

18th Annual National Nursing Home Week Contest

NATIONAL NURSING HOME WEEK May 8 - 14, 2011 “Fulfilling the Promise”

We are excited to present the winners of *Creative Forecasting's* Annual National Nursing Home Week Contest. Thanks to all the subscribers who sent entries! These winning entries can be adapted for all settings.

The sponsor of National Nursing Home Week is the American Health Care Association (AHCA). The week was created in 1967 and always begins on Mother's Day.

The 2011 theme is “Fulfilling the Promise.” Visit www.nnhw.org for more information. AHCA member facilities should have received the product catalog and planning guide by mail in February. For non-members, the product catalog and planning guide can be downloaded free of charge from www.nnhw.org. They can also be requested by calling 1-800-321-0343.



WINNERS

■ LAS VEGAS THEME WEEK

Sandy Hale, Activity Director, Pacific Coast Manor, Capitola, CA

We had a Las Vegas Theme Week. We had a real slot machine with tokens that residents played during the day. The activity room was set up with two blackjack and two poker tables and one roulette table. We also set up a horseracing game. Every day, the casino was open from 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. The Mocktail Bar was also open during this time. Some drinks served were Bloody Marys, pina colodas, margaritas, and strawberry daiquiris. The staff passed out drinks to the residents. From 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., we had entertainment that included an Elvis impersonator, magician, and Frank Sinatra impersonator. One day, the managers played A Minute to Win It Game. At the end of the week, we had a Las Vegas Skit and Cowboy Show. On the last day of the week, we added up the residents' winnings, and they chose prizes. This event was a great way to get the staff and families involved.

■ CARNIVAL FOR A CURE

Rose Tway, Director of Recreational Services, Good Samaritan Society, Ellis, KS

Our facility chose different diseases and corresponding colors to focus attention on throughout the week. Each day, a guest speaker who had personal experience with the disease spoke to the residents and staff.

MONDAY ~ HEART DISEASE ~ RED DAY Residents and staff wore red clothing. Residents played carnival games. Students that represented the leadership team from the grade school came to the center to help the residents play the games and to hand out prizes. Cinnamon popcorn was served.

TUESDAY ~ MENTAL HEALTH DISEASE ~ GREEN DAY Residents and staff wore green clothing. The residents played a lollipop tree game, and the prizes were related to different shades of green.

WEDNESDAY ~ BREAST CANCER ~ PINK DAY Residents and staff wore pink clothing. Residents played games using pink footballs. We held a Relay for Life Walk to honor those who have died or survived breast cancer. After the walk, a community barbecue was held. There was a face painting booth, and homemade ice cream and cotton candy were served.

THURSDAY ~ ALZHEIMER'S & LUPUS ~ PURPLE DAY Residents and staff wore purple clothing. They were also given purple ribbons to wear. Funnel cakes and purple cows (grape juice and ice cream) were made as an activity for the residents and staff to enjoy.

FRIDAY ~ NATIONAL NURSING HOME WEEK National Nursing Home Week T-shirts that were personalized for our center were worn. The final special events of the week included a potluck, and awards were given to the employees including Rookie of the Year and CNA of the Year (which the residents voted on).

Throughout the week, the residents and staff shared lots of memories, laughter, and tears by focusing on different diseases that affect people's lives.

■ THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Kathleen Taylor, ADC, Activities Director, Good Shepherd Rehab & Nursing Center, Jaffrey, NH

Our theme for National Nursing Home Week centered around the line that Dorothy says in *The Wizard of Oz*, “There's no place like home.” Life-size figures of Dorothy, Glinda (the Good Witch), Scarecrow, Lion, Tin Man, and Wicked Witch of the West greeted people as they entered our home. Yellow sheets of card stock were cut and taped to handrails to indicate the yellow brick road, leading to places where activities were held. Bulletin boards held photos from the movie and cut-out paper houses that contained messages conveyed by residents that finished the statement, Here at my home . . . “I can sleep late, the staff is friendly, they have great food, I can go outside whenever I want,” etc. Origami blue birds and rainbow mobiles hung from lamps in the dining room. A table was set up

in the front lobby with items the characters received in the movie (i.e., ruby slippers, diploma, medal, ticking clock). These turned out to be fantastic sensory items. Each day had its own theme.

SUNDAY - AUNTIE EM'S PIE SOCIAL Family members were asked to bring in their mothers' favorite pies to share with other residents. Dressed as Auntie Em, I cut the pies that the staff served. Pictures taken that day were developed in black and white (as the movie started out in Kansas and was filmed in black and white).

MONDAY - FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD DAY We showed the movie, *The Wizard of Oz*, to the residents. Residents followed the yellow brick road to the Oz Word Challenge and Emerald City Music Social where songs from the movie were sung.

TUESDAY - BRAIN TEASER DAY In celebration of the Scarecrow, the residents played Brainy Bingo, when participants had to answer trivia questions throughout the bingo games and when they won. In another activity, Use Your Noodle, residents hit balloons with swimming noodles and answered simple math problems. Later in the day, the residents played Scarecrow's Trivia and answered questions about *The Wizard of Oz* movie.

WEDNESDAY - PUT YOUR HEART INTO IT DAY In celebration of the Tin Man, residents made a rainbow craft, had Tin Man Action Hour, acting like the Tin Man while kicking a ball. Residents also played an Oz-themed Concentration Game. That night, we showed a romantic-themed movie, remembering that it was the Tin Man who felt he did not have a heart.

THURSDAY - HAVE THE COURAGE TO TRY SOMETHING NEW In celebration of the Lion, we made visits to residents who normally don't like to come out of their rooms and encouraged them to try just one program. The residents played Over the Rainbow, a volleyball-type game where a long, double-sided paper banner that had rainbow stripes was hung over a string between two chairs. They batted bluebird balls back and forth. Residents played Cowardly Bingo, and the winners had to act scared when they won games.

FRIDAY - THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME DAY Children were invited to a Li'l Munchkins Party in the morning. A simple version of *The Wizard of Oz* story was read. Residents and children sang *Over the Rainbow*. The snack was doughnut holes. In the afternoon, staff dressed in rented costumes and put on a condensed version of *The Wizard of Oz* in a 30-minute performance that was very funny. As the commentator, I added some thoughts at the end of the play about our home. The team of persons who care for families' loved ones need to have a brain to know how to care for the residents. Residents are encouraged to use their brains, learning something new daily, if they choose. Having a heart means that we care for the residents and

they are like family, and they, too, can still feel love in their hearts. Residents and staff alike have the courage to face new challenges every day and know that they can accomplish things together. Finally, we reminded ourselves that there is no place like our own homes, but if they have to be somewhere until they find their way over the rainbow, Good Shepherd is a pretty good place to be.

SATURDAY - TOTO'S FRIENDS DOG SHOW Family members and staff were invited to dress their dogs like characters from *The Wizard of Oz* and bring them to visit the residents.

■ WE'RE ON VACATION!

*Sue Ellen Clark, Activities Director,
Guggenheimer Nursing Home, Lynchburg, VA*

Our National Nursing Home Week theme was "We're on Vacation! Seven Fantastic Locations in Seven Days!" I came up with this idea because people that live in a nursing home don't have the opportunity to go on vacation, so we brought the vacation to them. In the weeks and months leading up to the week, many of the centerpieces and decorations were made by the residents in the crafts group and in their rooms, and the evening receptionist helped, too. Many residents were also involved in other preparations for the week.

Every day of the week, we changed the decorations, centerpieces, and bulletin boards since we were in a different location each day. At the main sign-in area at our facility, a mannequin (stuffed like a scarecrow) sat in a chair with a suitcase and an atlas. His face was our administrator's which we enlarged from a photo. Each day, he was accessorized with something from our vacation location. At this table and other places around the facility, there were travel brochures and maps that changed every day. (I ordered these free items from various travel Internet sites months ahead of time. I also checked out books from the library.) Our daily activity boards featured each day's destination and events. Corresponding pictures were hung to capture the residents' attention. Each day, the kitchen matched the lunch menu with the vacation location.

SUNDAY: HOLLYWOOD, CA Since National Nursing Home Week always starts on Mother's Day, we made this our biggest day of the week. Our theme was "Mom, You're a Star!", and the colors were red, black, and gold. Families were sent personalized invitations several weeks before the event, so they had time to RSVP. There was a limit to two family members per resident for the brunch. When families walked into the facility, they were greeted with a Hollywood walk of fame that was made using a long red runner with red and black stars. Each female resident had her name on the walk of fame written in gold fabric paint. The wall decorations were pictures of Hollywood stars.

The centerpieces were soup cans painted black, sitting upside down, wrapped in gold and black tulle, secured with gold ribbons. Star trophies (purchased at a dollar store) ☛

were hot glued in the middle of each can. Each table was covered with a red or black linen tablecloth with contrasting napkins. Placecards were red or black construction paper stars with the families' names written on them with gold fabric paint. We played Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin music. A glamour shot booth was set up so residents and their family members could put on glamorous accessories (studded sunglasses, gaudy jewelry, bow ties, top hats, boas, trophy) and have their pictures taken.

MONDAY: LANCASTER, PA The decorations were a clothesline strung across the dining room with quilts hanging on it. The centerpieces were photos of Amish life and quilts and barns glued to tongue depressors and stuck into Styrofoam balls that were in painted plastic pots. Scraps of cloth and miniature clothespins also accented the centerpieces. In the morning, we featured an Amish craft and talked about the life of the Amish. In the afternoon, a woman gave a talk about Amish life and displayed authentic quilts and crafts.

TUESDAY: WYOMING COUNTY ZOO There is no zoo in our county, but there was one in our facility that day. The centerpieces were cardboard tubes from skeins of crocheting floss, painted to look like zebra stripes, tiger stripes, giraffe spots, and cheetah spots. A stuffed animal popped out from the center of each tube with a sign that said, "Don't feed the animals!" In the morning, we had a Pet Parade. The animals that visited were a miniature horse, Burmese mountain dog, hog, cat, and rabbits. In the afternoon, we played animal bingo and ate animal crackers.

WEDNESDAY: LAS VEGAS The centerpieces were playing cards and poker chips glued to tongue depressors and stuck into Styrofoam balls that were in red or black plastic cups. Red and black tulle was wrapped around the centerpieces secured with gold ribbon and poker chips. In the morning, the residents played a horseracing game. In the afternoon, we played pokeno, black jack, and I Got It. After supper, the residents enjoyed non-alcoholic cocktails and enjoyed entertainers that performed a casino-themed show.

THURSDAY: ROME, ITALY Italian-themed decorations and Italian flags hung on the walls. In the morning, we held a Celebrity Chef Program with our nursing supervisor making lasagna. In the afternoon, we threw spaghetti. The kitchen prepared many pounds of spaghetti and put them in zipper-closing bags. The residents sat in a large circle. Four employees, who volunteered, sat in the middle of the circle. They wore white chef hats, garbage bags over their clothes, and aprons. The residents threw spaghetti at them for 20 minutes. Everyone had a great time. Once we cleaned the floor, we served Italian ice. Later in the afternoon, we played a True or False Italian Trivia Game.



FRIDAY: ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME, CLEVELAND, OH Residents and staff were encouraged to dress up, 1950s style. Wall decorations included pictures of soda fountains, musical notes, and '50s rock legends. The centerpieces were records. In the morning, we had a discussion about the history of rock and roll music. In the afternoon, we had a Sock Hop. The residents voted on what employee had the best costume. The staff competed in a Hula-Hoop Contest and Twist Dance Contest. The resident council donated \$75 in prize money for the winners.

SATURDAY: MAYBERRY, NC In the morning, the residents reminisced about *The Andy Griffith Show*, answered trivia questions about the show, and watched an episode. In the afternoon, a bluegrass entertainer performed for the residents.

Since the residents and staff had so much fun, we repeated this event during the week of Halloween. We began the week in Paris, France (since Halloween was on a Sunday in 2010). In the morning, we went on a "Tour de France." We took a trip on our bikes and visited many tourist attractions and learned about the customs of France. In the afternoon, we had a Fashion Show that featured the staff's children dressed in their Halloween costumes. They walked down a runway, decorated with balloons and silk flowers, with a background of a large picture of the Eiffel Tower that was outlined in white lights along with many other photos of Paris. The models danced to the *Monster Mash*, and we all enjoyed a French snack buffet with mock champagne, cheese and crackers, and pastries.

We switched two of the other locations for the week (instead of Las Vegas, we were in Atlantic City, NJ, and instead of Rome, we were in Venice), but we used the same decorations.

■ TRAVELING SUITCASE

*Sandra Mead, ADC, Activity Coordinator,
Friendship Village of South Hills, Upper St. Clair, PA*

This activity is entertaining and keeps the residents' attention for the entire program. We use a suitcase from the 1950s or 1960s that is made of different colors and has pockets on the front. A theme is chosen and the person who will be taking the suitcase around dresses up, related to what the program is about. Props and pictures related to the theme are put in the suitcase to take out to show the residents during the activity. Some examples of programs we've done are a visit to a farm (with ears of corn, photos of farms animals) and a visit to the seashore (seashells, swimming suits). This activity gets the residents talking about the different places they've been to and reminiscing. This activity is perfect to take to residents who can't come to the activity. The smiles on the residents' and staff's faces is worth the time of preparing for the program, dressing up, and carrying an outdated suitcase. Everyone wants to know what is in the traveling suitcase. **CF**