

Blue Sky News



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May News

We have been soaking up the nice weather in the mornings. It has been great doing art projects outside, going for walks and doing mindfulness on the patio. Our garden is really taking off and we have watermelons, cantaloupes and zucchini's growing like crazy.

We started a new wheelchair accessible garden at Colt and have tomatoes, watermelon and squash growing there.

With Mother's day, Cinco de Mayo, and birthdays we had lots to celebrate last month. We also have been having some very meaningful group discussions, read the last page to learn more.



Garden



Cinco de Mayo



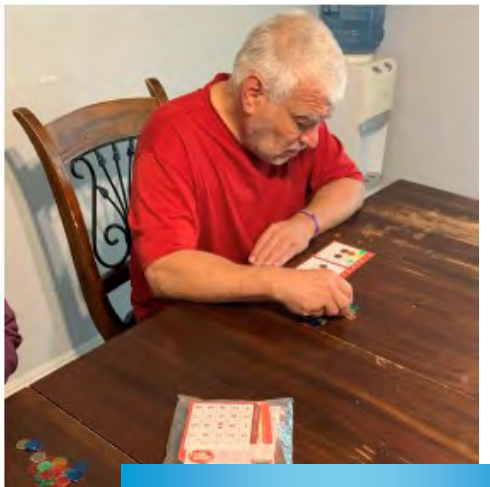
Cinco de Mayo



Outdoor Art Projects



Bingo



GROUPS

This month we have been doing groups to help us learn how to help manage anxiety and demanding behaviors. We discussed what we can do when we want or need something and staff is busy and we don't want the staff to forget. We discussed what we can control and what is out of our control. We also did a group on personal hygiene, the importance of having good hygiene as well as personal boundaries and discussing our own boundaries and how to respect others. Our last group discussion of the month was on isolation and we came up with a few ways to become more involved in activities.

In our learning activities last month we learned about Van Gogh, his life and work and took a virtual tour of a museum dedicated to his work. We also learned about Mount Everest, Rosie the Riveter and Beethoven and took time to listen to his music as well.

As usually we made sure we get our exercise and went for walks as well as doing chair exercises. We did mindfulness activities as residents sat on the patio listening to relaxing music. We did several art projects last month. A couple you'll see pictured doing cactus art project, painting and a Mother's day Art project. It has been a great, educational, fun month with lots of hard work on the part of our staff and residents.

VINCENT VAN GOGH [1853-1890]

Van Gogh was Dutch painter. His work is sometimes described as "Post-Impressionism," which means that his style of painting was similar to the "Impressionist" paintings that were being made only a few years before he started, but he added his own ideas that were different from them. His style was very personal, and though he was influenced by many kinds of artists, he made few lasting friendships with any of them and was almost always alone.

Van Gogh lived a troubled life, and his paintings are some of the best records we have of it. Only one of his paintings was sold in his lifetime, and he was never able to financially support himself. His brother, Theo, often helped him, and the friends he would briefly have would help him as well. People who knew him would often describe him as a difficult person and very rarely happy. His paintings, however, use very vibrant colors and sometimes seem joyful.

It was in his paintings that Van Gogh was able to express himself clearly. Most of his relationships in life fell apart quickly or turned out not to be what he had thought they were. There are many sad stories of Van Gogh attempting to get married only to be refused by each woman. The famous painter, Gauguin, went to visit Van Gogh once, after Van Gogh had written to him constantly, requesting a visit. When Gauguin arrived Van Gogh was extremely excited. He had painted several pictures of sunflowers in anticipation of his guest. Gauguin respected Van Gogh's talent, but the friendship only lasted a few months, the two had constant arguments and it ended when Van Gogh threatened him with a razor blade.

No one had ever painted the way Van Gogh did: his colors were vibrant and the shapes were strange and dream-like. His life was just as unpredictable and strange as his art, and it ended very early. However, since his death, his paintings have gone on to become some of the most famous in the world, and he has been a huge inspiration to artists ever since.



Bedroom in Arles



Starry Night



Sunflowers

