

# 1920s theme of Willowbrook festival



Employees of the Staten Island Developmental Center's Building 11 entertain residents at their spring festival and barbecue.

S.I. Advance Photos by Steve Zaffarano

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"The Roaring 20s" was the theme for yesterday's fifth annual spring festival and barbecue hosted by Building 11 at the Staten Island Developmental Center, Willowbrook.

"These parties prove to be a huge success for these women," said Linda Boccio, physical therapist and part-time client coordinator of Building 11. "They look forward to it."

Staff, invited guests and residents of the all-women's residence dressed in costumes appropriate to the theme of the party. One resident even had her wheelchair decorated with crepe paper. "1925 Model T Ford," the sign on the chair read.

For entertainment, recordings of songs from the 1920s were played. The recordings were made from albums rounded up by the staff. Those residents who were able to dance did so, and others enjoyed the music.

Events for the day were planned by the professional, recreational and direct-care staff of about 100 day and night shift workers, under the coordination of Jeanne John, a recreator at the facility, and Betty Barnes, physical therapist. Hand-painted murals of dancers and old-model cars, flowers and other decora-



Phyllis Sanftner, right, and Chester Lewis, dressed in costumes of the 1920s, serve a resident.

tions were made by Lorraine Thompson and other staff members.

Costumes reflecting the dance-crazed '20s were also created by the employees of Building 11, under the direction of Catherine Traylor and Mary DelGrippe, both part of the direct-care staff.

Chicken, spare ribs, baked beans and other cook-out favorites were barbecued for the guests by Mildred Irwin, who serves as the chef for most of the parties at the center. Food for the residents was paid for by the center, and the staff contributed for their barbecued lunches and dinners. The party was scheduled to last into the evening so the night shift could enjoy the festivities.

In the past, the parties' themes have included a physical fitness day, a western roundup, a Hawaiian luau, and a carnival.

Life in an institution can get tedious for the residents, said Phyllis Sanftner, Building 11's treatment team leader. "This

gives them something to look forward to. It's a very big event for them."

The residents of Building 11 are women who range in age from their 20s to over 80. The building houses the geriatric unit of severely retarded women who receive medical treatment.

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