

# Activity Director Today

E-magazine of Activity Director Today Website / <http://www.theactivitydirectoroffice.com>

**This Is Our Last FREE Issue**

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## From Bob & Linda

Dear Reader,

Due to the costs of operating and maintaining our free website for Activity Professionals, it is necessary for us to raise money to keep Activity Director Today on the Internet. Therefore, **this is our last free issue.**

Our choices are sell memberships to the website, charge a subscription fee for the e-magazine, or stop publishing Activity Director Today. None of the choices are satisfactory to us. However, we have opted to keep the website free for your use but charge a very low fee for Activity Director Today e-magazine.

We are asking a very small subscription fee. If you order the e-magazine one issue at a time, the donation amount is \$3.00 per issue. If you order a 1 year subscription the suggested donation is \$24.00 for 12 months (that's 4 free issues per year).

All subscriptions are paid by credit card through PayPal. That way you can use your MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express or debit card.

Activity Director Today will be sent to your e-mail box by PDF attachment. This method saves you the cost of postage and handling.

We look forward to receiving your subscription soon. It will help us out more than you know; and it assures you of receiving every issue of our e-magazine..

Best wishes,

*Bob Lucas*

Executive Director



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## Activities You Can Do

By Linda Lucas, AD, Site Owner: Activity Director Today

<http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com>

### Clay Pot Spider



Make this cute spider using a terra cotta clay pot and a few other supplies.

#### Materials Needed:

- 1 1/2 inch Terra Cotta Clay Pot
- Black Pipe Cleaners
- Wiggle Eyes
- Paint
- Clear Acrylic Sealer Spray
- Glue (hot glue gun preferred)

#### Instructions:

- Wipe down your terra cotta pot with a damp cloth and let dry completely.
- Paint the clay pot black. Once the paint is dry, turn the clay pot upside-down and paint a mouth and eyes on it (figure 1) - you

can use wiggle eyes if you like. Once all your paint is dry, spray it with the clear acrylic sealer.



Figure 1

- Cut 4 pieces of pipe cleaner, each about 5 inches long. Glue four on each side of the spider (figure 2).



Figure 2

- Once the glue is dry, bend the pipe cleaner for the desired effect. Your clay pot spider is now done!

Resource:

<http://familycrafts.about.com/cs/spidercrafts/l/blcspider.htm>

### Chocolate Spiders

#### Ingredients :

4 cups semisweet chocolate baking chips

#### Preparation :

4 cups semisweet chocolate baking chips Melt chocolate chips in top of double boiler. Let stand over the water until water is cool, about 10 minutes. Place wax paper on cookie sheet. Pour chocolate into a pastry bag that is fitted with a 1/8-inch or 1/4-inch tip. Squeeze chocolate onto wax paper in the shape of spiders. If chocolate is runny it needs to be cooled longer. Chill the spiders for about 10 minutes. When hard peel off wax paper. Store in refrigerator laid flat.



## Bob's Journal

By Rev. Robert Lucas, B.A., H.F.A. (retired)  
Executive Director, Activity Director Today  
<http://www.theactivitydirectoroffice.com>

### History and Customs of Halloween

Halloween is an annual celebration, but just what is it actually a celebration of? And how did this peculiar custom originate? Is it, as some claim, a kind of demon worship? Or is it just a harmless vestige of some ancient pagan ritual?

The word itself, "Halloween," actually has its origins in the Catholic Church. It comes from a contracted corruption of All Hallows Eve. November 1, "All Hallows Day" (or "All Saints Day"), is a Catholic day of observance in honor of saints. But, in the 5th century BC, in Celtic Ireland, summer officially ended on October 31. The holiday was called Samhain (sow-en), the Celtic New year.

One story says that, on that day, the disembodied spirits of all those who had died throughout the preceding

year would come back in search of living bodies to possess for the next year. It was believed to be their only hope for the afterlife. The Celts believed all laws of space and time were suspended during this time, allowing the spirit world to intermingle with the living.



Naturally, the still-living did not want to be possessed. So on the night of October 31, villagers would extinguish the fires in their homes, to make them cold and undesirable. They would then dress up in all manner of ghoulish costumes and noisily paraded around the neighborhood, being as destructive as possible in order to frighten away spirits looking for bodies to possess.

Probably a better explanation of why the Celts extinguished their

*(Continued on page 13)*

### October Holidays

**Columbus Day:** A federal holiday observed the second Monday in October, it commemorates Christopher Columbus's landing in the New World in 1492. Quite likely the first celebration of Columbus Day was that organized in 1792 by the Society of St. Tammany, or the Columbian Order, widely known as Tammany Hall.

**Shemini Atzeret** (Assembly of the Eighth Day), Check calendar for date. This joyous holiday, encompassing Simchat Torah (Rejoicing in the Torah), falls immediately after the seven days of Sukkot. It marks the end of the year's weekly readings of the Torah (Five Books of Moses) in the synagogue, and the beginning of the new cycle of reading

**October 31,** Halloween Eve of All Saints' Day, formerly called All Hallows and Halloween. Halloween is traditionally associated in some countries with customs such as bonfires, masquerading, and the telling of ghost stories. These are old Celtic practices

#### About Bob

Robert Lucas is a retired Nursing Home Administrator and is married to Linda Lucas, a retired Activity Director. Bob has a B.A. degree in Ministry and is an ordained minister. He has served the elderly community more than 35 years. His many talents include portrait artist, musician, writer and website designer (learned after his retirement).

Having a special place in his heart for Activity Professionals, Bob began building **The Activity Director's Office** website. His goal was to create a hub on the Internet where Activity Professionals could find meaningful and current resources. That goal has been achieved and continues growing yet today.

For more information visit the website at:  
[http://www.theactivitydirectoroffice.com/ADO\\_Beginnings.html](http://www.theactivitydirectoroffice.com/ADO_Beginnings.html)

### Resident Shopping and More

Featuring Adaptive Clothing, Footwear and Accessories for Residents  
<http://www.theactivitydirectoroffice.com/ProductPageAFF.html>



## Current Activities in LTC

By Kate Lynch, Editor  
*Current Activities in Longterm Care*  
<http://www.activities4elders.com/>

### Aromatherapy Beadstring

Source: January/February 2007 *Current Activities in Longterm Care*

#### One-to-one for persons with mild or moderate Alzheimer's

*"Multi-sensory therapies have the potential to be a valuable tool in managing the mood and behavior of elderly people with dementia, with the added benefit of reducing anxiety and stress in carers and staff," writes Dr. Sarah Baillon, research associate at the University of Leicester's division of psychiatry for the elderly in the United Kingdom, in the journal Advances in Psychiatric Treatment.*

*The following intervention is designed to evoke pleasant memories of the person's past, by means of a rewarding multisensorial experience involving touch, sight and smell.*

*It is indicated when the therapeutic goal is to increase arousal and alertness, improving the person's capacity to enjoy quality sensory experiences.*

#### Materials needed

- Fragrant wood beads of different color, size, and shape (e.g., ovals, cubes, flowers, tubes, hearts, letter beads). If you can't find fragrant wood beads, buy normal ones plus an essential oil of the elder's choice. Apply a drop of oil to each bead and gently rub it with your finger.
- A piece of cording approximately 20 inches long.



#### Steps to follow

Before the activity, prepare the beadstring: pass the cording through the beads and knot the ends.

**Note:** Use a washable cording that is thinner than the beads' holes, and when preparing the beadstring, leave some space between beads so that they can move and slide along the cording, allowing for a more stimulating and engaging tactile experience.

**Give the person the beadstring to look at, manipulate and smell. It's important that you share the sensorial experience with them. Touch, hold, and smell the beads yourself.**

#### Sensory Room Activity

Invite the person to focus on the memories the fragrance evokes. If nothing comes to mind, ask them to think of:

- images of themselves, as a child, teenager, and so on.
- objects such as flowers or food.
- places.
- colors.

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### Current Activities in Longterm Care

is a bi-monthly magazine that provides useful activities, calendars, therapeutic activities and programs, feature stories, specialized activities for Alzheimer's patients and other disease conditions, professional news, medical news and much more!

#### If You Subscribe to Current Activities in Longterm Care Here's what you get:

- A large section on activities for all stages of Alzheimer's residents!
- A section just on Men's Activities!
- Plus FREE Internet Access for:
- A special current calendar of activities for all stages of Alzheimer's!
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- Internet archives with all kinds of additional unique activities, including more Men's activities!
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 Cedar Falls, IA 50613

ONLINE: <http://www.activities4elders.com/>

Email: [klynch@cfu.net](mailto:klynch@cfu.net)



## DH Special Services

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

### Putting the "Special" in Special Event

Planning special events and parties is an important responsibility for the activity department. A responsibility that cannot be appreciated until presented with the daunting task of coordinating all the details. Consider the following list of tasks which should be reviewed when planning parties, special events and large gatherings

#### Purpose :

- Why are you having this event? To celebrate, recognize, or just get together and have fun? The goal of the event will direct many of your decisions.

#### Budget :

- One of your first questions should be - how much to I have to spend? This will impact upon your entire planning process.

#### Entertainment :

- A party isn't a party without some "noise". The entertainment should compliment the purpose. For example, a fashion show may have a back ground piano player, while a seasonal party may have a sing-a-long/dance entertainer.

#### Food :

- Refreshments also contribute to the success of your gathering.

The visual presentation, as well as substance, is an important aspect of special event planning. Establishing an alliance with the food service department will allow for cooperative efforts in party planning.

#### Decorations :

- A special event is a visual event. Balloons, tablecloths, banners and other visual indicators of the festivities are important.

#### Communication:

- Interacting with staff in the planning stages contributes to a team effort. Communicating plans to the residents/clients promotes anticipation. Information can be shared through meetings, memos, posters, written invitations and facility newsletters.

#### Agenda :

- There should be a "master plan". Working from lists, delegating tasks and following through on assignments maintains control and contributes to success on the day of the event. Creating a time line for completing tasks helps manage all the detail. Having an written agenda for the event which co-

ordinates the program, once it is underway, prevents chaos and conflict.

#### Public Relations :

- Sharing good news about the life in your facility and center is something every facility should strive for. Inviting the photographers to cover the event should be attempted. Don't forget to assign someone to take photos the day of the event!

#### Evaluation :

- Before you know it - it's over! Before the dust settles, ask yourself what would you have done differently. If this is to become an annual event or similar parties are planned, make notes of what was successful and suggestions for changes.



#### 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.



## Alternative Solutions in LTC

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

### Corporate Activity Consultants Are a Plus for Health Care Organizations

Article from Summer 2007 Long Term Care Newsletter

Corporate Activity Consultants Are a Plus for Health Care Organizations  
Article from Summer 2007 Long Term Care Newsletter

Corporations that utilize an Activity Consultant will see immediate results in the following areas:

- Competitive edge over their competition
- Deficiency free survey's
- Continuity of Activity departments
- Increase in customer satisfaction scores
- Trained Activity Directors & staff
- Strong programming to meet the individual needs of your clients
- Documentation compliance
- Strong volunteer programs & community involvement
- Awareness of community resources
- New systems implemented
- Continuity among their facilities
- Deadlines met because of training in time management

Many health care organizations are utilizing Activity Consultants because long term care facilities have poor surveys, inexperienced directors (lack qualifications) or a department with major concerns in areas of programming and docu-

mentation. With the new guidelines it is imperative that corporations recognize the need for an Activity consultant who can pinpoint any areas that are of concern and fix those problems before your annual survey. Many corporations make the mistake of bringing in a consultant during the survey window. That is not recommended as Activity Directors and the Activity Consultant need adequate time to isolate the problems, make recommendations, and implement new systems.

Some Activity Directors view the consultant as a threat to their job but on the contrary they should view the time and money the corporation is investing on the consultant as a "gift." The Activity Consultants have years of experience and a wealth of knowledge. The Activity Director should utilize the time with the consultant to gather as much information and resources from the consultant as possible. As most consulting jobs are short term contracts the Activity Director has a limited time with the consultant. As long as the Activity Director is moving forward and implementing the recommendations, the Activity Director has no reason to be insecure about their job. In the long run, the Activity Director will

have a better department and confidence in her performance. Activity Consultants want to see the Activity Director succeed.

Often times the consultant is called in by the Administrator or the Corporation. Generally when the Corporation calls in a Consultant it is to provide systems and programs that are offer continuity with their facilities. When the Administrator contacts with an Activity Consultant it's generally because there are areas of concern. The Administrator needs to be open and forthright about the reasons for hiring the consultant. This will insure that the relationship begins on the right foot; otherwise the director will view the consultant as a threat and with a hidden agenda.

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#### 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.



## Re-Creative Resources

By Kimberly Grandal, CTRS, ACC, Executive Director

<http://www.recreativeresources.com/>

### Build a Championship Team Instead of a Team of Champions

By Kimberly Grandal BA, CTRS, ACC

Teamwork is a word used often in healthcare, but do we really understand what it means to work as a team? Unfortunately, many Activity Professionals feel they are working independently, not part of a team. Activity departments are usually small and many times, overlooked, making teamwork a necessity. Teams can be found within the Activity Department itself, as well as outside of the department. There is much talk lately about the role of facility staff in providing meaningful activities to long term care residents.

First, it is important to define "teamwork". Stockley (2007) defines teamwork as, "A group of people, contributing their individual knowledge and skills but working together to achieve a common goal or task." Many tasks, goals, projects etc. entail that people cooperatively work together. Therefore, teamwork has become a fundamental element of long term care and other healthcare facilities.

According to Stockley (2007) team-



work is important because it can increase employee moral and motivation, as well as increase productivity. Many Activity Directors and

professionals, work alone, which can lead to stress, lack of morale, feelings of inadequacy, and eventually, a high turnover rate. For some reason, Activity Professionals tend to shy away from asking for help, and at the same time, have the inability to say "no" when asked to take on additional assignments.

Stockley also suggest that teamwork is essential because individuals often do not have *all* of the knowledge and skills necessary. Activity Professionals can highly relate to this because the job requires a vast array of leisure talents, skills and knowledge. Since not everyone is good at singing, doing a craft, cooking, and so on, there is a need to share talents, expertise, resources and such. Once, again, teamwork becomes a vital component of providing meaningful activities that meets the *individual* needs and interests of the residents,

patients, and clients in health care facilities.

Before we begin to develop teams it is important to understand the process. Team Technology (2006) identifies the team building process. First, the team leader must clarify the team goal. What is the team expected to do? Perhaps the team will organize a community event, create a recreation room, or increase CNA involvement in activities. Next, the team leader must demonstrate goal commitment. If the team leader establishes a particular goal, then there must be evidence of commitment such as memos, posters, flyers, minutes of meetings, etc. The next step is very important and involves identifying any inhibitors. What factors may act as a barrier to the development of the team? Is it a certain staff member, lack of time, lack of interest, etc? Once these inhibitors are identified, remove them

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#### About Kimberly

Ms. Kimberly Grandal, Founder and Executive Director of Re-Creative Resources, Inc., is a strong advocate for the field of Therapeutic Recreation, with over fifteen years of experience working with the elderly in numerous administrative and consultant positions. She is an Activity Consultant Certified by the National Certification Council for Activity Professionals (NCCAP), and a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist by the National Council of Therapeutic Recreation Certification

Ms. Grandal is a recipient of the Kessler Institute of Rehabilitation 1997 Triumph of the Human Spirit Award. She is a speaker for various state and local activity associations, colleges, and community groups, and provides educational workshops and consultation to long-term care facilities in New Jersey.

# The NAAP

## National Association of Activity Professionals

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

## The Activity Professional's Role in Preventing the Spread of Flu

By Myrtle Klauer, ADC, CAP

As part of the interdisciplinary team, activity professionals need to know what to do in order to help keep the residents and themselves healthy during the flu season. Although most viruses do not live environmentally, it is always good practice to decontaminate surfaces,

props, supplies, and equipment that are shared by others. The largest outbreaks of flu usually occur between December and March.

### Preventing the Spread of the Flu

The most important thing staff and volunteers can do is to **stay home** at the first signs of the flu. If someone begins to get the flu while at work, instruct the employee to return to the activity department and go home **immediately**.

It is also important to know and follow the CDC's Guidelines for Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette:

- *Cover the nose/mouth when coughing or sneezing.*
- *Use tissues to contain respiratory secretions and dispose of them in the nearest waste receptacle after use.*
- *Perform hand hygiene (e.g., hand washing with non-antimicrobial soap and water, alcohol-based hand rub, or antiseptic hand*

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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 practice.

### NAAP MEMBERSHIP WHY NOT JOIN 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](mailto:membership@thenaap.com).

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

# The NCCAP 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

## Good Grammar is Golden

By Debbie Bailey, ACC

Each time you vocalize a thought, put your pen to paper and write, or type in a message, memo, or report on a computer, you are communicating your level of professionalism by your choice of vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and pronunciation. Do you consider your language usage the best it can be? How strong is your desire to improve your English? It may have been your least favorite in school, but now it is an important component for your career.

Achieving certification not only implies that you possess certain knowledge and skills in your field, but that you are truly a professional. One means of projecting your competency is through the correct usage of English, both in writing and speaking. Many of the residents we serve come from an era when proper use of language was an accepted and often expected practice and they appreciate and note the difference when we carefully employ proper grammar. A good practice to remember is to avoid adolescent and common slang. Additionally, it is better not to address residents as "you guys" - they are ladies and gentlemen. Being sensitive to

the nuance of language demonstrates respect.

Professional advancement can be the result of your effort at self-improvement. To achieve polish in oral presentations, be they to residents or to colleagues, you might want to contact your local Toastmaster's Club. You are certain to gain valuable skills and training. For improving your writing skills, you might also consider enrolling in a communication class at your local community college - many classes may be available on-line. How about night classes at your local high school? Credits earned in these classes count as continuing education for certification and renewal. Choose to select some person's speech patterns and delivery that you admire and try to emulate them. Our residents can serve as our most valuable resource.

It is always a good idea to keep a dictionary readily available and consult it often. That is an excellent

*(Continued on page 19)*

## 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):

workshops, seminars, college courses that keep the activity professional abreast of present trends. NCCAP's Body of Knowledge contains 27 areas of education with many subheadings that are applicable.

- D. **CONSULTING EXPERIENCE** May include: advising a group, working one to one, teaching a class, conducting workshops, publishing professional articles, supervising students and/or managing 5 or more activity staff persons.

**FEES:** The cost of being certified initially ranges from \$45 to \$65 depending upon the level. Renewal is required every two years with 20-40 hours of continuing education and a fee of \$40.

For further information visit  
<http://www.nccap.org>

## Monthly Observances

For activity idea nuggets visit us at:

<http://www.theactivitydirectoroffice.com/ActPlannerIntro.html>

### MONTHLY OBSERVANCES

- Adopt-a-Shelter-Dog Month
- AIDS Awareness Month
- Apple Month
- Auto Battery Safety Month
- Blindness Awareness Month
- Book Month
- Brain Injury Awareness Month
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Car Care Month
- Caramel Month
- Child Health Month
- Christmas Seal Month
- Clergy Appreciation Month (Pastor Appreciation Month)
- Clock Month
- Computer Learning Month
- Cookbook Month
- Cookie Month
- Cosmetology Month
- Country Music Month
- Crime Prevention Month
- Dental Hygiene Month Dessert Month
- Dinosaur Month
- Disability Awareness Month
- Disability Employment Awareness Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Drum Month
- Energy Awareness Month
- Family Health Month
- Family History Month
- Family Sexuality Education Month
- Fire Prevention Month
- Flu & Pneumonia Month
- German American Heritage Month
- Glaucoma Awareness Month
- Healthier Babies Month
- Healthy Lung Month
- Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 - October 15, 2005)
- Adult Immunization Awareness
- Kitchen & Bath Month
- Learning Disability Awareness Month
- Liver Awareness Month
- Lupus Awareness Month
- Magazine Month
- Make a Will Month

- Medical Librarians Months
- Medical Ultrasound Awareness Month
- Organic Harvest Month
- Pasta Month
- American Pharmacy Month
- Physical Therapy Month
- Pickled Pepper Month
- Pizza Month
- Polish-American Heritage Month
- Popcorn Poppin' Month
- Pork Month
- Pregnancy & Infant Awareness
- Pretzel Month
- Roller-skating Month
- Sarcastic Awareness Month
- Seafood Month
- SIDS Awareness Month (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)
- Spina Bifida Awareness Month
- Spinal Health Month
- Stamp Collecting Month
- Story Telling Month
- Talk About Prescriptions Month
- UNICEF Month
- Vegetarian Month
- World Series Month / Baseball Play-offs
- Youth Against Tobacco Month

### Famous Weeks

#### Week 1

- National Eat Dinner Together Week
- National Gerontological Nursing Week
- National Healthcare Food Service Week
- National Mental Illness Awareness Week
- National Nurse-Midwifery Week
- National Spinning & Weaving Week
- Walk a Child to School Week

#### Week 2

- Handicapped Week
- International Letter Writing Week
- National 4-H Week
- National Adult Immunization Awareness
- Bookkeeper's Week
- Fashion Week
- Fire Prevention Week
- Get Organized Week
- Mystery Week
- Pet Peeve Week
- Respect Life Week
- School Lunch Week

#### Week 3

- Bible Week
- Getting the World to Beat a Path to Your Door Week
- Pinball Week
- Hepatitis Awareness Week
- Infection Control Week
- Kraut Sandwich Week
- Networking Week
- Pickled Pepper Week

#### Week 4

- Cleaner Air Week
- Consumers Week
- Forest Products Week
- Healthcare Facilities And Engineering Week
- Hug-A-Vending Machine Week
- Magic Week
- Massage Therapy Awareness Week
- Pharmacy Week
- Red Ribbon Celebration
- Respiratory Care Week
- Save Your Back Week
- New International Version of the Bible
- Pastoral Care Week
- Peace, Friendship and Good Will Week
- Toastmaster's Week

## Resident Shopping and More

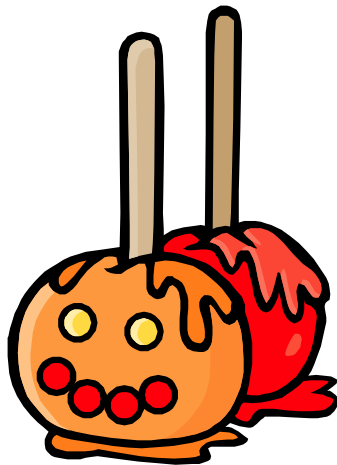
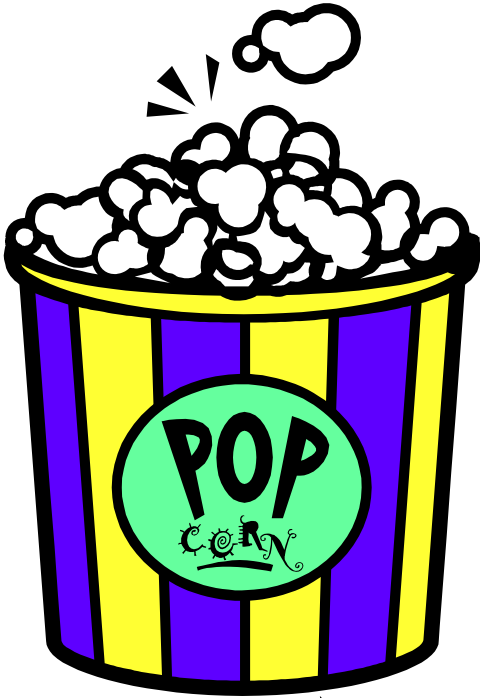
Featuring Adaptive Clothing, Footwear and Accessories for Residents

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# Clipart for the Month



Columbus



# OLD BOB'S FUNNY BONE

Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?

Because he didn't have any guts.

What kind of music do mummies listen to?

Wrap!

What kind of monster is safe to put in the washing machine?

A wash-and-wear wolf.

What's the first thing ghosts do when they get into a car?

They boo-kle their seatbelts.

What has webbed feet, feathers, fangs and goes quack-quack?

Count Duckula.

What do you call someone who puts poison in another's corn flakes?

A cereal killer.

Why are monsters huge and hairy and ugly?

Because if they were small and round and smooth, they'd be M&M's.

Why wasn't there any food left after the monster party?

Because everyone was a goblin!

How did the ghost patch his sheet?

With a pumpkin patch.

What do witches use on their hair?

Scare spray.

What is as sharp as a vampire's fang?

His other fang.

What do the birds sing on Hallow-

een?

Twick or Tweet.

What did the little ghost have in his rock collection?

Tombstones.

Why should a skeleton drink ten glasses of milk a day?

It's good for the bones.

What do baby ghosts wear on Halloween?

Pillowcases.

What do you get when you drop a pumpkin?

Squash.

Why did the witches' team lose the baseball game?

Their bats flew away.

What was the witch's favorite subject in school?

Spelling.

What does a vampire fear most?

Tooth decay.

Where did the vampire open his savings account?

At a blood bank.

Where do mummies go for a swim?

To the Dead Sea.

What is Transylvania?

Dracula's terror-tory.

Where does Dracula water ski?

On Lake Erie.

What do you get when you divide the diameter of a jack-o-lantern by its circumference?

Pumpkin pi.

Why are there fences around cemeteries?

Because people are dying to get in.

Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?

He didn't have the guts.

What does a ghost eat for lunch?

A boo-loney sandwich.

How does the silly witch know what time it is?

She looks at her witch-watch.

What did the mommy ghost say to the baby ghost?

Don't spook until your spooked to.

What kind of protozoa likes Halloween?

An amoeboboo!

How do vampires get around on Halloween night?

By blood vessels.

Why do ghouls and demons hang out to-

gether?

Because demons are a ghoul's best friend!

What happened to the guy who couldn't keep up payments to his exorcist?

He was repossessed.



*(Halloween—Continued from page 3)*

fires was not to discourage spirit possession, but so that all the Celtic tribes could relight their fires from a common source, the Druidic fire that was kept burning in the Middle of Ireland, at Usinach.

Some accounts tell of how the Celts would burn someone at the stake who was thought to have already been possessed, as sort of a lesson to the spirits. Other accounts of Celtic history debunk these stories as myth.

The Romans adopted the Celtic practices as their own. But in the first century AD, Samhain was assimilated into celebrations of some of the other Roman traditions that took place in October, such as their day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple, which might explain the origin of our modern tradition of bobbing for apples on Halloween.

The thrust of the practices also changed over time to become more

ritualized. As belief in spirit possession waned, the practice of dressing up like hobgoblins, ghosts, and witches took on a more ceremonial role.

The custom of Halloween was brought to America in the 1840's by Irish immigrants fleeing their country's potato famine. At that time, the favorite pranks in New England included tipping over outhouses and unhinging fence gates.

The custom of trick-or-treating is thought to have originated not with the Irish Celts, but with a ninth-century European custom called souling. On November 2, All Souls Day, early Christians would walk from village to village begging for "soul cakes," made out of square pieces of bread with currants. The more soul cakes the beggars would receive, the more prayers they would promise to say on behalf of the dead relatives of the donors. At the time, it was believed that the dead remained in limbo for a time after death, and that prayer, even by strangers, could expedite a soul's passage to heaven.

The Jack-o-lantern custom probably comes from Irish folklore. As the tale is told, a man named Jack, who was notorious as a drunkard and trickster, tricked Satan into climbing a tree. Jack then carved an image of a cross in the tree's trunk, trapping the devil up the tree. Jack made a deal with the devil that, if he would never tempt him again, he would promise to let him down the tree.

According to the folk tale, after Jack died, he was denied entrance to Heaven because of his evil ways, but he was also denied access to Hell because he had tricked the devil. Instead, the devil gave him a single ember to light his way through the frigid darkness. The ember was placed inside a hollowed-out turnip to keep it glowing longer.

The Irish used turnips as their "Jack's lanterns" originally. But when the immigrants came to America, they found that pumpkins were far more plentiful than turnips. So the Jack-O-Lantern in America was a hollowed-out pumpkin, lit with an ember.

So, although some cults may have adopted Halloween as their favorite "holiday," the day itself did not grow out of evil practices. It grew out of the rituals of Celts celebrating a new year, and out of Medieval prayer rituals of Europeans. And today, even many churches have Halloween parties or pumpkin carving events for the kids. After all, the day itself is only as evil as one cares to make it.

References: Charles Panati, *Extraordinary Origins of Everyday Things*, 1987; and Dr. Joseph Gahagan, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Personal letter, 1997

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Also available on the Web at  
[www.wilstar.com](http://www.wilstar.com)



*(Corporate Consultants—Continued from page 6)*

Additionally, Activity Directors who feel there are areas that they need training should be honest with the Administrator about those concerns. The Activity Director should discuss with the Administrator the reasons for bringing in a consultant.

The Activity Director may know a consultant they feel comfortable with and may wish to recommend that consultant. But when this happens, remember, it does no one any good if you are hiring a “friend” consultant just to provide positive feedback. We all want that! But it’s more important to the director to hire a consultant who will be objective and provide information and guidance. If the Activity Director feels that this can be accomplished than go forward with hiring the Consultant.

I am often asked, “once the consultant is hired, now what?” That is a great question. Often times this is the first time a facility or corporation has utilized an Activity Consultant. The Administrator should ask for references and feedback from previous corporations.

During the first visit, the Activity Consultant provides an initial comprehensive audit in the areas of documentation, observations, review of programs and compliance with state and federal guidelines. Based on the initial audit, the Consultant will meet with the Administrator to discuss recommendations, systems to be implemented and the amount of time on site required to insure implementation. A comprehensive report is provided to the administrator that will state the area

of concerns and specific recommendations. The Activity Director is provided with written objectives and time frames.

Alternative Solutions has provided consulting services for seven years with 100% deficiency free surveys for our clients. 100 % success to an Administrator might mean a positive outcome during survey. However, for the consultant it is the satisfaction of training a director to be a top notch Activity Director in all aspects such of their job; management, program development, population and calendar analysis, documentation, community resources, room bound programs and volunteer programs.

For those facilities that are seeking other accreditation the consultant can provide valuable information. Many facilities are implementing dementia units and rehab units. The consultant can bring all kinds of programming ideas, resources, policies, training, in-services and systems to the facility which enables the facility to stay competitive as well as insuring a positive outcome during survey.

Additionally, consultants are used when the director does not meet state or federal regulations and lacks the qualifications. They can also be used to fill in for an activity director who is out on leave, vacant positions and oversight of a director does not meet federal or state requirements.

Activity Consultants provide many services:

- Training and in-services
- Activity Courses (NCCAP 180 MEPAP REV 2)
- Training for Activity Directors (Management, Documentation, Q/A, Calendar planning and implementation, Q/A, Resident Council, etc)
- Calendar and Population Analysis Tools
- Implement state and federal guidelines
- Implement standard of practice protocols
- Survey readiness –on site visit
- Implement special programs for Alzheimer’s and dementia, low functioning, Sensory enrichment programs, bed bound, room bound, NPO, sensory rooms
- High Functioning programs, committees, empowerment, self esteem, wellness, community involvement, spiritual, independent, etc
- Documentation compliance – Initial assessments, progress notes, MDS, care plans, IDCP notes individual participation, group participation
- Compliance for Quality Indicator Reports
- Calendar review
- Q/A Program
- Activity Policy and Procedures
- Volunteer Management Program which includes policy and procedures, recruitment, train-

*(Continued on page 21)*

## Resident Shopping and More

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(Championship Team—Continued from page 7)  
and watch your team develop!

Creating teams requires vision, planning, and commitment. There are many strategies for creating teams and promoting teamwork. My recipe for teamwork includes the following ingredients:

1) Leadership, 2) Motivation, 3) Teambuilding Activities

Demonstrating excellent leadership skills is an important part of creating a team. Leaders provide inspiration, create opportunities, energize people, and make key choices. It is important to lead by example, have vision, honesty, and humility, and to provide support, training, and mentorship. (S. Khan 2006). Remember, that being a manager and being a leader are different roles, both of which are equally important but it is the leader that leads his/her people to work together.

Motivating employees is also a key element in creating teams. Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, *“Motivation is the art of getting people to do what you want them to do because they want to do it.”* There are many ways in which we can motivate ourselves, the Activity staff, and the facility staff. Some suggestions include:

- Have Activity staff attend care plan meetings
- Involve the Activity staff in the Quality Improvement process
- Have the Administrator meet with the staff
- Encourage feedback
- Encourage staff to be on committees
- Holiday events
- Theme days/dress down days

- Sunshine Club (celebrate birthdays, weddings, babies, etc.)
- Luncheons or other meals
- Celebrate recognition weeks (Activity Professionals Week, TR Week, etc.)
- Have departmental t-shirts
- Go on field trips to other facilities
- Provide awards and certificates
- Celebrate employee appreciation day
- Ask for employee feedback (employee surveys and suggestion box, etc.)
- Play games, have contests, etc.

The final recipe for building successful teams is the facilitation of team building activities. These activities are not only fun but have many benefits. Larry Lipman (2006) suggests that team building activities create an open climate for communication, promote trust, establish rapport, stimulate creativity, promote learning, provide opportunity for hidden problems to surface, and of course, strengthen teamwork and motivation. There are many fun team building activities, icebreakers, energizers. For some great ideas you can visit the following websites:

Re-Creative Resources:

[www.recreativeresources.com/recreationtraininggames.htm](http://www.recreativeresources.com/recreationtraininggames.htm)

Wilderdom:

[www.wilderdom.com/games/InitiativeGames.html](http://www.wilderdom.com/games/InitiativeGames.html)

Group Dynamics and Team Building:

[www.community4me.com/groupstarters.html](http://www.community4me.com/groupstarters.html)

Big Dog and Little Dog:

[www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/)

[icebreak.html](http://icebreak.html)

Business Balls:

[www.businessballs.com](http://www.businessballs.com)

Fun Team Building:

[www.funteambuilding.com](http://www.funteambuilding.com)

In summary, teamwork is an essential aspect of most healthcare facilities especially in long-term care, assisted living and adult day care centers. Don't be afraid to be the team leader! Build an effective team by being a leader, a motivator and a team building facilitator. So, go ahead and build a championship team instead of a team of champions!

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- END

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(FLU — Continued from page 8)

*wash) after having contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials.*

Make sure to have plenty of tissues and hand hygiene supplies available **at all times**. These should **always** be on the activity carts along with a non-touch receptacle for soiled tissues.

Activity professionals should avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth to prevent their possibly contaminated hands from spreading germs throughout the facility. Anyone with a cough should wear a mask when interacting with the residents.

Activity professionals have a great potential for spreading disease because of the many props and common supplies used during activities. Staff needs to take extra precautions to keep everyone safe.

- Poker chips, scissors, plastic game pieces, glue bottles, etc. should be washed in a basin filled with hot water and an antibacterial soap.
- Playing cards, game boards, etc. should be wiped with a clean cloth dipped in a basin of antibacterial soap.
- Stuffed toys and other cloth props should be washed in a washing machine filled with hot water and an antibacterial soap at least weekly. They should be sprayed after each use with Ly-

sol or another antibacterial surface spray.

- Limit the borrowing of books and magazines during flu season.
- Limit “assembly line” crafts. Choose simpler crafts a resident can complete on their own.
- Wash surfaces of tables, arms of chairs and seats, before **and** after each activity.
- Activity carts should be washed down with an antibacterial solution at the end of each day.

### Meeting the Activity Needs of Residents With the Flu

Activity Professionals must meet the activity needs of those residents in isolation. Encourage the residents with flu symptoms to stay in their rooms where you can bring the activity to them. Make sure any props you bring into the residents’ rooms can be left and disposed of after the resident’s isolation ends.

The following are some guidelines from the CDC when working with residents who have contracted the flu:

- *Wear a surgical mask upon entering the room or when working within three feet of the resident. Remove masks when leaving room and dispose of properly.*
- *Wear gloves if in contact with respiratory secretions or potentially contaminated surfaces.*

- *Wear a gown if soiling of clothes with respiratory secretions is expected.*
- *Change gloves and gowns after each resident encounter.*
- *Decontaminate hands before and after touching the resident, environment, or secretions even if gloves were worn.*
- *If hands are visibly soiled, wash with either a non-antimicrobial or an antimicrobial soap and water.*
- *If hands are not visibly soiled use an alcohol based hand rub.*

### Educating Volunteers and Groups

Hold in-services with all the volunteers so they know what to expect during the flu season and how to stop the spread of the flu throughout the facility. Make sure each volunteer has a supply of tissues and antibacterial hand wash when they visit.

Action must also be taken to prevent groups from spreading the flu. Work with the leader of each group and explain the danger for the residents when someone with the flu comes into the facility.

The same is true for children involved in the intergenerational program, because the flu is dangerous for children coming into the facility. If there is a serious outbreak of the flu in the facility, be sure to notify all groups scheduled during the outbreak and ask them to postpone their visit until the residents are well.

At the top of this page is a sample letter to send to each group leader who schedules a visit during flu season. By educating these

(Continued on page 17)

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(FLU — Continued from page 16)

groups, activity professionals can prevent individuals who are ill from visiting the facility.

### Conclusion

By remaining vigilant and exercising common sense, the activity department can help the facility prevent and/or lessen the flu among residents, volunteers, and staff. Frequent washing of one's hands is perhaps the easiest way of preventing the spread of the flu.

Disinfecting the supplies and props used in the activity program is another way of killing germs. Limiting visits from outside groups and educating those scheduled to visit also helps decrease the spread of the flu.

Building in time for the activity staff to clean and disinfect the areas where they work, activity carts, and other supplies will help insure it is being done. Don't forget to keep a supply of alcohol wipes handy to clean the phone receiver before use.

Use this article and the Pre/Post Test found at the end of this article as an in-service for the activity staff and volunteers. Review it often during the flu season to make sure the staff and volunteers know the importance of following the guidelines found in this article.

**Pre/Post Test Answers:** 1. F, 2. T, 3. F, 4. F, 5. T, 6. T, 7. T, 8. T, 9. F, 10. T, 11. T, 12. T, 13. T, 14. F, 15. T, 16. T, 17. T, 18. T

### Sample Letter to Groups

November 1, 2004

Ms. Gayle Simpson  
Happytown School  
555 W. Third Street  
Happytown, IL 55555

Dear Ms. Simpson,

Thank you for scheduling a visit to sing carols for the residents at Happyville Nursing Home. The residents are looking forward to your visit on Friday, Dec. 3rd at 3:00 p.m.

I'm sure you are aware of the shortage of flu vaccine this year. In order to protect the residents, as well as the children visiting Happyville Nursing Home, we ask the following of you:

- Please do not bring any child exhibiting symptoms of the flu.
- Notify me if there is an outbreak of the flu at the school and you need to reschedule your visit. I can be reached at 555-5555 ext. 35.
- Please limit the children's direct contact with the residents this year.
- Do not bring handmade cards, ornaments, or other things for the children to give to the residents.

In turn, I will notify you if an outbreak of the flu happens at the nursing home. We can reschedule when the residents are feeling better.

Please explain to the children why we must take these precautions and limit their contact with the residents.

Sincerely,  
Myrtle Klauer, ADC, CAP

Activity Director

### *The Activity Professional's Role in Preventing the Spread of Influenza Pre/Post Test*

Place a "T" for True or an "F" for False in front of each statement

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Since the activity department is made up of fewer staff than other departments in the facility, I should report to work unless I have a fever.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Washing my hands frequently with an alcohol-based hand rub is one of the best ways of preventing the spread of the flu.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. An essential part of preparing for an activity is to wash the table, chair arms and seat with a disinfectant before inviting the residents to the activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Resident with the flu cannot have their activity needs met until they are well and able to join the group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Before using a phone, wipe the receiver with an alcohol wipe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Tissues, an alcohol-based hand rub, and non-touch disposal container should be constantly available during an activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. If I have a cough or am sneezing, I should wear a mask when interacting with residents.

(Continued on page 18)



(Grammar — Continued from page 9)

way to further your self-improvement. Dictionaries, thesauruses, and even your local newspapers will enhance your effectiveness in delivery. These sources are inexpensive and easily accessible.

A well-planned endeavor on your part, if brought to fulfillment, almost undoubtedly insures improved rapport with your residents, compliments from your supervisor, and self-gratification. It may even result in advancement in your profession - leading you to the conclusion that good grammar is indeed golden!

- END

## A Holiday Thank-you

By Kathy Hughes, ADC  
NCCAP President

With the coming holiday season we can make a difference in the lives of our volunteers, residents, staff and families. Each person has donated their time and talent toward making the activities that you have provided a success and a great experience for all who have participated.

If it weren't for the staff making sure that residents are up and ready to go to activities or staff that provides the financial security to your facility you would be planning activities for yourself. They do contribute to the success of your programs and your department. The activities staff, plan and implement activities that residents enjoy and make memories with each other.

The families of the residents have entrusted their loved ones in your care and have provided information that assists you in planning successful programs. If they had picked another facility, you would not have had the privilege of planning that unique event that their mother or father enjoyed this past year. You would not have learned about a specific hobby or interest.

The volunteers who have helped residents attend activities or assisted your activities department in providing a quality of life to your residents are the key to your success. If they had chosen another facility, you would not have been able to provide extra programs to your residents.

The residents who provided the challenge of providing unique activities to meet their needs and interests are the reason that we come to work each day. Because everyone is unique we are inspired to provide opportunities for him or her to grow and enjoy themselves. They came willingly to **your activities** or allowed you to provide activities in their home. Even those who enjoyed themselves on their own are grateful for the respect of their space and their time.

There is a story about the various telephone company employees who always hear about the problems that people have with their telephones. Rarely, if ever, do they have someone call and say "Thanks" for the



great service, which they provided without problems 97% of the time. So is it with the activities programs. We hear all of the complaints, but rarely do we hear that 97% of the time the activities were wonderful and that everyone enjoyed themselves. We rarely celebrate within our department the great programs that we provided.

Everyone contributed to your success this year. Even though it will be a very busy holiday season ahead, a handwritten note to those who contributed to the success of your department would be appreciated. Yes, writing a note to all the residents would be time consuming, but just a Thank-you card from the activities staff would be something that residents would cherish. We spend a lot of the year complaining about everything and so very little time looking for the good things.

So take a couple minutes each day and write a "Thank-you" note to those that contributed to the success of your department. By the time the holiday season has passed (sometime in February) you will have made the day of a lot of people who are supportive of your department and goals.

Best Wishes for a great holiday season! - END

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# How To Throw An Unforgettable Halloween Party

By: John Lenaghan

Halloween probably has more parties than almost any other day, second perhaps to New Years. People of all ages love to dress up and pretend they're someone else for a night. Most people end up with more than one invitation to Halloween parties and have to choose one of them to attend.

If you're thinking of throwing a Halloween party, how do you convince people to choose yours over the others? A creative, unique theme is the first step.

Most people don't plan a theme beyond "wear a costume" at Halloween. Just giving your party a more specific theme will help it stand out from the crowd.

You can choose the traditional "spooky" type of Halloween party and have everyone come as their favorite ghost, horror movie character or monster.

A spooky party will probably be one of the easiest to find party favors and decorations for, since that tends to be the most common theme for Halloween.

There are lots of other themes you can try, however. What about a famous couples party, where everyone comes as a famous couple? Or maybe a



movie theme night, where everyone comes as their favorite Star Wars character for example.

## Some other theme ideas include:

- crazy hat party
- decade party (60's, 70's, 80's, etc)
- murder mystery
- favorite cartoon character

- pirate party
- "future" party (everyone comes as themselves in 25 years, for example)

When you're planning your party, one of the most important things is the menu. Food is always an important part of any party.

It could be a full meal or just finger foods, but be creative with what you serve. Try to work the food into the theme of the party.

For example, you could make some ladyfingers that actually look like severed fingers.

If you start to plan your party early, you'll leave yourself lots of time to get everything organized. Get some help from friends or family if you need it, and remember - planning the party is half the fun!



(Corporate Consultants—Continued from page 14)

ing, recognition, applications, welcome packet.

- Referral of numerous resources
- Recruitment

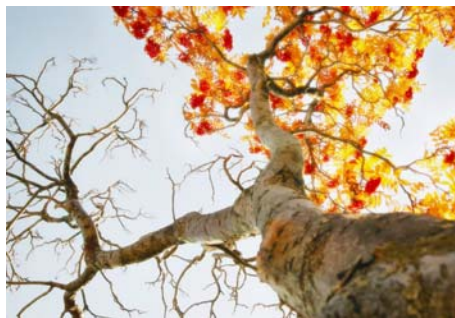
Companies may hire a consultant for a one day audit, weekly, monthly or even daily oversight of the activity departments. They provide on-site and off-site consulting and generally are available by email and phone should the situation arise. They are sometimes asked to be there during a survey.

So the most important question I would ask the owners of facilities is why you don't have a corporate consultant? Because you can invest wisely now or pay penalties later.

## WHAT IS THIS OBJECT?



This is a photo of Christopher Columbus's coat of arms. Funny...I don't see any arms.



As there are a limited number of consultants it would be in the best interest of the facility to contract with a consultant now and take the necessary steps to insure your activity department is in compliance.

I recently worked for one corporation who was honest enough to say, "activities were not an area they had invested in before." They were unsure of what the consultant would provide and I think were amazed not only by what we could bring to the departments but the changes they saw in their activity program and quality of life for their residents. They saw how the investment paid off with deficiency free surveys and an increase in customer satisfaction scores. It's never too late to begin working with a Activity Consultant as it can only be of benefit to the Activity Director, residents and the corporation.

If you are concerned about your department or just want an objective opinion of the Activity Department contact Sandra Stimson for information at [activityther-apy@aol.com](mailto:activitytherapy@aol.com). All correspondence is held in the strictest of confidence.

- END

## Activity Director Community

You are invited to join the Activity Director Community message board.

Many Activity Professionals have already joined.

The AD Community is a wonderful way to be in contact with Activity Directors all over the United States and Canada.

This is a terrific resource for you. You can ask questions, respond to questions or just read what others have posted on the board.

Join today and keep up to date with what's going in the world of Activities.

**Join Today  
IT'S FREE**

[http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/AD\\_Community/](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/AD_Community/)

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# 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 profes-

sional 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.

## Forgot to Buy Your Halloween Costume? Now That's Scary

(ARA) - Halloween is around the corner. You run to your local Target or Big K to find a costume, but all the cute ones are gone. What do you do -- a ghost again? Not necessarily, says Jocelyn Leiser Herndon, an instructor in Fashion Design at The Art Institute of California - San Francisco.

"Two simple costume ideas that are great for both kids and adults are 'The Cat in the Hat' and a witch," says Herndon. Several years ago, says Herndon, her brother came for a visit on Halloween. Short on time, Herndon had him purchase a black shirt and pants. With red and white felt to make the hat and a small amount of black fabric to make a tail she built around a coat hanger, Herndon finished off the costume using a pair of white gloves.

"For the witch, just about any black dress paired with striped socks or tights and black boots

or shoes will do the trick," she says. For the hat, Herndon suggests picking up an inexpensive hat at any Halloween store (there are usually lots of these left, even after Halloween).

Another great costume for an adult is a cobweb. Pick up some cobweb printed fabric and make a poncho out of it by cutting a hole in the center for your head and wear with black clothes. For men, get a shirt that has spiders on it. For la-



dies, pick up a pair of spider covered tights (available at Halloween or specialty hosiery stores). For an added touch, buy a big furry spider from the decoration aisle and attach it

to your head with hair pins or elastic as if it's the spider in the web.

For the minimalist, a scary face is a simple way to go on Halloween. There are many good one-time-use inexpensive latex scarves available in all sorts of shapes and sizes these days, says Herndon. To enhance the "boo" factor, Herndon uses the following fake blood recipe (not suitable for eating, she cautions):

- 1 ounce red food coloring
- 1 tablespoon blue food coloring
- 2 ounces water
- 1 pint light corn syrup
- Combine ingredients. Scare at will.

To learn more about The Art Institutes, visit [www.artinstitutes.edu/nz](http://www.artinstitutes.edu/nz).

The Art Institutes ([www.artinstitutes.edu](http://www.artinstitutes.edu)) is a system of more than 35 locations located throughout North America providing an important source of design, media arts, fashion and culinary arts professionals.

*Courtesy of ARAcontent*

# Seniors and Loneliness: Tips for Overcoming Isolation

(ARA) - For millions of seniors, loneliness can have a very serious affect on their physical and mental health; but there are many ways to overcome loneliness and improve their quality of life.

Emotional isolation is linked to elevated blood pressure in seniors, a 2006 University of Chicago study indicated.

Lonely seniors have blood pressure readings up to 30 points higher than their socially connected peers, regardless of race, sex or other health factors, researchers found.

Loneliness is also closely linked to depression, with more than 2 million of the nation's 64 million seniors suffering some form.

"Approximately 8.8 million seniors were living alone in America 17 years ago, according to the 1990 U. S. Census," says Scott Perry, president of Bankers Life and Casualty Company, a national insurance company that specializes in serving the senior market.

"The 2000 Census showed that number had climbed to 9.7 million. Experts agree it's reasonable to expect the number of seniors living alone will continue to grow. Maintaining strong social networks can help seniors stay healthier longer, and enhance the over-

all quality of their lives as well."

Older Americans are more prone to experience the kind of life changes that place them at greater risk for loneliness, including:

- \* Death of their spouse, relatives and friends;
- \* Retirement;
- \* Illness;
- \* Decreased physical mobility;
- \* Loss of the ability to drive; and
- \* Intentional reductions in their social networks to include only those who the senior feels close to.

Fortunately, there are many ways in which seniors, even



those with significantly curtailed mobility, can prevent and combat loneliness. Finding the right mode of social interaction for you, can improve your health as well as your enjoyment of life.

## **Proven loneliness-fighting strategies include:**

\* Volunteering -- Volunteers live longer, have higher functional ability, lower rates of depression and less incidence of heart disease, according to a study by the Corporation for National and Community Service. In particular, research shows that seniors age 65 and older who volunteer had significantly lower rates of depression than their non-volunteering peers.

"The life changes that come with age can easily make us feel isolated and less useful than we felt when we were working and raising our families," Perry notes. "For those who are physically able, volunteering is a great way to connect with new people and renew your sense of purpose in life."

\* Joining Social and Support Groups -- Social interaction with people who have similar interests, or face similar challenges, not only combats loneliness, but can be a way to build new friendships as well. If your community has a senior center (and most can provide transportation assistance), take advantage of its programs and facilities. Call your local recreation or senior services department to learn what's available in your area.

\* Connecting to Others on the Internet -- The number of seniors using the Internet more than doubled between 2000

*(Continued on page 25)*

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and 2004. Seniors who face mobility challenges can find others with similar interests through a variety of resources and Web sites directed at seniors on the Internet.

Technology providers continue to develop products to make it easier for seniors to use the Internet, such as large-button keyboards and voice recognition software. Asking for help to get online can also be a great way to connect with tech-savvy grandchildren.

**\* Learning Something New --** Learning a new skill requires you to interact with a teacher and fellow students. Choose to learn a skill such as cooking or e-mailing, and the skill itself can help enhance your ability to interact socially with others. Local community colleges and city centers offer many courses appropriate for seniors.

**\* Maintaining Friendships --** Studies have found that friendships are often more important than family connections in fighting loneliness among seniors. Make a conscious effort to stay connected with friends by visiting with them in person or keeping in touch by phone, letter or e-mail.

For more information on senior topics, visit [www.bankerslife.com](http://www.bankerslife.com) and click "Senior Resources."

*Courtesy of ARAccontent*

# SPOOKY RIDDLES

Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?

Because he didn't have any guts.

What kind of music do mummies listen to?

Wrap!

What kind of monster is safe to put in the washing machine?

A wash-and-wear wolf.

What's the first thing ghosts do when they get into a car?

They boo-kle their seatbelts.

What has webbed feet, feathers, fangs and goes quack-quack?

Count Duckula.

What do you call someone who puts poison in another's corn flakes?

A cereal killer.

Why are monsters huge and hairy and ugly?

Because if they were small and round and smooth, they'd be M&M's.

Why wasn't there any food left after the monster party?

Because everyone was a goblin!

How did the ghost patch his sheet?  
With a pumpkin patch.

What do witches use on their hair?  
Scare spray.

What is as sharp as a vampire's fang?  
His other fang.

What do the birds sing on Halloween?  
Twick or Tweet.

What did the little ghost have in his rock collection?  
Tombstones.

Why should a skeleton drink ten glasses of milk a day?  
It's good for the bones.

The house looks empty,  
There's no one around.  
There isn't a sight,  
There isn't a sound.  
In the darkness each year  
I feel the same shame --  
Having eaten the treats  
before the kids came!

## Top 10 Signs You Are Too Old to Be Trick or Treating

10. You get winded from knocking on the door.
9. You have to have another kid chew the candy for you.
8. You ask for high fiber candy only.
7. When someone drops a candy bar in your bag, you lose your balance and fall over.
6. People say, "Great monster mask!" and you're not wearing a mask.
5. When the door opens you yell, "Trick or..." and can't remember the rest.
4. By the end of the night, you have a bag full of restraining orders.
3. You have to carefully choose a costume that won't dislodge your hairpiece.
2. You're the only Princess in the neighborhood with a walker.
1. You avoid going to houses where your ex-wives live

Place  
Postage  
Here



## A Ghost Story

An extremely modest man was in the hospital for a series of tests, the last of which had left his system upset. Upon making several false- alarm trips to the bathroom, he decided that the latest feeling was another false-alarm and decided to stay put. He suddenly filled his bed with diarrhea and was embarrassed beyond his ability to remain rational. Los-

ing his presence of mind, he jumped up, gathered up the bed sheets, and threw them out the hospital window.

A drunk was walking by the hospital when the sheets landed on him. He started yelling, cursing, and swinging his arms wildly, which left the soiled sheets in a tangled pile at his feet. As the drunk stood there staring down at the sheets, a security guard at the hospital, who had watched the

whole incident, walked up and asked, "What the heck was that all about?"

Still staring down, the drunk replied, "I don't know but I think I just beat the crap out of a ghost!"

