Residential clients enjoy ‘Putting on the Ritz!’

The annual March dinner event for the Residential program took a fancy turn this year, as clients donned tuxedos and fancy dresses and gowns, and arrived via party bus and limo at Anthony’s Ocean View restaurant in East Haven. The March 20 event was dubbed, “Putting on the Ritz,” and featured hors d’oeuvres, buffet dinner and scrumptious desserts, followed by residents pairing off for a dance contest. And what would a fancy event be without some parting gifts – as swag bags were given out to each resident as mementos of the festive evening, which certainly will be remembered for a long time.
Congratulations to Residential Services Director Davaul Amin who along with his wife, Latonya, welcomed into the world a new bundle of joy, a daughter, Samiya, born on Feb. 7.

In recognition of the occasion, Davaul was feted with a surprise “Dad’s Baby Shower” thrown by Disability Services staff and clients at the second floor meeting room at the Community Connections building on Campbell Avenue just prior to the happy occasion. The “surprise” included a luncheon and cake where Davaul was presented with a Dad’s “Tool Box” of items to help him through fatherhood. The tool box that included such items as Q-Tips, baby wipes, nail clippers, pediatric medicines, diaper rash cream, toys, band aides, booty socks, ice pack and teething ring (for the baby). “I was definitely surprised,” Davaul said recently. Mom, Dad and baby are doing well.

‘Ceramics’ work helps spell time during winter months

No one needs to be reminded that it was a long and cold winter and in their constant search to find new and fun activities, Community Connections staff and clients recently began working with ceramics. Chuck and his group dove right into the activity and were proud of their individually unique creations. While spinning clay can be a bit messy, it was nevertheless a fun activity that provided a meaningful and fulfilling activity during the cold winter months.

Playing games not only fun but helps keep minds sharp

It is a well-known fact that people who use their minds to read, compute numbers and play games often stay mentally more healthy, which is why game night including BINGO at Community Connections are great activities, never mind just fun. Putting their own particular “spin” on their game night activities, the evening includes fun and familiar games that serve to enhance recognition and familiarity with common household skills and tasks. Participants included Stephanie, Lasaudria and Caprice, among others. And a special thank you to Verissa from our residential program for assisting in the game night effort.

Collection for service persons inspired by son of staff member

In January and February, the entire Community Connections family took on a special project to collect items for our Armed Service soldiers serving our country. The inspiration for the collection was the induction of staff member Cathy Crawford’s son, Casey, into the U.S. Army last summer. Casey recently completed basic training and has now embarked to his first duty station in Alaska. So in honor of the dedication of our service members, the collection of various items was made and forwarded.
Happy 60th birthday, Michael!

Residential client Michael Roche celebrated his milestone 60th birthday party in style with friends and family in January 2014 at App’s restaurant in West Haven. While his actual birth date is Dec. 28, a snowstorm delayed the celebration, which featured a buffet dinner, birthday presents and cake, of course! And what was happening in the country and world 60 years ago in the year 1953 when Michael was born? Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower was inaugurated as the 34th president of United States on Jan. 20, 1953, while several months later ruthless Soviet Premier Josef Stalin died in March. Scientists James Watson and Francis Crick published their groundbreaking findings about their molecular model of DNA, while Marilyn Monroe, Ava Gardner, Rita Hayworth, Doris Day and Lana Turner were Hollywood favorites. The Korean War armistice was signed in July 1953, and here is something the fledgling Community Connections book club might take note of: Ernest Hemingway was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for his book, *The Old Man and the Sea*, in the Fall of 1953. Happy birthday, Michael, and many Happy 60th birthday, Michael!

Trip to NYC is mememorable

New York City and glittering ‘Times Square’ was the five-day destination vacation site for Frank, who traveled in style in his very own limo to the New York Marriott Marquis. The contemporary NYC hotel is noted for its amenities and exceptional service with its location second to none, being close to Fifth Avenue shopping, Radio City Music Hall, Rockefeller Center, the Empire State Building, Central Park, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Madison Square Garden, Madame Tussauds, and more! Among the sites and scenes Frank enjoyed was the Broadway play, “The Lion King.” All in all, it was a trip to be remembered!

‘Book Club’ is formed

Several clients came together beginning in the winter of 2014 to start a Book Club.

Participants spend time reading the stories out loud together, then complete related activities designed to enhance their understanding and comprehension of what was read, participate in a field trip created to support the book’s storyline, and end the effort by watching a film adaptation of the chosen book.

So far, participants have read: Matilda, Charlie & the Chocolate Factory and Witches. Readers and participants include Ralph, Nitsa, Lyza, David, Bryan, Shawn, Annette, Chuck and Tim.
February each year is a time to think of flowers, candy and valentines, and Feb. 7 was the day that Community Connections and Residential program clients joined together at a Valentine’s Day social and dance. Everyone enjoyed a night of dinner and dancing to honor St. Valentine, the widely recognized third-century Roman saint who is commemorated on February 14 and is associated with the tradition of “courtly love,” according to Wikipedia. No matter what the origin of the holiday, it was a great opportunity for social and recreational fun for clients of both programs. A special ‘thank you’ goes to the Bartha family for their generous donation of cupcakes for the event.