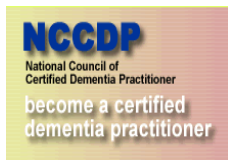




**ABOUT SANDRA**

Sandra Stimson has experience as a corporate consultant, Corporate Trainer and National Speaker. Her experience is in long term care, as Activity Director, Director of Alzheimer's Units and Assistant Administrator of a 550 bed long term care county home. She is Co-founder of Pet Express Pet Therapy Club, is a Life Replay Specialist. Sandra implements dementia units nationwide. Sandra has written several books, Volunteer Management Essentials for Long Term Care and Pet Express Pet Therapy Program. Sandra has been a facilitator for Alzheimer's support groups and is the Awards Chair for the NJ Association of Activity Professionals. Sandra is the Executive Director of **National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners**  
<http://www.nccdp.org>.

[Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care](#) offers resources for health care professionals in many areas of dementia care, care plans, Snoezelen products, dementia activity calendars, adult day care calendars, sensory calendars, reminisce videos for dementia, activity books, and dates to remember, party supplies, resources and links.



Each Norman Rockwell print is paired with a national standards of Resident Rights and is illustrated by a picture depicting the "Resident Right."

# Pathways to the Past

by Sandra Stimson ADC, CALA, CDP  
Executive Director, [Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care](#)



It is very important when activity directors are planning their calendars to incorporate as many ideas into the calendar that aide in reminiscing. Here are a few suggestions to consider.



FREE Download: Pathways To The Past Articles: Creating Themed Boxes, Memory Boxes and Themed Trunks <http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com/AlternativeSolutionsPage.html>

FREE TOOL KIT FOR CREATIVE ARTS FROM NATIONAL CENTER FOR CREATIVE AGING <http://www.creativeaging.org/publications.htm>

FREE Eldersong Activity Ideas. Each month they feature reminisce ideas that are seasonal and themed related. Excellent. Download all of them! <http://www.eldersong.com/newsletter-april.html>

FREE: Download this fantastic resource Alzheimer's and Dementia Programming: A Guide to Direct Care Staff. Pages of Ideas. See all the ideas for making reminiscing kits. [http://www.kahsaconferences.org/files/Alzheimer\\_s\\_Quick\\_Guide\\_for\\_Direct\\_Care\\_Staff\\_-\\_2008.pdf](http://www.kahsaconferences.org/files/Alzheimer_s_Quick_Guide_for_Direct_Care_Staff_-_2008.pdf)

Tea Cup Gardening: You can go to any church thrift shop and purchase Tea Cups / Saucers for as little as ten cents. You can use these tea cups to plant seeds, seedlings and spring flowers such as pansies. They are pretty to look at and can be used over and over again.

Purchase a George Forman Grill and make all kinds of things. Grilled Cheese Sandwiches to just about any kind of food can be cooked on the grill. Will smell great too!

Take a ride to a residents' old neighborhood. If the neighbors are still there, arrange a short in visit.

Egg Relay: Use hard boiled eggs and large spoons and keep passing until the music stops.

Contact a local church and invite them to perform their Easter Performance. Or if possible take the residents to the performance.

Place large coffee table books of flowers, fairs and water gardens on the table.

Begin a spring / summer club with children and their pets. See Pet Express Pet Therapy Program at [www.activitytherapy.com](http://www.activitytherapy.com)

Plan a spring art show and show all the art work by your residents. Enter their art work in community art shows and county fairs art exhibits.

Provide paint and paper and have the residents paint a portrait of their neighbor or have a model such as the activity assistant.

See the Sunshine and Joy Reminiscing Books at [Activitytherapy.com](http://Activitytherapy.com)

See West Virginia Activity Association Newsletter for Themed Boxes and reminiscing ideas. <http://www.wvapa.org/newsletter/jan2005WinterEditionNewsletter.doc>

Set up Themed areas or rooms: For a garden room have the following props and again many of these can be donated from home or visit the local thrift shop or garden centers or discount stores, such as Target or Wall mart. For the garden room, rakes, shovels, wheel barrow, sun hats, garden gloves, plants, dirt, bird bath, bird houses, vegetable plants, silk butterflies, silk birds, out side chairs and out side tables. The sights and smells should stimulate memories and aide in socialization. Have prepared questions to reminisce with your residents about regarding gardening. See Alzheimer's Care Group for Ideas [http://www.alzcaregroup.com/dementia\\_care\\_homes.aspx](http://www.alzcaregroup.com/dementia_care_homes.aspx)

For room bound residents prepare small trunks that you can purchase at craft stores and fill with items listed above. Discuss the same questions with the residents. Each week, swap out the items and fill with a new theme. The ideas are endless. There are great books at activitytherapy.com called Wake Up, Best Friends Volume 1 and 2 and Sensory Enrichment Sensory Stimulation Book. Also see Alzheimer's Care Group for Interactive Programming Kits [http://www.alzcaregroup.com/dementia\\_care\\_homes.aspx](http://www.alzcaregroup.com/dementia_care_homes.aspx)

Plan a visit to a small nursery and see all the flowers. The sights of the gorgeous flowers, smells, the butterflies and birds are sure to make this a memorable day. Go on a day and time where it is not crowded. Have everyone wear the facility shirt with the name of your facility on it. In case someone wanders off, you are sure to remember

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what they are wearing. But bring enough people to provide one on one supervision at all times.

Take a drive to view the Cherry Blossoms when they are in full bloom. Also many areas have Lilac Festivals.

Get the garden ready, pull weeds and rake. Provide one rake for each person. If raised beds, provide hand small rakes.

Visit local nurseries, garden centers, water garden centers, flower shows.

Plant annuals and or spring bulbs

Make perfume from Lilacs or Roses.

Read poems and quotes about Spring

Guided Imagery: [http://www.healthjourneys.com/product\\_detail.aspx?id=26](http://www.healthjourneys.com/product_detail.aspx?id=26) or visit [Activitytherapy.com](http://Activitytherapy.com) for other Guided Imagery Tapes.

Create a Visual Journey: Put on soft music and ask residents to write down their thoughts of spring or draw spring.

Invite a local farm or petting zoo to bring the baby animals. Be sure to comply with state regulations regarding visiting pets. Many states have pet therapy farms who regularly visit long term care settings.

Have a butterfly farm as it is fun to see the butterflies emerge from the cocoon.

Order a hatchery from a local farm and watch the baby chicks hatch. It is truly amazing and provides hours of enjoyment.

Begin a pet therapy club with children and pets. See [activitytherapy.com](http://activitytherapy.com) Pet Express Pet Therapy Book.

Contact the American Girl clubs and invite them to a tea with your residents.

Take residents to local community outside sports games.

Make Flower Pins: Purchase from Target or Wall mart a silk flower (bunch) bouquet usually under 10.00 (Dollar stores have flowers too!), cut off the flowers and hot glue gun on pin backs. Simple and easy and fun.

Sit out side and serve different fruit drinks: Here is one great spring drink

**Berry Freeze:**

Source: *Eating Tips: A Nutrition Guide for Adults, God's Love We Deliver*

**Ingredients:**

- 6 Strawberries—frozen
- or fresh, sliced
- ¾ cup cranberry juice
- 1 banana—peeled, frozen
- 4 oz pineapple chunks
- (in natural juices)
- 8 oz low fat strawberry yogurt
- ¾ cup low fat milk
- (or 1 scoop of protein powder)
- 6-8 ice cubes

**Directions:**

- If using fresh fruit, wash well.
- Place all ingredients in blender, blend
- until smooth. Makes 2 servings.

Order free samples of Stain Glass Coloring Books <http://www.doverpublications.com/sampler3/>

-END



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