

Activity from Active Aging Week

- Hippotherapy
- Egg drop science contest

Each year, Active Aging Week features many opportunities for learning and fun. Since each host of one or more events determines what activities are offered, it's always inspiring to discover what older adults experienced during the week.

Enjoy these snapshots of two unique activities. Look for more reports from Active Aging Week 2010 in the November/December issue of *The Journal on Active Aging*.

Horses as teachers

In the four Parc Communities in the Atlanta area, Active Aging Week included activities at individual locations as well as joint community-wide events, including a health fair and the annual Parc Charity Ball.

Horse therapy (hippotherapy) was a unique addition to the week. "Hippo" comes from the Greek word for horse, and hippotherapy means treatment with the help of a horse. Information on the website of the American Hippotherapy Association explains that the horse's movement is multidimensional, variable, rhythmic and repetitive. Because the rider adjusts to this movement, riding a horse increases trunk strength and control, balance, overall postural strength and endurance, and addresses weight bearing and motor planning.

Angela Butler-Hackett, Parc Corporate Wellness Director, knew about hippotherapy because of her earlier work with head-injury patients. She used an Internet search engine to find local horse therapy programs and discovered that one stable charged \$5 per person and the



other \$15 per person. The fee included a tour, grooming the horses, learning horse talk and observing a therapy session.

Residents from three of the four communities were interested, and they paid the fee for the introductory one-hour tour. The owner of the stable explained the therapy program before conducting on the tour.

"Our residents enjoyed the horse therapy," said Angela. "It gave them an opportunity to get outside and use all of their senses. They were able to groom the horses, view therapy with a physical therapist and a child with spina bifida, and tour the stables. They were fascinated with the concept of horse or hippo therapy. It was an excellent experience." ■

Resources

American Hippotherapy Association Inc.
Research, explanations, glossary, therapists
www.americanhippotherapyassociation.org/

Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association
Explanations, certifications, resources
www.cantra.ca/hippotherapy.shtml

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The four winners of the egg drop contest used different concepts to protect their eggs, constructing a parachute, wings and cages.

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Gravity and the egg

“This year, our Active Aging theme was Brandermill University,” explained Mary Carmichael, communications coordinator at Brandermill Woods Retirement Community. “We decorated our facility with different banners and signs that welcomed back our BU seniors! We started the week by passing out Resident Report Cards, an Acceptance Letter to BU, BU buttons/pencils and a quiz booklet full of fun trivia, science, math and geography questions. Each day, we had a variety of activities that covered different college subjects and the different components of active aging.”

The egg drop science project was a highlight of the week. Over 25 residents created a container to protect their eggs from breaking when dropped from a second-story window. A very large crowd of residents and staff watched as each container fell to the ground.

The idea for the egg drop contest came from a local high school physics class. After conducting research on the Internet, the staff members wrote the rules and materials list.

“The residents enjoyed this activity because it was different, challenging and competitive,” added Mary. “Needless to say, the four winners of the contest won the Science Award at Graduation.” ■

Brandermill University Egg Drop Science Experiment



Purpose:

To design an apparatus using only the materials given to protect an egg during free fall motion.

Materials:

- 1 sheet of paper (8.5 x 11)
- 2 paper towels
- 6 Q-Tips
- 1 Styrofoam lid
- 2 paper clips
- Scotch tape—as much as needed

Specifications:

The device must hold a “Grade A Large” egg during its fall descent from the second story window to the ground.

Grading:

- 3 stamps - if egg does not break or crack, survives the fall fully intact
- 2 stamps - if egg cracks, but is still intact
- 1 stamp - if egg breaks

Physics Concepts:

- Impulse and Momentum
- Pressure
- Air Resistance
- Torque and Angular Momentum

Project Due:

Thursday, September 16 at 11:00 a.m. after “Discussion with the Dean” in the Courtyard. Residents may choose partners for this project or work on it individually. **REMEMBER: YOU CAN ONLY USE THE MATERIALS GIVEN!!!**