

**U.S. Postage Stamp Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Discussion group – read the history of the US Postage stamp and discuss with residents. See Wikipedia for U.S. Postage stamp history information.
  - Ask the residents what was the price of the stamp when they were children.
  - Did they ever have a favorite stamp design? Who do they think should be on a stamp design now that never has been?
- Show and learn – See if there is a stamp collector in your area, if so ask them to come in to display their stamp collection and give a talk highlighting stamps of historical interest.
- Craft – Design a stamp. Let the residents design a stamp. You can find a stamp template on [enchantedlearning.com](http://enchantedlearning.com) under crafts, paper crafts and then stamp.
- Game - Guess what year – Make copies of old stamps off [bing.com](http://bing.com) with Bing images. Make sure you block out the years or date on the stamp before showing it to the residents. Ask if they recognize the stamp and what year it is. You may also need to block out the cost on the stamp since that might give the year away too.
- Community project – Check with the US Post office in your area and ask when they will have their next food drive. Then start to campaign now to ask all staff and residents family/friends to bring in item of non-perishable food to give towards the postal food drive.

**Blueberry Day:** (Official Blueberry month for US is in July and Canada is in August)

- Blueberry picking – Check [pickyourown.org](http://pickyourown.org) website to see if there is a blueberry picking farm near you. This site will give what each farm offers, days and time available to public and directions to location. If you cannot take the residents to a farm, then how about a Farmers Market or to the fresh produce stand to let them pick out a small container of blueberries for them to use in their cooking class. If none of these are options for your residents, then how about letting them help plant a blueberry bush in the courtyard or somewhere next to a window so the residents can watch it grow. It may take a couple of years for it to produce, but in years to come you can share the fruit of this year's labor with them or future residents.
- Cooking – There are a list of ideas the residents can make with blueberries:
  - Blueberry pie
  - Blueberry mixed with yogurt
  - Plain blueberries with cool whip
  - Blueberry muffins
  - Blueberry cake
  - Blueberry jelly/jam
- Word Search – See the end of the activity list for a Blueberry Word Search
- Game – Name That Blue – Play like name that tune, except use songs that have the word blue, blueberry or berry in the title. Suggestion for songs to use, but see what you can find too:
  - Blueberry Hill by Fats Domino in 1956 (earlier version are listed on Wikipedia)
  - Blue Suede Shoes first recorded by Carl Perkins in 1955, by Elvis Presley in 1956
  - Blue Velvet by Tony Bennett in 1951
  - True Blue by Madonna in 1986 (they may not know this one, but give it a try)
  - Forever in Blue Jeans by Neil Diamond in 1979
  - Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain by Roy Acuff in 1945 and later others see Wikipedia.
  - Memphis Blues by W.C. Handy in 1912
  - Crazy Blues by Mamie Smith in 1920 (ref: [redjotjazz.com](http://redjotjazz.com) under Mamie)
  - I Guess That's Why They Call It The Blues by Elton John in 1983

**Family Reunion Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Baby Photo guessing game – Request a baby picture from all staff and residents. Then display them on a bulletin board with numbers. Have a list of all the participate names to pass out to staff and residents asking them to review the baby photos and match them with the correct name. Before the end of the work day announce or post the names with the matching photo number for all to see. You can offer prizes to the person who had 10 correct, then a prize that had 20 a prize...etc... so you can have several winners.
- Family Bingo – Play a special round of Bingo by filling the card with all B's and the top row across and to the free space on the third row to form an F for family. The next round fill in the space to form an R for reunion, which would be all the B column, all the top row, three down on the O column, all the row with the free space and the space under the free space, the fourth space on the G column and the last space on the O column . If you think this might be too much, then just Bingo with and X, L and all over.
- Facility activity – Family style cook out for staff, residents and their families.
- Relay Race – Have a staff member walk, not run while pushing a resident in a wheel chair relay race. The winning team gets a prize. REMEMBER they can only walk, not run! You will find you have some pretty fast walkers among your staff...which you can remind them of later...lol...
- Family Picture – Make sure to get the families together for a family photo. I suggest having a volunteer or another staff member to have a list of all the families attending and schedule a time for the family members to come to the photo booth for their family photo. I also suggest that you take a group picture of all your staff, the volunteers and all the residents in their own group picture. Make sure you are in the group picture as well by asking a family member to take several group shots to ensure one will turn out. After developing or printing displaying them for a short time, but then give them out to the families they belong to. They will appreciate the time you took to create a lasting memory for them to keep.

**Independence Day: July 4th(National Holiday)**

- Reading – Start off by reading “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. (Ref: nationalcenter.org search Paul Revere’s Ride or just Google it.) It would be really fun if you or someone else would dress up as Paul Revere.
- Word Search-Have a bell ringer walk the halls and stop by each room to pass out a word search. Tell them to take five minutes to talk to the residents and explain the word search.
- Sing-a-long – Sing the patriotic songs in honor of our countries independence.
- State Capital Time Zone (Play it like Bingo, but a little different) – You will need enlarged copies of the USA map that has the state names and has the zone outline to break down which states are in a particular time zone. On bing.com search for “USA Maps with Time Zones” it will bring up color coded maps images you can from. On each copy cross out one state from three of the time zones leaving only one time zone with all the states. Each copy will have to have a different state crossed out so you don’t have everyone calling out Time Zone at the same time. Write out the names of each state and its capital on individual index cards. Place in a container for shaking so the card will mix well. Draw out one card at a time and call out the state with the capital name. The residents need to place a flag button or chip on it to mark the matching state. The first to fill up one Zone calls out “Time Zone” and then you need to ask which time zone they have filled. They win a prize just like in Bingo. Keep going until the next time zone is filled so each time zone is filled and there is at least one winner per time zone. This takes some prep time, but well worth the time.

**Circus Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

In honor of P.T. Barnum, 1810 (American Circus owner) Birthday:

- Bring on the clowns – Have a visit from some clowns to get the staff and residents in the circus mood. They can also make room to room visits to encourage residents to participate (if possible) in the activities. If they can make at least five minute visits then this can be a 1:1, besides it will make the room bound residents smile.
- Toss the ring – If you don't have a ring toss game, you can make one. All you need is two litter soda pop (coke) bottles weighted down with sand and rings big enough to go over the bottles (you can make them out of plastic tops from large butter containers, just cut out the middle leaving the outer ring).
- Word search – Ask a resident volunteer to go room to room to pass these out to keep the room bound resident feel a part of the Circus theme. See Circus Word Search at the end.
- Penny in the cup – Line up different size coffee cups and let residents toss the pennies to get them in the cup. Make sure they are at least five feet away from the cups.
- Magic show – Have a magician come to do some magic for the residents and staff. Make sure to serve some popcorn and/or cotton candy.

**Davy Crockett Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Listen and learn – Read some historical information about Davy Crockett on Wikipedia to discuss with the residents. Ask question about any experience they had hiking the mountains or any outdoor adventure story they would like to share.
- Quiz time – Create a quiz from the information on Wikipedia to challenge residents with.
- Rifle demonstrations – See if there is a rifle club in your area that can demonstrate a flintlock rifle. If you tell them it is to celebrate Davy Crockett day they may come in costume.
- Log Cabin game – Set out some Lincoln Logs and ask the residents to build their own cabin.
- Cooking – Applesauce cake which is a pioneer favorite can be found on virginiaapples.org under recipes and scroll down to desserts. This is an easy recipe with few ingredients.
- Social – Play fiddle music while the residents enjoy their applesauce cake they made in cooking class. Don't forget to serve it with decaf coffee or tea.
- Movie – There are a lot of movie suggestion on Wikipedia on the Davy Crockett page.

**Tell the Truth Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Discussion group – How do you define truth? Discuss with residents how important truth is. Wikipedia has many a variety of meanings on the word truth to get a good discussion started.
- Truth or Dare – Okay, we all played this in our youth and I am sure most all the residents did too at some point in their life. Use a balloon to toss around and who ever catches it has to answer a question by the person who through the balloon. They can elect to tell the truth or accept a dare. You can dare them to make up a poem, or sing a song or do some type of exercise. Just keep the dares within your residents' capability. After they either tell the truth or complete the dare then they bat the balloon for someone else to catch
- Compliment the truth – All day long staff and residents should be completely be honest about anything they are asked. If you are concerned that the answer my hurt they feelings, them tell them to find something honest they can say about the person asking the question. Ex. "Oh, Mary did anyone tell you how pretty your eyes are." Changing the subject can prevent any hard feelings without telling a lie.
- Movie – Suggestion "Liar Liar" This is the comedy that teaches how important it is to tell the truth.

**Comic Relief Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Reading – Start the day out with reading the comic strip from your local paper. If you can enlarge them so the residents can see them will make it even better.
- Listen and learn – Read some of the history on comedians from Wikipedia.
- Comic relief – See if any of your residents or staff members like to try being a standup comedian. Make sure you set the stage for some comic relief.
- Game – Name some of the famous comic strips (not comic book characters) and/or comedians?
  - Peanuts
  - Beatle Bailey
  - Lil Abner
  - Ma and Pa Kettle
  - Bob Hope
  - Jack Benny
  - Jerry Lewis
  - Red Skelton...you get the idea
- Movie – Show some of the great comic movies that the residents can relate to like Bob Hope or Jerry Lewis movies. If your residents prefer current movies then show them some new ones like “Bedtime Story” which was very funny or “Mall Cop” was kind of funny too.

**Ice Age:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Learn and listen – Learn all about the ice age on Wikipedia and discuss with residents.
- Craft – Let the residents make an ice candle to keep or give as a gift. To make an ice candle you will need:
  - a square candle mold or a bottom of a milk carton
  - candle wicks
  - candle wax
  - ice cubes
  - candle dye (option)
  - Heavy pot or double boiler to melt wax

Use basic candle making instruction which can be found in a basic candle making kit or Google “Candle Making Instructions”, there are lots of sites that offer the instructions. You can even Google “Ice Candles” so you can see what they will look like.

When you have the candle mold set up according to the instructions and the wax is almost ready to pour, place ice cubes in the mold. No need to place the ice cube in a neat order, just toss them in the mold. This will give the wax a unique form which makes each one special. Try to keep the area close to the wick free from ice so the wax can form solid around the wick. Slowly pour the melted wax around the wick and over the ice cubes. Continue until the entire mold is full. Allow the wax to set before trying to remove from the mold. The ice cubes will melt so it will not take as long to set up as regular candles do. Once the candle is set up and completely cooled then carefully remove from the mold (or milk carton). Watch out for the water that will come out from the melted ice cubes. These candles are just really cool to display and they really do remind one of an ice age formation.

- Cooking – Snow Cones – Instructions for to make snow cone syrup can be found on eHow.com by entering “how to make snow cone syrup” in the search window. It’s seems simple to make. Then search for “how to make Hawaiian Shaved Ice” This tells you how to make the shaved ice to use with your syrup. You could make this two cooking classes by making the syrup in the first class then later in the day make the shaved ice toping it off with the syrup.

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- Movie – Show the cartoon Ice Age and if you have time show the second Ice Age: The Meltdown movie. The third Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs is coming out in July 2009 in case you want to take them to see the movie.

### **Clerihew Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

In honor of Edmund Clerihew Bentley and his works of poems and rhymes called clerihew.

- Listen and learn – Check out Wikipedia for information on Edmund Clerihew Bentley and also on Clerihew. I found the best example by searching clerihew on Think.com. Once you see how much the resident knows about the subject, then you can have a lot of fun today.
- Writing – Either have the residents write a clerihew using their own name or ask them to think of a four line rhyme. If a resident can't write have them tell it to a staff member or volunteer so they can write it down. Make sure to give several examples to guide them into making up their own.
- Social – Serve light refreshments for residents to enjoy while each one come up front to read or recite his/her clerihew work they did in the writing class.
- Facility activity – Get the entire staff and all residents making up rhyming names for the remainder of the work day. When a staff member sees a resident ask them to think of a rhyme to use with the resident. Example: Ms. Mary Hill, it is time to take your pill. See how many people will have fun with it.
- Rhyme match search game – Create a list of words, then provide a stack of magazines and ask residents to search through the magazines to find a picture that will rhyme with the words on your list. Ex. list word rat and they find a picture of a cat. Depending on your residents functioning level use some challenging words on your list to make the search worth their efforts.

### **World Population Day:** (Is an annual event, observed on July 11.)

- Discussion – Search on the US Census Bureau website census.gov for world population information so you can have information to discuss with residents. This day is about family planning, human rights, family values, and the population is all about numbers, so this should start some good conversations with the residents.
- Community activity – Invite speakers to discuss issues on family values and human rights to address the community. Invite all staff and residents families and extend the invitation to the community. You can offer light refreshments too. This will be news worthy activity to publish in the local paper. You could also contact local business for donations for a drawing. A free drawing always brings people in. Beside free restaurant coupons for two, see if a local gas station will donate gas cards or maybe a grocery store will donate free grocery shopping cards for the drawing. Just have the guest attending the event fill out their name on paper and at the end of each speakers time draw out a winner and present the prize. I would have a drawing after each speaker and the guest must be present to win, this saves on having to hold a prize and track down a winner.
- Resident Counsel – This would be a good day to promote your facility resident counsel. Post all the responsibility of the counsel and their purpose to remind residents that they do have rights and they have a personal counsel to discuss issues with. Encourage all residents to get involved with the resident counsel.
- Game – Numbers count: This game will require sale papers of any kind that have large print. Give a sale paper to each resident and ask them to first find a sale price that when they add the numbers together it totals to equal a specific number. Ex. You ask them to find a sale price that will total the number 12. They look on their sale paper and find an item on sale for \$1.29 and

## July Theme Activities – Compiled by Christine Jennings

when they add  $1+2+9=12$ . You can come up with lots of numbers so they can add up numbers. Keep score so the person finding the most numbers total wins a prize.

- Movie – A good movie that teaches family values on education, trust, respect and friendship:
  - Akeelah and the Bee (great movie!!!)
  - The Ultimate Gift (awesome movie!!!)

### **Game Show Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

This is an easy theme, because there are so many TV game shows to choose from, but try to pick at least five today that are different from what you normally play with the residents. Here are a few suggestions that you might not normally play:

- Family Feud (this would be fun to divide the residents up in teams for this game)
- Jeopardy
- Name that Tune
- Don't Forget the Lyrics
- What's My Line (old game show that guesses a person line of work)
- Let's Make A Deal
- To Tell The Truth
- Password
- Hollywood Squares
- The Jokers Wild
- Match Game

### **International Town Criers Day:** (Yearly, every second Monday in July so the date will change.)

- Have a facility "town crier" for the day to walk the halls before each activity to announce the activity, time and location. If they are in historical customer will make it even better, however use a small ringing bell so not to cause a panic among the residents.
- Listen and learn – Read about the history of the town criers on [scottichtowncrier.com](http://scottichtowncrier.com). Discuss if any of the residents recall in their youth hearing a town crier proclaims the news or announce special events. Wikipedia also has the history of the town criers.
- Bell Choir – Contact a local church to see if they have a bell choir and book them for this day. You may even consider starting a bell ringers group with the residents.
- Yard Ring Toss – Play outdoor ring toss game. If you don't have a ring toss game you can make one with the instructions on [lowescreativeideas.com](http://lowescreativeideas.com) and enter "yard toss game".
- Cooking – Jell-O ring – Make a Jell-o ring in honor of the town criers that ring the bell.
- Golf game – Gulf Challenge to ring the ball. This is an outdoor golf game which requires rings instead of gulf holes to putt the ball in. Scatter the rings throughout the yard area with flags numbering the rings. Have a starting point and let the resident try to putt the gulf ball into each ring in order.

### **Ball theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Ball quiz – How many balls can you name?
  - Baseball
  - Football
  - Basketball
  - Volleyball
  - Soccer ball
  - Cricket ball

## July Theme Activities – Compiled by Christine Jennings

- Billiard balls
- Lacrosse ball
- Tennis ball
- Golf ball
- Softball
- Bouncing balls
- Ping pong balls
- Marbles
- Rubber balls
- Hard ball (slang)
- Balls of fire (slang)
- Snow balls
- Eye balls
- Ball bearing
- Medicine ball
- Bowling ball
- The list can go on and on with slang words or phrases that have the word ball in it.
- Instruction ball – game – Take a large child’s playing ball and write with a permanent marker short instruction on what the person is to do when they catch the ball. Ex. Sing, dance, laugh, stretch, bend, wave, tell a joke, etc ... Start by tossing the ball to a resident. When the resident catches it the instruction closest to their right hand is what they need to do before tossing the ball to another resident. I recommend setting up two lines so the residents can pass the ball with ease and all will get a turn. To make it more challenging than random tossing to keep the residents attention throughout the game, but still try to make sure all get a turn.
- Nerf ball baseball – This is the same as baseball, but you use the pool noodles as the bat and they hit a Nerf ball instead of a baseball. This can be played outside or indoors in a large room.
- Cooking – Peanut butter balls or snow ball cake:
  - Peanut butter balls: (I love making these and they freeze well too!)
    - 1 ½ cups peanut butter (any regular brand will do)
    - 3 ½ cups of powdered sugar
    - ½ cup softened butter
    - 1 tsp vanilla
    - 12 oz bag of milk or dark chocolate chips

      Mix peanut butter, butter and vanilla until well blended. Slowly add powdered sugar mixing a little at a time until all the sugar is mixed in making the dough a little crumbly. Form the dough into large marble size balls.

      You can either melt the chocolate chips in a double boiler or just melt the chocolate chip in the microwave.

      When the chocolate is melted use a toothpick inserted in the peanut butter ball to dip it in the chocolate until it is covered. Place on a cookie sheet lined with wax paper to cool. You can freeze these too and they store for a month.

      If you don’t want to make the peanut butter balls as a cooking project Google for an easy Snow Ball Cake recipe.
- Dance – Teach a dance line dancing that has the ball chain step in it.
- Movie – Show any movie starring Lucille Ball in it. Suggestion “Yours, Mine and Ours”

**Gummy Worm Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Cooking – Make gummy worms with the instructions on About.com and search “gummy worms’ candy”.
- Discussion – Learn all about worms on Wikipedia so you can have an interesting or amusing conversation with your residents.
- Game – Fishing game using magnets to catch the fish that have paper clips on them.
- Book worm – If you don’t have a book club now would be a good time to start one, so your book worm residents can all get involved. Pick a good current book for them to start reading today and pick a day for the group to meet to discuss the book.
- Craft – Make a clay worm. All you need is some clay and wire. Roll small pieces of clay into balls about five, insert a piece of wire to form your worm however you want and it keeps the clay together. Make smaller balls for eyes and you have a friendly worm to display on your shelf.

**Comic Book or Marvel Comic Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Discussion – Talk about old comic books, not comic strips, but comic books. Call a local comic book store to see if one of their collectors will talk to the residents and bring some of the old comic books for them to see.
- Facility activity – Pick a comic book and make up a skit using the dialog from the comic book. Ask staff and residents of interest to get involved to present the skit during a social. This time would be for them to practice the skit.
- Social – Serve refreshment with name of comic book characters. Ex. Wonder Woman cookies, Superman chips and Kryptonite punch.
- Movie – There are so many super hero movies based on comic book characters that you can pick just about anyone you want.

**Trains Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Train ride – If you have a local train see about getting senior group discount tickets so your residents can take a train ride.
- Train Show and Tell – See if you have a local train shop that will send an employee out to set up a train set to demo for the residents. Some will even let each resident control the train with their guidance.
- Craft – Purchase the wooden train engine and let residents paint it to keep as their own.
- Train quiz – Check out Wikipedia for information on trains to create a fun quiz about trains.
- Movie – There are lots of documentaries about trains, so pick one and show it during movie time.

**Hot Dog Day:** (July is National Hot Dog month proclaimed by National Hot Dog & Sausage Council)

- Wiener dog race – If you know people that have dachshunds (aka wiener dog) then ask them to bring the dogs to the have a little friendly race. The residents will love seeing the dogs and cheering them on and the dogs will love all the attention.
- Hot dog lunch – What else...serve hot dogs and chips
- Sing-a-long - Can you sing the Armour Hot Dog song they use to sing on the commercials? Let residents sing it if they remember it. Other songs of interest:
  - How much is that doggie in the window
  - Take me out to the ball game
  - Hot Dog by Buck Owens

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See and hear the Hot Dog songs on [hotdog.org](http://hotdog.org) under pop culture and hot dog fame.

- Cooking – Make Root beer floats to enjoy.
- Movie – The latest dog movie worth watching is “Hotel for Dogs” it was really a cute movie!

### **Dance Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Let’s stretch – To warm up for our day of dancing. Start with some warm-up by doing light stretches to start the day using some dance movements.
- Dance quiz – Check Wikipedia for dance history and make up your own quiz.
- Bring in the dancers – Call a local dance studio and ask if they would come down to dance for the residents. It is a good way for the studio students to practice for a dance recital in front of a live audience.
- Facility activity – Host a dance for staff, residents, and family complete with either a band or a DJ.

- Movie – So many to choose from:

- Shag
- Dirty Dancing
- Save the last dance
- Ballroom Dancing

The list goes on so just visit the library or video store, or ask family or friends to loan you the DVD so it will not cost you a dime, just remember to always return it to the owner the day after the viewing and in good condition so they will loan you other items/movies in the future. If you return it the day after then you don’t have to worry about the DVD disappearing off your desk.

### **National Lollipop Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Listen and learn – Discuss the history of lollipops with info from Wikipedia. Talk about their favorite flavor, most unusual flavor and the worse flavor of lollipops they have ever had.
- Cooking – Make easy lollipops with recipes found on [bhg.com](http://bhg.com), click on crafts then scroll down to kids crafts then click on rainy-day, scroll down the page to fun projects and click on easy to make lollipops. Great way to make lollipops!
- Sing-a-long - Search [lyricsmode.com](http://lyricsmode.com) for the lyrics
  - Lollipop lyrics by Chordettes
  - Candy Man by Sammy Davis Jr.
  - On The Good Ship Lollipop by Shirley Temple
  - Sugar, Sugar by The Archies
  - Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch by TemptationsSee how many other songs your residents can come up with relating to lollipops, candy or sugar.
- Craft – Make a lollipop tree for your residents to take to their room or to give to their grand or great-grand children. Use a Styrofoam that is cone shape and cover with any type of decorations: paper flowers, glitter, yarn, whatever you have they can glue on the cone. Leave thin rows to expose the Styrofoam so after the decorations are dry they can push in the lollipops. You may want to clue the entire cone on a small plastic plate so they will have a way to carry and so it does not fall over.
- Movie – What else but “Charley and the Chocolate Factory”

### **Summer Camp Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

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- Animal discover – Contact a local park ranger to see if they would come out to teach the residents about how to identify animal by the tracks they leave in the mud. A Boy Scout leader will have this knowledge too, if you don't have a local park ranger in your area.
- Archery – There are many types of bow and arrows that the residents can use that are very simple and if you are unsure of safety issues, then there are lots of bow and arrow sets that do not have the sharp points on the arrows.
- Bird watching – Learn to identify birds by their markings and the songs. You may want to check into some inexpensive binoculars so they can look for the birds. Bird Magazines are not that expensive to subscribe to and if you get on your local freecycle.org website, you can post a request for wanting old bird magazines and you will get emails telling you to come pick them up.
- Plant & Insects – See if someone in the area is an expert in plants and insects such as a Boy Scout leader. If you can't find someone to volunteer then check out the website giantsleepover.com and look under competitions and challenges to find at the bottom of the page a free download on how to make your own nature trail as well as a guide to animal and plant facts. You can be your own nature guide if no one else will help out.
- Hiking – Okay, so maybe it will be more like a walk, but get them out and moving in the park or around the facility.
- Basic Camping skills – Let the residents talk about when they went camping and the skills they used to set up tents, build a fire and how they cooked while camping. Then let them try their hand at setting up a tent, stacking fire wood for a fire and if you do this outdoors light the fire.
- Cooking – Make S'Mores
- Craft – Make a plaster animal track and let them paint it or they can paint a wooden fishing lure.

### **Pied Piper Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Listen and learn – Read about the origin of the Pied Piper on Wikipedia. You can also read the story if you Google Pied Piper Story or check it out at the library.
- Entertainment – Contact your local college or music store to see if anyone that plays the pipes will visit to play for the resident. If you have a local Scottish club you may try contacting them to come play their bagpipes.
- Craft – Make any type of craft with pipe straws. There are lots of cool ideas on family.go.com under the how to video section. You may have to look up pipe cleaners to see the video demo on the different craft technique.
- Cooking – Make pie, any type of pie you want to make with the residents. It is peach month, so you could think about making a peach pie.

### **All-American Soap Box Derby Day:** (Officially held yearly in July, so dates will change each year)

- The Run Down – The official 2009 race date is the 25<sup>th</sup>; however lots of the Test run date is on the 23<sup>rd</sup> so this day is celebrated in honor of the test date. Check out all the info on aasbd.net to see how big this event is. Get the residents to talk about soap box cars they made as a kid.
- Craft – Get all involved by making a Soap Box Derby Car out of soap boxes. Easy instructions are on eHow.com. Let them make them so they can race them.
- Cooking – Let the residents make a chocolate box. Instruction on about.com, just search for Elegant Chocolate Boxes. If you want something easier then use graham crackers to make the box and icing to stick them together just like you are making a ginger bread house.
- The Great Race – Now is the time to rally the teams for the soap box car derby with the cars the residents made during craft time. Ask the staff to help cheer on the residents on to victory in their race.

## July Theme Activities – Compiled by Christine Jennings

- Movie – The Great Race movie 1965 is funny and worth watching.

### **Tell an Old Joke Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Laugh it up – Start out with some good clean jokes. Check out the book “The World’s All-Time Best Collection of Good Clean Jokes” by Bob Phillips from your local library.
- Creative writing – Ask the residents to write a funny story or poem so they can read them during the social time.
- Cooking – Let residents make pigs in the blanket and homemade chips. Check out [funnyfood1.com](http://funnyfood1.com) for some ideas and how to make homemade chips. This can be served at the social time.
- Social – Okay, now is the time to serve the pigs in the blanket and you might want to slice them up so there will be enough for everyone along with the homemade chips. During this time let the residents read their funny story or poem that was written during the creative writing activity.
- Movies – There are way too many funny movies to choose from, so have fun picking one.

### **National Day of the Cowboy:** (Officially the fourth Saturday of every July)

- Discussion – Check out the cowboy heritage on [nationaldayofthecowboy.com](http://nationaldayofthecowboy.com) or [cowboyday.com](http://cowboyday.com) for details to discuss with the residents.
- Cooking – Let residents make Western Omelets to enjoy. Wikipedia has lots of information you can talk about on omelets while they enjoy theirs.
- Dance – Let’s square dance! Don’t know how then see if a dance studio can help with steps or check to see if you have a local Square Dance Club to help out. Ask your residents if any of them were square dancers in their younger years.
- Fiddle/banjo time – Ask around to see if anyone plays the fiddle or banjo that will come play for the residents. Ask the residents, you may be surprised that some play one of the instruments or both. If so, let them entertain. You can possibly add singing in with this some of the old cowboy songs “Home on the Range” or a real oldie....” (I’ve got spurs that)Jingle Jangle Jingle” by Tex Ritter. A few websites to check out for cowboy songs are [lonehand.com](http://lonehand.com) and [lyricsmania.com](http://lyricsmania.com) for lyrics of songs.
- Movie – Any John Wayne movie will most likely do, if not then try some of the newer cowboy movies.

### **Christmas in July:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

(Pull out your December calendar because this is not your normal Christmas in July. Today will be your planning day for Christmas with your residents and staffs help.)

- Listen and learn – Read the history of how Christmas in July got started and discuss with residents if they made Christmas plans in July when they were raising their children or maybe they did this as a child. Let them know how many days left till Christmas to set up your intro to today it is all about planning for Christmas. To put them in the spirit play some Christmas music and serve hot coco with sugar cookies.
- Facility Activity – Have staff and residents come together to decide on a Christmas decorating theme. Christmas themes are fun and it gets everyone in the spirit of love, joy, peace and giving. It also gets them a goal to work towards when there is a plan in place leading up to an event. Ask each to make suggestion of themes such as Snow men, penguins Candy Cane Land, Silver Bells, Country Christmas, Vacation Christmas, ...etc... Once the theme list is voted to only three

remaining themes then ask them to suggest what type of decoration and make a list of all the items that are mentioned.

Most likely a lot of staff can't come to this voting activity, so later that day send out the list for everyone to vote on one Christmas theme. Give them one hour to vote and drop them in a Christmas wrapped box located in a centralized area. At a set time collect all the votes to tally the winning theme. At the end of the day post the winning theme on the bulletin board. If you have second and third shifts then allow 48 hours to ensure all staff gets to vote.

Once the theme is picked then start asking everyone to look through their home decorations for something that will fit the theme that the facility can use. Set a date for all decoration to be turned in so you can evaluate what needs to be purchase to complete the theme decorations. Or you can ask for volunteers to be part of a decorating team. Set up a date and time that decoration can be put up. When you schedule this make sure you note to provide refreshments for that time in appreciation for the staff and residents participating on the decorating team. Make sure to mark all dates and times you set up today on your calendar.

- Christmas craft plans – This will not be a craft class, but a craft planning class. Show different crafts that they can work on once each month until Christmas so they can give as gifts to love ones. Once they have voted on the craft(s) you will know what to order to prepare for the special “Christmas Creative Workshop”. This also will help you with the budget so you can purchase the material each month and not have to pay it out at all one time. Besides you will have a chance to purchase the items on sale to make your budget go further.
- Christmas Choir – Now is the time to sign up residents to participate in the Christmas Choir to sing for the staff. Once you see how many are interested you will know if this to proceed with getting a music director or not. Ask a volunteer or maybe a music student in college to help organize the choir and set up a schedule for choir practice. If a voice choir is not possible then ask about a Bell Choir, or both. Decide on a date for the choir to perform and make it a social activity, complete with some of the cookies they made as refreshments. Make note to also serve coffee, hot cocoa or tea.
- Christmas party idea time – Once the theme is decided then you will need to ask them to decide if they want type of Christmas party they want; dance, dinner, Secret Santa or a re-gift party after Christmas. Decide on the date and time in December to have the party and write it down.
- Christmas baking – make a list of things they can make and freeze for Christmas. Cookies will freeze up to one six to eight months and still taste fine when thawed. Let them pick from your list and mark the dates you will have the Christmas Bake off groups.
- Christmas outings – Gather them all together to decide on their Christmas outings. Where they would like to go shopping? Do they want to go to a local Christmas play? Do they want to go out at night to see the Christmas lights? Go ahead and pick a day because this is what this is day is all about (at least for something different anyway).
- Community project – Serve a Christmas treat and have a list of community projects the residents and staff can work on between now and Christmas, but they need to make a choice today. Be prepared and have a complete list of worthy projects for them to choose from. Some of the yearly project to start your list are:
  - *Toy drive* – have staff, family or volunteers bring in toys that just need a little TLC to make them like new to donate for the Christmas toy fund. Residents can wash, dress, mend and fix any toys to give them a fresh look so other kids can receive something for Christmas.
  - *Shoe Box* – Start asking staff, family and friends for donations to fill shoe boxes to give from your facility. Remember the shoe box cost \$7.00 (price last year) for shipping

overseas. You can find out a local drop off place to mark on your calendar for the date they need to be turned in. Residents and staff can pack the shoe boxes with items set for a girl or a boy according to the age chart for each box.

- *Christmas cards for soldiers* – Start making Christmas cards to send out to soldiers.
- *Angel tree* – Set up a tree with names you get from the Salvation Army to purchase gifts for the little angle names you will get for your tree. You may only want to pick one or two names off a local mall Angel tree and pull all your money together to purchase all the gift wish list on the angles list. Either way this is a good project.

Check out your local area charity organizations for complete details on the projects and the required turn in dates. Make sure that the residents and staff understand that the choice must be made today so you can start the planning process and schedule the activity dates/time to let them work on the projects. If you have to narrow the list down to three and vote on the project, then do so. If you have a large facility with different shifts then you can break them down in groups and let each group pick a project. The more projects you can make into an activity work shop, the quicker your August – December calendars will get filled. Once the decision has been made mark it on your calendar to ensure you don't mix up dates or times. Once you have them on the August – December calendar you can send out a date reminder list with the exact dates and times to all the staff and residents so they will remember to attend the projects they want to participate in. This list is separate from your regular activity calendar because it is just a list with dates and times, and your regular calendar will be just one more reminder for them as well.

You have just turned your December planning into a day of activities. This same concept can also be done for other big events or holidays. It also lets your staff and residents participate more with the planning side of activities and may give them some insight as to how much work is involved in planning activities.

By the end of the day you should have at least one or two days a week from August until Christmas scheduled for Christmas crafts, choir practice, baking/freezing, community project, outings for shopping and plays, as well as making or collecting Christmas decorations for the theme to put up. You should have most of your Christmas calendar completed with few days left to fill with additional activities, guest speakers or last minute project completions.

Don't forget to get a head start on making phone calls to get volunteers lined up before they are all committed to other obligations during the holidays. During each activity today ask staff, residents or volunteers if they have suggestions for people they know that you can contact to help out for the holidays. If so, then write down names and contact number now so you don't forget later. Remember to note on your calendar dates to send out reminders and follow up calls to confirm the volunteers, guest speakers or entertainers still have your activity on their schedule. This will give you time to find someone else if something has happened and they cannot come as planned (things happen...).

Now is also the time to start asking for donations for anything that you may need during the holidays that your budget can't cover. Once all this is done you and your staff will be able to enjoy all the activities for Christmas and have the much needed time for your own personal family celebrations too.

## July Theme Activities – Compiled by Christine Jennings

- Listen and learn – Read the historical information about Daniel Boone on Wikipedia to discuss with the residents.
- Quiz – From the information read on Wikipedia make up a quiz game for residents to participate in and see just how much they remember.
- Quote game – Did you know that Daniel Boone was noted for 20 quotes? Well, I didn't and I am sure there are others that did not know this either. Have some fun with famous quotes and by reading the quotes and asking the residents if they can identify the person that made the quote. In order to do this you will need to get a list of quotes. Check out [brainyquote.com](http://brainyquote.com) and enter Daniel Boone in the search window, then scroll down until you see the link to 20 quotes by Daniel Boone. You can also click on the authors letters using the letter of the person's last name and scroll through the names to choose from to include in your quote game.
- Cooking – Pioneer style! Find some pioneer and Indian recipes on [nps.gov](http://nps.gov), then in their search window enter pioneer recipes. This will give you a list which you can choose from, however I found that the Kids main page link will give you lots of information that is well worth reading to help with additional activities for today's theme.
- Movie – The old Daniel Boone TV series is most likely on DVD's now, if not then I am sure there is a good movie at the library or video rental store to choose from.

### **John Henry Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Discussion – Read the history of the John Henry legion on Wikipedia. Ask the residents if they recall learning about the John Henry story. Discuss what the story represents, strength, endurance, determination, commitment, loyalty, and achievement.
- Game – This is a word scramble using the types of hammers most commonly used. Have the residents unscramble the words to get the right hammer name:
  - adhe itlps = Split head
  - nrgamfi = Framing
  - tdiemookni = Demolition
  - dgelse = Sledge
  - lmtaels = Mallets
  - srbas = Brass
  - pcepor = Copper
  - sasnom = Masons
  - ipne = Pein
  - lain lpulesr = Nail pullers
  - oirn = Iron
  - outa dyob = Auto body
  - ddea wblo = Dead blow
  - tilisarndu = Industrial
  - ybohnb = Hobby
- Hammer Toss – This is like any other outdoor toss game. You will need a light weight hammer that residents can pick up and toss or use a toy hammer for extra safety measures. Let each resident toss the hammer with the right hand first, then with the left. With each toss measure the distance and note or put up flags with their name on it so they can see how far they can toss. After the first toss is measured tell them to try tossing the hammer further than the first time. This gives them a goal to outdo themselves and to put more movement into their toss. After everyone has had a turn then let them do it again with the hand that was the weakest.

Challenge them to put more strength in their tossing this time to get it further than the good hand toss. You should make note about each resident's strength level in their arms and try to incorporate more strengthening activities in your future games, if you don't already do that.

- Tug of war – Have resident sit in chairs lined up in a row one in front of the other on one side of the room or court yard and the rest lined up on the other side. Stretch a long rope from one end to the other just like in regular tug of war. Have the center of the rope marked with a bright colored scarf and in the middle of two starting lines. Once everyone has hold of the rope tell them to pull. Their goal is to get the scarf over their team line. This will help build up arm strength and promote team cooperation. It will help if there is one staff for each team to cheer the residents on. Remind them they must stay seated at all times to ensure no one gets up out of their chair to pull the rope. You could play this again, except make the residents switch chairs to the other side so the other arm will get some strength building exercise too.
- Movie – Disney has an animation movie with short stories of American Legends called “Disney’s American Legends” narrated by James Earl Jones. It has the story of John Henry, Johnny Appleseed, Paul Bunyan and the Brave Engineer. This movie will relate too many of our American Legend themes that you have celebrated this month and the residents will enjoy the movie animation.

**Johnny Appleseed Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Discussion – Talk about the story of Johnny Appleseed and read the history on Wikipedia with the residents. Ask them if they have an apple story to share with the group.
- Cooking – Cook or bake anything with apples. If you want to try something different then try making apple chips, or apple dumplings, or caramel apples or maybe apple butter to can and use all winter long (note, canning is a lot of work but worth the effort and something the elder women most likely have done in their past).
- Hot Apple – Game played like hot potato, except they pass an apple while music is playing and the one caught with the apple in their hands when the music stops leaves the circle. The residents that leave the circle can watch while they enjoy some apple juice and apple wedges or apple chips or apple cookies.
- Basket fill – This game requires the residents to be set up in teams. You will need two baskets for each team. Set up two tables at each end of the room. Place one basket on each table and on one side the baskets will all be full of apples and the other side the basket is empty. Line up chairs spreading them out from one table to the other table. The object of the game is to have one resident take an apple out from the basket and pass it to the next person on their team. Each team member has to pass the apple until it gets to the last person next to the table with the empty basket and they must put the apple in the empty basket. Once their team basket is filled with the apples from the original basket then they are pronounced the winners.
- Finish the sentence – Here are some phrases relating to apples that the residents can see if they can finish the phrase or quote.
  - The apple never... falls far from the tree. (Proverbs)
  - A is... for Apple.
  - The Big Apple refers to ... New York City.
  - An apple a day... keeps the doctor away.
  - Baseball, hot dog and ... apple pie.
  - One bad apple... spoils the whole bunch.
  - The apple of ... my eye.(or can be “his eye”, either way is correct)
  - American as... apple pie.

## July Theme Activities – Compiled by Christine Jennings

- Comparing apples... to oranges.
- Don't upset the ... apple cart.
- Rotten to ... the core.
- Sour as a... green apple.
- When the apple is... ripe it will fall. (Irish Proverb)
- A stone from the hand... of a friend is an apple. (Moroccan Proverb)
- "I tell you, all politics... is apple sauce." (Will Rogers quote)
- "Anyone can count the seeds in an apple,... but only God can count the number of apples in a seed." (Robert H. Schuller quote)
- "Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces,... I would still plant my apple tree." (Martin Luther quote)
- "Adam was but human-this explains it all. He did not want the apple for the apple's sake, he wanted it because... it was forbidden." (Mark Twain quote)

### **Cheesecake Day:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Listen and learn – Read the history about cheesecake on Wikipedia and give interesting facts to the residents to start a discussion.
- Outing – Check to see if you have a Cheesecake Factory in your area. If so call and ask them if the residents can come for a visit. Ask if someone would talk about the process of making cheesecakes and how the flavor ideas come about. The managers are usually very knowledgeable about their product and process that they can provide that information and might even throw in some free samples.
- Cooking – Make mini cheesecakes to serve during social time.
- Game – How many cheesecakes can you name? Name traditional cheesecake flavors and specialty flavors:
  - Tradition:
    - Classic New York Style
    - White Chocolate
    - Chocolate Decadence
    - Turtle
    - Caramel Pecan
    - Chocolate Chip
    - Chocolate Marble
    - Strawberry Swirl
  - Specialty:
    - Espresso and Coffee Liqueur
    - Mocha Cappuccino
    - Key Lime
    - Pumpkin
    - Chocolate Raspberry Truffle
    - Black Forest
    - Reese's Peanut Butter Cup Chunk
    - Bailey's Irish Cream

The fun in this game is all the answers you will get from the residents. Who knows they might even come up with a new specialty cheesecake idea!
- Social – Invite residents and staff to enjoy some mini cheesecakes and tea/coffee.

## July Theme Activities – Compiled by Christine Jennings

- Movie – You can either check the library for any cooking DVD's on making cheesecake OR since when we think of cheese we think of rats, why not play the fun animation movie "Ratatouille". I have not seen it, but hear it is funny. Just a thought!

### **Calamity Jane Theme:** (This is a theme, not an official holiday)

- Listen and learn - Wikipedia has lots of information on Martha Jane Canary-Burke aka Calamity Jane to read and discuss with residents.
- Demonstration – In your area see if you can find a rodeo or rancher and ask them to come demonstrate how to throw a rope to lasso a cow or horse. They can do the demonstration out doors and use a barrel instead of the real live stock. Residents will enjoy it if they happen to know some rope tricks. Ask around, it never hurt to see if someone in your facility has this talent/skill and if so then by all means get them to do it, it will be even more special to the residents to see one of their own displays the talent.
- Lasso and rope – Get a rope and let the residents try to lasso a chair or barrel. It will give good arm stretch and hand/eye coordination exercise.
- Craft – Use a small coffee can and some rope to glue on it going around covering the entire can. If you can find some cute western foam cut outs or small farm animals to glue on the front of the can that will make it more appealing too. The can is now a western storage container for pencils, glue sticks, etc. Make sure to put the residents name on it so they don't get mixed up while drying.
- Movie – Wikipedia suggest lots of movies that portray the life of Calamity Jane, so you can decide which one your residents might like the best.

Have a GREAT July!!!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Blueberry Word Search



ANTIOXIDANT

DESSERT

JAM

MUFFINS

PIE

YOGURT

BLUEBERRY

FRUIT

JELLY

NUTRIENTS

SUMMER

BUSH

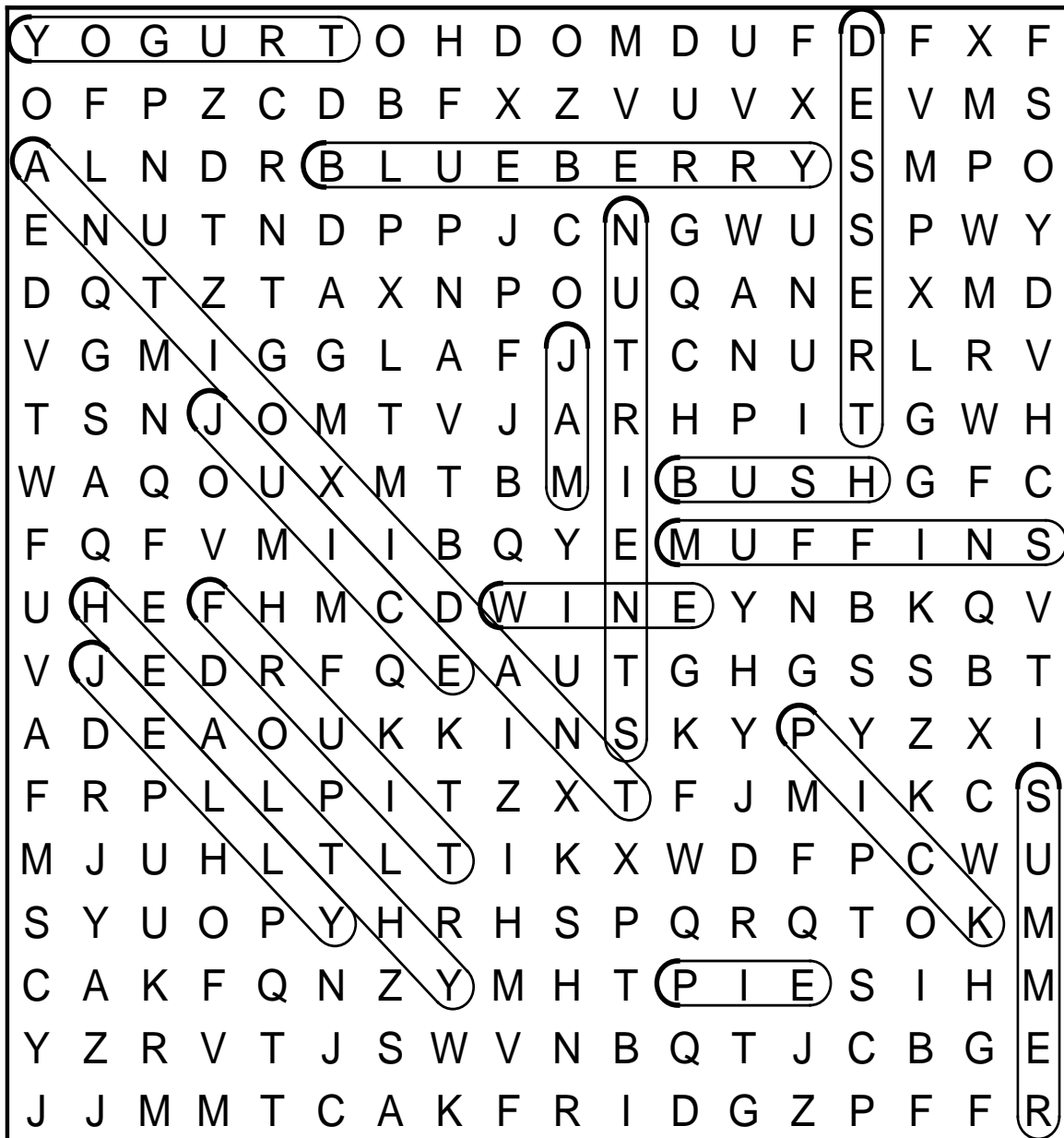
HEALTHY

JUICE

PICK

WINE

## Blueberry Word Search



ANTIOXIDANT

BLUEBERRY

BUSH

DESSERT

FRUIT

HEALTHY

JAM

JELLY

JUICE

MUFFINS

NUTRIENTS

PICK

PIE

SUMMER

WINE

YOGURT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Circus Word Search



ACROBATS

CLOWN

GAMES

POPCORN

TENTS

TRAPEZE

BEARS

COTTON CANDY

LIONS

RIDES

TIGERS

CANDY APPLES

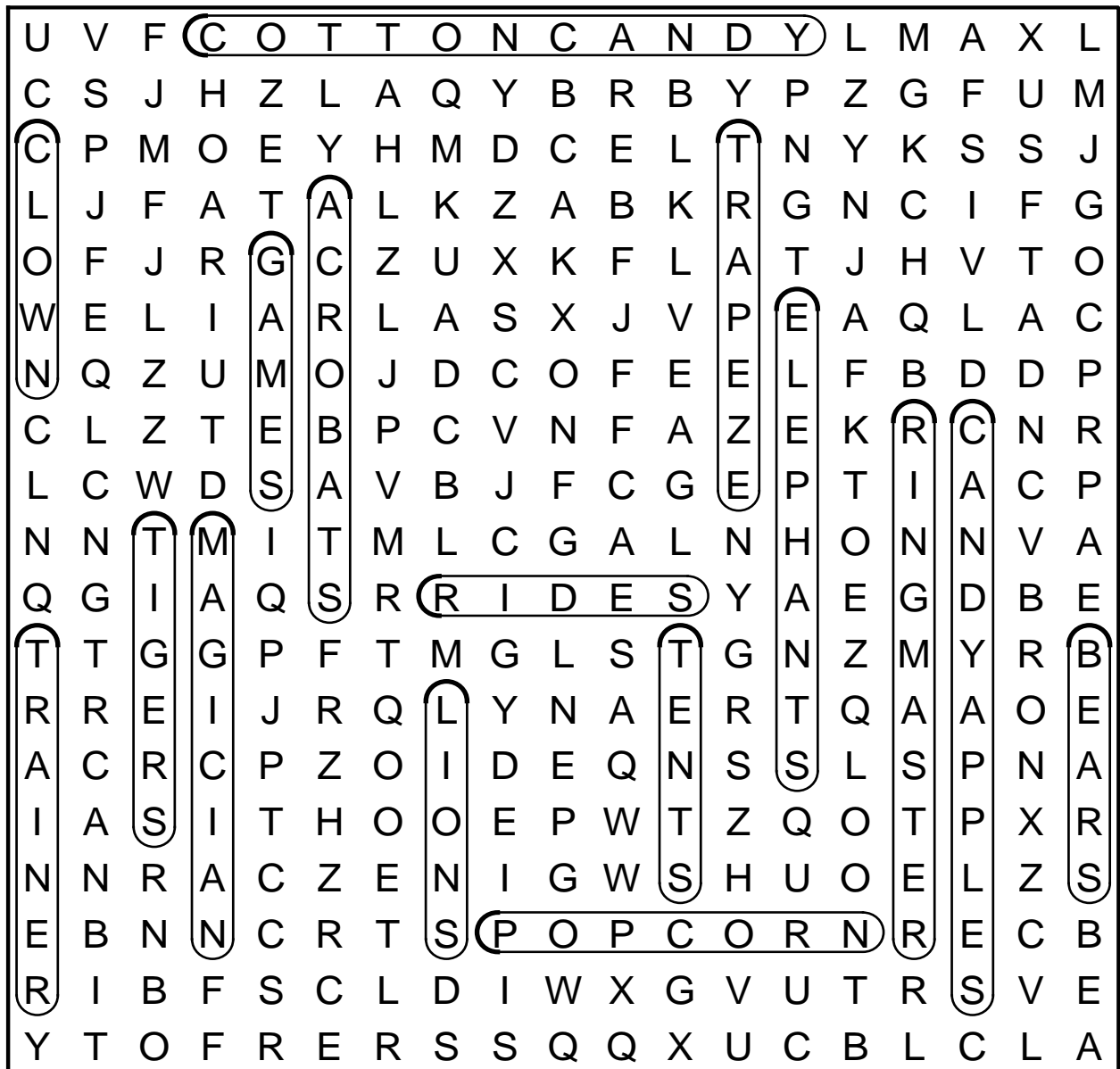
ELEPHANTS

MAGICIAN

RING MASTER

TRAINER

## Circus Word Search



ACROBATS

CLOWN

GAMES

POPCORN

TENTS

TRAPEZE

BEARS

COTTON CANDY

LIONS

RIDES

TIGERS

CANDY APPLES

ELEPHANTS

MAGICIAN

RING MASTER

TRAINER