

2015 NATIONAL NURSING HOME WEEK CONTEST WINNERS

Creative Forecasting is pleased to announce the winners of our 22nd Annual National Nursing Home Week Contest. Their activities are in the May 2015 issue of Creative Forecasting on pages 13 and 14.

WINNERS

*CELEBRATING AMERICA WEEK – Tina Senecal, Activity Director, Ballou Home for the Aged, Woonsocket, RI

*CAMP NPL – Ashley Cimala, Activity Director, Northpoint Lexington Healthcare Center, Lexington, KY

*TEA AND POETRY – Jenny Juhasz, MS, AP-BC, Activity Coordinator, Bishop Gadsden Retirement Community, Charleston, SC

*INDOOR CARNIVAL – Nancy Newman, Activity Director, Sterling Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, Media, PA

Each of these winners received \$50.00... Congratulations!

22ND ANNUAL NATIONAL NURSING HOME WEEK CONTEST

NATIONAL NURSING HOME WEEK®

May 10 - 16, 2015

“Bring on the Fiesta!”

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

The 2015 theme is “Bring on the Fiesta!”. According to the AHCA, “Imagine an event that brings the long-term care (LTC) community of residents, rehab patients, families, and care center staff together for a week-long celebration. Think of the event as a festival or a party. In fact, let’s plan on a bash in May and call it ‘Bring on the Fiesta!’ Make it a week of entertaining and educating folks and attracting new guests. For NNHW 2015’s Fiesta!, we hope you show how Familia, Vida, and Amor (family, life, and love) are alive and well and thrive at your care center, irrespective of anyone’s age or physical or intellectual ability. Speak the language of Familia, Vida, and Amor. Encourage family members and visitors to join loved ones for a social event. So, BRING ON THE FIESTA! Let the Familia, Vida, and Amor shine through your events like a beacon. Give residents and patients the chance to enjoy the crowds, activities, and comradery. Fill everyone up with family and friends and life and love!”

Visit www.nnhw.org for more information and www.facebook.com/nursinghomeweek. AHCA member facilities should have received the product catalog and planning guide by mail in February. For non-members, the product catalog and planning guide can be downloaded free of charge from AHCA’s web site, www.nnhw.org.

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

WINNERS

* CELEBRATING AMERICA WEEK

Tina Senecal, Activity Director, Ballou Home for the Aged, Woonsocket, RI

For National Nursing Home Week in 2014, we had a patriotic theme, Celebrating America Week, to honor our residents’ generation who are very patriotic. We gave our veterans special pins. The highlight of the week was the Miss America Contest. We invited the female staff members to enter this contest. They had to complete a questionnaire asking where they grew up, what they do for fun when not at work, and if they won the lottery what charity they would give to. Some staff had fun with the questionnaire making up wild stories. For the contest, the master of ceremonies introduced each person as the contestant came out dressed in an evening gown and read what she wrote on the questionnaire. The residents voted for their favorite person on ballots I created. After the votes were tallied, a volunteer, dressed in a tuxedo, presented a rose to each participant and a dozen roses to the winner, as I placed a tiara on her head. The residents and staff enjoyed this activity so much that they want to have it every year.

* CAMP NPL

Ashley Cimala, Activity Director, Northpoint Lexington Healthcare Center, Lexington, KY

In 2014, our residents and staff members headed to camp to celebrate National Nursing Home Week. We assigned each unit a camp name and color (i.e., Breckinridge Bears - green, Amelia Alligators - orange, Combs Cougars - red). Each unit and office was decorated with a cabin theme. A prize was given to the favorite. We also gave all residents and employees bandanas to wear throughout the week to show their team spirit. Each day, a unit was awarded a spirit stick (large, decorated cardboard roll). We also had T-shirts made that the residents and employees could purchase that said, "Camp NPL is now in session."

Our residents and employees in the various units competed in games throughout the week. We had a big poster that was updated daily with scores, and at the end of the week, the winners were announced at the Camper Awards Ceremony. Following are the activities that we did:

Monday Employees dressed like camp counselors. Activities were Archery Class (used Nerf® bow and arrow set), Campfire (fire pit) with s'mores, Nature Hike, and Nature Bingo.

Tuesday Residents and employees were invited to dress in crazy clothes for Tacky Tuesday. Activities were Mess Hall Duty (made a camp breakfast), Stump the Counselor, Let's Go Fishing (used children's wading pool and magnetic fish and rods), and Employees Human Knot Game.

Wednesday Residents and employees were invited to have wild hairdos for Wild Hair Wednesday. Activities for the residents were Camp Traditions Reminiscent Group, Treasure Hunters, and Prank Night (residents draped toilet paper around the activity office). Activities for the employees were Luau, Wheelchair Races, and All Aboard Game. (These were team-building activities.)

Thursday Employees were invited to dress in their team colors for Team Spirit Day. Activities were Craft Shack, Talent Show for residents and employees and the Canteen was open (snack shop).

Friday Activities were *Ernest Goes to Camp* movie, Ghost Stories, and Employee Cookout. The Camper Awards Ceremony was also held. (We made silly awards for the residents and staff, gave the final spirit stick, and presented overall camp winners).

This was, by far, our best National Nursing Home Week celebration ever. The employees continued competing every couple of months using their camp names and colors.

* TEA AND POETRY

Jenny Juhasz, MS, AP-BC, Activity Coordinator, Bishop Gadsden Retirement Community, Charleston, SC

More than a year ago, Anne, the Social Services Coordinator, approached me about starting a Tea and Poetry activity once a month. We decided to try the activity on a Sunday afternoon. Little did we know this first session would grow into a monthly event our residents look forward to. The following is what Tea and Poetry is about and how to facilitate it in your facility.

Tea and Poetry is just what it sounds like. We serve tea and cookies, but sometimes, we serve lemonade or hot apple cider instead. The most important part is the poetry. Anne and I always bring a few poetry books, some selected pieces we have found, and an iPad® to look up poems requested by the residents. We encourage resident participation; rarely do we have to resort to perusing our books or even reading the pieces we brought. From the time the session starts, the residents are in charge. The microphone is passed from resident to resident, and smiles, laughter, and thoughts of contemplation are seen on every face. Sometimes the poetry is serious, and sometimes it is funny, but it is always a wonderful opportunity for our residents to come together and share something they are passionate about. Tea and Poetry has provided a platform for our residents, regardless of their physical or mental status, to express themselves in ways they did not know they could. All it takes is an invitation, a circle of chairs, and an audience ready to listen.

The most important thing to note is that residents from any level of care can participate. Our monthly meetings consist of residents from independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing, and memory support. Many residents bring poems to share with the group, and others come to listen and reminisce. Tea and Poetry has built a wonderful sense of community at Bishop Gadsden.

* INDOOR CARNIVAL

Nancy Newman, Activity Director, Sterling Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, Media, PA

The smell of funnel cakes in the hallway, the sound of carousel music coming from the dining room, and the sight of a clown walking in the front door means one thing - it's Carnival time! Started in 2002, the Carnival is a much-anticipated National Nursing Home Week tradition. The activity department brings the fun, excitement, and magic of an old-fashioned Carnival indoors, accessible for 160 rehabilitation and long term care residents. This event brings back the residents' memories of when they attended carnivals with their families. The smells of funnel cake and popcorn, the taste of lemonade, the joy of winning prizes - everyone, young and old, loves a Carnival!

The community's large dining room is transformed into a place with games, food, mystery, music, and prizes. The ceiling is covered in floating balloons, carnival music plays, and the room quickly fills with smiling residents excited with anticipation. Games of chance, some made from plywood, painted in festive colors with number boards covered in felt, line the room. Residents win tickets playing games that can be redeemed at a prize table with stuffed animals, lotions, jewelry, purses, and much more. Here are the games the residents play:

Horse Race Players sit at a table marked with lanes (the track). Each person receives a cardboard horse that advances with a roll of the dice. The winner is the first to cross the finish line.

Wheel of Fortune Each player chooses a color on the color wheel, then spins it, hoping it lands on that color for a prize ticket.

Ring Toss Players toss rings over tall, painted bottles to secure prizes. (The bottles were decorated by the residents prior to the event.)

Ball Toss Players toss balls into inflatable hoops to try to win prize tickets.

Fish Pond Players cast a pole into a cardboard fish pond to catch paper fish and prize tickets.

Wii® Electronic Games Players play Wii® games such as bowling, boxing, and baseball on a large, flat screen TV.

Duck Pond Each player chooses a toy duck that's floating in a children's wading pool. The painted number on the bottom of the duck corresponds with a prize ticket.

Beanbag Toss Players attempt to throw beanbags into a painted, wooden clown's mouth to win prize tickets.

Slot Machines Players try to get winning rows of cherries, flashing lights, or ringing bells on coin-operated slot machines.

Other carnival-style entertainment includes a magician (community's General Manager), fortune teller (Activity Assistant), clown on stilts (another Activity Assistant), and strolling violinist. A video station is set up where people can be seen on a TV screen singing their favorite songs. There is also a photo area where people can put their heads through a face cutout of a wooden clown. These pictures later appear on bulletin boards throughout the building.

Sterling Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center has embraced the tenets of culture change where the residents are at the center of care, and employees are passionate about providing the best care. After all, you really need to be devoted to your residents to dress up like a clown! CF