursue the woman who wrote the chosen letter. This custom lasted until the 1700's when people decided their beloveds should be chosen by sight, not luck."
A husband found himself in big trouble when he forgot to get his wife anything for Valentines Day.

His wife angrily told him, “Tomorrow there had better be something for me in the driveway that goes from zero to 200 in five seconds flat.”

The next morning, the wife found a small package in the driveway. She opened it and found a brand new bathroom scale.

Visiting hours for the husband at the hospital are limited due to the extent of his injuries.

My funny Valentine
(Song Lyrics)

My funny Valentine
Sweet comic Valentine
You make me smile with my heart
Your looks are laughable
Un-photographable
Yet you're my favorite work of art
Is your figure less than Greek
Is your mouth a little weak
When you open it to speak
Are you smart?
But don't change a hair for me
Not if you care for me
Stay little Valentine stay
Each day is Valentine's day!