



# *Current Activities* **in Longterm Care**

January/February 2007

*The Activity Professional's Magazine*

- **Starter tips on creating and using a sensory room**



Before and After

- **Purpose to Produce a Professional Profile**

- **Team Work** How to get your staff involved in the new CMS regulations, by Kathy Vickers



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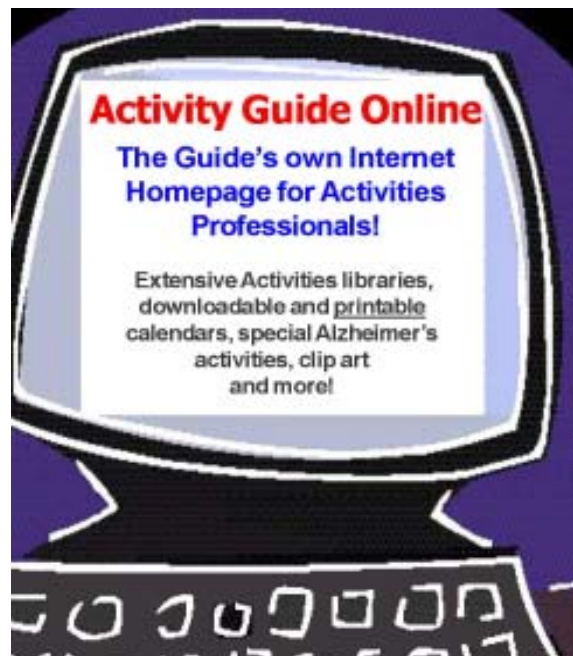
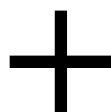
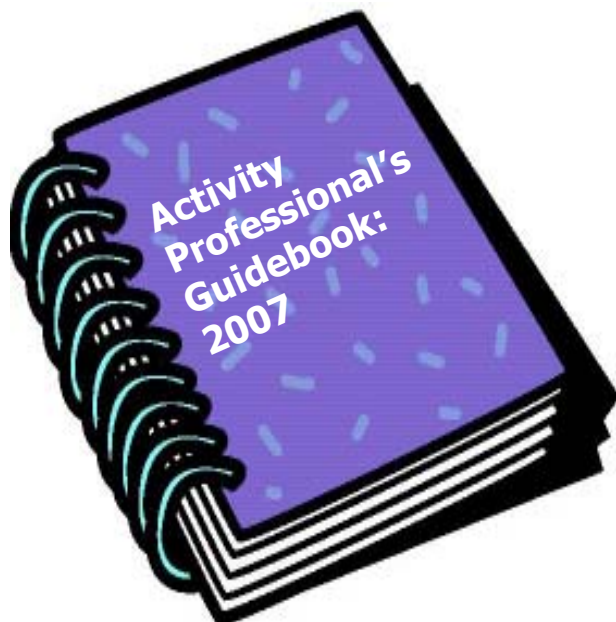


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# Current Activities in Longterm Care

January/February 2007

Volume 34, No.1

## Editor

Kate Lynch

## Research Reporter

Lorena Tonarelli, M.Sc.

## Production Manager

Kathy Freiberg

Ph: 319-553-0642

Fax: 319-553-0644

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

Internet: [www.activities4elders.com](http://www.activities4elders.com)

## To our readers:

This may seem like a dreary time of year, but take a closer look, because there are several really big events coming up! The first is January 22-27, National Activity Professionals Week! It's a whole week dedicated to you! For many, it's a perfect time for the residents to give thanks and appreciation; for others, it's simply a time to take a well-needed break from work. Whichever way you decide to celebrate, take time to give yourself a pat on the shoulder!

With the beginning of the new year, we would like to know your thoughts and opinions on the magazine and where you would like to see it go in the upcoming year. Are there things you would like to see more of? How about less? What are some of the things you use all the time? What are some of the things you never use? Please help us by filling out the short survey on page 10 and faxing it to us at 319-553-0644.

In addition, we are still looking for people willing to make \$150 by writing an article that you feel would be useful and helpful. Just e-mail me ([klynch@cfu.net](mailto:klynch@cfu.net)) your article idea and I will respond letting you know to proceed, or I will give you a few simple ideas on how to improve it. Anyone and everyone can write in, so please share your ideas with us!

Don't forget to download your free activities, posters, and calendars online!

Enjoy!

**Kate Lynch**

Editor

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

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# A letter from Marge

By Marge Knoth

## Purpose to Produce a Professional Profile

There are activity *directors* and there are activity *professionals*. You choose which you want to be. Twenty-seven years ago, I started in the field as an activity *director* because I didn't know any better. Then came continuing education—activity workshops, semi-annual activity conferences, and monthly district meetings with other activity directors. I read what I could find about our field, though there wasn't much available at the time. I learned on the job. I made lots of mistakes. I challenged myself to take on bigger and bigger events, to involve our residents in community events and to bring the community into our facility. I watched and admired professional women who would drop by our facility. I noticed how they dressed, how they carried themselves, how they spoke. This moved me to change my mode of dress from polyester elastic-waist pants and over blouses to dresses, skirts and dressy blouses, or dress slacks and jackets or blazers. I added colorful accessories. As I dressed the part, I gradually began to think of myself and my job in a more professional light, and I was treated by others that way, too. It was no longer a job; it was a career.

I was already a magazine writer when I became an activity director, so I continued to write for my company. I promoted it with national magazine articles, a nostalgic newsletter, press releases, radio

commercials, and a newspaper column called "Do you Remember" in which I wove my residents' memories in with researched facts. I also began to share the things I was learning with other activity professionals (back in the early '80s) in this newsletter, which was then called the *Activity Director's Guide*.

In those early days of our career, activity directors were considered merely bingo, basketball, and Bible study ladies, but I was convinced that we were more than that. So in 1988, I wrote my first book, *The Professional Activity Director*. I challenged other activity directors to think and speak of themselves as *activity professionals*. Well, that's been many years, and ten books ago, but I am still growing and learning every day and challenging other activity directors to do the same. There are many ways to do that. Let's look at a few.

### Professional dressing

Our appearance gives the first impression to visitors of how we regard our jobs, whether we are an activity *director*, or an activity *professional*. Today, dress is more casual than when I wrote that first book, but I still wear dress slacks, not khakis, and nice tops, or occasionally a dress. Different areas of the country have different accepted modes of dress. Still, I think our residents and visitors like it when we get a little dressed up for them. Colorful clothing communicates that we are people-oriented, while

conservative clothing says we are task-oriented.

### Let your body speak professionalism

Without a word spoken, people form impressions about us. Erect posture speaks confidence and high self-esteem, while slumped posture communicates low spirits, fatigue, or inferior feelings. Depressed people walk around with their head down, sometimes their hands in their pockets. Muggers, when stalking victims, are aware of this head-down position, assuming their victim is vulnerable and an easy target.

Eye contact can gain us respect and approval. When we look someone directly in the eye, we are perceived as being warm, caring, and trustworthy. On the other hand, averted eyes suggest deceitfulness. In normal conversations, people look at each other 30 to 60% of the time, but more for those romantically involved. Direct eye contact should last seven to 10 seconds. Any longer can send an intimidating message and make the other person feel uncomfortable. Faces can reveal an emotion. The body shows the intensity of that emotion. In conversation, we tend to turn our bodies toward the person we are interested in and away from those we are not.

Too many hand gestures discredit us. Licking the lips indicates nervousness, and biting the lip, self-reproach. Shielding our mouth when we are talking to another suggests lying.

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Clenched fists say, "I'm afraid." Fidgeting, head propped up on the hand, or sighing means, "I'm bored." Women naturally use more gestures than men. People perceived as authoritarian use fewer gestures. Short, jerky gestures can signify that our thoughts and words are equally disconnected.

### **Our words can make or break our professional image**

It is so easy to get caught up in the negativity and gossip that is often present in our facilities. I once heard gossip described as a feather pillow that is taken to the top of a high hill on a windy day, slit open, and dumped out. The feathers blow everywhere. No matter how hard one might try, they could never determine where those feathers might land, or they could never retrieve each and every feather.

Women talk more than men. Gary Smalley, renowned author and marriage counselor, says that men speak 10,000 words a day, while women speak 25,000. We tend to use 10 words when a man can say it in one: "Yup!" So consequently, we must be on guard that our many words are positive and uplifting and try to avoid being pulled into facility gossip. It's not easy. Personally, I pray before I go to work in the mornings that the Lord will guard the words of my mouth, and too often, I still fall short. Being a department head, or team leader, we are often informed of facility happenings before line staff have any knowledge of them. Sometimes I sit in the break room for lunch when the resident aides are eating and frequently complaining about their jobs. Though I could offer them some comfort by solutions that I know are coming, I

cannot.

### **Attitude is key to professionalism**

The choices we make day in and day out all add up to create our attitude. Pastor, author, and speaker Charles Swindoll is quoted in Zig Ziglar's book *Over the Top* as saying, "The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more than important facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than success, than what other people think, or say, or do. It is more important than appearance, gifted ability, or skill. It will make or break a company, a church, a home."

And so it is in our facilities. An activity professional is like a mother in a home. "If mom isn't happy, nobody's happy." On the other hand, our positive attitude can quickly spread to our residents, staff, and visitors. Remember, attitudes are contagious. They are caught, not taught.

### **Share your expertise**

When I began studying for my writing career, one of the first lessons I learned was, "Write what you know." In those days, my children were young, so I wrote about children's issues, crafts, and cake decorating. Later, in an English class at Purdue University, I had to write an article to convince the reader to choose the opposite side of an issue than they would generally choose. I was of a different generation than the "kids" I was studying with, so I wrote what I knew. My article, titled, "The Case *Against* Teens Helping at Home," later sold to *Family Circle*, and for what it's worth, I convinced the editor of the other side. She called and said,

"My kids are still young, but I'm going to remember this when they are teens." When I became an activity director, again, I wrote what I knew.

I rambled on a bit there to say this: *Share in your job what you have a passion for and use it to promote your program and your company.* As you can see, writing is *my* thing. Someone once said, "Do the thing you love, and you'll never have to work a day in your life."

Everyone has a passion for something. Maybe yours is art. Hold an art show and use your contacts to bring in local artists. Introduce an art class. Challenge residents to paint or do whatever art *you* do. Bring in artists to speak. Teach about different mediums. Bring in paintings and discuss famous artists' styles. Hold demonstrations of your particular art choice for residents, families, and the public.

Maybe you have a passion for sports. Invite a local team to visit and talk to your residents. Teach your residents about *your* particular sport. Improvise playing it in your facility. Get them jerseys. Have sports parties. Invite athletes to speak and show videos of their playing. Take them to sports events. Bring in sports equipment to discuss. Form a basketball team (Coach Gene Keady from Purdue University and some of his Boilermakers came and played bucket basketball with my residents). Maybe you are musical. Hold recitals in your facility. Teach residents about different kinds of music. Play instruments. Sing. Invite in various musical groups. Offer your facility as a place for groups to practice, and

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let residents listen in. Form a resident singing group or band or orchestra. Start a traveling kitchen band. Take residents to musical events.

Maybe you can act. Form a drama club. Encourage residents to perform skits and plays. Invite college drama groups in, or take residents out to plays or dinner theaters.

Maybe you know famous or important people. Hold a "celebrity" day. Regularly invite them in as speakers. Maybe you are a clown by nature. Maybe you have a great sense of humor. Maybe you are a historian. Maybe you have a military background. Maybe you are a craft person. Maybe you are a

woodworker, or an antique buff. Whatever your passion is, incorporate it into your program. And be sure to invite the press so you can bring positive coverage to your facility.

**So how else can I show myself as an activity professional?**

Before you speak, stop and think if anyone will be hurt by your words. Look for something good in every negative situation. Ask yourself, "What can I learn from this? How can I use this situation to make me a better person?" Choose to respond to a situation, not react. Get all the facts first, then speak softly, slowly, and thoughtfully. Feed yourself positive self-talk. "Well, it looks like another problem is brewing. But I

am up to the challenge. I have a sense of humor, and I am a good problem solver." And, finally, remember to smile. It brings sunshine into your facility. Till next month, God bless you all. Marge

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**Marge Knoth can be reached by calling 941-705-3336. You can also e-mail Marge at [valleypressbooks@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:valleypressbooks@tampabay.rr.com).**

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## The Round Table



The current question for *The Round Table* is:

**What was your state survey like this year? What was the process for your department? What did they look at? What is your advice to others for the coming year?**

Your answers could help other activity professionals and give them some great ideas that they may never have thought of! Write as much on the subject as you wish or just a few paragraphs.

Be sure to include your name, title, facility, and address so we can identify you in the issue. If for some reason you do not wish to be identified, please indicate this and we will not publish your identity.

**Please e-mail me directly if interested at: [klynch@cfu.net](mailto:klynch@cfu.net). We may not be able to publish every response, but we'll pay \$50 for each response we do use.**

Also, if you have any ideas for future round table topics, let me know. I'll be glad to consider them for future issues.

Sincerely,  
Kate Lynch, Editor

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# Team Work

Written by Kathy Vickers



Kathy Vickers

When we started looking at the Revised Guidance for Activity Requirements, it appeared overwhelming. How do we share information about changes to all staff? How do we track personalized activity programs in each department? I started with a mandatory presentation for all staff. During this time, I reviewed the guidance and explained that the focus during survey would be our teamwork, how we address resident behaviors, adaptations used to allow residents to be as independent as possible and person-centered activity programming. I reminded staff that activity programs are ongoing, not just at 10:00 and 2:00. The staff was very receptive and began to share stories about how they have assisted residents but did not think about it as offering an activity. One nurse stated, “This is nothing new, it’s just providing good care.” I also stressed that each staff member, in each department, needs to know about the person they are caring for, such as present



and past interests, occupation and family. We provided a handout that offered many ideas about how to provide activities to address behaviors, we offered examples of adaptations and we reinforced importance of teamwork. We also required each staff member to answer questions about the information found in the handout and return it completed. A flow sheet was started for all departments to track activity programs.

Flow sheets were added to the CNA workbook, and each department was given books with flow sheets.

If we agree that everything a resident does is an activity and that the staff is responsible for the social well-being of our residents, the person-centered care begins. We started a project through our Culture Change Committee that would assist staff of all departments to know our residents better. In each room, above the resident



bed, an information sheet is placed so that all staff and volunteers can quickly know the resident name, where they were born and raised, occupation as well as favorite hobbies and interests. At a glance, the staff are able to offer appropriate interventions such as handwork, music, newspaper to read, clothes to fold, and the list goes on. For residents who prefer to stay in their room, the information provides nursing, housekeepers and laundry staff with discussion topics. This sheet is very helpful to new staff and volunteers. Our front line staff interviewed residents and called families to complete information.

Jigsaw puzzles, table games, radios, CDs and reading material can be found in each hall. Our administrator made several comments about how messy the halls looked with all the “stuff” out on tables. Then, looking at it closer, we found that families are playing games with loved ones, residents that spent much time in their rooms were now in the hall trying to fit that last piece

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of the puzzle and people are in groups reading the paper and discussing current events. She later stated, "Looks just like home." And that is the point, this is the home of our residents.

Our nurses play a movie in the evening after supper. Not only do they put the movie in the player, they also ask residents what they would like to watch and now bring movies from home that are current and fun. The dietary staff has also assisted with this activity. Our



dietary cooks provide visits to rooms of residents who are finding it difficult to adjust to long-term care. Our CNAs bring

homemade snacks and fast food to residents as a treat and a way to make residents feel special. The activity department offers a fast food order-in and opportunities for residents to use favorite recipes during cooking programs. One of our challenges in our skilled area is that as the day goes on, so does resident energy and alertness. We started a Breakfast Club that meets every morning at 7:00 in the dining room. Our nursing home has many farmers, so we start the morning with a crop and weather report. Many of our skilled residents love simple word games. I was amazed at the people who answer correctly at Breakfast Club, but by 10:00 a.m. could not answer same question or any question. They also listen to a morning radio talk show that offers a trivia question of the day and spend much time at each table guessing what the answer might be, right along with nursing and housekeeping staff. The activity assistant moves from table to table with individualized activities. After Breakfast Club, we have a cart loaded with music boxes, fabric, nail polish, lotion, word games, reading material, simple puzzles, exercise equipment, trivia, playing cards, stationary and large colorful photos of interest to our residents. We also have old feed sacks, old road advertisement signs, old tools, church cookbooks, and sewing projects that make

their way up and down the halls for small group programs. For residents in the hall reclined in chairs, we made a mobile out of old license plates that hang so the residents can see the plates flat. This can also be done with sport items and postcards for people who traveled. Let the residents' current and past interests spark your ideas!

We started our sewing group as a way for people to mend clothing. They had peers waiting in line to have a button sewn on a sweater or a seam in a pair of slacks mended. As the group shared sewing stories about the past, we discovered that many people were quilters. So came the Quilting Circle. Every Tuesday Morning, a group of about 12 to 14 residents gets together and hand pieces fabric to make quilted wall hangings. The resident quilts are proudly displayed in our halls. The residents take great pride and never tire of the compliments given by visitors, peers and staff.

We have a Red Hat Lady Club and

a Men Only Club that plays poker and shares a beer or two with the guys. We have a Card Club that is resident led; they are teaching peers how to play Crazy 8s so more than one group can play at a time. We have a corn boil in the summer. Residents husk the corn the morning of the boil. One man spent over an hour on one ear of corn and felt so good about his success, he asked staff later that day what time the corn was to be served. This resident spends most of his time with eyes shut and is seldom verbal, but loved sweet corn and gardening. Snapping green beans and pea pods is also a meaningful, home-like activity.

We have social times for our veterans to gather and share stories. We have a room for mid-morning coffee, and the ladies have a gab session. This area is



*continued on next page ►►*

near the Beauty Shop, another social place for people to gather. We have an Ice Cream Parlor that volunteers operate. We also have the local ice cream truck visit the nursing home. With the help of volunteers and donations, we have raised flower beds in our courtyard. Each morning, the Garden Club and an activity assistant prune the flowers and pick tomatoes and peppers as they ripen. We use an indoor garden in the winter and force bulbs to bloom for flowers in the dining rooms. Families are encouraged to bring resident pets. We also have a retired greyhound that lives at our home. One of our residents cares for our resident bird; residents also fill bird feeders located outside room windows.

I encourage the community to be vital part of our home so residents can stay in touch with friends and take part in programs that are familiar to them. We encourage family meals and parties that are held at our center. We offer space for church groups and clubs to have meetings at our center so residents are able to participate.

I asked all our staff to list at least 10 to 15 things that are very important to them and then asked them to cross out what they could no longer do if placed in a nursing home and what would be left if they were bed bound. During this exercise, staff began to put themselves in our residents' shoes and started to realize the importance of the social well-being of our residents, not just medical needs, and that we are all people with needs and emotions that need to be nourished.

*Kathy Vickers has been employed at DeKalb County Rehab and Nursing Center for over 20 years, the last 17 as Activity Director/Volunteer Coordinator. She serves on the Culture Change Committee at the center and has successfully completed Leadership in Dementia Care training at Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center as well as training to develop staff for person-centered care of our residents. The center has 192 beds. More than 80 percent of the residents have some form of dementia.*



## **Activity-Pro Online!**

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Any questions? Call toll free: 1-800-354-3371.

# Tell us what you think!

Please take a couple of minutes to fill out the questionnaire and comment sections below:



## What activities are you most interested in?

- Person centered
- Alzheimer's
- Daily holiday based
- Other (if so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

## How often do you use Activity-Pro Online (free Internet access for all *Current Activities in Longterm Care* subscribers)?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Every once in a while
- Never

If so, what do you use it for? If not, why? \_\_\_\_\_

## What resources do you use the most for your activity ideas?

- Subscriptions (which ones? \_\_\_\_\_)
- Internet
- Networking
- Books
- Other (if so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

## What do you need more help with?

## How would you describe your budget situation?

## In your opinion, what are the most important factors facing your profession in the years ahead?

## Is there anything you would like to see included in *Current Activities in Longterm Care*?

## Have you been happy with your subscription to *Current Activities in Longterm Care*?

Thank you for taking the time to fill this out! We appreciate your answers and comments. Please fax or mail to:

Kate Lynch, *Current Activities in Longterm Care*  
Freiberg Press, Inc.  
P.O. Box 612  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
P: 319-553-0642  
F: 319-553-0644

klynch@cfu.net, www.activities4elders.com



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**Arm Circles**  
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**Looking out the Window**  
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**First Crush**  
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# FEBRUARY

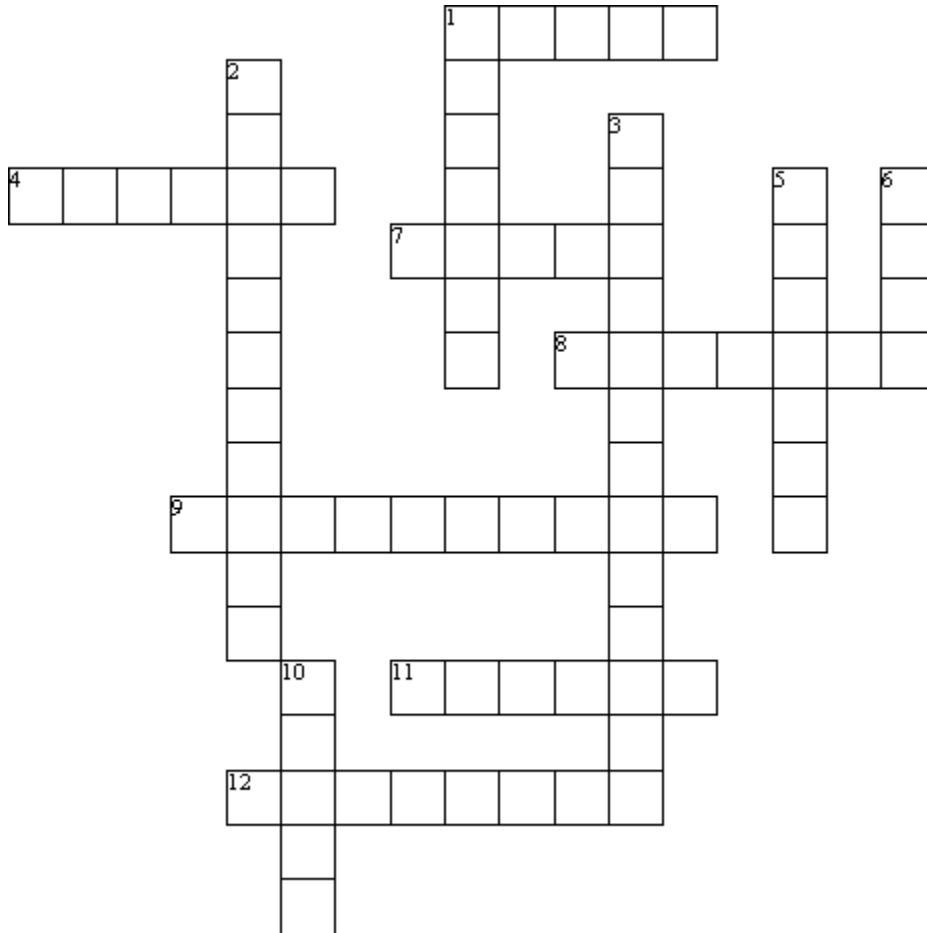
## 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Groundhog Day	3
4 Super Bowl Sunday	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Lincoln's Birthday	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17
18 Chinese New Year	19 President's Day	20 Shrove Tuesday	21 Ash Wednesday	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

# Cognitive Crossword

Complete the puzzle using the clues shown below.

Hint: February is Hot Breakfast Month



---

## ACROSS

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1. Sweet, sticky liquid used to top pancakes.
  4. Hot drink that contains caffeine.
  7. Flat strips of meat usually served with eggs.
  8. Small cakes that are sometimes flavored with fruit.
  9. Potatoes thinly sliced into strips and fried.
  11. Round rolls with a hole in the middle, usually toasted and spread with cream cheese.
  12. Small cakes that maple syrup is sometimes poured over.
- 

## DOWN

---

1. Seasoned meat usually served in links or patties.
2. Thick slices of bread dipped in egg mix and fried.
3. Rolls baked with cinnamon and icing.
5. Fried eggs wrapped around veggies, meat, and cheese.
6. Can be served over-easy, scrambled, or poached.
10. Thin pieces of bread, usually toasted.

Answers on page 53 ►►

# Word Search

*This puzzle is designed for cognitive stimulation.*

*Find the hidden words within the grid of letters.*

**Hint: February is National Black History Month**

P R E S E N T H E R O E S C N  
B Y O V K K W L E T T G E O O  
E L S Y D R G R I L U R S L I  
P M A Y R G A G J I Q T M I T  
L A I C U P E P O K H Z X N A  
N A S R K R D N A G L X R L R  
G O T T W H B R I S O M A P B  
Y S I O H L I R A F O M Y O E  
E S O T U E L S E H E R C W L  
P D T F I I R I T R C U H E E  
S C O F V L M O I O B I A L C  
L R N I U A O C E U R Y R L S  
D Z C P J A A B T S N Y L O R  
Y E R F N I W H A R P O E R A  
M U H A M M A D A L I O S E W

Abolition

America

Black History

Celebration

Civil Rights

Colin L. Powell

Guion Bluford

Jamie Foxx

MLK Jr.

Muhammad Ali

Oprah Winfrey

Past Heroes

Present Heroes

Ray Charles

Richard Pryor

Rosa Parks

Struggle

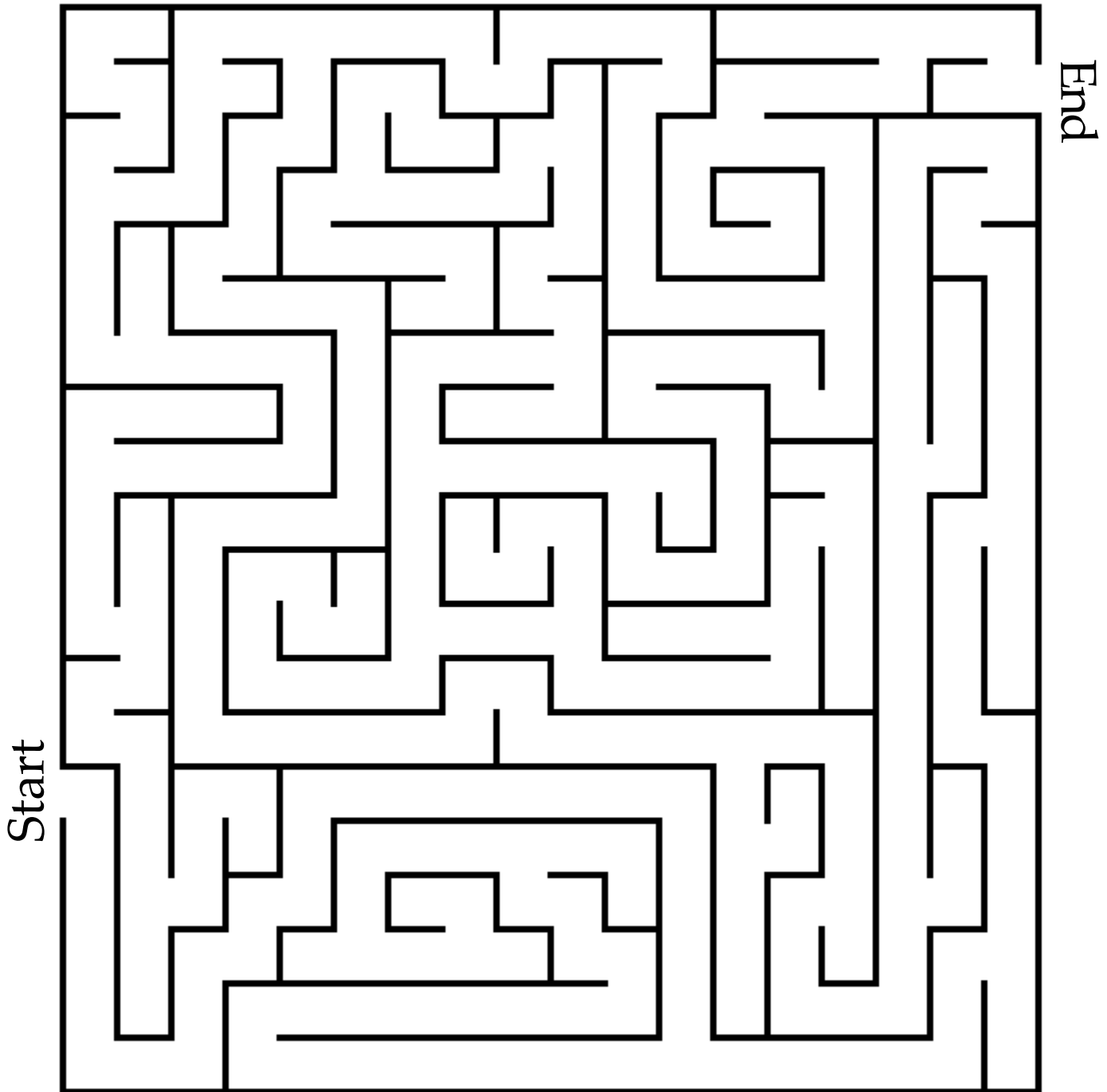
Tiger Woods

Wars

*Answers on page 53 ►►*

# A-maze Yourself!

*This maze is designed for cognitive stimulation.*



*Answers on page 54 ►►*

## Leaky Faucet?

### Materials needed:

Washers of several different sizes  
Steel wool  
Toothbrush  
Adjustable wrench  
Screwdriver

### Steps to follow:

Put all the materials above into a small caddy that is easy to carry around. Ask a resident to volunteer his time to try to fix the leaky faucets around the facility. Find the valve to turn off the water. The water must be turned off before you start! Otherwise, there will be a huge mess! You can double-check by turning on the faucet. If no water comes out, you are ready to move on to the next step. Unscrew the aerator from the nozzle, and use the toothbrush to remove any debris from the mesh. Run water through it and tap gently. Use the steel wool to clean the inside of the faucet gently. Then replace the aerator. Find the packing nut of the faucet just below or inside the individual faucet handles, and loosen with the wrench. Using the faucet handle, pull out the entire valve unit by twisting and turning it until it pulls free. Locate the old washer, usually located at the bottom of the valve unit. Remove the screw that is holding the washer in place. Find a new washer that is of the same size and replace the old one. Place the valve unit back into the faucet. Make sure that both of the handles are shut off. Tighten the packing nut, turn the water back on, and test for leaks. Tip: close the drain to prevent losing any parts.

## Bologna Roll-ups

### Ingredients needed:

Flour tortillas  
Mustard  
Bologna  
American cheese

### Steps to follow:

1. Place one flour tortilla on a microwave-safe plate.
2. Spread a small amount of mustard on the shell.
3. Place one or two slices of bologna on top of the mustard.
4. On top of the bologna, place one or two slices of American cheese.
5. Roll the tortilla up.
6. Place the open edge of the tortilla down on the plate and microwave on high for 15 to 30 seconds.
7. Make sure all cheese is melted.

## Indoor Balloon Ball

This game has many variations. It is up to you make it fun! Get creative and join in! This activity can be limited to men or it can involve women.

### Materials needed:

Empty gift-wrap roll  
Balloon  
Base markers (outline available online)  
Chalkboard/dry erase board

### Steps to follow:

You will need a relatively large room to conduct this activity. Separate participants into two teams. Try to have equal amounts of men and women for each team to make it fair. The rules for the game are very flexible; if you want the game to be played very much like softball, follow these rules:

Two teams play the sport, nine players per team, with each team taking turns at batting and defense.

The aim of the game is to advance a runner around all bases to home plate and score the most runs.

Each team's half of the inning ends when three of its batters have been ruled out. A game of softball is seven innings.

If the score is tied, extra innings are played.

You can create your own rules to what you think will work best with your players. You can have less innings or fewer players. Throw in a twist where they have to answer trivia questions to bat and progress towards the next base. Another twist could be that if the balloon touches the floor before someone catches it, the player advances to first base. Assign one player to keep score and be the umpire. Have each team pick one player to pitch or have the teams rotate the pitchers.



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## FOR THE BIRDS

February is National Birdfeeding Month. Since birds are the only wildlife your residents may see, it pays to attract them to the areas surrounding your facility. The following are some tips to keep in mind.

- ◆ Plan to provide three things—food, water and shelter.
- ◆ Put feeding stations and bird baths near trees or bushes that can offer protection from predators and a shelter from cold winter winds. If surrounding plants have varied heights, they will attract more types of birds.
- ◆ Birdbaths are necessary in winter, as birds need water to drink and a place to clean their feathers. Place the bath far enough from vegetation to give birds a view of approaching danger, but close enough to provide refuge if needed. Heavy-duty plant saucers make good birdbaths for winter weather, but water should be checked often to make sure it isn't frozen.
- ◆ Provide a variety of birdseeds to attract more kinds of birds. A blend of sunflower, safflower, thistle, and millet seed is a good choice. Suet balls will attract still other species.
- ◆ Choose birdfeeders that keep seed clean and dry and that are easy to refill.
- ◆ If possible, postpone having the grounds cleaned in the spring so residents can watch the birds collect twigs and other materials to build their nests.

For more information, including free downloads on starting a birdfeeding program, visit [www.birdfeeding.org](http://www.birdfeeding.org).

## Goin' Fishin' in Jell-O

**Materials needed:** Paper  
2 batches of Jell-O Pen  
Ice cube trays Foil  
Large bowl Wet towel

### Steps to follow:

Make the two batches of Jell-O and place into ice cube trays. For more color, use two different kinds of Jell-O.

Then write a bunch of reminiscing questions on the paper. Try to make them relevant to the resident. For example:

- What was your favorite event of your childhood?
- What were your parents' careers?
- What did you do for relaxation 30 years ago?
- What was your favorite place to go on vacation?

Once you have about 10 questions made, cut them apart. Place in the middle of a square piece of foil, and scrunch up into a ball. When the Jell-O is finished, place the square cubes into a large bowl and randomly place the foiled questions into the bowl as well. Have the resident fish out a question and answer it. Use the towel to wipe off his or her hands.

## Wedding Fair

February is the season for romance, and the month in which many an engaged couple begins to plan for an upcoming wedding. Consider holding a wedding fair in your facility as an event that will attract community attention and keep your residents entertained for a day.

### Publicity

The key element in planning a wedding fair will be to tell people about it. Announce your plans to local vendors well in advance to offer them a chance to show up and display their wares. You'll also need brides and grooms who are interested in coming, so make use of your community newspaper, the local news, and other outlets to let the community know what you are planning.

### What to offer

A wedding fair can cover nearly any aspect of the wedding. Caterers, bakeries, musicians, dress and tuxedo shops, photographers, florists and jewelers are some of the vendors you should approach. You may find they'll be happy to spend a couple of hours at your facility drumming up summer business for themselves.

### Getting the fair underway

Plan to hold the fair in an area of the facility large enough to accommodate both shoppers and your residents who are interested in the happenings. You'll also need tables where vendors can spread out samples, pictures and brochures of their foods or products, and a highly visible stage or area for a bridal fashion show.

Hosting a wedding fair will likely be a lot of work, but the dividends can be large when you consider the positive image your facility will have with the community. If you delegate tasks to your activities staff members, volunteers, and even residents who are interested and able, you can take a lot of stress off yourself.



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# Alzheimer's Activities

## Sensory Room Activity

### Aromatherapy Beadstring

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.

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.
- persons.

**More ideas:** Have participants create their own personalized aromatic beadstring, in a separate session, before the activity.

#### Adaptation for persons with severe Alzheimer's:

Place the string on the elder's lap. Next, place your hands over their hands (ask permission first) and gently guide them over the beadstring so that they can interact with it for as long as they wish. Help them bring the beadstring close to their face to enjoy the fragrance. Provide verbal prompts and encouragement, and use cutout pictures that relate to the fragrance (e.g., a lavender sprig, a peppermint ice cream, a slice of bread, a cup of coffee) to facilitate reminiscence. You may also want to use the real items.

**Tips:** One important therapeutic use of the aromatic beadstring is for redirecting the attention of Alzheimer's patients with rummaging and picking behavior. Those who tend to wander will also be able to enjoy the experience during their walking activity. (Make sure you follow the facility's policy for using equipment and materials outside of the sensory room.)

#### Reference

1. Baillon S., van Diepen E., Prettyman R. "Multi-sensory therapy in psychiatric care," *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, November 2002, 8:444-450.

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Alzheimer's activities!**

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# Person-Centered Activity

## First Crush...!

(Small Group)

### Materials

- Audio equipment
- Recordings (and lyrics) of famous love songs
- Chair for all participants arranged in a semicircle

### The activity

Play the songs and invite your elders to sing them together.

Next, ask them to remember an adolescent crush, someone unattainable they loved from a distance, such as a famous person—perhaps an actor or a singer—they never actually met.

- Who was, and how would you describe, this person?
- What did you admire most about them?
- What would you have liked to say to this person if you had met them at that time?
- What would you like to say to them if you met them now?

Make sure there is enough time for everyone in the group to tell their stories.

Then, invite each elder to write down a short, playful, and humorous lyric about their first crush, and take turns singing it, improvising the melody.

### Things to consider

Ensure person-centeredness by selecting songs that your elders like. Before the activity, ask them about their musical preferences .

Person-centered music interventions are widely recognized as valuable therapeutic tools for the well-being of the elderly, particularly those living in nursing homes. Residents who are involved regularly in activities of this kind have been found to have better cognitive skills and be less depressed.<sup>1</sup>

1. Myskja A. "Individualized music—A method for integrating music therapy into health care practices," *Twelfth Congress of the International Psychogeriatric Association*, 20-24 September 2005, Stockholm, Sweden.



•••••  
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•••••

# Facts and fun

Use these facts for cognitive stimulation and conversation.

Answer true or false to the following questions.

1. The only U.S. state that grows coffee is Hawaii.
2. During the 1600s, boys and girls in England wore dresses until they were about 7 years old.
3. Hitler was never voted *Time* magazine's man of the year.
4. In 1836, Mexican General Santa Anna held an elaborate state funeral for his amputated leg.
5. Arabs invented the Arabic numeral system.
6. In the third century, Romans thought of the lemon as an antidote for all poisons.
7. The first hot air balloon flight lasted for a whole day.
8. The longest-living goldfish lived for 42 years.
9. On average, a person laughs 15 times a day.
10. Most American car horns honk in the key of F.
11. The average bank teller loses about \$250 every year.
12. Every person has the same tongue print.
13. Men's hearts beat faster than women's.
14. In Los Angeles, California, there are fewer people than there are automobiles.
15. A gorilla sticks its tongue out when it gets angry.
16. Your chances of being stung by a bee increase if there is no wind.
17. A Japanese artist once made a copy of the *Mona Lisa* out of toast.



Answers on page 54 ►►

# Terrific Trivia



Use this activity to stimulate long-term memory.

Choose the correct answer for the multiple-choice questions.

- The names of the three monkeys conveying “hear no evil,” “see no evil,” “speak no evil” are:
  - Mohammad, Joseph, and John
  - George, Bella, and Steve
  - Mizaru, Kikazaru, and Lwazaru
  - They don’t have names
- Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a historically great king. The king of clubs represents:
  - King David
  - King Tut
  - King Timothy
  - Louis XIV
- Which of the following presidents had a pet raccoon?
  - Truman
  - Clinton
  - Coolidge
  - Hoover
- The first winter Olympics in 1924 were held in:
  - USA
  - Greece
  - Athens
  - France
- Which U.S. state’s flag features a mother pelican with its young?
  - California
  - Louisiana
  - Maine
  - North Dakota
- Which Beatles band member starred in *Give My Regards to Broad Street*?
  - Paul
  - George
  - John
  - Ringo
- This comic hero wasn’t able to fly until later but was able to jump from building to building in the beginning comics:
  - Superman
  - Spiderman
  - Snoopy
  - None of the above
- This decade was known for the bobbed-hair fad:
  - 1920s
  - 1910s
  - 1930s
  - 1940s
- In many weddings, the role of the bride’s father is to:
  - Give marriage advice
  - Give the bride away
  - Take care of the groom
  - The father has no role
- In the sport of boxing, it is mandatory that the knockdown count is:
  - 20 seconds
  - 5 seconds
  - 3 seconds
  - 8 seconds
- Which office machine was developed in the ‘70s from a noodle-making device?
  - Stapler
  - Scissors
  - Paper shredder
  - Paper clips
- This cluster or bundle of fruit consists of 10 to 20 fingers:
  - Peaches
  - Apples
  - Bananas
  - Oranges

Answers on page 54 ►►

# The missing word

Use these word puzzles to stimulate vocabulary.

Fill in the blank with the correct answer.



1. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a payment imposed by military, civil, or ecclesiastical authorities, usually for special or extraordinary purpose.
2. When an animal is exposed to show the several parts of it for scientific examination, it is known as a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. A form of skating characterized by the performance of various jumps, spins, and a dance movement is known as \_\_\_\_\_. (2 words)
4. A hole or excavation in the ground made by an animal for a shelter or habitation is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is a colored, usually liquid, material for writing and printing.
6. A person chosen, named, or honored as a special guardian, protector, or supporter is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
7. When a person at a job gets a \_\_\_\_\_, he is being raised in position or rank.
8. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a moth whose larva spins a large amount of strong silk in constructing its cocoon.
9. When a piece of food is \_\_\_\_\_, it is free of the effect of cold because of an exposure to warmth.
10. Any of the various tall grasses with slender, often prominently jointed stems that grow especially in wet areas is known as a \_\_\_\_\_.
11. The narrow part of the body between the thorax and hips is called the \_\_\_\_\_.
12. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a small, yellow-marked vespid wasp that commonly nests in the ground and can sting repeatedly and painfully. (2 words)
13. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denotes one kind of object or idea used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them.
14. An electronic device that applies an electric shock to restore the rhythm of a fibrillating heart is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
15. To be \_\_\_\_\_ is being drained of all energy or exhausted from lots of activity.
16. An extraordinary event from divine intervention is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ is a lustrous, rainbow-like play of color caused by differential refraction of light waves that tend to change as the angle of view changes.
18. To run away secretly with the intention of getting married, usually without parental consent, is called \_\_\_\_\_.
19. A person who converses a great deal or who excels in conversation is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
20. An electric kitchen appliance with a set of interchangeable blades revolving inside a container is a \_\_\_\_\_. (2 words)

Answers on page 54 ►►

## For More Activities

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## What's special about February

Youth Leadership Month

National Weddings Month

Plant the Seeds of Greatness Month

National Pet Dental Health Month

Women's Heart Week: Feb. 1-7

National School Counseling Week: Feb. 7-11

Live to Give Week: Feb. 21-27

Safetypup's Birthday: Feb. 12

Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day: Feb 24



## February history notes

**February 3, 1945** - Walt Disney's *The 3 Caballeros* released.

**February 7, 1914** - Charlie Chaplin debuts as "The Tramp" in *Kid Auto Races at Venice*.

**February 11, 1921** - Ambassador Theater opens at 215 W. 49th St., New York City.

**February 15, 1903** - First teddy bear introduced in America, made by Morris & Rose Michtom.

**February 19, 1913** - First prize inserted into a Cracker Jack box.

**February 25, 1925** - Beatrix Loughran wins U.S. female figure skating championship.

## Opinion poll — Questions for discussion



What is your favorite season?

What about it makes it so special?

What does the air smell like?

What is your favorite smell of the season?

What types of activities do people participate in?

What is your favorite activity of this season?

What sounds are usually heard?

What did you do as a child during this time?

Did you have a favorite game or craft?

## Paczki Day February 8

Paczki (punch-key) Day is the feast of plenty before the Lenten fast begins. On this day, traditional deep fried pastries (something like jelly doughnuts) are enjoyed throughout the world.

In the United States Polonia, Paczki Day takes place the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, traditionally called Fat Tuesday in Carnival. Polish American bakeries also supply Paczki in the hundreds of thousands that day. Often in American Polonia, Paczki Day is celebrated with polka dances. In Roman Catholic grammar schools throughout American Polonia, children enjoy Paczki at school on that day.

# The year in review:

## 1935



---

### ***In the News:***

Soil Conservation Act is passed, Employment Relief

Act allows government to provide jobs, Louisiana

physician assassinates Huey Long, Social Security Act

is passed to provide for the aged, Penguin Books

publishes the first “paperback” book, and Shah Reza

Pahlavi renames Persia “Iran.”

### ***Prices:***

Tires: \$4.95

Turkey: \$4.00

Toy doll: \$1.00

Toy typewriter: \$0.98

Used 1932 Ford: \$275.00

### ***Top Records:***

*Cheek to Cheek* (Fred Astaire)

*I’m in the Mood for Love* (Frances Lanford)

*It’s You I Adore* (Russ Morgan)

*The Oregon Trail* (Ozzie Nelson)

*Lullaby of Broadway* (Dick Powell)

*Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart* (Victor Young)

*June in January* (Bing Crosby)

*Footloose and Fancy Free* (Dorsey Brothers)

### ***Top Movies:***

*Top Hat*

*The Miracle Rider*

*Tumbling Tumbleweeds*

*Westward Ho*

### ***Science and Technology:***

- Charles Richter and Beno Gutenberg develop the

Richter magnitude scale for quantifying earthquakes.

- Wallace Hume Carothers creates nylon.

- A. Edwin Stevens produces the first wearable hearing aid.

- Henrik Dam discovers vitamin K.

- Robert Watson Watt pioneers aircraft-detecting radar.

### ***Sports:***

- Detroit Tigers win World Series.

- James J. Braddock wins the Heavyweight Championship of the World.

- Joe Davis wins World Snooker Championship.

- Helen Hull Jacobs wins her third U.S. Open.

- Wilmer Allison wins men’s U.S. Open.

- Montreal (Maroons) wins the Stanley Cup.

- Omaha, ridden by W. Saunders, wins the Triple Crown.

- NFL college football draft begins.

### ***Pulitzer Prizes:***

Pulitzer Prize for Novel: Josephine Winslow Johnson—

*Now in November*

Pulitzer Prize for Poetry: Audrey Wurdemann—  
*Bright Ambush*

# A bit of wit

*Humor and laughter have an important role in everyone's health and well-being.*

---



Two sisters, one blonde and one brunette, inherit the family ranch. Unfortunately, after just a few years, they are in financial trouble. In order to keep the bank from repossessing the ranch, they need to purchase a bull so that they can breed their own stock. Upon leaving, the brunette tells her sister, "When I get there, if I decide to buy the bull, I'll contact you to drive out after me and haul it home." The brunette arrives at the man's ranch, inspects the bull, and decides she wants to buy it. The man tells her that he will sell it for \$599, no less.

After buying the bull, the brunette drives to the nearest town to send her sister a telegram with the news. She walks into the telegraph office and says, "I want to send a telegram to my sister telling her that I've bought a bull for our ranch. I need her to hitch the trailer to our pickup truck and drive out here so we can haul it home."

The telegraph operator explains that he'll be glad to help her, then adds, "It's 99 cents a word." Well, after paying for the bull, the brunette only has \$1 left. She realizes that she'll only be able to send her sister one word.

After thinking for a few minutes, she nods and says, "I want you to send her the word "comfortable." The telegraph operator shakes his head. "How is she ever going to know that you want her to hitch the trailer to your pickup truck and drive out here to haul that bull back to your ranch if you send her the word, "comfortable"?"

The brunette explains, "My sister's blonde. The word's big. She'll read it slow. ---- ("com-for-da-bul")."

---

## Ever Wondered....

**How did the grapefruit get its name? It doesn't look like a grape!**

It is believed that the name refers to the manner in which grapefruit grows in clusters on a tree.

Most botanists agree that the grapefruit is a cross between a Pummelo (see <http://pas.byu.edu/pas100/pummelo.htm>) and a sweet orange (see [http://www.floridata.com/ref/C/citr\\_sin.cfm](http://www.floridata.com/ref/C/citr_sin.cfm).)

Grapefruit, like all citrus fruit, is a Hesperidium, or a large modified berry with a thick rind. If you see grapefruit growing on a tree, you will notice that they grow in clusters. It is suggested that these clusters resemble the shape of large yellow grapes, and so the fruit was called a grapefruit. Another explanation is that the premature grapefruit looks similar in shape to unripe green grapes.

# They said it!

*These quotes can be used therapeutically to reflect or be inspired by others' knowledge.*

---

"I am thankful for laughter, except when milk comes out of my nose."

-Woody Allen

"When you reach for the stars you may not quite get one, but you won't come up with a handful of mud either."

-Leo Burnett

"The past is never dead. It's not even past."

-William Faulkner

"Despite everything, I believe that people are really good at heart."

-Anne Frank

"If A equals success, then the formula is:  $A = X + Y + Z$ . X is work. Y is play. Z is keep your mouth shut."

-Albert Einstein

"Dreams are the touchstones of our personality."

-Henry David Thoreau

## Wisdom of the Aging

*Use these starters by choosing a leader to begin by reading one of the problems to the group and then ask residents for their advice.*

---



Gloria and Hillary wrap packages for a large chain department store. They are not supposed to accept tips, but after some customers have a courtesy wrap for nothing, they feel they should leave something. Gloria has accepted tips and then wants to share them with Hillary, but Hillary refuses to be part of what Gloria is doing. Should Hillary report Gloria to her department head? What would you do?



Lulu and Oscar are both 80 years old and spend most of their time watching television. Oscar is hard of hearing, so the volume is set very high. During the commercials, the noise is extra loud, and Oscar never remembers to press the mute button during the commercials. Lulu is upset because he insists on having the remote control by his chair. What should Lulu do to convince Oscar that she should have possession of the remote control?



When the city repaired the sidewalk in front of Jose's house, it was necessary to cut the roots from a tree. This required the city to cut the tree down to prevent it from falling on the house during a strong windstorm. Jose wanted to keep the wood for his fireplace, but instead, the city workers hauled it away. They want to charge him to have it returned. Jose thinks this is unfair and wants to file suit against the city. His wife, Yolanda, says forget it. How do you feel?

# FEBRUARY

**2007**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				8	9 Groundhog Day	10
4	5	6	7	15	16	17
Super Bowl Sunday	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Lincoln's Birthday		Valentine's Day			



18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 Earth Day	29	30	31

<b>18</b>							
<b>19</b>							
<b>20</b>							
<b>21</b>							
<b>22</b>							
<b>23</b>							
<b>24</b>							
<b>25</b>	Chinese New Year	<b>26</b>	President's Day	<b>27</b>	Shrove Tuesday	<b>28</b>	Ash Wednesday

# MARCH

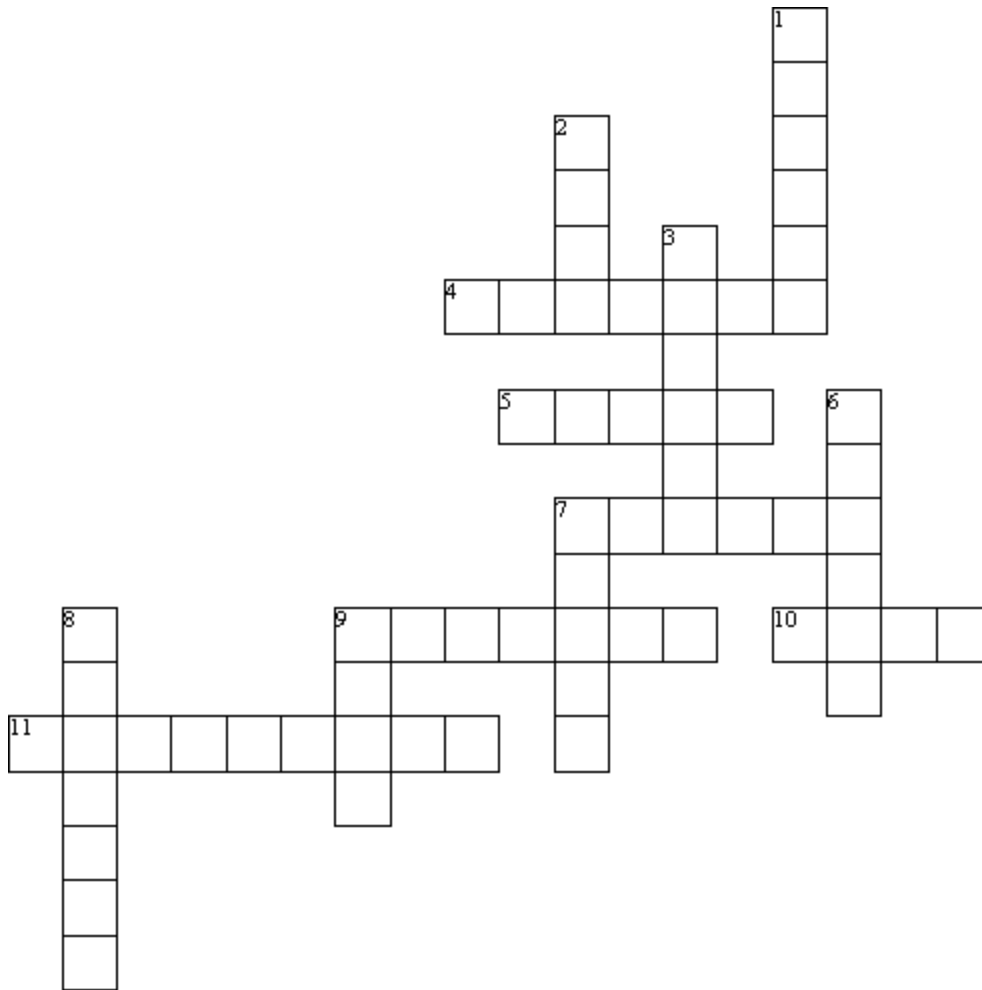
## 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
						St. Patrick's Day
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
			Earth Day			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

# Cognitive Crossword

Complete the puzzle using the clues shown below.

Hint: March is Craft Month



---

## ACROSS

- 4. Detailed sewing instructions.
- 5. Small decorative objects used for jewelry.
- 7. Large scissors with strong blades.
- 9. A piece made by arranging designs and pictures from different resources.
- 10. A string in a candle designed to feed the flame with wax.
- 11. The art of decorating using cutouts coated by a clear finish.

---

## DOWN

- 1. The spool holding the thread in sewing machine.
- 2. To make a fabric by joining loops of yarn.
- 3. A sharp, pointed object with a hole for thread.
- 6. Art consisting of a design of stone, tiles, or glass.
- 7. Rubber or a block of wood that uses ink or die to imprint a design.
- 8. Pattern used in craft projects.
- 9. Material used in modeling.

Answers on page 53 ►►

# Word Search

*This puzzle is designed for cognitive stimulation.*

*Find the hidden words within the grid of letters.*

**Hint: March is Frozen Food Month**

S P I Z Z A E S G O D N R O C  
E K W H R T K T A Q U I T O S  
L Q C P X M A K A N P O H E B  
B U S I V E C T G G Q L I P U  
A S P E T M M M O M A R C O R  
T L U S J S A E A R F U F T R  
E L H V Z A E E A H T I P A I  
G O S A O R R S C T S O O T T  
E R U R J C C N E H C M T O O  
V G P B E V E S S E V W P S S  
I G A C U R C T N U H N I K Z  
D E I Q F E I O Z P H C E I Q  
G A R L I C B R E A D P S N K  
T S F I K P O P S I C L E S G  
S X I S G N I R N O I N O B X

Burritos

Cheese Sticks

Corn dogs

Egg Rolls

Fish Sticks

French Fries

Garlic Bread

Ice Cream

Ice Cream Cake

Meat

Onion Rings

Pies

Pizza

Popsicles

Potato Skins

Pot Pies

Pushups

Taquitos

Tator Tots

Vegetables

*Answers on page 53 ►►*

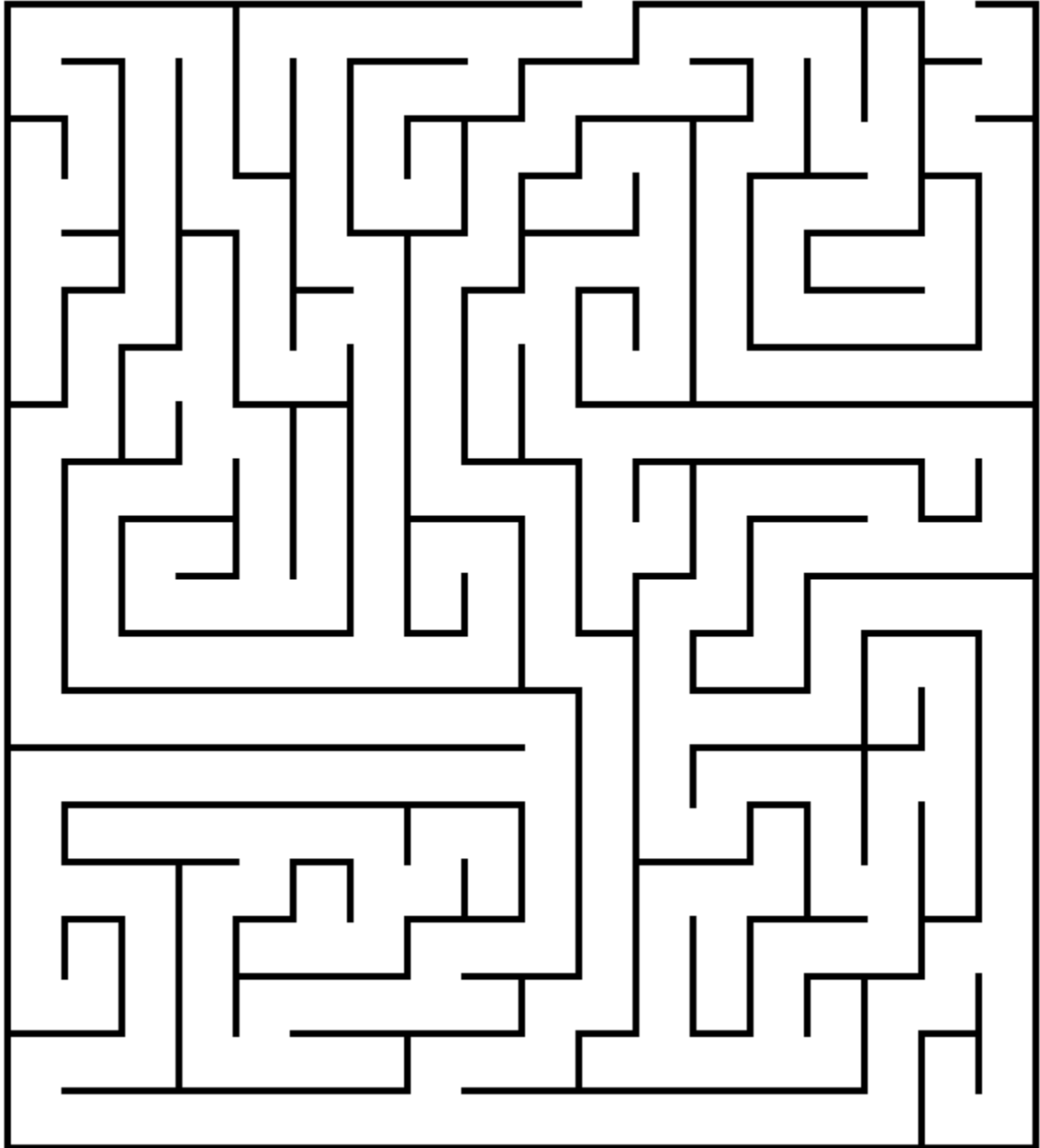
# A-maze Yourself!

*This maze is designed for cognitive stimulation.*



Start

End



*Answers on page 54 ►►*

# Sheet Keep

## Materials needed:

- Bed sheets
- Washer machine
- Dryer machine
- Portable stereo
- Music
- Short and easy recipes

## Steps to follow:

Let all the residents know that you are going to start a "Sheet Keep" day once a week. Put up a sheet of paper for people to volunteer their time.

Pick a day to do this activity. Let the volunteers know one week ahead of time that it is their turn for the "Sheet Keep," and tell them where and when to meet you. Have the resident grab the laundry cart and travel from one room to another to gather the used sheets off the beds. Once he or she has enough for one load, have the resident take them to the washer, load them in, add the detergent, and start the machine.

This is a great opportunity for one on one time. Present the resident with a couple of short recipes. Make sure you choose recipes that will be done in time for when the washer is done washing. Help the resident make the recipe. Once the time is up for the washer, have the resident switch over the wet sheets to the dryer. Now invite the resident to sit down, have a cup of tea or coffee, and eat whatever you made before.

The dryer usually takes a lot more time, so use it to reminisce about when the resident did laundry. Here are some questions to ask:

- Did you have a laundry day? When was it?
- What kind of washing machine did you have?
- How often did you have to do laundry?
- What was the silliest thing you ever found in a pocket?
- What tips would you give someone who has never done laundry?

Once the dryer is done, help the resident fold the sheets. To make it fun, plug in a portable stereo, put in the resident's favorite music, and sing along.

# Big Dice

## Materials needed:

- Basketball hoop/large plastic garbage can
- Masking tape
- Paper
- Black marker
- Note cards with scoreboard on them (available online)

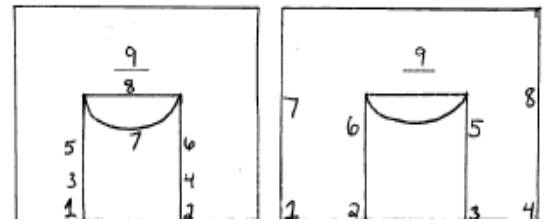
## Steps to follow:

If using a large plastic garbage can, securely set that up against a wall. If using a regular basketball hoop, no setup is required until the next step.

On the pieces of paper, clearly write numbers 1-9. Then secure them with masking tape on the floor near the hoop following either of the diagrams below.

Each number has a certain number of shots a player can try to make. If they don't make the shot by that number, then that is their score.

These need to be determined before play begins.



Before starting, have participants do warm-up exercises to stretch their arms, neck and stomach muscles. Explain to players that each number represents a station, and each station has a shot limit. When a player has reached the shot limit before making a basket at that station, their score is the shot limit number and then they move on.

At each station, the player is responsible for keeping his or her own score. Go to all the stations in order and tally the total score when completed. When all participants have finished, compare scores and honor the winner with a prize.

Name:	Par	Score	
#1			
#2			
#3			
#4			
#5			
#6			
#7			
#8			
#9			Total:

**Note:** It would be helpful to have a volunteer for every participant.



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# Location, Location, Location

## Materials needed:

Map, atlas or globe  
2-6 players  
Small prizes

This activity can be limited to just your city, state, country or even your facility! It depends on the skill level of the participants.

Once you choose an area, you will need several large maps that each person can look at. An easy way to get those is to photocopy and enlarge the maps. Many times, this activity is used to get people familiar with a new city and their surroundings.

## Steps to follow:

Arrange the room's chairs in a large circle where the residents will sit down when they arrive.

## Rules:

The object of the game is to be the first one to call aloud the secret location. Everyone takes turns picking out a secret location. All the others are allowed to ask as many yes and no questions as possible about the secret location.

Possible questions to ask:

- Are you in a building?
- Is it green?
- Is it near the diner?
- Are you in the kitchen?

The person who first correctly guesses gets a small prize.

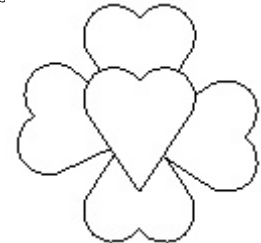
# Clever clo0000vers

In honor of Irish-American Heritage Month and the arrival of spring, make these clover plant pokes with your residents. Use them to adorn the facility and its gardens for St. Patrick's Day on March 17th.

For each plant poke, you'll need:

- Five 1-inch wooden craft hearts
- One 12-inch wooden dowel
- Green craft paint
- Black, fine-tip permanent marker
- Wood glue
- Glitter
- 8-inch length of ribbon or scrap of fabric

1. Paint the dowel and each of the craft hearts green. Allow paint to dry.
2. Outline four of the five painted craft hearts with the permanent marker, making a dotted line just inside the outer edge all the way around the face of each heart.
3. Spread a thin coat of glue over the face of the fifth craft heart. Sprinkle glitter over the glue. Shake off the excess glitter and let the heart dry.
4. Assemble the clover. Arrange the four outlined hearts in a circle, using the diagram above as a guide. Put plenty of glue on the back of the fifth heart (the one with glitter on the front) and press securely over the center of the other four hearts.
5. When the glue has set, glue one end of the dowel to the back of the clover.
6. Tie the ribbon or fabric scrap in a bow around the dowel, beneath the head of the clover.



# Dropping Eggs

## Materials needed:

Marshmallows  
Cotton balls  
Bubble wrap  
Balloons  
Other cushioning materials  
Eggs  
String  
Tape  
Boxes or half-gallon milk cartons

## Steps to follow:

The objective of this activity is for every resident or group of residents to create a container that will protect an egg from breaking when dropped from 8 to 15 feet.

Clear off several tables and set the materials that can be used in the front of the room. Two minds usually work better than one in this activity, so pair the residents up or have them in small groups.

Encourage everyone to get creative and use whatever they think will keep their egg safe during the fall. Once all of the devices are constructed, have the groups bring them outside.

Most people don't like being on the roof, so set a ladder up against the building or a tree and just climb up and down the ladder for each drop. After each drop, open up the containers and see if the egg survived. Keep track of those that did and those that didn't.

Once all drops have been made, hand out prizes for the eggs that successfully survived the drop. Also, give out prizes to those who had the biggest crash, most creative container, and messiest break.



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# Alzheimer's Activities

## Exercise/Music Activity

### **Arm Circles**

**Up to five persons with *mild to moderate* Alzheimer's**

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

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



### **Materials needed**

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

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

### **Steps to follow**

Start the music, and with the participants sitting in front of you, give the following instructions:

- Sit with feet flat on the floor and arms down at sides;
- Slowly lift arms to shoulder height;
- Rotate arms forward five times;
- Hold;
- Rotate arms backward five times;
- Slowly lower arms to the side; and
- Rest.

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

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

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

### **Reference**

1. Stevens J., Keelin M. "A randomized controlled trial testing the impact of exercise on cognitive symptoms and disability of residents with dementia," *Contemporary Nurse*, Feb-March 2006, 21(1): 32-40.



**Log in online to download more  
Alzheimer's activities!**

Twice as many Alzheimer's activities and calendars!  
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# Men's Activity

## *Woodwork Craft for Men*

Up to five persons

Men living in a nursing home may be particularly keen on gathering together and participate in “men only” initiatives, and the new guidelines issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), in fact, encourage and recommend initiatives of this kind. Simple woodwork projects are one way to keep men busy with a creative activity that can hold their attention and interest for a rather long time.

### **Therapeutic Benefits**

- Promotes confidence.
- Improves social skills.
- Enhances fine motor skills.
- Provides sense of achievement.

### **What You Need**

- Sandpaper and sandpaper blocks.
- Brushes and non-toxic paints.
- Unfinished wooden items (boxes, small shelves, birdhouses, and car or animal models).



**Note:** Before the activity, arrange tables so that each elder can have his own space, and make sure everybody has the necessary tools to work at their project.

**Ensure good ventilation to limit exposure to sawdust. Participation in the activity for residents with respiratory problems, such as asthma and COPD, may not be advisable.**

### **What to Do**

Spend a few minutes to explain what the men need to do to complete their project. Although many may be familiar with woodworking, others may not.

Invite each elder to choose the item they like most and to finish it off by sanding and painting it in whatever way they think is appropriate.

Allow participants to work independently as much as possible, but provide help if they have difficulties in initiating or carrying out their task.

Encourage the men to share their knowledge about sanding and painting techniques. The most experienced will be able to provide suggestions and tips, which will be very useful for those who are new to woodworking.

**Variance:** It is also possible to show the elders a short how-to woodworking video before the session begins, in which case, you need a moveable TV with a VCR.

***Tip:** Acknowledge the work of each group member by congratulating them for their efforts and providing positive feedback about their projects. You may want to label the projects with the elders' name, and display them in the facility's dining area for everyone to see. The elders will feel proud about sharing their work, and other men who like this kind of activity will feel motivated to join the group.*

For more activities such as this, check out *Research-Based Person-Centered Therapeutic Activities*, by Lorena Tonarelli, M.Sc.



### **More Activities Online**

visit [www.activities4elders.com](http://www.activities4elders.com) and use your customer number and zip/postal code to log in.

# *Facts and fun*

*Use these facts for cognitive stimulation and conversation.*

*Answer true or false to the following questions.*

1. Penguins can jump as high as 8 feet in the air.
2. Donald Duck comics were banned from Finland because he doesn't wear pants.
3. Christopher Columbus had brown hair.
4. The left lung takes in more air than the right one does.
5. The average person is about a quarter of an inch taller at night.
6. There were 13 couples celebrating their honeymoon on the *Titanic*.
7. Great Britain was the first country to issue postage stamps.
8. Thomas Edison was afraid of the dark.
9. Absolutely no toothpastes contain antifreeze.
10. During the middle ages, chicken soup was considered an aphrodisiac.
11. There are more real flamingos in America than plastic ones.
12. In Kansas, it is legal to catch fish with your bare hands.
13. San Diego public schools banned hypnotism.
14. Einstein's parents thought he had special needs because he couldn't speak fluently when he was 9.
15. Celtic warriors sometimes fought naked during battles.
16. There are more chickens in the world than there are people.
17. Some lipstick contains fish scales.



*Answers on page 54 ►►*

# Terrific Trivia

Use this activity to stimulate long-term memory.  
Choose the correct answer for the multiple-choice questions.



1. This character navigated the jungle with the aid of a chimp named Cheetah:
  - A. Tarzan
  - B. George
  - C. Fresco
  - D. Jane
2. Cindy Crawford wore this brand of makeup:
  - A. Mary Kay
  - B. Cover Girl
  - C. Revlon
  - D. She didn't wear makeup
3. What team conspired to throw the 1919 World Series?
  - A. Brooklyn Dodgers
  - B. Chicago Cubs
  - C. Chicago White Sox
  - D. Boston Red Sox
4. Which river is not in the United Kingdom?
  - A. Humber
  - B. Avon
  - C. Mersey
  - D. Murray
5. What is the capital of Kansas?
  - A. Kansas City
  - B. Salina
  - C. Topeka
  - D. Wichita
6. What is the body of water off the west coast of the Florida peninsula?
  - A. Atlantic Ocean
  - B. Caribbean Sea
  - C. Gulf of Mexico
  - D. Pacific Ocean
7. Absolute zero is:
  - A. 0 degrees Kelvin
  - B. 0 degrees Celsius
  - C. 0 degrees Fahrenheit
  - D. There is no absolute zero
8. In which U.S. state is Einstein's brain kept?
  - A. New York
  - B. Washington
  - C. Massachusetts
  - D. New Jersey
9. What star is the center of the solar system?
  - A. The moon
  - B. Earth
  - C. Mars
  - D. The sun
10. Characters in which cartoon are known to be "three apples high?"
  - A. *Garfield*
  - B. *The Smurfs*
  - C. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*
  - D. *PowerPuff Girls*
11. Millie was which president's pet?
  - A. Ronald Reagan
  - B. Richard Nixon
  - C. George Bush
  - D. Bill Clinton
12. Which of the following board games is the oldest?
  - A. Candy Land
  - B. Chutes and Ladders
  - C. Mouse Trap
  - D. Go to the Head of the Class
13. The only bird that can fly backwards is the:
  - A. Mockingbird
  - B. Hummingbird
  - C. Kiwi
  - D. Loon

Answers on page 54 ►►

# The missing word

Use these word puzzles to stimulate vocabulary.

Fill in the blank with the correct answer.



1. \_\_\_\_\_ is a dish that consists of small pieces of food cooked in or dipped into a hot liquid.
2. Pasta in the form of broad, often ruffled ribbons, and a seasoned sauce of tomatoes and usually meat is a dish called \_\_\_\_\_.
3. A disc that is thicker in the center than at the perimeter and that is hurled for distance as a track-and-field event is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a pole with a strong spring at the bottom and two footrests on which a person stands and moves along with a series of jumps. (2 words)
5. A platform that projects from the wall of a building and is enclosed by railing is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. A \_\_\_\_\_ is when a score of three points in football is made by a play. (2 words)
7. A \_\_\_\_\_ is an affix attached to the beginning of a word, base, or phrase.
8. A stationary basin connected with a drain and usually a water supply for washing and drainage is a \_\_\_\_\_.
9. A wild, headlong rush or flight of frightened animals is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
10. An area equipped to accommodate mobile homes is a \_\_\_\_\_. (2 words)
11. An establishment that is laid out so that patrons can be accommodated while remaining in the automobiles is a \_\_\_\_\_.
12. A \_\_\_\_\_ is the U.S. 5-cent piece regularly containing 25 percent nickel and 75 percent copper.
13. Rice cooked usually with ham, sausage, chicken, shrimp, or oysters and seasoned with herbs is a soup mixture called \_\_\_\_\_.
14. An \_\_\_\_\_ is a glacier forming on an extensive area of level land and flowing outward from its center. (2 Words)
15. A regulated discussion of a proposition between two matched sides is a \_\_\_\_\_.
16. A bar with adjustable, weighted disks attached to each end that is used for exercise and in weight lifting is a \_\_\_\_\_.
17. A \_\_\_\_\_ is the typical way of life within a group, culture or as an individual.
18. Small, brownish spots in the skin usually due to increased exposure to sunlight are called \_\_\_\_\_.
19. An open pie made of flattened bread dough and spread with a savory mixture of tomatoes, cheese and other toppings is a \_\_\_\_\_.
20. A large basket with a cover, often used for transporting articles of food or laundry, is called a \_\_\_\_\_.

Answers on page 54 ►►

## What's special about March

American Red Cross Month  
Health Care Diversity Month  
Music in our Schools Month  
Celebrate Your Name Week!: March 6-12  
Camp Fire USA Birthday Week: March 14-20  
National Cleaning Week: March 27-April 2  
National Children's Craft Day: March 14  
Kite Flying Day: March 27



## March history notes

**March 2, 1923** - *Time* magazine debuts.  
**March 7, 1933** - Game "Monopoly" invented.  
**March 11, 1924** - NHL Championship: Montréal Canadiens sweeps Ottawa Senators in two games.  
**March 16, 1926** - Robert Goddard launches first liquid fuel rocket; it goes 184 feet.  
**March 22, 1903** - Niagara Falls runs out of water because of a drought.  
**March 29, 1936** - 10,000 watch the 200-inch mirror blank passing through Indianapolis.

## Opinion poll — Questions for discussion



Do you have a favorite magazine?  
Why do you like it so much?  
Do you have a favorite section?  
What is the magazine about?  
Is it for entertainment or professional?  
Do you have a favorite issue?  
Are there any other magazines you read?  
What other magazines do your family/friends read?

## National Salesperson's Day March 4

The holiday was set up to recognize the skills of sale professionals. Their skills help consumers to make informed, quick, and better purchasing decisions every day.

The main skills that sale professionals have are:

1. Telling the truth
2. Being consistent
3. Following through

This is the fifth year this holiday will be recognized by consumers and sale professionals. The holiday was set up by Maura Schreier-Fleming, president of Best@Selling.

For more information on the holiday or how to develop your skills as a sale professional, visit her Web site, [www.bestatselling.com](http://www.bestatselling.com).

# The year in review:

## 1960

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### ***In the News:***

Two white public schools in New Orleans are first to integrate, two airliners collide over Staten Island, John F. Kennedy wins presidency, Nixon wins GOP, Howdy Doody show ends after 13 years, Wilma Rudolph wins three Olympic gold medals, and Emily Post (queen of etiquette) dies.

### ***Prices:***

Average Salary: \$4,743  
Minimum Wage: \$1.00  
New home: \$16,500  
Dozen eggs: \$0.57  
Gallon of milk: \$0.49  
First class stamp: \$0.04

### ***Top Ten Songs:***

1. "You Talk Too Much" - Joe Jones
2. "Cathy's Clown" - The Everly Brothers
3. "The Twist" - Chubby Checker
4. "Save The Last Dance For Me" - The Drifters
5. "Running Bear" - Johnny Preston
6. "Sweet Nothin's" - Brenda Lee
7. "Handy Man" - Jimmy Jones
8. "Walk, Don't Run" - The Ventures
9. "Alley-Oop" - The Hollywood Argyles
10. "Stay" - Maurice Williams & The Zodiacs

### ***Top Movies:***

*Psycho*: \$32,000,000  
*La Dolce Vita*: \$19,516,000  
*The Alamo*: \$7,910,000  
*G.I. Blues*: \$4,300,000  
*Macumba Love*: \$3,000,000

### ***Science and Technology:***

- Theodore Maiman created the laser light.
- *Echo I* is launched, the world's first communications satellite
- NASA Office of Scientific and Technical Information (OSTI) is established.
- *Sputnik 4* is launched into Earth's orbit.
- United States launches first weather satellite.

### ***Sports:***

- Pittsburgh Pirates win the World Series.
- Boston Celtics win NBA Finals.
- The first season in American Football League is played.
- Arnold Palmer wins The Masters golf tournament and U.S. Open.
- Ottawa Rough Riders win the Grey Cup in Canada.
- Montreal Canadians win the Stanley Cup.

### ***Television Debuts:***

*The Flintstones*, *The Andy Griffith Show*,

*Coronation Street*, *My Three Sons*, *Route 66*,

*The Bob Newhart Show*, and *Saturday Night at the*

*Movies*.

# A bit of wit

*Humor and laughter have an important role in everyone's health and well-being.*

---



The new family in the neighborhood overslept and their 6-year-old daughter missed her school bus. The father, though late for work himself, had to drive her. Since he did not know the way, he said that she would have to direct him to the school.

They rode several blocks before she told him to turn the first time, several more before she indicated another turn. This went on for 20 minutes—but when they finally reached the school, it proved to be only a short distance from their home.

The father, much annoyed, asked his daughter why she'd led him around in such a circle.

The child explained, "That's the way the school bus goes, Daddy. It's the only way I know."

---



A famous art collector is walking through the city when he notices a mangy cat lapping milk from a saucer in the doorway of a store. He does a double take. He knows that the saucer is extremely old and very valuable, so he walks casually into the store and offers to buy the cat for two dollars.

The storeowner replies, "I'm sorry, but the cat isn't for sale." The collector says, "Please, I need a hungry cat around the house to catch mice. I'll pay you 20 dollars for that cat." And the owner says "Sold," and hands over the cat. The collector continues, "Hey, for the 20 bucks I wonder if you could throw in that old saucer. The cat's used to it and it'll save me from having to get a dish." The owner says, "Sorry buddy, but that's my lucky saucer. So far this week I've sold 68 cats."

---

## Ever Wondered....

**What is the largest flower in the world?**

The *Rafflesia arnoldii*.

The flower with the world's largest bloom is the *Rafflesia arnoldii*. This rare flower is found in the rainforests of Indonesia. It can grow to be 3 feet across and weigh up to 15 pounds! It is a parasitic plant with no visible leaves, roots, or stem. It attaches itself to a host plant to obtain water and nutrients. When in bloom, the *Rafflesia* emits a repulsive odor, similar to that of rotting meat. This odor attracts insects that pollinate the plant.

Another enormous flower found in Indonesia is the *Amorphophallus titanum*, or Titan arum. It is also known as the "corpse flower" for its unpleasant odor. Like the *Rafflesia*, the Titan emits the smell of rotting flesh to attract pollinators. Technically, the Titan arum is not a single flower. It is a cluster of many tiny flowers, called an inflorescence. The Titan arum has the largest unbranched inflorescence of all flowering plants. The plant can reach heights of 7 to 12 feet and weigh as much as 170 pounds!

# They said it!

*These quotes can be used therapeutically to reflect or be inspired by others' knowledge.*

---

"A bookstore is one of the only pieces of evidence we have that people are still thinking."

-Jerry Seinfeld

"Everyone is an artist."

-Joseph Beuys

"The two prime movers in the universe are time and luck."

-Kurt Vonnegut

"Everything in the world exists to end up in a book."

-Stéphane Mallarmé

"It's easy to play any musical instrument: all you have to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself."

-Johann Sebastian Bach

"Don't let yesterday use up too much of today."

-Will Rogers

## Wisdom of the Aging

*Use these starters by choosing a leader to read one of the problems to the group and then ask residents for their advice.*

---



Nellie likes to take a 45-minute walk every night after dinner. She usually takes the same route through her neighborhood. However, one of the streets she walks down has a lot of traffic. It wouldn't be a problem, except that some of her neighbors park their cars half in and half out of their driveways, blocking the sidewalk and forcing her to walk into the street. What can Nellie do to convince her neighbors to leave the sidewalks clear for pedestrians? What would you do?



Minnie's neighbor has a tomcat that roams over five square blocks. He is the perpetual father of 10 or 15 kittens born every few months. Minnie thinks he should be neutered but does not want to lose the friendship of her neighbor. How can she go about getting this situation cleared up? Do you have any ideas?



The Carter family has three children. Five years ago, they built a backyard swimming pool and invited their longtime neighbors, who have no children, to feel free to use the pool whenever they wanted. Recently, the neighbors have been inviting guests of their own to join them. They bring refreshments for themselves and friends and linger at the pool, sometimes inconveniencing the Carters. The neighbors are abusing their privilege. How can the Carters correct this situation without offending the neighbors or breaking a long, pleasant relationship?

# Activity Professionals Research Briefs

by Lorena Tonarelli, M.Sc.

## Social dancers have better mobility and fall less

Older adults who regularly engage in social dancing have significantly better balance and gait than non-dancers, according to new research published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. They also tend to fall less, and have improved cardiovascular health.

The improvements in balance can be partly explained by a more stable walking pattern, says the study's author, Dr. Joe Verghese, assistant professor at the department of neurology of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, New York.

In fact, although social dancers tend to walk faster, they also tend to take longer steps and strides, and spend more time in the swing phase, which increases stability.

Non-dancer, instead, tend to shorten their step length, which diminishes stability and increases the risk of falling.

Verghese concludes that "social dancing is a popular and accessible form of recreation... [that] could be examined as a feasible and enjoyable way to encourage sedentary older adults to increase physical activity to improve their health."

Verghese J. "Cognitive and mobility profile of older social dancers," *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, August 2006, 54(8):1241-4.

## Resistance exercise lessens prostate cancer treatment side effects

Australian researchers found that a progressive resistance exercise program can help counteract the side effects of androgen deprivation treatment (ADT) in older men with prostate cancer.

Androgen deprivation treatment focuses on lowering the levels of testosterone, and is the traditional treatment of prostate cancer – the sixth most common form of cancer among men in the developed countries. ADT has many undesired effects, including reduced muscle mass and strength, and poor functional performance.

Developed by Dr. Daniel Galvao, of Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia, and co-workers, the program was tested on 10 men, aged 59 to 82, for 20 weeks.

It consisted of 12 different upper and lower body exercises, including chest press, biceps curl, seated row, and leg press, performed at 6 to 12 repetitions.

Resistance training resulted in improved muscle strength, functional performance, and balance. It should, therefore, be considered in patients receiving ADT to counteract the side effects of the treatment and maintain a good quality of life, say the researchers.

The findings appeared in the Dec. 2006 issue of *Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise*.

Galvao D.A., Nosaka K., Taaffe D.R., Spry N., Kristjanso L.J., Mcguigan M.R., Suzuki K., Tamaya K., Newton R.U. "Resistance training and reduction of treatment side effects in prostate cancer patients,"

*Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise*, December 2006, 38(12):2045-52.

## Occupational therapy program beneficial to dementia elderly

The Nov. 17, 2006, issue of the *British Medical Journal* reports that an occupational therapy program has been developed in The Netherlands that improves functioning in activities of daily living among elders with mild to moderate dementia.

The finding comes from a randomized study led by Dr. Maud Graff, of the University Medical Center of Nijmegen, involving 135 older adults aged 65 and more, who were randomized to either 10 one-hour sessions of occupational therapy, held twice a week for two weeks, or no occupational therapy.

Sessions focused on teaching both patients and their caregivers strategies to facilitate the elders' capability of performing activities of daily living, including most effective supervision techniques and environmental modifications.

Not only the intervention reduced significantly the level of dependence of the patients, but also diminished the level of burden and related stress of the caregivers.

Graff M.J.L., Vernooij-Dassen M.J.M., Thijssen M., Dekker J., Hoefnagels W.H.L., Rikkert M.O. "Community based occupational therapy for patients with dementia and their caregivers: randomized controlled trial," *British Medical Journal*, November, 17, 2006, doi:10.1136/bmj.39001.688843.BE.

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# Some starter tips on creating and using a sensory room

By Lorena Tonarelli M.Sc.

Current Activities research reporter

*The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) encourage nursing homes to use sensory rooms as part of their effort to improve the lives of their residents with dementia. Yet, evidence shows that many facilities don't have one, and when they do, it is often underused or used inappropriately, mostly because of lack of funds, space, and training. This article offers advice on how to create a sensory room at affordable costs and how to use it effectively and safely.*

Also known as multisensory environments (MSEs), sensory rooms are intended for the delivery of multisensory stimulation to elders with impaired cognition. They provide stimulation of the primary senses (i.e., smell, touch, hearing, and sight) through pleasurable experiences, in a calming atmosphere of soft colors, music, and lights.

## What the research says

Dr. Heather Waterman, professor of nursing at the University of Manchester, in the United Kingdom, writes in the journal *Dementia*: "The use of MSEs is considered a positive adjunct to the meaningful care of older people with dementia, particularly, in terms of affording a medium through which communication may be facilitated."

Sensory rooms appear particularly effective at improving the patients' ability to talk and interact with others. In a randomized trial published in the *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, persons with moderate to severe dementia who attended two 30-minute sessions per week in a sensory room for one month talked more often and more spontaneously. They also appeared happier, less bored, and more alert.

Other studies report higher levels of feelings of well-being and declines in the frequency and severity of problem

behaviors, which, in turn, helped reduce the use of restraints.

## For all budgets

Sensory rooms installed by commercial manufacturers can cost \$7,000- \$80,000, and some nursing homes feel they cannot afford them. (If you can... go for it, as they're the ultimate in therapeutic experiences for your elders.)

But sensory rooms don't need to be expensive or huge and elaborate to be therapeutic. They can be created at relatively low cost and in a limited space. Most importantly, they can be developed over time, as more funds and features become available. This has the advantage that you can see what works best for your residents and shape the room accordingly, ensuring its ongoing therapeutic effectiveness without wasting resources.

## Before you start

Once you have decided how much you can afford to spend, there are a few important things to consider before you start buying anything.

First, the sensory needs of your elders. These vary greatly among individuals. For instance, residents who are withdrawn need

activities that stimulate their senses, whereas agitated ones require experiences that soothe their senses and promote relaxation.

An occupational therapist with sensory room training or another specialized consultant can help you assess the unique sensory needs of each resident and suggest ways to meet them. Having a clear understanding of who needs what will help you decide what to buy.

Also, consider how many elders will use the room at the same time, as the smaller the group, the less complicated and expensive the project will be.

## Find the right place

The next step is finding a place to install the sensory room. This should be

- big enough to accommodate your group;
- located in a quiet but not isolated area of the building;
- away from areas with strong smells; and
- fully accessible to wheelchair users.

If space is an issue, check for rooms that are underutilized. If a whole room is not available, consider creating a "sensory area" in a corner of a room, to be used with one resident at a time.

## What you need

Tina Champagne, M.Ed., OTR, occupational therapist at the Department of Behavioral Health Services of Cooley-Dickinson Hospital, Northampton, Massachusetts, has created one of these rooms. She is currently using it successfully with patients with mild to severe cognitive impairment, some who are older than 100.

"It's a nice space where we do activities and use equipment which is modified for those folks," she told *Care Guide*. "They just love it, including sitting in the beanbag chairs!"

Developing a sensory room can be a fun project to work at, and you don't need much to start with. Some starter ideas include:

- Bubble tubes.
- A mirror ball.
- A projector with effects wheels.
- Fiber optic lamps.
- Comfortable chairs.
- Audio equipment and relaxing music tapes.
- A TV with nature videos.

You can purchase these items for relatively small prices on the Internet, at garage sales, or at local stores. Suggestion: Try finding a sponsor who is willing to make a donation toward the cost of these items in exchange for the publicity involved, or organizing a sensory room fundraising event, like a fair or a bingo evening.

Depending on how much you have to spend, you may consider buying large posters with nature scenes, a rocking or



Detail of the ceiling, before (left) and after (right) the intervention of the volunteers. (Photo by Dr. Kevin Hope, University of Manchester, UK.)

continued on next page ►►

beanbag chair, cushions, and weighted blankets. A fish tank, aroma diffusers, rope lights, and tabletop water features are also good ideas.

All items must be in good working order and safe and used according to the manufacturer's instructions. Fabrics and furniture must be fire resistant.

"You need to know the facility regulations," says Champagne, "before buying anything."

### Make it a team effort

Champagne, who also trains nursing home staff on the use of sensory interventions, says the development process should be a team effort: "Staff and client involvement is important—especially in a nursing home that is actually peoples' home. So, they should give their input whenever possible."

Post and distribute leaflets in your unit to let them know about the project, and ask for help, donations, and ideas. Pay particular attention to suggestions from caregivers who are the closest to the residents, as they are in the best position to know what their elder would enjoy experiencing.

"Adding pet therapy is also a huge hit, usually," explains Champagne. "We have therapy dogs that visit regularly. Fish, birds, cats... this is all sensory too."

### Setting things up

The idea behind a sensory room is to give the person with dementia a special place that has been designed and constructed with their needs in mind; an oasis that allows them to awake or to soothe their senses in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility. Consequently, anything that generates confusion or acts as a distraction, like busy patterns, bold colors, and too-bright lights, should be avoided.

Ideally, a sensory room for people with dementia should have:

- walls, curtains, and furniture in calming, soothing colors;
- subdued lighting; and
- a neat, uncluttered appearance.

Fiber optic lights, water features and other items should be at wheelchair level so that everybody can enjoy them. Then, perhaps hang rope lights around the top of the room for a relaxing, soft glowing light effect, creating delicate colored patterns on the walls with the projector.

You may want to backlight the bubble tubes with pastel-colored bulbs, so as to

enhance the effect of the bubbles rising up. And as finishing touches, have gentle music play softly in the background and some fragrance sprayed in the room. For the latter, consider what effect you want to achieve. Vanilla and lavender, for instance, are calming scents, whereas peppermint and cinnamon are stimulating.

For a "sensory corner," use curtains to separate it from the rest of the room and sheets to lower the ceiling and make the area more cozy.

Avoid mirrors or any highly reflective material, such as foil or glass panels. Persons with dementia may no longer be able to

recognize their reflection. They think that what they see is a stranger, which has been shown to trigger hallucinations and episodes of aggression. For the same reason, abstract projected images should be preferred to pictures.

### Policies and procedures for use

Any sensory room must have a policy and procedure for use; that is, a document that sets out the requirements for using the room and its equipment. This should indicate—among other things—recommended ways to interact with residents; items stored in the room; number of residents allowed in the room at the same time; educational resources and/or manuals for equipment use; and procedures for taking items out of the room.

### Precautions

The document should also provide information about precautions for use, such as infection control practices. It is commonly recommended that residents, staff and visitors wash their hands before entering a sensory room and that items for general, not individual, use be disinfected

between residents, at the end of sessions, or at the end of the day.

Be aware of health problems like allergies to fragrances, nickel, or latex. Avoid using strong scents with residents with COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), as they worsen their already compromised breathing. Also, certain natural sounds

may be upsetting for residents with dementia. These vary greatly from person to person, so you need to check first.

**The December issue of the American Occupational Therapy Association's journal *Mental Health* emphasizes that "staff trainings must accompany the initiation... of the sensory room and the kind of treatment that may occur within it.**

"Staff trainings generally include... sensory modulation, an introduction to the equipment contained

within the room, treatment approaches... safety considerations, contraindications, and policies and procedures for use of the sensory room." Furthermore, staff needs to be familiar with the principles of person-centered and dementia, care.

### Sensory profile

For each resident, prepare a "sensory profile" indicating most/least liked stimuli. Relevant information can be drawn from observations of the person during daily activities and from the resident and their family. This has to be done *before* the person starts using the sensory room.

Care plans, reporting time/day of the week in which residents use the room, activities provided, and intended therapeutic aims and outcomes, are also recommended.

### Address specific problems

Remember: Sensory rooms are for enjoyable, failure-free experiences. "There is no expectation of performance," report researchers of the University of Leister, UK, in the journal *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*. "This removes demands on individuals to understand what they are experiencing, thus reducing the

*continued on next page* ►►



*A view of a corner of the room, with a bubble tube and a projector on the left and a beanbag chair on the right, before (above) and after (below) the artwork was carried out. (Photo by Dr. Kevin Hope, University of Manchester, UK.)*



tendency... to feel confused and withdrawn.”

Simply being in a sensory room, comforted by the soothing sound of water and gentle music, calming colors and aromas, is, therefore, a therapeutic experience.

However, each resident has different problems that need to be addressed in a unique way. So, for example, depending on whether they are agitated or withdrawn, they will need different types of sensorial experiences, namely different music, light effects, colors, and fragrances. This means that in order to ensure their effectiveness, sensory rooms should be used each time by a group of residents with similar needs and preferences.

### Conducting the session

When using the sensory room, “time should be spent introducing preferred stimuli and sharing the experience with the patient,” explains Dr. Lesley Pinkney, lecturer in occupational therapy at the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom.

“The focus should be on the sensory qualities of each piece... and the memories it provokes.”

Other stimuli can be introduced as the session develops, but consider that presenting more than three different stimuli simultaneously is not usually recommended.

The session’s length can be as little as 10 minutes, depending on the person’s attention span.

### Activities examples

Following are just some of the most commonly used sensory room activities for persons with dementia, as reported in the literature. Each one has a specific therapeutic goal.

**Wilbarger protocol;** helps reduce verbal and physical aggressive behavior. Using a soft scrub brush, gently and slowly brush the elder’s arms, back and legs. Repeat several times, while talking with a calm, soothing tone of voice. Then, wrap the person in a weighted blanket. **(Weighted blankets are commonly used in sensory rooms. They can weigh up to 20 pounds and provide a pleasant sensation of comfort when wrapped up around the body.)**

**Fiber optic sprays.** Made up of hundreds of strands up to a few meters long, they can be wrapped around the body and manipulated safely. They provide a great visual and tactile experience, which helps stimulate elders with apathy and works

particularly well for involving grandchildren and great-grandchildren in the sensory room experience with the elder.

**Air mat therapy.** Recommended in guidelines from the National Guidelines Clearinghouse (NGC) to prevent agitation in Alzheimer’s patients, it consists, at its simplest, of having the elder lay on a special vinyl mat attached to an air compressor to enjoy the calming stimulation provided by the jets of air through the mat’s seams.

**Aromatherapy massage.** Gently massage the elder’s hands, feet or back with their favorite scented lotion while gentle music is playing in the background. This technique promotes relaxation, soothes pain and... according to recent findings... can reduce repetitive yelling and screaming. Hand and/or feet massage can be given by a family member.

**Reminiscence with music.** This, too, is a wonderful activity when family members visit. With the person sitting in a rocking chair, use excerpts from their favorite songs to promote reminiscence, or read favorite stories, or look at items in their lifestory scrapbook.

**Popping soap bubbles** or watching them as they form and move around helps prevent aggression and is another great, fun way to promote younger children’s participation.

**Sensory cart.** This can give you more ideas for experiences to try with your elders and can be brought to those residents who can’t use the room because they’re bed bound. It may include balls of various textures, foam cubes, clay, scented lotions, and reminiscence items for the person to touch, search and discover. This technique helps improve rummaging, picking, and wandering behaviors. Avoid small, loose items, as persons with dementia tend to put everything in their mouth (a condition called hyperorality), which puts them at risk of choking.

“Again, it’s important to consider if you want to assist with calming and decrease agitation, or with alerting by facilitating social contact and communication,” notes Champagne.

Keep records of what sensory experiences work best for each resident and repeat them in the next sessions. Also, ensure supervision. No resident should be left alone in the room at any time.

**Sensory rooms involve a whole new and unique therapeutic science, which can evolve and change with each elder. Because of the many types of sensory**

**room experiences and programs available, you’ll want to read all you can about them and contact knowledgeable sensory consultants for advice and program development as much as possible.**

Remember, above all, sensory rooms should be pleasurable and fun. They should be a place for everyone to enjoy and that families, children, and grandchildren are encouraged to share with their elders. The reward can be wonderful: a softly spoken word, a gentle smile, or that special look in their loved one’s eyes that seemed lost forever.

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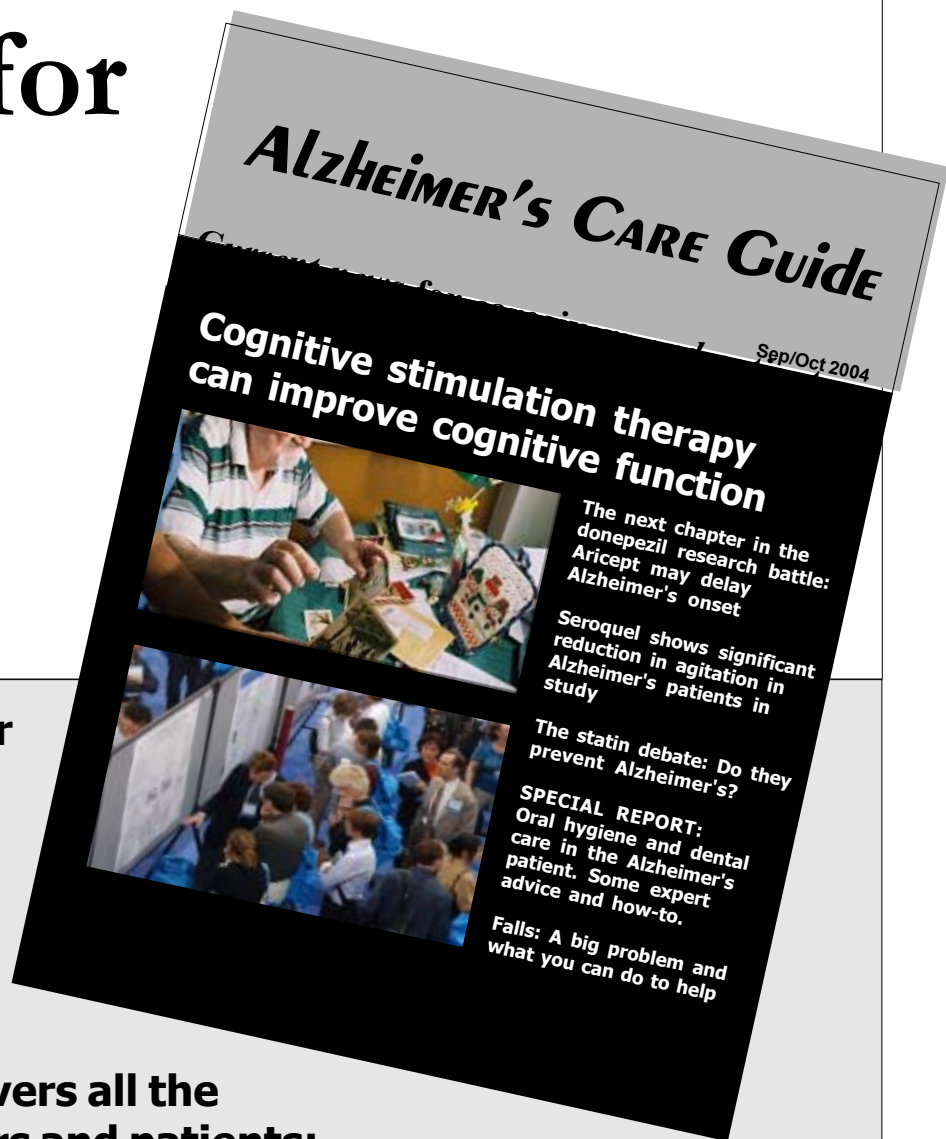
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# The activity director's round table

Each month, *Current Activities in Longterm Care* asks activity professionals to respond to our Round Table topic. This month, a reader asks:

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**How much do you spend on your residents out of your own pocket? What do you spend it on? Do you get reimbursed? What is your advice to others?**

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I know many Activity Professionals who spend their own money on residents. I say DON'T DO IT!

First of all, this could be seen as favoritism if money is spent on certain individual residents and not on others. (And it could be against your facility's policy to boot!)

Secondly, it may be unfair to your co-workers. Case in point: At one facility I was at, my three co-workers and I took turns working the weekends. I couldn't figure out why the residents were angry and upset with me when it was my turn for Saturday afternoon Bingo.

Turns out, a co-worker was using her own money to sweeten the winnings. We normally gave out 50 cents a game and she was giving out \$5.00 per game!!! My boss put a stop to this, but in the meantime, we looked like el-cheapos to the residents and it made for some very unpleasant Bingo games!

Finally, the facility should provide an adequate budget in order to meet the residents' needs, plain and simple. The only time I ever spend my own money is at Christmas when we all adopt residents who might not otherwise receive a gift!

Terri King, ADC  
East Bay Nursing Center  
4470 East Bay Dr.  
Clearwater, FL 33755

Are you interested in winning \$50 like **Terri King**? Simply answer the next roundtable question on page 7 and send your responses by **e-mail**: [klynch@cfu.net](mailto:klynch@cfu.net), **mail**: P.O. Box 612, Cedar Falls, IA, **fax**: ATTN: Kate Lynch; 319-553-0642! We may not be able to publish every response, but we'll pay \$50 for each response we do use!

# Sports Planning Ahead



Be sure to include these dates in your calendar!

## February

AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month  
 American Heart Month  
 Bake for Family Fun Month  
 National Bird Feeding Month  
 National Black History Month  
 International Boost Self-Esteem Month  
 National Cherry Month  
 National Children's Dental Health Month  
 International Expect Success Month  
 February Is Fabulous Florida Strawberry Month  
 National Get to Know an Independent Real Estate Broker Month  
 National Hot Breakfast Month  
 Library Lovers' Month  
 Marfan Syndrome Awareness Month  
 North Carolina Sweetpotato Month  
 National Parent Leadership Month  
 National Pet Dental Health Month  
 Plant the Seeds of Greatness Month  
 Relationship Wellness Month  
 Return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket Month  
 National Senior Independence Month  
 National Time Management Month  
 National Weddings Month  
 Wise Health Care Consumer Month  
 Youth Leadership Month

## March

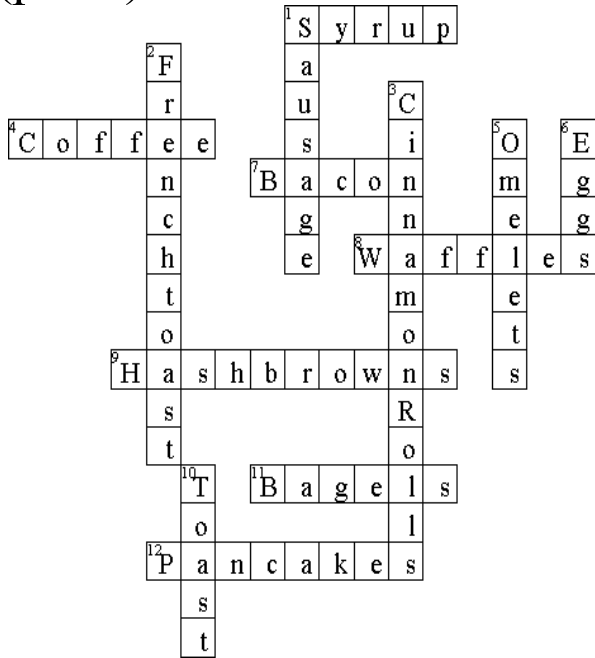
American Red Cross Month  
 National Athletic Training Month  
 National Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Month  
 National Collision Awareness Month  
 National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month  
 National Craft Month  
 National Ethics Awareness Month  
 National Eye Donor Month  
 National Frozen Food Month  
 Honor Society Awareness Month  
 Humorists Are Artists Month  
 International Ideas Month  
 Irish-American Heritage Month  
 National Kidney Month  
 International Listening Awareness Month  
 Mental Retardation Awareness Month  
 International Mirth Month  
 Music in Our Schools Month  
 National Nutrition Month  
 National On-Hold Month  
 Optimism Month  
 Play-the-Recorder Month  
 Poison Prevention Awareness Month  
 Save Your Vision Month  
 Small Press Month  
 Spiritual Wellness Month  
 National Umbrella Month  
 Vulvar Health Awareness Month  
 National Women's History Month  
 Workplace Eye Health and Safety Month  
 Youth Art Month

Date	Sporting Event	Sport
February		
1	Black Hills Stock show Rodeo Tour Rodeo	Rodeo
2-5	FBR Open	PGA
4	Super Bowl XLI	NFL
8	Dixie National Rodeo	Rodeo
9	Coors Pro Rodeo	Rodeo
9-12	AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-AM	PGA
10	NFL Pro Bowl	NFL
10	Budweiser Shootout	NASCAR
16	NBA All Star Rookie challenge	NBA
16-19	Nissan Open	PGA
17	NBA All Star Saturday Night	NBA
18	NBA All Star Game	NBA
18	Daytona 500	NASCAR
22-26	WGC-Accenture Match Play Championship	PGA
23-26	Chrysler Classic of Tucson	PGA
March		
2-5	Ford Championship at Doral	PGA
9-12	Honda Classic	PGA
11	UAW-DiamlerChrysler 400	NASCAR
14	Dodge National Circuit Finals	Rodeo
16	Helzapoppin' PRCA Rodeo	Rodeo
16-19	Bay Hill Invitational	PGA
18	Golden Corral 500	NASCAR
23-26	The Players Championship	PGA
25	Food city 500	NASCAR
30-2	BellSouth Classic	PGA
31-2	AVP Cuervo Gold Crown Fort Lauderdale Open	Volleyball

# Answer Page



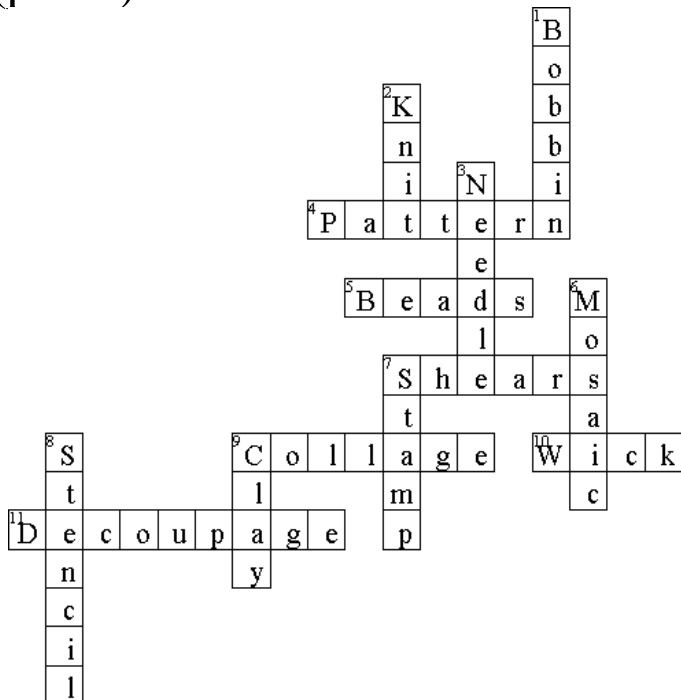
## Crossword Puzzle (p. 13)



## Word Search (p. 33)



## Crossword Puzzle (p. 32)



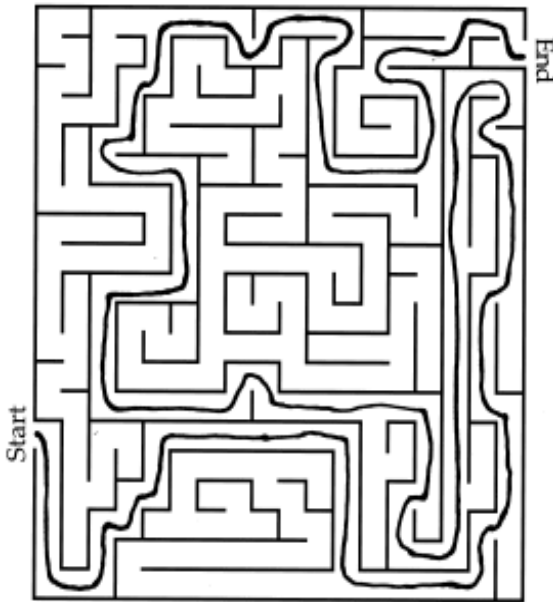
## Word Search (p. 14)



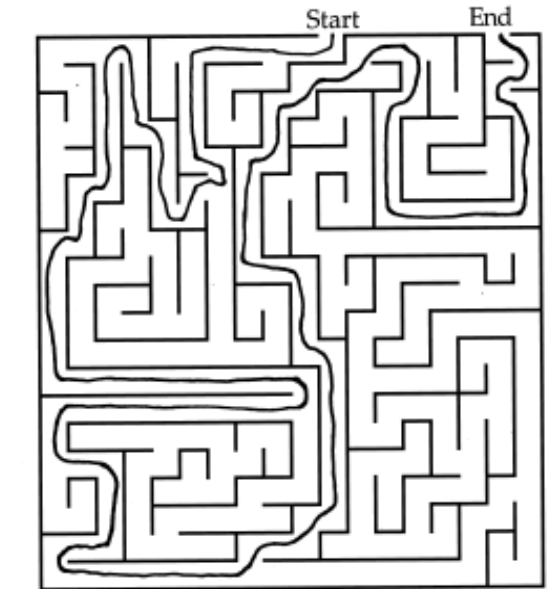
# Answer Page, cont.



## Amaze Yourself! (p. 15)



## Amaze Yourself! (p. 34)



## The Missing Word (p. 22)

- |                   |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Contribution   | 8. Silkworm       | 15. Spent             |
| 2. Dissection     | 9. Thawed         | 16. Miracle           |
| 3. Figure skating | 10. Reed          | 17. Iridescence       |
| 4. Burrow         | 11. Waist         | 18. Eloping           |
| 5. Ink            | 12. Yellow jacket | 19. Conversationalist |
| 6. Patron         | 13. Metaphor      | 20. Food processor    |
| 7. Promotion      | 14. Defibrillator |                       |

## The Missing Word (p. 41)

- |               |                  |               |
|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1. Fondue     | 8. Sink          | 15. Debate    |
| 2. Lasagna    | 9. Stampede      | 16. Barbell   |
| 3. Discus     | 10. Trailer park | 17. Lifestyle |
| 4. Pogo stick | 11. Drive-in     | 18. Freckles  |
| 5. Balcony    | 12. Nickel       | 19. Pizza     |
| 6. Field goal | 13. Jambalaya    | 20. Hamper    |
| 7. Prefix     | 14. Ice cap      |               |

## Facts and Fun (p. 20)

- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. True.                   | 10. True.                    |
| 2. True.                   | 11. True.                    |
| 3. False. He was, in 1938. | 12. False. Different.        |
| 4. True.                   | 13. False.                   |
| 5. False. Hindus.          | 14. True.                    |
| 6. True.                   | 15. True.                    |
| 7. False. 23 minutes.      | 16. False. Greater if windy. |
| 8. True.                   | 17. True.                    |
| 9. True.                   |                              |

## Facts and Fun (p. 39)

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. False. 6 feet. | 10. True.           |
| 2. True.          | 11. False.          |
| 3. False. Blonde. | 12. False. Illegal. |
| 4. False. Right.  | 13. True.           |
| 5. True.          | 14. True.           |
| 6. True.          | 15. True.           |
| 7. True.          | 16. False. Equal.   |
| 8. True.          | 17. True.           |
| 9. False. Some.   |                     |

## Terrific Trivia

(p. 40)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. A | 8. D  |
| 2. C | 9. D  |
| 3. C | 10. B |
| 4. D | 11. C |
| 5. C | 12. D |
| 6. C | 13. B |
| 7. A |       |

## Terrific Trivia (p. 21)

- |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. C | 4. D | 7. A | 10. D |
| 2. A | 5. B | 8. A | 11. C |
| 3. C | 6. A | 9. B | 12. C |

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