

Activity Programming

Name of Program: *Annual King and Queen of Hearts Dance*

Recommended Duration of Program: 2 hours

Size of Group: Large group – open to all residents, family members and community

Goals and Objectives: Designed to provide a festive Valentine/Dance/Party setting for all and a special time of socializing together and brings the community/Junior High Students together with your residents. It is also great PR for your activity department/facility.

Materials and Equipment: a space large enough to accommodate the event; chairs, camera/film, decorations to set the mood, music/entertainment that can be danced to, refreshments coordinated between dietary and activity departments; King and Queen crowns and scepters, corsages, boutonnieres, archway/trellis

Decorations and Centerpieces: Valentine themed balloons, napkins, cups, trellis or archway decorated with valentine theme, etc.

Preparation, planning and participation: Plan to hold the event on a weekend closest to Valentine's Day as possible (this allows family to attend). This is done on the order of a prom. You will need to find some group to take this on, as most activity departments don't have enough staff to carry the event out. We have a Junior High School who assists us. They provide us with 25+ students to come in for the event. The school also pays for the band that day. The dietary department provides punch and cookies. About a month prior to the event the teachers/chaperones and I select the date of the event, we hold it either on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon closest to Valentine's Day. We hold it from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. I arrange for a Polka band per our residents preference. Two to three weeks prior to the event I ask the unit staff to select one female resident and one male resident to serve on the court. We have three units so we have three couples on the court. I then type up ballots and put them in paychecks so the entire nursing home staff can vote for a King of Hearts and a Queen of Hearts. Every resident on the ballot is on the court. The winners of King and Queen are kept secret until it is announced the day of the event when we do the coronation. The day of the event each lady on the court receives a pink carnation corsage and each male on the court receives a red carnation boutonniere. (I order real ones from a florist and have them delivered. They give me a discount, as they are familiar with the event.) We hold the coronation at 2:30 PM where I announce the King and Queen. We have a real King's crown and Queen's tiara and a scepter for the King and Queen too. (I ordered them from Stumps, they are what schools order for prom courts.) The initial cost was about \$100 but they are used from year to year. I bought good quality, no cardboard that doesn't last. Of course the crowning always brings tears to the winners' eyes, but every resident on the court feels special for the day. We then have a dance for just the court and students are paired up with them to escort them around the dance floor. This event has been done at our facility for over 40 years by the same school, not the same students or teacher, but it has been handed down as it was to me when I came to the facility. I have tweaked it and added my own flair to it over the years, but the basic premise has not changed. The students dance with all residents who are willing, even in the wheelchairs. We also utilize the Valentine trellis for this event and they parade/dance through it throughout the afternoon. Families are invited to this event. It is standing room only. Staff dress residents in their "Sunday Finery" for this event. I invite the local paper to do a story and/or picture. Sometimes they will do a story/picture depends on what else is going on news wise that day.

Submitted by Debbie R. Bera/ADC Public Relations Trustee