



# "Simon Says"

The Official Newsletter of the  
Robert E. Simon, Jr. Children's Center, Inc.  
January 2024

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12005 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 30, Reston, VA 20191  
Established 1990

[simoncenter.org](http://simoncenter.org)

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## DIRECTOR

Director:

December was filled with winter fun for the children, teachers, and parents, too. 😊  
From Winterfest & Mr. Jon's performance, a staff holiday dinner & a Buffalo Wing Factory fundraiser, our dress-up "boots day" & our New Year's "Rockin' Eve" dance party... we certainly know how to end a year. Good-bye 2023 and welcome 2024!!  
Don't forget--- we will be closed on Monday JAN 1st and Monday JAN 15th. Then later in the month, we will host a Kindergarten "Know How" for our Star parents.  
In January, we will welcome new friends and sadly say good-bye to others. We will do



another dress-up day, but this time in "silly" socks. There will be several children transitioning to new classrooms, and a Chuck E. Cheese fundraising night, too. The fun just doesn't stop, and we are all looking forward to more in 2024!!

- Leila





**Assistant Director:**

December came and went, and I loved hearing all the stories on what the children did to celebrate their winter holidays!

Now, we are looking forward to a New Year... of fun and learning here at the Simon Center. Happy New Year's (2024)! Whoo-hoo!!

I am excited to welcome the month of January, as I am still hoping for some snow to fall (and stick!). I love seeing the children play on the playground making footprints in the snow and making snowmen! It brings me back to fond childhood memories of growing up in NJ. The snow was endless during NJ winters! Even with 5+ inches of snow, the school bus would come and pick us up. After school, we would have snowball fights and my father would build amazing igloos. 😊 Then, hot chocolate was a must!



Fingers crossed for a white January. Dress warm and stay safe!

- Jessica



**Board of Directors:**

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a joyous holiday season and took some time to rest and reflect on the past year. It is once again time to make fun (or not so fun) resolutions. Like many others, I often make resolutions for the new year that are quickly abandoned. So, my resolution for this year is to set more realistic goals. Whatever your resolutions or goals are for the coming year, here's hoping you all are happy and healthy!

Winterfest was once again a hit! The children loved Mr. Jon's performance. It was great to see them enjoying the silliness and hear their laughter.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Buffalo Wing Factory fundraiser in December. Be on the lookout for more information about our next fundraiser at Chuck E. Cheese in Herndon on January 11.

In closing, thank you all for being part of the Simon Center family! It would be wonderful to see the Simon Center family grow in 2024. If you know any families who are looking for child care, be sure to tell them about the amazing quality care provided at the Simon Center!

- Meredith (Mom of "Giraffe" Eleanor)



**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:**

Ms. Alicia

Gaby

Max

Celia

Aaron

Lewis

Juno



## Nursery 1 Penguin class:

We are utterly flabbergasted as we reflect on the beginning of the school year and how much each baby has grown! Once upon a time, the babies were just beginning to sit on their own or pull up to stand and move around by crawling. Now we see them moving around even more as they try to walk!

Max is practicing his standing skills and is working hard to furniture walk around the small house. He is also practicing using a spoon and drinking out of a sippy cup.

Oscar is practicing crawling and moving around on the mat. He is reaching for toys of interest and is exploring the room more. He loves to play with rattles and little fishies.

Evie is moving from her back to her tummy. She is working on turning from her tummy to her back. Evie enjoys tummy time and likes to play or snuggle with stuffed animals.

Uma is walking side to side from the divider area and standing up from the furniture. She loves to use the tunnel and enjoys the pop-up and spinning toys.

Adeline is a big girl! She loves to play with the big rings and the mega blocks. She plays peek-a-boo using the scarves and enjoys the small house. This month, Adeline will be transitioning over to the Monkey room. We will miss her!

Elijah will be also moving up to the Monkey room and we will miss him as well! He is a big toddler and enjoys playing with the cars and trucks. Elijah is working on using a spoon to eat and drinking water from a sippy cup.

Brooks will be moving to Africa this month. We plan on enjoying our last couple weeks with him! He is officially crawling everywhere. Brooks likes to play with the farm animals and the stacking cups. He is trying new food from home and working on pushing himself up to stand.

Ziana will also be moving out of the area, and we will miss her so much! She is standing up everywhere! Ziana loves to play with the hard and soft books. She is walking from side to side around the divider area and enjoys the stacking rings.

We would like to welcome Pearl, Tessa, and Franklin! They will be new additions to our Penguin family! We are excited to get to know each of them. Welcome!!!

We wish you a New Year full of happiness and love. Welcome winter and... let it snow!

- Luz, Arline, and Rosanete





## Nursery 2 Monkey class:

In December, we celebrated different holidays from around the world.

We talked about Hanukkah by reading books: My Chanukah and The Magic Dreidels. Then, we focused on Christmas by reading the books: The Little Reindeer, Clifford's First Christmas, and Christmas Wishes.

We also learned about winter animals and gifts/presents, and we listened and danced to holiday music.

The children made footprint art reindeer, ornaments, and candy canes. We also did dot-dot art.

During sensory play, we played with ribbons, wrapping paper, and gift bags. To end the month, we had sensory play with bubble wrap, too.

In December, we welcomed Rio from the Penguin room, welcomed Saylor back to the Simon Center, and said good-bye to our friends Connor and Tess who joined the Dolphins. We said good-bye to Leo who had his last day on the 29<sup>th</sup>. We will miss him! In January, the Monkeys will learn about the New Year and our themes will be snowmen, snowflakes, birds in winter, winter clothing, and ice/icicles. We will have sensory play with ice, and hopefully with real snow.

Two new Monkeys are scheduled to join us in January, Adeline on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Elijah on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Welcome!!

We will continue to go on walks and to the playground as the weather permits. Please make sure to bring in appropriate clothing for the cold January days.

Thank you to all the parents for the generous holiday gifts. We really appreciate you all and wish everyone a very... Happy New Year!

- Reena and Alicia





## Junior 1 Dolphin class:

Hello, Dolphin Families! We hope you had a wonderful holiday season last month just as we did in the Dolphin room. The children had fun in December talking about gingerbread men, reindeer, holidays, and the winter season. Everyone had a great time at the Winterfest... seeing the Center filled with lovely decorations and enjoying the festive music with Mr. Jon. We loved watching our children dancing together and seeing all the families chatting happily all around us. The Winterfest put us in a very festive mood indeed!

For our “Gingerbread Man” theme, the children had fun singing different gingerbread man songs and doing a marble painting on a gingerbread man cutout with golf balls. They also loved chasing after a gingerbread man who was “hopping” away on a mat and adding stickers to a giant gingerbread man.

During our “Reindeers” week, the children did a great job of adding handprint antlers to their reindeers, and they had fun feeding yummy beanbag “treats” to a big box cut-out reindeer. The toddlers did a wonderful job of adding short strips of paper to give their reindeers awesome antlers.

Next, we did several different activities related to Hanukkah and Christmas. The class had fun making handprint menorahs and a big handprint Christmas tree. We also brightened up the room with fingerprint holiday lights and marble painted candy canes. To finish up the month, the Dolphins talked about the “Winter” season. We all had fun working on arts & crafts, like hot cocoa mugs and cozy fireplaces; and doing winter activities, like putting winter clothing onto a felt figure and ripping or balling up used wrapping paper to toss in the air.

In January, we will say goodbye to Alani and Gaby, both will be moving up to the Goldfish class. We are going to miss them very much and we wish both girls the best! Our group will welcome two new Dolphins in January, as Hudson and Saylor join us in January from NUR 2. We look forward to getting to know them better. 😊 Welcome!!

In January, we will be talking about winter related topics, like snow and mittens; and winter animals who live in colder climates, like polar bears, penguins, and walruses. Are you busy making new year resolutions? It is a nice way to start a new year with new plans and dreams. We hope you have a wonderful and happy new year in 2024.

- Julia, Warda, and Sameey





## Junior 2 Goldfish class:

Wow, what a wonderful December we had with our little ‘fishies’, and we were able to welcome Ms. Mayi into the classroom just in time for the holidays.

During December, we enjoyed reading about holiday traditions, playing with holiday and winter items, and making artwork to celebrate each theme.

For Hanukkah, we read the books Dreidel, Dreidel, Dreidel!, Something from Nothing, The Light from Within. Each child made a dreidel, a Star of David, and some Hanukkah lights, too.

In December, we welcomed Luca O. into our fishbowl as well as two goldfish pets into



the room. The fish enjoy swimming in their bowl and enjoy being right by the music, too. The children enjoy stopping by the bowl to say “hi” to our pet fish... every day. In the bowl, we added toys for them to play with too! 😊

Then, we moved on to discuss Christmas. We made arts & crafts, like reindeer, Santa hats & boots, and snow handprint globes. We loved hearing Christmas stories, like Who will pull Santa’s Sleigh Tonight.

To end the month, we had a short and relaxing week talking about Kwanzaa but started off with Boxing Day fun. The children made holiday lights and painted boxes as gifts. On the last day of the year, we celebrated New Year’s at the New Year’s “Rockin’ Eve” dance party with all the classes. The Goldfish are ready for 2024!

In January, our themes will be polar pals, snow, winter, and ice. Let it snow, let it snow,



let it snow!! We can't wait for our upcoming themes and activities!

This month, we will be saying goodbye to two friends, Dylan S. and Mila. They will be moving to join the Panda class. At the same time, we will welcome Alani and later in January Gaby into our fishbowl! “Goodbye” to our old friends, but “Hello” to the new! Happy New Year everybody!!

- Mayi, Rama, and Fettouma





### Junior 3 Panda class:

Greetings from the Panda 🐼 classroom! We hope everyone had a great winter holiday season, and that you were able to celebrate and welcome in 2024!

We stayed busy during the month of December. We enjoyed learning about sports and what types of balls and equipment we need to use for each different sport. We also want to thank all the families that brought in their family pictures during our “Family” week. The children enjoyed sharing their own family pictures with the class and looking at their friend’s family members too.

Winter animal week was fun for the students. We all enjoyed painting with forks to make a polar bear along with other fun art activities. We can’t believe winter is already here; our friends (and teachers!) are wishing for snow. The class enjoyed learning about the different winter holidays from around the world. We discussed Hanukkah, Las Posadas, Kwanzaa, Christmas, and New Year’s along with other holidays. Thank you to Ayra and family for sharing a book with us about Eid. The Pandas enjoyed learning and sharing about how their holidays are celebrated.

In January, Grace will “graduate” from Pandas into the Bear class on the 8th. Maddie will follow her later in the month. Congrats, girls! Also in January, we will say a sad “goodbye” to Connor K. as he and his family are moving. Have a great 2 yrs. in Africa! The Goldfish class will send Dylan S. to our room on the 8th. Then, Mila will follow him later in the month. We can’t wait to have fun and learn new things with you both. Happy New Year!

- Sarai and Mary



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## Senior 1 Bear class:

Last month, we learned about 3-D shapes, patterns, winter holidays around the world, and different New Year celebrations and traditions.

We also reviewed the letters I & J, and the numbers 8 & 9.

As always, the Bears enjoyed practicing their yoga poses with Ms. Nora, and learning Spanish vocabulary with Ms. Sarai. The children continued having fun during our

weekly Music for Life classes with Mr. Diego, too. 

While hosting Dani's mother and grandmother, the class learned about Hanukkah.  Thank you for sharing your family's holiday customs with us!

We enjoyed Mr. Jon's performance at Winterfest and building a box snowman! 

Our January themes will be about winter, planets, hibernation, and math in our world.

We will review the letters K & L, and the numbers 10 & 11.

In January, Grace will join our group mid-month from the Pandas, and Nathaniel will move up to be a Giraffe.

Happy New Year!

- 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:

December was a festive month for us in the Giraffe class. We talked about different “Festivals of Lights”, like Diwali, Hanukkah, Posadas, and Advent.

Our theme on different holiday customs helped us to imagine traveling to new places and to focus on what we do at home during the winter holiday season.

We started with our own country, America. Next, we went “across the pond” to learn about the winter holiday customs in England, Italy, and Germany. We learned that the first Christmas tree was made by Germans in their country, and we decided to decorate a picture of a tree to make cards for our parents.

In December, the winter season began, and we had to bundle up when we went outside to play. We read and discussed books about winter and how to be safe on very cold and snowy days.

Welcome 2024 and ... Happy New Year!

To be more “intellectual” this year, we will start with the following January themes: Earth & Space; Dinosaurs; Martin Luther King, Jr.; and Tools & Machines

In January, we will bid Jonah a fond farewell as he will be leaving the country mid-month, and afterwards we will welcome Nathaniel from the Bear class as the newest member of the Giraffe class. We are sure to have a wonderful January!

- Pompeii and Shirin



## UPCOMING EVENTS:



- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| January 1   | CLOSED for New Year’s Day                        |
| January 11  | Dress up “Silly Socks” day                       |
| January 11  | Chuck E. Cheese fundraiser night, from 3 to 9 PM |
| January 15  | CLOSED for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day       |
| January TBD | “Kindergarten Know-How” meeting for SR 3 parents |



### Senior 3 Star class:

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe that December (and with it the year 2023) has come and gone. We are now in 2024 😊.

In December, the Stars “dug deep” and learned about different types of weather conditions. Everyone had a really good time with our science experiment to make tornados using 2-liter soda bottles.

The other December themes were about the holidays of Hanukkah and Christmas. We learned different songs, discussed holiday traditions, and enjoyed yummy holiday foods. For a cooking project, the class made latkes.

Of course, we couldn't end the year without celebrating the New Year. The students got to practice the “big countdown” and we changed the calendar to 2024.

In January, we will be learning about numbers while playing number games, and study arctic animals. Then, the children will do an experiment with snow & ice, and we will end the month talking about winter clothing.

The letters for January will be D, I, K and Q. See you in 2024!

- Roselle and Shatara



**Happy  
New Year**