

Activity ideas for people with dementia

If you have a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease or other dementia, whether your loved one lives at home or in a care facility, you might wonder what to do for activities. What will your loved one enjoy doing?

“People with Alzheimer’s and dementia can do everything you can, with a little patience and time,” said Shelly Anderson, activities coordinator for Hilltop Affiliates Inc. Anderson plans and facilitates daily exercise and activities at Hilltop of Pepper, our memory care facility, and Hilltop Alpine Terrace, our traditional assisted living facility. Anderson was the guest speaker at the November Alzheimer’s caregiver support group meeting.

Anderson works both one-on-one with residents and in groups. She has found that some exercise is better one-on-one or else people lose interest. However, batting around balloons or soft balls is a favorite for the group. “I could do that every day” as an activity, she said. Residents like to roll, toss or kick balls. You can use a hula hoop, laundry basket or an indoor basketball hoop to play basketball. Anderson uses real hockey sticks and a child-size soccer goal with balls to play hockey. She brings in a croquet set and lets residents hit the balls back and forth. Sometimes, they use plastic cups as targets.

“You can do pretty much anything,” she said.

Anderson shared a list she compiled from online suggestions for activities. They include active ideas, crafts, in the kitchen, household chores,



SHELLY HELPS BERNICE TRY ON A HALLOWEEN COSTUME.

Read more about Shelly Anderson and her job at Hilltop in the employee spotlight on page 2.

reminiscing, self-care, fine motor skills, games and more. While not everyone will enjoy household chores, if your loved one was a homemaker, she might like to help fold clothes or wipe off the table.

Anderson finds

most people like to do activities that involve cooking – and eating. “Even if people don’t like the activity, they still like to eat,” Anderson said. Food activities also can be good for a group. Different people can help measure and mix. If it’s something like cookies or cupcakes, everyone can decorate his or her own.

“Have them teach you a hobby or craft they still remember how to do,” Anderson said.

“If they still talk about a memory, ask them about it. Expand on it,” she said. Reminiscing can be a good way to redirect someone who might be anxious or upset about something.

Music is another way to jog memory, Anderson said. Many people love music. Their faces light up when they hear it. Try dancing and clapping.

Listen to Saturday morning polka music on the radio or find music your loved one enjoys.

Try a game, like “What’s in my suitcase?” Plan what you’d pack for a trip to the beach or to a rodeo. This can be a good group activity, too.

Repetition is OK, Anderson said. If your loved one enjoys puzzles and wants to do the same one over and over, it’s OK. Doing the same activity every day is fine – if your loved one enjoys it and wants to do it.

To see the full list of suggested activities, go to <http://hilltopaffiliatesinc.com/news.html>.

Alzheimer’s caregiver support group

The Alzheimer’s Caregiver Support Group will feature Mike Grotesend of Alpine Medical Supply on Dec. 10 and Kim Inda of the Aging & Disability Resource Center on services related to dementia on Jan. 14. We meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Aging & Disability Resource Center in Centralia Center. Join us for the guest speaker and a time for sharing. There is no cost and no obligation. Refreshments are served. Call 715-423-7400 for information or to arrange free respite care for your loved one so you can attend the meeting.

New employees

Please say hello to these new employees when you see them around:

- Jean Rhoda, Hilltop of Pepper, cook
- Rachelle Butzlaff, Hilltop of Pepper

Employee spotlight

Shelly Anderson credits a higher power with her job as activities coordinator at Hilltop, a position she’s held since September.

“I decided to re-enter the workforce after being a stay-at-home mom for eight years,” Anderson said. “God placed this into my lap. He knew the hours I needed,” she said, in order to be available for her daughter after school.

The job fits perfectly with her creative interests and working with people. Her favorite part is connecting with residents and seeing their faces light up when they do something fun together.



Anderson’s inspiration is her mom, Audrey. “She’s always been the most godly woman. She always has time to help out anyone.” She’s also where Anderson gets her crafting inspiration.

Traveling the world is on her bucket list, Europe in general, and London, Rome, Greece and Israel in particular, as well as touring the entire Smithsonian and watching the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade in person.

Mostly she wants to raise her daughter with her husband, Grant, to be an upstanding young lady.

Anderson is mom to four children, but only one, Allison, 8, is here on Earth. The experience of losing her other children taught her to “embrace every moment of life and not take anything for granted.”



THESE EMPLOYEES DRESSED UP AS '80S LADIES FOR HALLOWEEN AT HILLTOP OF PEPPER. DENIM, LEG WARMERS, BRIGHT COLORS, BIG HAIR, PRINTS – THEY’VE GOT IT ALL.



Young visitors joined us for games and treats at our Halloween parties (above). We gave thanks on wreaths we made (far left and below). And we marked November birthdays with a cute turkey cake by Becky (center).



December: Happy birthday to these residents!

- Helen, Dec. 14
- Bill, Dec. 26



IMAGE COURTESY OF STUART MILES AT
FREEDIGITALPHOTOS.NET

Holiday eating tips and tricks

It's that time of year when buffets beckon and favorite fattening dishes are the norm. We have cookies galore and decadent drinks.

WebMD offers some tips to not pack on the pounds this holiday season. (Read the full list here:

<http://www.webmd.com/diet/top-10-holiday-diet-tips-of-all-time>)

1. Wear snug clothes and keep one hand busy. If you wear snug clothes, you'll be more likely to hold in your stomach than overeat. Keeping a drink in your dominant hand makes it harder to grab food.
2. When you don't want to eat, chew a piece of sugarless gum.
3. Be a food snob. Only eat the foods you really love and skip those you can eat any time.



MAYOR ZACH VRUWINK AND HILLTOP OWNER ANITA WHETSTONE SHAKE HANDS AT THE HILLTOP GRAND VILLAGE GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY.

Dignitaries attend Hilltop Grand Village ground-breaking

We had a beautiful day Nov. 3 for a ceremonial ground-breaking for Hilltop Grand Village. Professionals who helped make the project a reality as well as local dignitaries attended and helped toss shovels of sand for the cameras.

You can watch videos of our progress and ground-breaking at <http://tinyurl.com/HilltopGrandVillagePlaylist>.

Follow our progress on our Hilltop Grand Village Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/HilltopGrandVillage>

WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Merry Christmas from all of us at Hilltop! We hope your holidays are merry and bright.

We will celebrate with resident families on Dec. 8 at Alpine Terrace and Dec. 15 at Hilltop of Pepper. If you're a family member and didn't get an invitation, please call the office to learn the details and RSVP.

We also wish you a Happy New Year!