

Creative Program Ideas for May 2011

The birthstone for May is the emerald.
The flower is the lily of the valley.

Celebrity Birthdays:

May 1, 1918 ~ Jack Paar	May 16, 1905 ~ Henry Fonda
May 2, 1936 ~ Engelbert Humperdinck	May 17, 1911 ~ Maureen O'Sullivan
May 3, 1921 ~ Sugar Ray Robinson	May 18, 1912 ~ Perry Como
May 4, 1929 ~ Audrey Hepburn	May 19, 1939 ~ James Fox
May 5, 1915 ~ Alice Faye	May 20, 1919 ~ George Gobel
May 6, 1931 ~ Willie Mayes	May 21, 1917 ~ Dennis Day
May 7, 1922 ~ Darren McGavin	May 22, 1934 ~ Peter Nero
May 8, 1940 ~ Rick Nelson	May 23, 1928 ~ Rosemary Clooney
May 9, 1936 ~ Albert Finney	May 24, 1944 ~ Patti LaBelle
May 10, 1922 ~ Nancy Walker	May 25, 1929 ~ Beverly Sills
May 11, 1911 ~ Phil Silvers	May 26, 1919 ~ Jay Silverheels
May 12, 1925 ~ Yogi Berra	May 27, 1912 ~ Sam Snead
May 13, 1914 ~ Joe Louis	May 28, 1944 ~ Gladys Knight
May 14, 1944 ~ George Lucas	May 29, 1917 ~ John F. Kennedy
May 15, 1918 ~ Eddy Arnold	May 30, 1909 ~ Benny Goodman
	May 31, 1930 ~ Clint Eastwood

Important Dates to Remember in May:

Older Americans Month

May 1st ~ **May Day**

May 5th ~ **Cinco de Mayo** (<http://www.brownielocks.com/cincomayo.html>)

May 7th ~ **Kentucky Derby** (<http://www.brownielocks.com/kentuckyderby.html>)

May 8th ~ **Mother's Day**

May 8th – 14th ~ **National Nursing Home Week**

(http://www.hccil.org/pro/newsletters/closeup_new/pdf/cu-709.pdf)

May 21st ~ **Preakness Stakes**

May 29th ~ **Indianapolis 500** (<http://www.brownielocks.com/daytona-indianapolis.html>)

May 30th ~ **Memorial Day**

Food and beverages enjoyed in May: bread pudding, carrots, cauliflower, chocolate chips, eggs, grapefruit, hamburgers, kiwi, limes, pizza, potatoes, rhubarb, and Vidalia onions.

Barbeque and Hamburger Month

Fire up the barbecue and prepare juicy hamburgers on the grill. Experiment with cooking other foods on the grill. Have the residents help plan the menu and then take them outside to help put the meal on the table. Talk about things the residents used to make on the grill and why they think food seems to taste better when eaten outdoors or cooked on a grill. For recipes, visit: <http://www.recipezaar.com/r/16/139>.

Better Hearing and Speech Month

Take this opportunity to share the message that help is available for the more than 41 million Americans with hearing and speech problems. Invite a local audiologist to provide screenings for the residents, families, and community during a special open house or family support group. Ask a speech therapist to explain his or her role in helping individuals regain their ability to speak following a stroke or another medical condition affecting one's speech. For more information, visit: <http://deafness.about.com/cs/events/a/bhsm.htm>.

Family Support Month

Take this opportunity to strengthen your family council and family support groups offered by the facility. Plan a family dinner or social to help the families get better acquainted. Do a survey to determine what subjects the families would like to discuss or learn more about. Develop education sessions based on the families' feedback or choose topics about all aspects of care-giving. Invite the community to these education sessions or support group meetings. For possible speakers, contact the hospital discharge planners, staff physicians, the facility's pharmacist, or local chaplains. Invite the facility's social workers, activity professionals, therapists, or nurses to share information about topics related to their profession. Create a display featuring pictures from past family events and ask some of the participants to briefly discuss the events. Encourage "seasoned" family members to talk about issues they have dealt with, such as guilt, increased frailty of their loved one, challenges with visiting their loved one with dementia, their role in the care plan process, adjustment, etc.

Get Caught Reading Month

Reading can be the "window to the world." Keeping the residents connected through reading is easier than ever. As the residents' vision declines, many may give up reading because they don't know about large print books and talking books. Help the residents register for talking books by visiting <http://www.loc.gov/nls/> for eligibility information, lists of available books and some of the other materials available through this resource. Invite your local librarian to visit the facility or take the residents to the library to explore what is available in large print books. Organize an after-school reading program for local school children and the residents. Have interested residents help the children with their reading skills and share their love of reading with the youngsters.

Book Month

Book Month goes hand-in-hand with *Get Caught Reading Month*. Use this opportunity to build or add to the resident library. Organize a book drive, and advertise your needs in the facility newsletter, flyers posted in the community, ads in a local paper, letters to used bookstores and/or the public library, etc. When asking for books, don't forget to include children's titles for your intergenerational program. Have the residents decorate a large container as the "drop-off" box and place it in a prominent spot in the facility. Catalog the books and place them on bookshelves that can be easily accessed from a wheelchair. Develop a system for checking the books in and out of your library. Encourage several residents and/or volunteers to be responsible for the library. Designate one or two days each month as Library Day and organize a mobile lending library by taking a selection of books from room-to-room to encourage use of your library.

Gifts from the Garden Month

Ask the residents for ideas about the flowers and vegetables they would enjoy planting around the facility, in the raised beds, and in the residents' garden. Help the residents look through seed catalogs to get ideas. Purchase the seeds, starter soil mix, peat pots and other supplies to get the residents started. Gather the residents and talk about gardening, when to plant, how to start the flowers and vegetables for the garden, moving the seedlings outdoors, etc. Determine which residents would like to participate in planting the seeds, planting the raised beds, watering, weeding, harvesting, etc. Make a schedule for each resident and hang one in the activity department for easy reference. When you have purchased the supplies, gather the residents to help plant the seeds in the starter pots. Place the small pots on windowsills where they can get the correct sunlight. Help the residents water the plants by filling small watering cans for them to use and make sure the area is free of obstacles.

May 1st - 7th ~ National Pet Week

Talk about the family pets the residents had as children or when they were raising their own children. Encourage the residents to write short stories about a favorite pet. Compose a group poem about pets and publish the poem in the facility's newsletter. Invite a local animal shelter to bring some of the animals for a visit. Ask the shelter's volunteers to discuss the work of they do at the shelter. Organize a pet parade, and invite the grandchildren and their pets to participate in the event. Ask a local trainer or pet therapy group to discuss the training required for certification as a therapy dog.

May 5th ~ National Day of Prayer

No matter what religion you are, today is an opportunity to join together in prayer. Invite some of the local clergy to lead an ecumenical prayer service for the residents. Encourage the residents and families to write down their prayer requests, and bring them to the event. Ask your staff and the social services staff to ask residents unable to participate in the service for their prayer requests. Collect all the prayer requests, give them to the clergy leading the prayer service and ask them to include the written prayer requests in the service.

May 6th ~ Anniversary of "Babe" Ruth's First Major League Home Run

On this day in 1915, Red Sox player "Babe" Ruth hit his first major league home run in a game against the New York Yankees. Encourage everyone to wear t-shirts and baseball caps representing their favorite team. Decorate the dining room with baseball pennants and play *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* as the residents enter. Serve hot dogs, chips and soda for lunch. Show the movie, *The Pride of the Yankees*, and then discuss "Babe" Ruth's career. Invite the residents to share their memories of this great baseball player.

May 7th ~ Scrapbooking Day

Begin organizing the photos you've taken at different events throughout the year. Gather the residents and have them help you put them in scrapbooks. This can be done by independent residents working in their rooms or as a group working together on several scrapbooks. Some residents can crop the photos, others can paste the photos into the books, while others compose and/or write captions under the photos. The finished scrapbooks should be placed around the facility for the residents, visitors and staff to enjoy. This is a great intergenerational, 1:1 or small group project.

May 7th - 15th ~ National Tourism Week

Take the residents on an imaginary trip around the world by cruise ship. Visit a different port of call each day. Ask a local travel agent to share posters, travel brochures, DVDs and other media featuring tourist locations around the world. Decorate the facility with the posters and print an itinerary for the voyage. Each morning, announce the place being visited that day. Encourage the staff to dress in native costumes or wear the colors of the country being visited. Ask the dietary department to serve food from that country. Show slides or DVDs about the country and invite the residents, families, staff and volunteers from that country, or those who have visited the country, to share their memories and souvenirs.

May 15th ~ Anniversary of Gas Rationing

On this date in 1942, 17 eastern states instituted gas rationing as part of the war effort. With the price of gas escalating and the unrest in gas-producing countries, gas rationing may be in our future. To get more information about this historic event and view copies of actual ration stamps and mileage identification booklets, visit:

http://www.alumnibhs.com/old%20geezer%20photos/gas_rationing_during_ww2.htm,

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rationing>, and

<http://www.alumnibhs.com/old%20geezer%20photos/ww2%20ration%20stamps.htm>.

Discuss gas rationing and the ways it affected travel during the war years. Take this opportunity to discuss the current crisis with gas prices souring, and the possibility of limited supplies during the warmer months when people take to the open road for family vacations or weekend outings.

May 20th-21st ~ Rhubarb Festival

Rhubarb is easy to grow and can be found in many home gardens, yet many people don't know there are many ways to enjoy rhubarb other than in pies. At <http://www.rhubarbinfo.com/recipe-index.html> there are recipes for soups, drinks, cobblers, cakes, wines, jams, cookies, desserts, sauces, salads, puddings, muffins, etc., using rhubarb as the main ingredient. Ask for donations of rhubarb or grow some in the facility's raised beds. Harvest the rhubarb, and make some of the residents' favorite recipes during a cooking or baking activity. If the residents feel adventurous, try some of the unusual recipes found on the referenced website.

May 23rd-30th ~ Backyard Games Week

Now that the weather is nicer, take the residents outdoors and play some outdoor games such as croquet, yard darts, bocce ball, egg toss, kickball, Frisbee, horseshoes, etc. For more ideas and an explanation of how to play many different backyard games visit:

<http://www.familyeducation.com/whatworks/item/nogroup-index/0,3002,1-16406,00.html>.

May 25th ~ National Senior Health and Fitness Day

Work with the rehabilitation department and physical therapists to get the residents involved in a modified exercise program. Ask for assistance from the rehabilitation nurse or physical therapist to design a variety of simple exercises to do just prior to an activity, where residents gather or while the residents are waiting for meals.

May 28th ~ International Jazz Day

Many people love jazz and can remember some of the greats in the music industry who promoted jazz as American's number one art form. Discuss the residents' favorite jazz

musicians, composers, etc. For more information about jazz before 1930 and the musicians who made this genre great, visit <http://www.redhotjazz.com/>.

Simple Craft Idea for the Month of May

May Day Basket

What you'll need:

- Colored card stock or heavy construction paper
- Assortment of silk flowers in stems
- Tape
- Ruler
- Scissors

How to make it:

1. Cut a triangle shape out of bright colored construction paper.
2. Make the point flat.
3. Roll the triangle into a cone shape and tape the two sides together.
4. Trim off any extra paper around the top of the cone to make it even.
5. Cut a strip of construction paper that is approximately 12 inches long by 2 inches wide.
6. Tape this strip onto the top of your cone to make a handle.
7. Now you can fill the basket with silk flowers.
8. Once the resident's May Day cone basket is done, he or she can give it to a loved one or hang it on a neighbor's doorknob without getting caught!



Many residents participated in May Day celebrations like this one – hanging May baskets on neighbors' doorknobs – when they were children.