



"Simon Says"

The Official Newsletter of the
Robert E. Simon, Jr. Children's Center, Inc.
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12005 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 30, Reston, VA 20191
Established 1990

simoncenter.org

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DIRECTOR

Director:

As always, November was a month to remember, but I am shocked by how quickly this year has gone by at the Simon Center. I hope our SR parents enjoyed the Thanksgiving dessert of pumpkin pie... I know the children did!

Our December "season of giving" will include a Winterfest for our families on Friday 12/15. Mr. Jon will perform at 4 PM, and winter "goodies" will be available to enjoy. As we are going into "flu season", please remember to let the office know if anyone in your household is diagnosed with a communicable disease... like the flu, strep throat, COVID-19, conjunctivitis, RSV, coxsackie, etc. We are required to put out exposure notices. When in doubt if it's *reportable*, just ask or email us at: info@simoncenter.org With that being said, I hope you stay well, be merry, and have a happy start to the winter season of celebrations with family and friends. 😊

- Leila



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Assistant Director:

December is here, which means the winter holiday season begins... now!

Though I am not a "winter" person who loves the cold, I do love what this month brings... family and friends together to make many happy memories. 😊

The one tradition I enjoy at the Simon Center is the Winterfest! It is great having everyone come together to sing, dance, eat, and mingle. My children have met lifelong friends here from these events and are looking forward to another fun-filled event.

My fingers are crossed for the first snow (and soon!). Snow always seems to make it a special "winter wonderland". I hope you all enjoy this wonderful time of the year!

- Jessica



Board of Directors:

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays. Years ago, when I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ukraine, I couldn't have turkey or cranberry sauce on Thanksgiving. It helped me realize that it doesn't really matter what is on the table. What matters is that you "break bread" with loved ones or new friends and share the universal human emotion of gratitude.

As I'm sure many of you can agree, one of the things I'm most grateful for is the Simon Center and all the caring staff who take such good care of our children. 😊

The Board would like to give a special "shout out" of thanks to everyone who helped during our highway cleanup in November. In the spring, we will be doing a more flexible schedule for the cleanup to make it easier for more to volunteer.



A special thanks to Annie for helping as well and taking photos.

We also want to thank everyone who participated in our Chipotle fundraiser! Another opportunity to support the Center is coming up on Tuesday, December 12th. We will be having a fundraiser at Buffalo Wing Factory (Reston location only) from 5:00 – 10:00 PM. This fundraiser does not include deliveries. You will need to dine in person or get take-out and let them know you're with the Simon Center. We will send out a reminder email soon. My husband and I think they have the best wings around so please be sure to try them if you haven't already!! Also, we will be having a fundraiser at Chuck E. Cheese in January. Details to follow next month.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season full of joy, good health, and laughter (and some yummy treats!).

- Jessica (Mom of "Dolphin" Nora)



Nursery 1 Penguin class:

The Penguins have grown, and they have made amazing developmental progress! We have babies standing up, crawling, and practicing walking along the furniture, too. Elijah has found a “best friend” in Uma. He loves to crawl and play peek-a-boo with her. They enjoy each other’s laughter. Elijah likes to clap along when we sing. 😊 Max has been enjoying exploring the room by army-crawling, everywhere. He is fast! Max enjoys playing musical instruments, and he is now eating the school food. Oscar is moving all around the room. He rolls onto both sides and reaches out to grasp the toys he wants. Oscar loves to play with the little fishies and by shaking the rattles. Evie H., our youngest baby, is practicing her tummy time. She does not always enjoy it but she works very hard to hold her head up. By placing toys of interest around her, we are working with Evie to roll over to try to reach for the toys. Ziana is working on pulling up on the furniture and along the dividers. She is crawling everywhere! Ziana loves to play with the magic stars and the animal puppets. Uma is practicing standing and walking along the dividers. She enjoys playing with the soft books and loves to chase the balls on the floor. Uma laughs when she pops bubbles. Brooks is beginning to try different flavors of food from home. He is sitting up without help and is also moving to practice the crawling position. Brooks enjoys the pop-up toys and the See n’ Say toys.

Leo is officially walking 😊. The last week in November he moved next door to the Monkey room. We will miss you, Leo!

Rio is practicing his walking skills and doing a couple steps. He enjoys playing with the trucks & cars, and with all his friends. Rio will be a Monkey soon to make new friends in the NUR 2 and to be reunited with some old friends, too.

We also want to welcome Adeline who joined us the last week in November. We are excited to get to know her in the coming month. Welcome!!

December is a month to be filled with many joys, happiness, and holiday celebrations & traditions 😊. We wish you all a very happy holiday season and a happy new year!

- Luz, Arline, and Rosanete





Nursery 2 Monkey class:

We welcomed November with the early sunsets and with a change of clothes to be more appropriate to the cooler weather. All our little Monkeys kept exploring, learning, and growing.

The first week, it was about pets. We did sensory play with feathers and learned different animal sounds. The second week was about vegetables. Our little Monkeys did vegetable stamping art. They all loved the sensory play with real veggies, too.

The third week was all about food. The children danced with self-made holiday shakers filled with beans and corn. Pretending to go grocery shopping with play food and shopping bags was a hit! During the fourth week, we made handprint turkeys and celebrated Thanksgiving with homemade potatoes and sweet potatoes... yum! We all enjoyed doing the “turkey dance”.

In November, we wished Dylan the best of luck with his new friends in Junior 1 and he fit right in almost immediately! We welcomed Leo to the Monkey class. He will only be with us until the end of 2023, but we know it will be a great month “monkeying around” together.

In December, we will send Connor M. and Tess up to the toddler room. We trust you will both have a great time as Dolphins! Also, this coming month, we will welcome Saylor and his family back to the Simon Center on the 4th. Saylor used to be a Penguin, but this will be his turn as a Monkey and we can’t wait! On December 6th, Rio will join us from next door. He visited us some in the last week of November and we already can see he will have fun in the new room. Welcome!!

In December, we will start our winter themes and activities – snowflakes, snowmen, and winter holidays.

Reminder – As the weather is getting colder, we want everyone to keep warm and stay healthy. Please make sure to bring warm clothing for your child. 😊 Thank you and ... Happy Holidays!

- Reena and Alicia





Junior 1 Dolphin class:

We had a lot of fun talking about Thanksgiving & turkeys and other interesting topics with the class in November.

During our week about owls, the toddlers had fun painting an owl using cotton balls and celery sticks. They got their *hearts pumping* while pouncing on bean bag “mice” to carry them to the nest... just like an owl! The students also loved reading about owl babies and the night adventure of a little owl.

For our “Turkeys” week, the Dolphins worked on different arts & craft projects to make their own turkeys. They first did a tissue paper mosaic turkey, and then made a coffee filter dot-dot turkey. The class enjoyed adding the eyes, beaks, wattles, and legs to the bodies of their turkeys. They also loved adding colorful tails to a turkey on a felt board during a circle time while learning and practicing color naming.

The “Thanksgiving” week was a short one, but the children made a special gift for their parents by making a footprint turkey with colorful tail feather cutouts, and we talked being thankful while reading books, like Pete the Cat: The First Thanksgiving and Thank You Thanksgiving.

Our last theme was “Bears” and the group had fun reading We’re Going on a Bear Hunt together and singing the song too. They also loved making animal sounds while reading Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? at circle time. The children had a lot of fun stamping with potatoes to make their bear paw prints art and doing a free painting with sponge brush wrapped with fur.

In November, we welcomed Dylan M. to our room. He moved up from the Monkey room and he has adjusted very well to the new environment. We also said good luck to Emmett as he started with our neighbors in the Goldfish class. He was ready! 😊

There will be two friends joining us this coming month, Connor M. and Tess from the Monkey class. Welcome to you both! You will have lots of fun, too! In December, we will be saying goodbye to Luca O. as he too will join the JR 2 class. We will miss you! It's hard to believe that we are already in the month of December. We hope this year has brought many happy and joyful moments for everyone. The Dolphins will be talking about things like winter, gingerbread men, and the winter holidays to do many fun activities together. Have a wonderful December and... Happy Holidays!!

- Julia, Warda, and Sameey





Junior 2 Goldfish class:

In November, we had discussions about colors, friendship, families, turkeys & pumpkin pie, and we ended the month talking about giving gifts.

For our colors week, the children matched different colored animals to colored circles on an activity board, and for sensory play we put colored rice in the sensory table to explore.

During our week on friendship, we talked about how to be a good friend by sharing & taking turns, and by welcoming new friends to the room (like Emmett who joined us on the 21st!). The children took turns using the playdough cutters and utensils, and we enjoyed playing outside with our friends who are now in the Panda room, too (like Adrianna who moved up on the 27th!).

For the family theme, we went to the nearby pond to look at the geese family living there. We also named family members... mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, grandparents, pets, and aunts & uncles, too.

Next, we had a short holiday week and talked about the Thanksgiving holiday foods to gobble-gobble. We made turkey headbands and enjoyed a yummy pumpkin pie for snack.

To end the month, we started talking about the winter “season of giving” and giving gifts to family and friends.

In December, we will welcome a new teacher named Mayi 😊. She is ready to teach us more about gift-giving, and we will focus on the winter holidays of Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa to end the year. Happy holidays!

- Fettouma, and Rama (and soon Mayi, too!)



UPCOMING EVENTS:



- | | |
|------------------|---|
| December 12 | Buffalo Wing Factory fundraiser in Reston (5 – 10 PM) |
| December 15 | Winterfest with Mr. Jon performing at 4 PM |
| December 21 | Dress up “Boots” day |
| December 25 | CLOSED for Christmas holiday |
| December 26 - 29 | HOURS: 8 AM - 5 PM |



Junior 3 Panda class:

Happy December!

We hope all our Pandas and parents had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends. The month of November was filled with fun and educational learning experiences. During the week on “Healthy eating”, the class learned that eating candy and a lot of sweets is not good for you and can also give you cavities in your teeth. We stressed that eating fruits and vegetables is much healthier.

Our Panda friends had a great time making their Thanksgiving placemats and making a card for their parents. They were excited to try the pumpkin pie at snack (but enjoyed the Cool Whip even more!). 😊

Thank you to everyone for bringing in a picture of your pet during our week on pets. The children enjoyed talking about and showing their friends their pet pictures.

Congratulations to Troy who moved up to the Bear class in November! We will miss you, but know you were ready for a preschool classroom.

Adrianna came to the Panda class last month from the JR 2 Goldfish class. We can’t wait to make great memories with you... Welcome to our room!

During the month of December, we will talk about different holidays from all around the world.

“Happy Holidays” to all from the Pandas!

- Sarai and Mary 🐼



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Senior 1 Bear class:

Last month, we learned about the different states of matters, fall animals, Thanksgiving, and foods & nutrition. We studied the letters G & H and the numbers 6 & 7.

As always, the Bears enjoyed practicing their yoga poses with Ms. Nora and Spanish classes with Ms. Sarai. The children continued having fun during our Music for Life classes with Mr. Diego. This fall we had our monthly storytelling from Ms. Kelly, the Reston librarian, via video.

The class learned about fall changes that happen in the nature. Then, the naturalist from the Walker Nature Center visited and taught the students about changes to look for in animals in Reston preparing for winter, too.

We all enjoyed the pumpkin pie Thanksgiving dessert with our Bear parents. Thank you for coming to “gobble-gobble” with us! 😊

Troy, Nathaniel, and Luke joined our class in November. Welcome boys!!!

Our December themes will be about 3D shapes, patterns, holidays around the world, and different New Year celebrations & traditions, too. We will review the letters I & J and the numbers 8 & 9. Happy Holidays!

- Rozita and Maryam



Did you know... ?

- Our telephone number when we call you will look a bit different. To call us, please use 703-834-5880. To be sure you know when we are calling you, please save the following numbers to your phone: 571-375-7671 and 571-375-7673
- As a non-profit, we have an Amazon “wish list” for various classroom wants & needs, as well as for much needed Center supplies. <https://a.co/4WoEviD>

- We have an official (and private) Parent Group Facebook page. Please “join us” at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/902695849810695/>





Senior 2 Giraffe class:

In November, our class had fun talking about what we do in the daytime as well as at night. We each made a dream catcher, to ensure “only good dreams would go through” each night while we sleep.

The month of November was a special time to be thankful for everything that has helped us to be what we are now. We read books about why and how the Pilgrims left their country. We also discussed the Native Americans who helped the Pilgrims settle down, build houses, and plant corn & other crops. We learned about how Native Americans and Pilgrims had the “First Thanksgiving”. We read different Thanksgiving stories. Then we made our *thankful tree* decorating it with leaves saying what we were thankful for this year. We know everyone had a happy Thanksgiving holiday celebration with family and friends.

Next, we filled our room with music because music makes us happy and more thankful to be in the Giraffes class.

Thank you to all the Giraffe parents for coming to meet for the one-on-one conferences.

This month, we have the following December themes to explore and enjoy:

Festivals of Lights

Holiday Customs

It's Winter

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

- Pompeii and Shirin



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Luca O.

Elijah

Uma

Alani

Rio

Caroline



Senior 3 Star class:

During November, the Stars were busy learning and having fun, every day 😊 . To start, we looked at some of our favorite animals and did many activities to make them “come to life”. We created hedgehogs from fruit and painted some of the animals found in Jan Brett books.

Our second November theme was about the different food groups and the different properties of each kind of food. We finished by making chocolate chip cookies and pasta with vegetables. The class learned basic cooking skills in our “kitchen”.

Then, we talked about our families. We discussed who is in our family, why family members are important to us, and how these special people affect us daily. We shared details about each member in our family and named a favorite meal we enjoy at home. (Ms. Roselle’s favorite family meal was... vegetable fried rice. Yum!)

Our next unit was our most exciting one yet... Thanksgiving! We looked at the many traditions and some of what our friends do (and eat!) to celebrate Thanksgiving. A big “thank you” to our Star parents who came to eat pie with our class.

To end the month, we talked about several different types of birds. We noted how each bird has different migration patterns; different colors, shapes & sizes; and how we interact with them today.

In December, we plan on studying the weather. For example, we will talk about rain, snow, and hail.

Then we will have several holiday units. First, we will learn about Hanukkah to discuss why it is celebrated and understand Hanukkah traditions, games, music, and stories.

Our next holiday units will focus on Christmas and then the New Year’s holiday. Each friend can share how they celebrate these holidays.

Our letters for December are Ww, Rr, Mm, and Nn.

We hope that you all have an amazing holiday season!

- Roselle and Shatara

