

Creative Program Ideas for November 2011

The birthstones for November are the citrine, pearl and yellow topaz. The flower is the chrysanthemum.

Celebrity Birthdays:

November 1, 1920 ~ **James Kilpatrick**
November 2, 1938 ~ **Patrick Buchanan**
November 3, 1933 ~ **Ken Berry**
November 4, 1946 ~ **Laura Bush**
November 5, 1941 ~ **Elke Sommer**
November 6, 1931 ~ **Mike Nichols**
November 7, 1918 ~ **Billy Graham**
November 8, 1927 ~ **Patti Page**
November 9, 1935 ~ **Robert Gibson**
November 10, 1925 ~ **Richard Burton**
November 11, 1925 ~ **Jonathan Winters**
November 12, 1929 ~ **Grace Kelly**
November 13, 1934 ~ **Gary Marshall**
November 14, 1948 ~ **Prince Charles**
November 15, 1929 ~ **Ed Asner**

November 16, 1907 ~ **Burgess Meredith**
November 17, 1948 ~ **Howard Dean**
November 18, 1942 ~ **Linda Evans**
November 19, 1921 ~ **Roy Campanella**
November 20, 1932 ~ **Richard Dawson**
November 21, 1936 ~ **James DePriest**
November 22, 1942 ~ **Guion Bluford, Jr.**
November 23, 1928 ~ **Jerry Bock**
November 24, 1925 ~ **William Buckley, Jr.**
November 25, 1940 ~ **Joe Jackson Gibbs**
November 26, 1938 ~ **Samuel Bodman**
November 27, 1837 ~ **Gail Henion Sheehy**
November 28, 1929 ~ **Berry Gordy, Jr.**
November 29, 1933 ~ **John Mayall**
November 30, 1929 ~ **Dick Clark**

Important Dates to Remember in November:

November 1 ~ All Saints' Day

November 6 ~ Daylight Savings Time Ends: Standard Time Begins

November 7-8 ~ Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) begins at sundown on the 7th

November 11 ~ Veterans Day (for more information, visit:

<http://www.brownielocks.com/veteransday.html> **November 24** ~ Thanksgiving

Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade (10:00 a.m. CST)

November 25 ~ Black Friday (holiday sales begin, which should put merchants in the "black" by the end of the year)

November 27 ~ First Sunday in Advent

Foods showcased this month: figs, pecans, lamb, pomegranates, peanut butter, pumpkins and turkey.

Family Stories Month: Recruit some volunteers to help the residents write stories about their families and memories about their childhood. This is a good project for high school students as part of a history, psychology or English class. Ask families to write down some of their own memories to add to the history of their family. Take digital pictures of the residents enjoying activities with some of their family members. Add these pictures to the story pages. Take the finished stories and assemble them into resident-specific booklets. Help the residents design a cover for their individual booklets. When completed, the residents can give the booklets as gifts to their families during the upcoming holiday season.

Military Family Recognition Month: Military personnel from all branches of the United States Armed Forces are stationed throughout the world. Ask the residents for ideas about how to

honor the Servicemen and Servicewomen, especially their loved ones who are serving our country. Partner with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, families, staff, and volunteers to collect personal care items, cosmetics, playing cards (casinos give used decks away for free), hard candies, small hand-held electronic games, sunscreen, bug repellent, small first aid kits, note cards **with** stamps, pens, etc. Assemble the appropriate items in decorated boxes or baskets. Include a letter of support, thanking them for their service. During small group discussions, ask the residents to share information about their own military service.

Aviation History Month: The beginning of aviation began with two brothers, Joseph and Jacques Montgolfier, in Annonay, France. The book, *Experiments Relating to Different Kinds of Air*, inspired the brothers to begin experimenting on their own. They first tried filling paper and fabric bags with smoke and hot air. These simple experiments led to the invention of the hot air balloon, man's first flight, and the science of aviation and flight. Discuss early airplanes, helicopters, rockets and the space shuttle. Determine whether any residents were pilots or have flown in a hot air balloon. During a group discussion, invite these residents to share their experiences. Gather pictures of all types of airplanes and hot air balloons. Use these pictures to make scrapbooks for the residents on the special care unit or use them for an intergenerational activity.

Inspirational Role Models Month: This is the time to implement a staff mentoring program, if your facility doesn't have one already. During a staff meeting, develop a list of the natural role models and leaders within the interdisciplinary team. Each department head should talk with the leaders on his or her team about mentoring new employees or volunteers. Acknowledge and thank the mentors in the facility's newsletter; identify the mentors with different colored identification badges; provide a pizza party to thank the mentors for being role models to their peers or give the mentors a new title (it's not always about money). This is also a great opportunity for everyone who has an inspirational role model to thank him or her for providing encouragement and support – try to be as specific as possible.

I Am So Thankful Month: With the children involved in the intergenerational program, trace the shapes of different leaves onto construction paper (see patterns at the end of this newsletter). Use fall colors such as gold, red, olive green, brown or maroon. Ask volunteers and residents to help cut out the leaves. With the help of volunteers and/or family members, help the residents choose one or two leaves to write one of the things they are thankful for. Using brown craft paper, draw the figure of a large tree trunk with spreading branches. Have volunteers cut out the tree and branches. Use fun tack (or a similar product) to hang the silhouette of the tree trunk in a prominent place. Add the residents' finished leaves to the bare branches and on the "ground" beneath the tree. Above the tree, hang a banner with the words, "I am so thankful for..."

November 1 ~ Holiday Bazaar Day: Have one of the first holiday bazaars in the community. Talk with the residents to determine what they would like to raise funds for, e.g., iPads and iPods for use with bedbound residents or a new wheelchair lift bus or adjustable tables for the activity center. You can augment the things made by the residents and families by selling table space at a nominal fee to crafters in the community. Develop a colorful flyer advertising the event, and ask families, volunteers, and staff to hang the flyers in Laundromats, stores, churches, schools and other gathering places in the community. Don't forget to place a flyer on each exit door, by the time clocks, in the staff lunchroom and on prominent bulletin boards in the facility. Highlight the outside crafters and product consultants, as well as sale items made by the residents, e.g., ceramics, crafts, bake sale items, etc.

November 1 – 7 ~ Animal Shelter Appreciation Week: In today's economy, animal shelters are experiencing an increase in the number of pets being brought to shelters because the owners have lost their jobs and are no longer financially able to care for their beloved pet. Local food pantries are also being asked to provide pet food to enable owners to keep their pets. Talk to the residents about starting a pet food collection drive for the community animal shelter or local food pantry. Have them decorate boxes with pictures of cats, dogs, hamsters and parakeets. Place the boxes in key areas around the facility – in the staff break room, at the front entrance, where volunteers record their hours and in the activity center. Talk to the local shelter and/or food pantry about your plans. Invite the shelter to bring some of the animals available for adoption to visit the residents. Invite the families and volunteers to this special event, and ask the shelter to explain how to adopt a pet or volunteer at the shelter. As a bonus, the residents will be able to pet and enjoy the animals the shelter brings.

November 4 ~ Use Your Common Sense Day: Discuss the difference between having common sense and being educated. Many residents had to quit school to help their families during the Great Depression, but they possess a great deal of common sense. Common sense day is celebrated on the birth anniversary of Will Rogers who said, "*Common sense ain't all that common.*" Encourage the residents and staff to do at least one thing their common sense tells them to do, e.g., stop smoking for a day, begin an exercise program, eat dinner as a family, etc.

November 6 ~ Guinness World Records' Day: The Guinness World Records has been published since 1955. This book celebrates ordinary people around the world who do extraordinary things. Obtain a copy of this book, and share some of the world records with the residents. Assemble your own list of extraordinary things done by the residents, families and staff, e.g., youngest great-great grandmother/grandfather, individual with the most military experience, youngest college graduate, individual who logged the most frequent-flyer miles, etc. Be sure to include bits and pieces of the list in the facility newsletter. For more information, visit: <http://www.guinnessworldrecord.com/>.

November 8 ~ Tongue Twister Contest: Research and compile as many tongue twisters as possible. Print out each tongue twister separately using a large font. Organize the tongue twisters by level of difficulty. Fold each tongue twister printout, and place the printout in the appropriate container. Have the participants draw a tongue twister from the "easy" container and recite the tongue twister. Continue until all the easy level tongue twisters are recited. Have the participants who were able to say tongue twisters draw from the medium difficulty level container. Continue to repeat the process until one champion remains. Give certificates to all participants, and a blue ribbon or small trophy to the winner. For more information, visit: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tongue-twister>, http://www.fun-withwords.com/tongue_twisters.html, and <http://thinks.com/words/tonguetwisters.htm>.

November 10 ~ Gingerbread House Competition: Include the children in the intergenerational program for this competition. Using graham cracker squares instead of gingerbread makes the houses more stable; however, gingerbread can be used if the group desires. Assemble all the decorating ingredients -- marshmallows, licorice, gum drops, M & Ms, icing, etc. Cut out pictures of completed gingerbread houses, and put them in plastic sleeves so the pictures won't get damaged as the residents and children handle the pages during constructing their gingerbread houses. When the houses are completed, give some to the children to display in their classroom and display the rest in a central location at the facility. Number the houses, and provide ballots to all visitors so they can vote for their favorite house. Provide a box with a slit so the ballots can be collected. On a specified date, have a committee of volunteers count the ballots and declare a winner. Take pictures of the residents and children who decorated the house. Publish the pictures

in the facility's newsletter. Give small prizes to the winners. For recipes and decorating ideas, visit:

<http://homecooking.about.com/od/specificdishes/a/gingerbreadhouse.htm> and <http://crafts.kaboose.com/miniature-gingerbread-house.html>.

November 13 ~ World Kindness Day: Celebrated in Japan since 1966, this observance has come to the United States. This day represents the pledge of each of the participating countries to join together to build a kinder and more compassionate world. In the United States, the observance is sponsored by the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation. Discuss the observance with the residents and determine what they would like to do to show kindness to others in the facility and the community. Perhaps they could make cards for a local women's shelter or hold a clothing drive for the women and children who live at the shelter. Be prepared to offer several suggestions. For more information, visit: <http://www.actsofkindness.org/kindness-days>.

November 15 ~ America Recycles Day: Discuss the importance of recycling and buying recycled products. Organize a recycling plan for the facility if you don't already have a program. Establish drop-off bins for paper, cans, bottles and plastic. Work with the residents to create a series of posters explaining what can be recycled in your community and where the drop-off bins are located in the facility. Encourage the facility to buy products made from recycled products.

November 21 ~ World Hello Day: This is a chance to smile and greet everyone with a cordial "hello" and a smile. Encourage the residents, staff and volunteers to greet at least 10 people today with a smile and a friendly "hello." Determine who greeted the most people and present these individuals with smiley face buttons.

November 22 ~ Family Volunteer Day: Use today to begin developing a volunteer program for family members. Invite residents' families to volunteer at the facility. Organize information about volunteer opportunities, and have job descriptions for each service area. Develop an application that includes an interest assessment, so you will be able to match the volunteer with the volunteer position(s) that match his or her interests. Send invitations to the family members who live in the area. Offer information sessions in several time slots to accommodate the majority of potential volunteers.

November 23-30 ~ Game and Puzzle Week: Encourage the residents and families to play board games when visiting or to add pieces to a jigsaw puzzle set up on a small table in the floor or unit lounge. Ask the families to bring their loved one's favorite board game(s) when they visit. Stock the floor or unit lounges with jigsaw puzzles and games for the residents to use. Be sure to take into consideration the level of ability of the residents living on each floor or unit. Advertise this special week with newsletter articles and flyers posted throughout the facility.

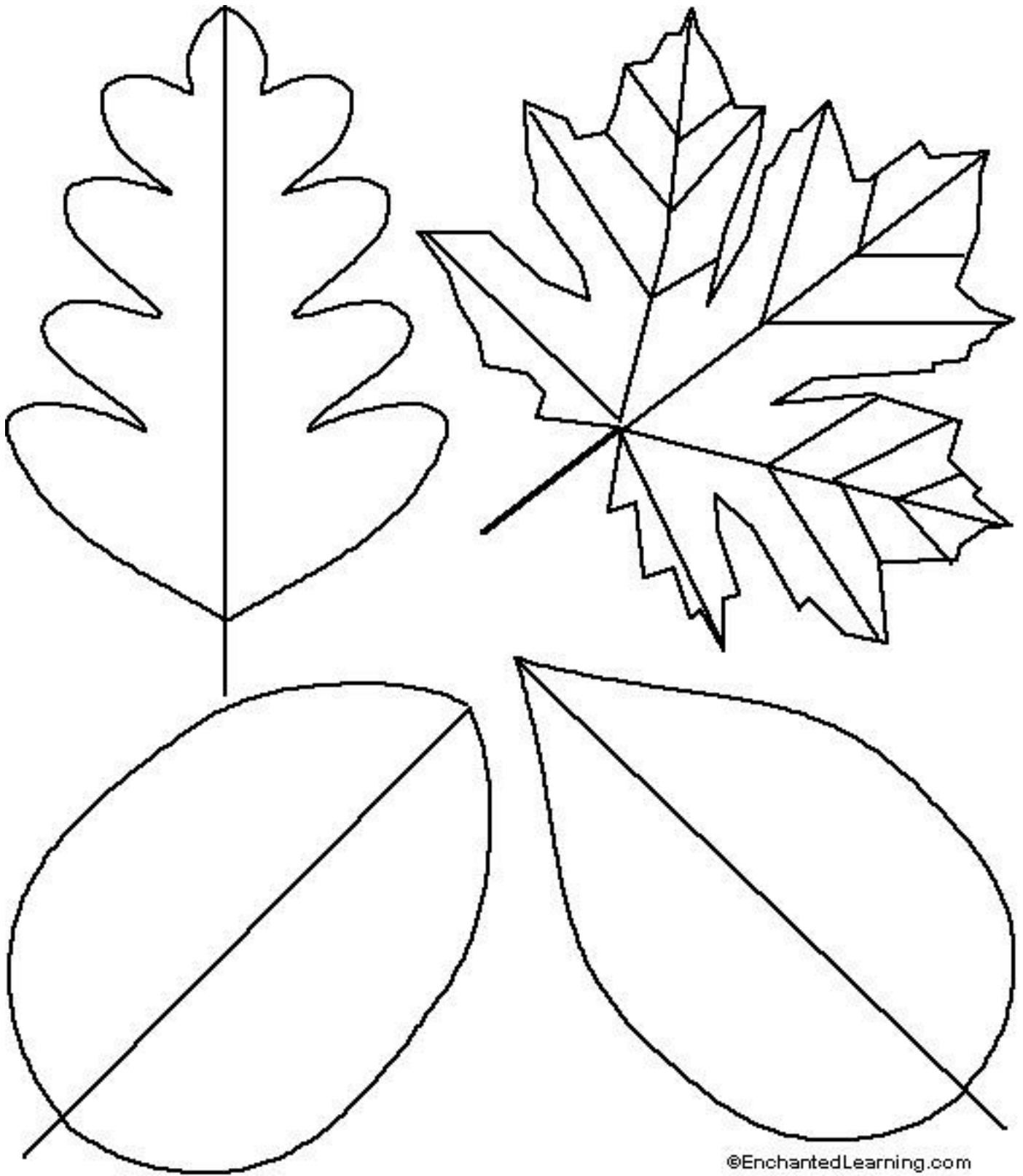
November 24 ~ Celebrate Your Unique Talent Day: Encourage residents, volunteers, family members and staff to share their unique (or weird) talents during a special event today. Schedule a tuba player, someone who can keep a hula-hoop up for five minutes, someone who can recite the Greek alphabet, someone who can whistle the *Stars Spangled Banner*, etc. The point is to have a good time today!

November 25-27 ~ Door Decorating Contest: Invite the families to help decorate their loved one's door for the holidays. Arrange pictures from last year's contest (or decorating pages from holiday magazines) on the floor or unit bulletin boards for ideas. Open the activity center and provide basic materials needed to complete the decorating -- decorative papers, ribbons, glitter, yarns, scissors, tape, etc. **NOTE:** Instruct the families to allow their loved ones to help with the decorating. Caution the families against using decorations with small parts that can be pulled off

and ingested by residents with dementia. Invite members of the community to judge the doors and choose the winners. Give all residents a certificate of recognition.

November 28 ~ Hanging of the Greens: It's time to decorate the facility for the upcoming holidays. Invite a local high school class or service club to help the residents decorate the Christmas trees around the facility. The students can help assemble the trees and string the lights. The residents can decorate the lower branches, while the students decorate the higher parts of the tree. Play holiday music, and encourage everyone to sing while they're decorating. When the floor or unit decorating is complete, serve warm cider or hot chocolate and donut holes while everyone shares their favorite holiday traditions. Another idea is to have the staff and residents decorate the floor or unit following a theme. Invite community volunteers to judge the decorations to determine the floor or unit that did the best job and give the entire floor or unit a pizza party.

**The leaf patterns for the Thanksgiving tree are
on the following page.**



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