

Activity Director Monthly

The Monthly Newsletter of The Activity Director's Office Website

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Providing Online Resources for Activity Directors

January 2005

Facts About Alzheimer's Disease

"Alzheimer's Disease" is the term used to describe a dementing disorder marked by certain brain changes, regardless of the age of onset. Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging - - and it is not something that inevitable happens in later life. Rather, it is one of the dementing disorders, a group of brain diseases that lead to the loss of mental and physical functions. The disorder, whose cause is unknown, affects a small but significant percentage of older Americans. A very small minority of Alzheimer's patients are under 50 years of age. However, most are over 65.

Alzheimer's disease is the exception, rather than the rule, in old age. Only 5 to 6 percent of older people are afflicted by Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia - - but this means approximately 3 to 4 million Americans have one of these debilitating disorders. Research indicates that 1 percent of the population aged 65-75 has severe dementia, increasing to 7 percent of those aged 75-85 and to 25 percent of those 85 or older. As our population ages and the number of Alzheimer's patients increases, costs of care will rise as well.

Although Alzheimer's disease is not yet curable or reversible, there are ways to alleviate symptoms and suffering and to assist families. And not every person with this illness must necessarily move to a nursing home. Many thousands of patients - - especially those in the early stages of the disease - - are cared for by their families in the community. Indeed, one of the most important aspects of medical man-

agement is family education and family support services. When, or whether, to transfer a patient to a nursing home is a decision to be carefully considered by the family.

The onset of Alzheimer's disease is usually very slow and gradual, seldom occurring before age 65. Over time, however, it follows a progressively more serious course. Among the symptoms that typically develop, none is unique to Alzheimer's disease at its various stages. It is therefore essential for suspicious changes to be thoroughly evaluated before they become inappropriately or negligently labeled Alzheimer's disease.

Problems of memory, particularly recent or short-term memory, are common early in the course of the disease. For example, the individual may, on repeated occasions, forget to turn off the iron or may not recall which of the morning's medicines were taken. Mild personality changes, such as less spontaneity or a sense of apathy and a tendency to withdraw from social interactions, may occur early in the illness. As the disease progresses, problems in abstract thinking or in intellectual functioning develop. You may notice the individual beginning to have trouble with figures when working on bills, with understanding what is being read, or with organizing the day's work. Further disturbances in behavior and appearance may also be seen at this point, such as agitation, irritability, quarrelsomeness, and diminishing ability to dress appropriately.

The average course of the

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Linda's Notes

Hi, AD's!

For 2005 **the Activity Director's Office** is adding more valuable resources to help AD's do their jobs easier, faster and smarter. In collaboration with **Newsletter-Express.com** we are pleased to offer a pre-printed facility newsletter you may download and use as your own. Believe me, it saves you a lot of time and stress while allowing you to attend to the more important things like activities and charting.

Also, you can have the newsletter personalized for your facility for a small fee (a savings of \$7.00 off the regular single issue price). It can all be accessed through this site on the "**Your FREE Facility Newsletter**" page.

Many AD's are taking advantage of the site's "**Prayer Requests**" page. You are invited to submit confidential, anonymous prayer requests which are monitored by my husband, Bob, who is an ordained pastor.

Thank you for subscribing to **Activity Director Monthly** and Happy New Year to you all,

Linda Lucas, A.D.



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

Readers may contact Linda at:
admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com

Bob's Monthly Journal

Next to Linda, the love of my life is a two year old Cocker Spaniel named Rosie. This article is dedicated to her.

Dogs - Man's Best Friend

by: **Keith Kingston**

Dogs have been known as man's best friend for decades. Owning a dog can be a positive, enjoyable experience for the entire family. Keep in mind however, that the decision to own a dog is an important one that should not be taken lightly. A dog is not just a fun diversion or entertaining gift. Owning a dog requires a commitment from you that will last the lifetime of the dog. The responsibilities of owning a dog and the joys of owning a dog hold an equal place of importance. If you are considering bringing a dog into your family, here are some important considerations for you to keep in mind.

A dog is an important member of the family. If you live in a city, you will need to devote a lot of time to walking the dog, ensuring that the dog gets plenty of exercise and fresh air, and you will most likely be taking your dog along on family excursions and trips. If you live in a country setting, you will need to ensure the safety of your dog and protect the dog from the hazards that come from a rural setting. Holidays and special occasions will include the dog and you may even find yourself including the dog in family portraits and gift

giving occasions.

Dogs bring companionship and joy to any family. The time and effort you spend caring for your dog will be returned to you in the form of the lifelong loyalty and friendship that you will receive from your dog. The dog will provide you with a friend to talk to, be an entertaining companion, and can also provide a sense of security and protection for your family. Individuals who are confined to their home or the elderly will find great joy in owning a dog and the problem of loneliness will be greatly reduced.



Because you will spend a lot of time caring for your dog in the form of walks and playtime, a dog can be a big health benefit for the owner. You may find yourself exercising more than you ever have before, and talking to your dog is a great way to reduce stress and anxiety. Owning a dog is beneficial to you and your family and the dog will be forever loyal and grateful for the time you invest in its care.

As unlikely as it may seem, owning a dog can introduce you to new friends that last a lifetime. Walking your dog, training classes, and romps through the park are great ways to come in contact with

others who share your interests and love of dogs. You can be certain that your dog will bring you joy in your private life and introduce you to other dogs lovers as well.

Owning a dog can be equated to raising a child. You must be a responsible parent to your dog just as you would to a child. You can rest assured that being a responsible, loving dog owner will bring you many benefits, the most important of which is the trust and friendship of a pet who will love you unconditionally for its entire life. Owning a dog is a big responsibility and can even be costly when you factor in trips to the vet, having the dog groomed, and taking care of unexpected medical expenses. The hardships involved in dog ownership are well worth your time and money. You will never find a more loyal, devoted friend than a dog who loves you unconditionally.

Keith Kingston is a professional web publisher, offering information on dog training and dog care products. You can visit his website at <http://dogs.allspecialoffers.com/>.

Attention Activity Directors!

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Gina's Activity Ideas

By Gina Salazar, AD

Owner of Activity Ideas That Work and Activity Chat websites

Hi, Everybody! Here are some great January ideas for you to try:

January is National Soup Month

Why not have a soup contest?

Have your residents make their favorite soups and bring them in and have the department heads

Judge the soups and pick a first prize winner.

This activity works well with independent living residents or assisted living residents, if you work in long term care, make all the soups together at a cooking class and then have the department heads judge which one is the best.

Campbells soup trivia link:

<http://www.campbellsoupcompany.com/history.asp?cpovisq=7JnYAA7CluRbRVAIiQf6fKKMRLCQ7mqO>

January is National Hot Tea Month

Why not have a Afternoon Tea Party?

Get out your best china and some different varieties of Hot Teas and muffins and provide some nice musical entertainment.

For some Tea Trivia:

<http://www.harney.com/harneyteas/trivia.html>

January is National Hobby Month

Why not challenge all of your residents to take up a new Hobby this month?

Try: Arts and Crafts, Yoga, Cooking, Stamp collecting, Poetry writing, Ceramics, Walking club, Knitting, Sewing and Woodworking to name a few.

Other Fun events in January:

Elvis Presley's Birth anniversary: January 8th.

Have an Elvis Day.

Start with banana and peanut butter sandwiches (his favorite !!) and coffee. Then do exercise class to his music, Share Elvis Trivia and even have an Elvis Movie Marathon.

Go to this link for Elvis Trivia:

<http://elvis-lives.8m.com/elvistrivia.html>

Super Bowl Sunday:

The best game of the season is usually the last Sunday of January. But since 9-11, it is now in February (this year on the 6th).

You can get Super bowl information from :

http://www.superbowl.com/features/general_info

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disease from the time it is recognized to death is about 6 to 8 years, but it may range from under 2 years to over 20 years. Those who develop the disorder later in life may die from other illnesses (such as heart disease) before Alzheimer's disease reaches its final and most serious stage.

The reaction of an individual to the illness and the way he or she copes with it also varies and may depend on such factors as lifelong personality patterns and the nature and severity of the stress in the immediate environment.

As research on Alzheimer's disease continues, scientists are now describing other abnormal chemical changes associated with the disease. These include nerve cell degeneration in certain areas of the brain. Also, defects in certain blood vessels supplying blood to the brain have been studied as a possible contributing factor.

There is no way at the present time to determine who may get Alzheimer's disease. The main risk factor for the disease is increased age. The rates of the disease increase markedly with advancing age, with 25 percent of people over 85 suffering from Alzheimer's or other severe dementia.

Other things often noticeable may be depression, severe uneasiness, and paranoia or delusions that accompany or result from the disease, but they can often be alleviated by appropriate treatments.

Alzheimer's disease has emerged as one of the great mysteries in modern day medicine, with a growing number of clues but still no answers as to its cause. Researchers have come up with a number of theories about the cause of this disease but so far the mystery remains unresolved.

Because of the many other

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disorders that are often confused with Alzheimer's disease, a comprehensive clinical evaluation is essential to arrive at a correct diagnosis of any symptoms that look similar to those of Alzheimer's disease. In most cases, the family physician can be consulted about the best way to get the necessary examinations.

Stress on the family can take a toll on both the patient and the caregiver alike. Caregivers are usually family members - - either spouses or children - - and usually wives and daughters. As time passes and the burden mounts, it not only places the mental health of family caregivers at risk. It also diminishes their ability to provide care to the diseased patient. Hence, assistance to the family as a whole must be considered.

As the disease progresses, families experience increasing anxiety and pain at seeing unsettling changes in a loved one, and they commonly feel guilt over not being able to do enough. The prevalence of reactive depression among family members in this situation is disturbingly high - - caregivers are chronically stressed and are much more likely to suffer from depression than the average person. If caregivers have been forced to retire from positions outside the home. They feel progressively more isolated and no longer productive members of society.

The likelihood, intensity, and duration of depression among caregivers can all be lowered through available interventions. For example, to the extent that family members can offer emotional support to each other and perhaps seek professional consultation, they will be better prepared to help their loved one manage the illness and to recognize the limits of what they themselves can reasonably do.

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How to keep the New Year's Resolution to exercise

by: **Phil Campbell, M.S., M.A.**

New Year's Resolutions motivate many to make commitments to exercise. Fitness centers will be flooded with great intentions during the first week of January. Sadly, within a few short weeks after New Year's Day, fitness center visits begin to decline.

Want an easy way to stay off the fitness commitment drop-out rolls? Here's a simple tip that could double your workouts this year.

Fitness Strategy for the Long-Haul

The key to long-term fitness training is to be aware that motivation levels come and go.

The one day that you decide to miss could be the last workout for a year. Long-term training is not a physical issue, it is a mental one.

I have a mental practice that I use to help me through the tough days when I do not feel like training. It's simple - I don't make the decision to miss a workout until I first change into my training clothes.

If I decide to miss a workout, that's okay (sometimes it's unavoidable), but I always make the effort to change clothes first.

Most of the time, just changing

into training clothes is enough to get me started. Once started, this typically becomes the best workout of the week!

Why People Stop Exercising

Never have I met anyone who made a conscious decision to stop exercising. Everyone who has stopped exercising began by "missing once."

That one miss led to another, then another.

The key to long-term training is to understand the mental risk associated with missing "one workout."

I can't overemphasize the importance of mentally making an issue of missing "one workout."

Missing one workout will not hurt you physically. Mentally, however, missing a workout permanently breaks the habit of training - until you make the next workout.

The Take Home

When deciding to miss a workout, make a mental note that you just decided to "stop training permanently". . . until you have completed the next workout.

Have a great day!

Phil Campbell, M.S., M.A.,
Author of Ready, Set, GO! Synergy Fitness



For Tax-Time Cost Savings, Do Your Taxes Online

(NUI) - Among the things Americans dread the most, filing their own income-tax returns probably ranks near the top.

But as a result of modern technology and greater Internet access, the task has become less cumbersome. Certainly it helps that 99 percent of all the forms are now available electronically, which means taxpayers don't have to trek to the local library or post office to pick up the latest tax schedule.

A greater number of Americans are taking full advantage of technology and e-filing their tax returns through companies such as Tax Centers of America. They are finding that it is easier, faster and more affordable. Of the more than 130 million tax returns filed in 2003, almost 53 million were e-filed, with nearly 12 million completed online.

E-filing is the most efficient option not only for taxpayers, but for the Internal Revenue Service as well. The IRS says it rejects 20 percent of paper returns because of errors, but less than 1 percent of those filed electronically. Additionally, it says the audit potential for e-filed returns is about the same as for paper returns. In part because of this increased efficiency, Congress has mandated that the IRS facilitate the electronic filing of at least 80 percent of all tax returns by 2007. Some Americans buy software programs to assist them in preparing returns. According to a survey conducted by NPD Group during the 2002 tax filing season, Americans spent \$204 million on retail tax preparation software, up from \$180 million the year before. But these software applications must be upgraded year after year in order to accommodate changes in tax laws, forms and schedules. Also, it might cost extra to e-file state tax returns.

Using the online services like those offered through Tax Centers of

America eliminates these added expenses.

"We want taxpayers to be able to visit our Web sites, file their tax returns, get their refunds quickly - and be able to do all of that at an affordable price," said Tonia Ouzts, president of Tax Centers of America. "If they have a question or a problem while completing their returns online, there is a convenient chat option that puts them in touch immediately with ... our experienced tax consultants."

Ouzts said Tax Centers of America also protects taxpayers' personal and financial information under the strictest terms of privacy. Another benefit to filing online is the ability to get federal and state refunds as quickly as possible, sometimes even the same day.

"If the return is accepted early in the day, we can very likely have their refund loan available to them in 24 to 48 hours by a direct deposit into their bank account," Ouzts said.

The online tax service link can be found at www.tcoausa.net.



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Though Alzheimer's disease cannot at present be cured, reversed, or stopped in its progression, much can be done to help both the patient and the family live through the course of the illness with greater dignity and less discomfort. Toward this goal, appropriate clinical interventions and community services should be vigorously sought.

While Alzheimer's disease remains a mystery, with its cause and cure not yet found, there is considerable excitement and hope about new findings that are unfolding in numerous research settings. The connecting pieces to the puzzle called Alzheimer's disease continue to be found.

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The Sin

Two elderly, excited Southern women were sitting together in the front pew of church listening to a fiery preacher.

When this preacher condemned the sin of stealing, these two ladies cried out at the tops of their lungs, "AMEN, BROTHER!"

When the preacher condemned the sin of lust, they yelled again, "PREACH IT, REVEREND!"

And when the preacher condemned the sin of lying, they jumped to their feet and screamed, "RIGHT ON, BROTHER! TELL IT LIKE IT IS... AMEN!"

But when the preacher condemned the sin of gossip, the two got very quiet. One turned to the other and said, "He's quit preaching and now he's meddlin'."

EDITORIAL

The Greatest Gift of All – The Gift of Empowerment

by: Joy Fisher-Sykes

During the year, a variety of celebrations – birthdays, holidays, and other special occasions – call for a gift of some kind. We sometimes work ourselves into a frenzy trying to come up with the “perfect gift.” The “perfect gift” is one that doesn’t wind up in the bottom of a drawer or a gift receipt because no one in his/her right mind would return it (after all it’s perfect.) Or have you ever received a gift and couldn’t wait for the return counter to open?

Why not invest in a gift that has staying power – the gift of empowerment. The gift of empowerment is a gift that keeps on giving, enabling one to enhance and further his or her personal development and achievement. An empowering gift is one that keeps on giving the whole year through and, if we’re lucky, beyond.

Here are three empowering gift ideas:

The Gift of Change

Enjoy cuisine of a culture other than your own. Learn about a culture other than your own. Learn the customs and the cuisine, or purchase a piece of clothing which can provide insight and an appreciation of others.

Realize no one is perfect. Don’t beat yourself up about the past - remember the past doesn’t

define your future – only you can do that. See and accept only positive people and thoughts in your life.

Change someone’s life for the better; do a good deed. A good deed has multiple payoffs for everyone. You can make life a little easier or enable others to accomplish something they may not have been able to on their own. The size of a good deed is not of importance – only that you did something for someone else. The payoff for you – as the commercial says, “priceless.”

The Gift of Knowledge

Expand your knowledge with books. Seeking new information expands our mind and can develop our spirit. No time to



read you say, books on tape (especially motivational tapes) are a great way to squeeze in learning during the vast amount of time we spend commuting, walking on the treadmill, or waiting at a doctor’s office.

Take a class at an adult learning center or community college. This inexpensive option allows you to further your knowledge and increase your potential.

Join Toastmasters! It’s not just for public speakers. This dynamic international organization empowers you to increase

your communication and leadership skills in a supportive environment. This is a must for anyone who interacts with people – ever!

Subscribe to a newspaper or magazine subscription such as a health, finance, or major newspaper. Why not better your well-being, develop your financial portfolio or learn more about current events that affect your life.

The Gift of Goal Setting

Set your first goal – you will make time for self. Even fifteen minutes alone, in the bathtub or shower, can provide you with the time you need to just think and find yourself. Finding yourself means determining what do you want and what you need. Who else knows you better and who else can give you what you need. Help someone else find time - barter or give the gift of time via baby-sitting or cooking a meal for another family (now they will have more time for themselves, too).

Commit to a healthful lifestyle.

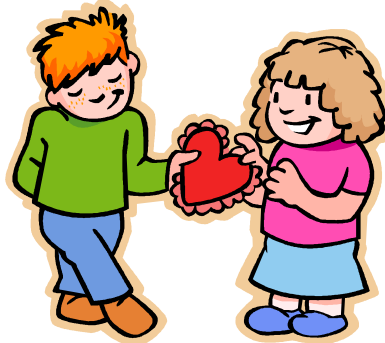
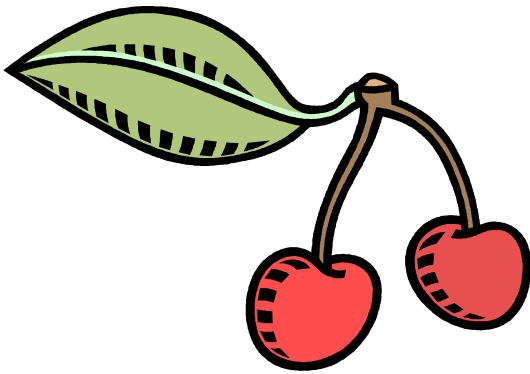
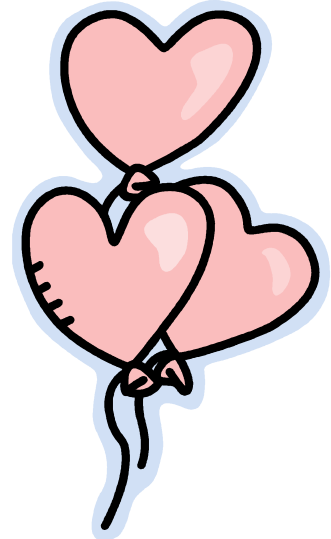
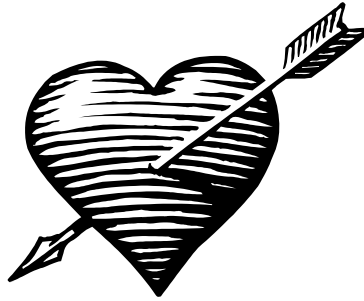
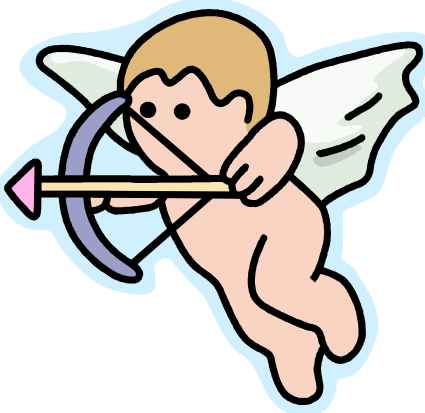
Diets are great for short term gain but often fail because they are so difficult to stick with. Improve your health with a subscription to a health magazine, buy or rent a video/DVD, join a gym or recreation center, or purchase a piece of gym equipment. Remember it can only work if you take action!

Set financial goals

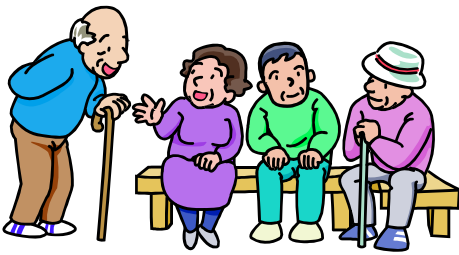
Financial freedom is a worthwhile goal that can be achieved with knowledge, planning and commitment. Whenever you find yourself in a buying situation, ask yourself “Do I want this item or do I need this

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Clipart for February



Now that I'm older, here's what I've discovered:



1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats have turned into prunes and all bran.
3. I finally got my head together; now my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don't remember being absent minded....
5. All reports are in; Life is now officially unfair.
6. If all is not lost, where is it?
7. It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
8. Some days you're the dog; some days you're the hydrant.
9. I wish the buck stopped here; I sure could use a few.
10. Kids in the back seat cause accidents.
11. Accidents in the back seat cause...kids.
12. It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.
13. Only time the world beats a path to your door is when you're in the bathroom.
14. If God wanted me to touch my

toes, he would have put them on my knees.

15. It's not hard to meet expenses...they're everywhere.

16. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.

17. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter...I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm here after.

*Provided by
corsinet.com*

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item?" I find this a big help when deciding to make a purchase and not be a slave to credit card payments. Also, pay by cash and not by credit card. Start now!

De-clutter and organize. That mess can make you feel overwhelmed, confused, and stressed. Less truly is more. Commit to keeping only what brings you pleasure, love, or need. Organize your home and office to enable you to find what's there. This in turn will save you time and money because you won't be going out all the time to buy what you already have.

I encourage you to start today - share any or all of these gifts with yourself, family, friends, or colleagues. Remember, the greatest gift of all is the gift that keeps on giving - the gift is empowerment!

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Attention: Activity Professionals

You are invited to submit articles of interest, poems, humor, photos and just about anything else for publication into

Activity Director Monthly.

The only compensation we can offer you is credit for the submission. All submissions are subject to editing. We cannot guarantee that all submissions will be published. However, they definitely can't be published if you

don't send them in.
So be brave and fire
your e-mail to us at:

admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com.

Or you can mail your information to:

**Attention: Editor
The Activity Director's Office
103 Tami Lane
Williamsport, Indiana 47993**

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

Please send only copies of your submissions.

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 subscribe to this publication.

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