

HELLO December



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County Care Homes

Best Dementia Care Home Finalists The National Dementia Care Awards 2011

Together We Care

Managers Dementia Corner

Evolution of the Human Brain and what it means for people living with dementia

We are led to believe that the earth has been in existence for 4.5 billion years and we as humans have been a part of life on earth for 6 million years.

If you imagine that the age of the earth is measured as a 24 hour clock, humans have been around from 23:59-24:00.

We have evolved a lot in that one minute.

Further to this, it gets very interesting when you consider that humans in our current era (standing on 2 feet) have only been here for around 200 thousand years. Now imagine that this time is measured from your shoulder to your fingertip, we have only been around for the same distance as a single brush stroke of a nail file on your fingernail. **Finally we (Homo-Sapiens) have only lived for 35 thousand years and as a civilization for 6 thousand years.**

To give these facts some sense of proportion we need to look at another mammal "The Rabbit" for instance which has been around for much the same amount of time as us, and is intellectual, but has hardly evolved at all.

Part of our evolution has been the extraordinary development of our brains and in particular the Frontal Cortex which includes the frontal lobe, and the temporal lobes.



In the blink of an eye we have evolved from nothing more fantastic than a rabbit to what we are today and the frontal lobe has a huge role to play in determining "who we are".

The frontal lobes are important for voluntary movement, expressive language and for managing higher level executive functions. Executive functions refer to a collection of cognitive skills including the capacity to plan, initiate, self-monitor, and control one's responses in order to achieve a goal. Other functions include compassion, empathy, reasoning, insight and of course the ability to learn new skills "filters".

A good example of learning a new skill "filter" is when we first pick up a "stinging nettle" and learn that it hurts. This is known as a filter, and we spend much of our life building up a portfolio of filters. Interestingly women are much better at this than men i.e. 4 year old boys get stung many more times by stinging nettles than 4 year old girls!!

Also last to develop were the temporal lobes which are mainly responsible for memory.

There is a thinking that both the frontal and temporal lobes evolved so rapidly and over such a short space of time that the blood supply to both did not keep up the same rate, and is therefore very easily compromised when there is either an acute illness, such as stroke, heart attack or hypoxia which affects the supply of blood to these areas causing long term brain damage, and chronic illnesses such as Dementia, Multiple Sclerosis (MS), and Motor Neurone Disease (MND) etc. which develops over a longer period of time.

Most of us would have experienced the short term effects on this part of the brain when indulging in excessive alcohol, which causes the same effect on the ability of these parts of the brain to function and therefore alters our ability to conduct ourselves appropriately.

In dementia these areas of the brain are also compromised by nerve damage and it is believed (although not entirely conclusively) that this may be a result of the insufficient development of the small blood vessels to these areas.

As a result the functions of the frontal and temporal lobes decrease in their effectiveness. In essence we "lose our filters".

When under the influence of alcohol we lose the ability to show understanding, compassion, empathy and the ability to plan normally. Luckily, some may say, we also lose the ability to remember vast swathes of the time during which we were under the influence of excessive alcohol, but do revert back to normality relatively soon after the effects of the alcohol have worn off.

Unfortunately, when dementia advances these "filters" are lost forever and the normal functions, as described above, are also lost forever.

There is therefore, no reason why people living with dementia cannot continue to be happy and contented.

The way we conduct ourselves in the presence of someone living with dementia is key to caring for them, and to understand that they may have lost their filters, but have not turned into someone else who we no longer recognise.

They are still our loves ones. The key to their continued contentment is down to us and our understanding.

Staff Games



One of this months staff games involved a game of archery, the teams get very competitive but there are lots of laughs throughout the game. The residents always enjoy watching the staff playing the games.



The BIG Questions

As well as Staff games there was of course, The BIG Quiz, that staff and residents took part in. Here are the questions from one of this months quizzes! Good Luck!

1. What does COP stand for?
2. Which Liverpool based soap opera ran on Channel 4 from its launch in 1982 until November 2003?
3. The ancient stone city of Machu Picchu is found in which South American country?
4. In which US city would you find the Bellagio, Luxor and Venetian hotels?
5. Where in the world is Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa exhibited?
6. How many bond films did Roger Moore appear as 007?
7. Which actor was James Bond before Daniel Craig, making four films as 007?
8. Can you name the other four Jacksons who made up The Jackson 5?
9. Can you name the six suspects in the board game Cluedo?
10. Can you name the game that simulates a person's travels through his or her life, from college to retirement with jobs marriages and children (or not) along the way. Two to six players can participate in one game?
11. What is the biggest technology company in South Korea?
12. Who played 'Bodie' and 'Doyle' in The Professionals?
13. What is the doll, Barbie's, full name?
14. What is the life span of a dragon fly?
15. How many time zones are there in Russia?
16. Name the longest river in the world?
17. Name the best selling book series of the 21st century?
18. Which famous graffiti artist comes from Bristol?
19. When did it open the London Underground?
20. Who invented the iconic Little Black Dress?

Flower Arranging

Flower arranging provides cognitive and sensory stimulation, can help preserve motor skills, and instills a sense of ownership, independence, and accomplishment.

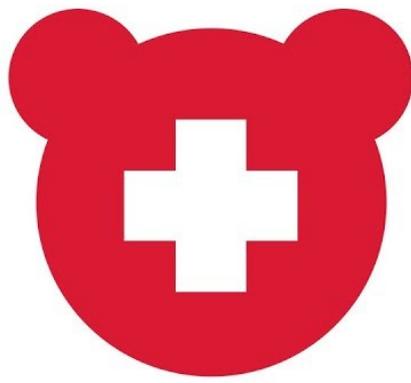




REMEMBRANCE DAY
Let Us Forget

The residents painted some beautiful poppies for Remembrance Day and then sat down to watch the Remembrance Sunday Service





Teddy Bear Hospital

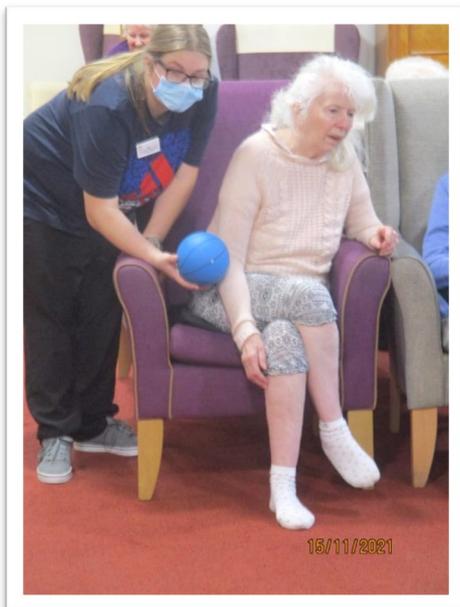
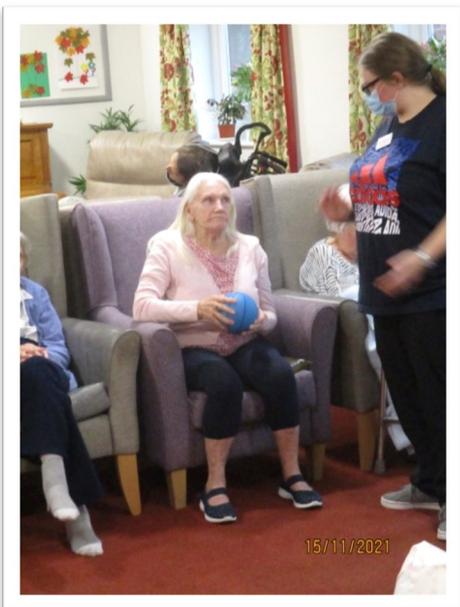
**Our lovely Kay in
laundry performed
surgery this week
on one of the
residents beloved
teddys!**



**We are pleased to
say he recovered
from his
operation very
well and is back
in the loving care
of his owner**



SKITTLES



Christmas Decorations

The Christmas decorations have started to go up around the home. It is starting to feel very festive!

Look out for all of our Christmas festivities in the January newsletter.



We are celebrating Elf Day on 15th December, Christmas Jumper Day on the 22nd December & on Boxing Day it's Christmas PJ day!

If you have a visit booked for any of these days, please feel free to join in (and make sure we take a photo!!)



Getting Ready for Christmas



J Q D G R E I N D E E R T H K L M N Y T C
A O S D F V H J U T U I T R E E O P K J S
W R Y Q D V C F H N J K L U Y L L O J A R
G N H N M S K L U L U E S N E S D C N Q B
M A L B T Z N C E S X W I D F G H T T Y U
P M P A U K L O V G T A J N M H A I S W E
W E R R T Y N J W K R U H B V F R N E A L
B N E K L L K I U T N M J H B G V S E R F
T T S U I O C A N D Y C A N E G H E N M B
W S E H B N M H G Y J K L X D E R L N R H
Z C N V B R E W R S F G H J M N B V E E E
L K T O I U J G L I G H T S A C F X W T B
F G S G N I K C O T S H G B N M K L I N J
H J U K L M N B G T F T C D E S E T H I W
P D F G O H U Y T F R E M D E D O W G W T
L E R F H C V X G H K M O A R Y H F I E A
O S G X O F G H Y T V G H N S M K I E U Y
D W E R H O L L Y G Y H G F V B K L L D S
U Q E D O G F V C X D F E O T E L T S I M
R E R F H H J K W R E A T H P O L K A G C

CANDY CANE

CHRISTMAS

ELF

HOOHO

HOLLY

JOLLY

JOY

LIGHTS

MISTLETOE

NOEL

ORNAMENTS

PRESENTS

REINDEER

RUDOLPH

SANTA

SLEIGH

SNOW

STAR

STOCKINGS

TINSEL

TRAIN

TREE

WINTER

WREATH

Christmas Raffle

It's that time of year already! Tanya is putting together the Christmas Raffle Prizes!



**Raffle tickets are available from reception.
The draw will take place on Tuesday 21st December**



This month we said a very fond farewell to Mandy, our longest serving member of staff! After 16 years Mandy decided it was time to step back and enjoy time with her grandchildren. We are very sad to see Mandy go and will miss her immensely!

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We look forward to assisting you

