

My name is Jack Prohaska, I've been volunteering at Douglas County Health Center in Omaha Nebraska for perhaps 30-years now. Recently, I helped develop a quite unique series of programs in the way of music therapy that have been quite successful at the Health Center... So much so that we've now put them up free on YouTube for other facilities.

(If this reaches a state president of Activity Assn):

Rather than try to reach facilities individually, I figured, "Why not give the info to someone who, if they find worth in the effort, is in contact with all the facilities in his or her state?" I can refer you to Deb Greiner, Pres., Illinois Activity Professionals Assn. She is very excited about the videos and will be glad to describe why. Her # is: (773)-744-8138.

The states of Alabama and Georgia have responded positively as well.

Here is the info I promised:

Over the past decade, I have spent thousands of hours preparing YouTube series of videos. I call it "cognition-ignition."

On my synthesizer/keyboard, I've been able to produce music that sounds indistinguishable, in most cases, from the real thing. I was thus able to incorporate rhythms, instruments, and styles from all eras, going clear back to the late 1800s and the old sing-alongs some of these folks' mothers used to sing to them. Indeed, one of the additional videos is the first of several planned "old-timey" concerts, *Songs their Mothers Sang*--full of songs and lyrics the most elderly haven't heard in half to three-quarters of a century.

The videos are a potpourri of genres: old-time ragtime, New Orleans jazz, polkas, great old hymns, Dixieland, marches, pop and rock, etc. right up to the present, so there's something for everyone...

Simply put, there is a series of seven "Name that Tune/Solve that Trivia" game videos that are packed with nostalgia and incorporate a great deal of humor as well...hopefully, to keep even the staff entertained.

There's also a two-minute "Helpful Hints" video activity people really should play prior to using the videos.

Being on YouTube, they can be played on any device where there is Wi-Fi. TVs, phones, and tablets in individual rooms, as well as on large-screen TVs in common areas.

The games can be scored on a point system or played in a Bingo-type setup.

(Douglas County Health Center in Omaha has found an app for making bingo-type cards for the residents... For info: Michael Riley, Rec Coordinator (402)-378-2526 or County switchboard: (402)444-7000, ask for activities dept.)

SPECIAL NOTE:

I learned as I went along, making the videos. Program number one is pretty long, as it explains the point system and what I thought would be a short fascinating look at how the music is "built", etc. It can be broken down into two programs. Subsequent programs increasingly presented music, humor, trivia in a much better mix. To get a good "picture", you'd need to look at some of the later ones and not judge by just program number one.

The acknowledged power of music for memory/cognition-stimulation is, I believe, increased exponentially by the addition of the participatory element. In these programs, there is the *added* feature of a real trip down memory lane for residents and patients.

I'm going to mention one other thing here. There is a separate video (you would certainly not want to play for residents) that I recorded for that same fundraiser I mentioned. It was designed originally to encourage folks to open their pocketbooks for a good cause, as well as prompt individuals to visit some of the lonely and forgotten in care homes.

In the 30-one years I performed and volunteered in care facilities I couldn't help but notice there was a lot of condescension on the part of staff toward their charges-- understandably so in a tough job, but not a good thing. I decided my video might be a great motivational/training aid for not only new

hires but also existing staff... Discouraging condescension and replacing it with empathy, compassion, and respect for residents and patients. If you think your training person might be interested, he or she can go to YouTube and type in *Waiting at the Last Stop*.

It's only 4 minutes or so, but I believe it has the potential to reach folks on a deep, emotional level.

Whew. I guess I've "bent your ear" enough now and maybe I'd best just give you the essential info for **JAX Memory and Cognition Games for Seniors**.

Go to YouTube.com and copy this into the search bar: [JAX Memory and Cognition Games for Seniors](#)

I would *greatly* appreciate your thoughts, reactions, and any feedback or advice that might help me in my mission to make life a bit better for the elderly and infirm.

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Again, thank you and God bless! I believe residents and patients would thank you as well, if they could.

Sincerely, Jack Prohaska