

16th Annual National Nursing Home Week Contest

NATIONAL NURSING HOME WEEK May 10 - 16, 2009 “Nurturing a Love that Lasts”

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 2009 theme is “Nurturing a Love that Lasts.” This theme is meant to encourage people to think of parents and grandparents nurturing future generations to carry on life and family traditions. 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 AHCA's web site, www.nnhw.org. They can also be requested by calling 1-800-321-0343.



WINNERS

TEAMWORK WEEK

*Diane Smith, Activity Director,
Plantation Manor Nursing Home, McCalla, AL*

Our facility had a great Nursing Home Week last year by delegating one day to each department. This takes the strain off the activity department. My advice would be to let each department choose its own theme. At 2:30 p.m. each day, residents gathered in the dining room for food and fun, and we announced winners of the costume contest.

MONDAY: ACTIVITY DEPARTMENT – So You Think You Can Dance Residents played a word game reflecting different dances. Step dancers entertained.

TUESDAY: NURSING DEPARTMENT – Glitz and Glamour People dressed like their favorite movie stars. Residents played a Hollywood Trivia Game.

WEDNESDAY: LAUNDRY & HOUSEKEEPING – 50s Day People dressed in 50s attire. Residents played Cupcake Walk. They sat in a circle, and each one was given a number. While music played, each person passed his number to the next person, and they continued passing numbers until the music stopped. A number was drawn from a hat, and the person with the winning number chose a cupcake. The game continued. In the afternoon, the staff competed in a Twist Dance Contest.

THURSDAY: DIETARY – Casino Day People dressed in casino-themed attire. Residents played High Card in the Hat Game. They sat in a circle with a hat in the middle and threw playing cards into the hat. Residents played Bingo.

FRIDAY: BUSINESS OFFICE – Tacky Day People dressed in tacky clothes. Residents played Dead Duck Throw with a plastic duck. Staff had a Sunflower Seed Spitting Contest.

MURDER MYSTERY LUNCHEON

Chris Bryan, ADC, Lexington Court Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center, Richmond, VA

We had a Murder Mystery Luncheon that involved the residents, staff, and family members. (These mysteries can happen anytime - breakfast, lunch, dinner, or even in the evening.) My activity staff says that you don't have to wait until Halloween to dress up. We not only had a great time dressing up, but it was so much fun for our staff to make up the mystery story. Here is the script we wrote:

MURDER MYSTERY IN OZ

Everyone has seen the movie, *The Wizard of Oz*, and the Bad Witch dead under a house. They were glad the tornado took the Bad Witch, but there was one person who thought the Witch was murdered before the house fell on her. The Straw Man said, “There is something funny about the feet sticking out from under the house. Oh, if I only had a brain!” Who would murder the Bad Witch? Everybody hated her. We need your help to solve this case.

Clue #1 The Bad Witch's feet were positioned facing straight up. Why were the feet positioned straight up?

Answer: *The feet were straight up because she was already dead. Forensics said if she were alive before the house hit her, she would be face down running from it or face up with legs bent, trying to stop it.*

After questioning the people of the town, detectives found out that the Lion was spotted walking down the street from the scene of the crime. After searching for the Lion for what seemed like forever, he was found in a fetal position shaking in the forest. After questions and hearing him boohoo for an hour, the detectives gave up. “If only the Lion had the courage” to tell us what he knows.

Clue #2 What was the Lion doing at the scene of the crime?

Answer: *The Lion was in the forest when he heard shouting in the distance, but because the Lion was scared, he tried not to shake while listening to the conversation the Witch was having with the murderer. The murderer was upset that the Witch was going to control Oz with her spells. The detectives couldn't determine whether the Lion knew*

anything or not because the Lion was scared to say anything, afraid a spell would be cast on him.

Following clues that led down the Yellow Brick Road, the detectives came across Dorothy, Toto, and the Good Witch. The Good Witch could not believe that the detectives were asking her questions and accusing her of killing the Bad Witch. When questioning Dorothy and Toto, the detectives had to subtract them from the murder list because at the moment the Witch died, Dorothy and Toto were flying through the air in the house that landed on her. Now, back to the Good Witch. The detectives found some magic dust around the crime scene, and the Good Witch said it couldn't be her magic dust because that dust was blue and hers is pink.

Clue #3 Now we know the murderer isn't the Straw Man, Lion, Dorothy and Toto, or Good Witch. Who is it?

Answer: *Find all the characters in the story, and one by one, eliminate them. There should be two characters left. In the forest, the detectives found the Tin Man crying. They had some oil from their lighters to pour into the Tin Man's mouth so he could talk. When the Tin Man was able to talk, he told the detectives that at the time of the crime, he was stiff in the forest, and there was no way he could move to murder the Bad Witch. Dorothy was his witness as she found him rusty and stiff. The Tin Man said, "If I only had a heart, I would help you find the murderer."*

Clue #4 Now we know it wasn't the Tin Man, and we can't question the Wicked Witch because she melted. Who is left for the detectives to catch? We cannot let him get away with it.

Answer: *He had to be at the scene, or he could be the one that caused the tornado to happen in order to cover up the evidence. Who was capable of sending Dorothy and Toto back home, cover the evidence up, and have the power to control Emerald City?*

ANSWER TO THE MYSTERY: The Wizard

THEME BASKET RAFFLE

Becky Dinello, Activity Director,

WillowBrooke Court at Plantation Estates, Matthews, NC

As part of a continuum of care retirement community, we wanted to get all the departments involved in celebrating the skilled care unit during National Nursing Home Week. To start simply and not overwhelm people, we decided to have a Theme Basket Raffle. Each department (environmental services, assisted living nursing, maintenance, main office, home health, security, resident services / transportation, therapy, culinary, skilled care nursing, and activity staff were asked to pick theme baskets to fill and donate for the Raffle. Themes included pamper yourself, kitchen gadgets, kid in you, spa, movie night, good for you, green thumb, car wash, I scream for ice cream, death by chocolate, and fabulous fruit.

We had 13 baskets to raffle and sold tickets for \$1 each or 13 for \$10 (people could divvy them up however they wanted). The tickets had a line for people to write the basket numbers they want to win, and tickets were kept in containers corresponding to the basket numbers. We sold tickets at lunchtime near the main café where many of the independent residents, staff, and family members came daily. We held the drawings on the Friday of National Nursing Home Week at the end of our finale party. We made enough money to purchase Wii™. The Theme Basket Raffle got everyone from the community involved and was a huge success!

NEVER TOO OLD RED HATTERS

*Kathy Weisenbarger, Activity Director,
Robinson Terrace, Stamford, NY*

Robinson Terrace is a 122-bed skilled nursing and rehab center in a small community in upstate New York. It is difficult to get entertainers to come to the facility due to the price of fuel and our allowance for such programs. In order to meet the needs of all our residents and for them to be involved in planning activities, we started the Robinson Terrace Never Too Old Red Hatters. They meet weekly, and the leader belonged to a Red Hat Club before she moved to the facility. At the beginning of each meeting, the leader says something positive about each member. Each month, the group has to plan an activity or fund raiser for the facility and their family and friends. During the past year, the group has had a Bike Raffle (to raise money for entertainment) and sponsored a Winter Ball, Pool Party, Nursing Home Fair, Staff Baby Shower, and Anniversary Party (for a married resident couple). They continue to plan new adventures weekly. This group is not just for higher functioning residents. They all take part in planning the programs, even if it is suggesting the color of the balloons. The local newspaper has covered several of the programs.

The benefits of this group is that the residents are very involved in the activity program and part of a social club, and it gives them something to look forward to and take pride in. The Never Too Old Red Hatters has been a success for everyone and great public relations for the facility.

TV THEME WEEK

*Shelley Evans, MT-BC, ADC, Director of LTC Therapies,
DeMay Living Center, Newark, NY*

The residents chose their favorite TV shows for a TV Theme Week during National Nursing Home Week. Special centerpieces to incorporate TV show inserts for each of the days were made for each of the dining room tables. Each day, we offered viewings of the featured TV show. We put up photos of the actors and did some biographies of their careers. Memories were shared about the shows with discussions about the lives the characters led and the differences we see in life today. Family members joined us for many of the events. ☞

Any theme week is a lot of hard work and it takes all the staff in a nursing home to make the person-centered activities succeed. We start planning six weeks ahead with formal meetings for people from different departments to give their ideas.

Sunday: Mother's Day, the TV show of choice was *Leave it to Beaver*.

The focus was on mothers and families. The morning reminiscence programs centered on sharing memories of our mothers as well as talking about being mothers. We asked Mother's Day trivia questions during a Mother's Day Tea. Staff brought in their tea sets, and each table was set with different tablecloths, linens, and dishes.

Monday: We celebrated *Little House on the Prairie*.

All units baked sugar cookies (to be used in a social later in the week). Staff dressed up as Ma and Pa Ingalls. We had a discussion about the hard times the residents had in their lives. In the afternoon, we offered Games at the Saloon. The recreation room was decorated like an old saloon with many props. Games of dice rolling, roulette wheels, and cards were set up so that residents with different functioning levels could participate or assist. Prizes were given to the winners, and non-alcoholic drinks were served at the bar.

Tuesday: It was time to head to *Gilligan's Island*.

The morning art groups made sand art, and many residents played Beach Blanket Bingo. It was the afternoon program that drew many laughs, as we had a Men's Bikini Contest. Dinner with a tropical theme was served, followed by a Beach Party. A musician playing a steel drum performed, and there was hula dancing, tropical drinks, and appetizers.

Wednesday: We held Western Day to celebrate *Bonanza*.

We decorated the recreation room with red bandanas and cowboy hats, then kicked up our heels for a Square Dance. Staff partnered up with those in wheelchairs. We panned for gold and then got ready for a BBQ. Some residents made cornbread to go with pulled pork and beans. In the afternoon, we played a homemade version of the Concentration Game. We used photographs and catch phrases from 12 retro commercials (i.e., photo of Mr. Whipple with the phrase, "Don't Squeeze the Charmin") to make the matching game.

Thursday: We were ready for *Happy Days*.

It was time to let our hair down as we held an Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe Look-alike Contest and 1950s Karaoke Party. Staff and residents paired up to sing duets. In the afternoon, we played Rock 'n' Roll Bingo, then we had a 1950s Dinner outdoors with hamburgers, hot dogs, onion rings, and root beer floats. Our parking lot was filled with

antique cars, and we held an Evening Sock Hop with more fun, games, and music.

Friday: We cruised on *The Love Boat*.

Many residents and staff spent the morning decorating the dining room for a Cruise. Sparkling gossamer fabrics were intertwined with white lights and streamers. Many residents participated in sensory groups, applying makeup, having nails painted, and dressing in period clothing of the '20s and '30s. As they entered the dining room, they posed with the captain for photos in front of a cruise ship background. The residents were treated to an elegant luncheon served by the waitstaff dressed in white shirts and black pants. After lunch, a special music program was held.

Saturday: We visited Mayberry from *The Andy Griffith Show*.

We baked pies in the morning, then decorated wheelchairs for an afternoon Parade to our Mayberry Town Square for a Lemonade Social.

SILENT PARTNERS

*Chelly Rutherford, Activity Director,
Parkway Manor, Marion, IL*

"The Heart Remembers Everything, Even When Your Mind Can't" - Author Unknown

- ◆ **Purpose:** Increase sensory awareness, provide sensory and cognitive stimulation
- ◆ **Goals:** Provide sensory stimulation, promote reminiscing, stimulate positive memories, and promote feelings of purpose
- ◆ **Objective:** Resident will experience stimulation from the following sensory areas: touch, olfactory, taste, hearing, and visual.
- ◆ **Length of Program:** Variable
- ◆ **Description and Procedure of Activity:** This can be done in a group or one-to-one setting. The role of the activity staff will change in each situation.

On the table, have items that represent the resident's past lifestyle (i.e., nurse – hat, white uniform, syringe, thermometer, coal miner – miner's helmet, heavy gloves, lunch bucket, homemaker – apron, sewing box, teacher – chalk apple, ruler).

Begin the program by introducing the resident by her title of job (Nurse Appleton) and proceed by giving her life story, not history (there is a difference). Utilize the information from the social history and family members. **CF**

