

# MARCH

## "Simon Says"

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

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Established 1990

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

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### DIRECTOR

#### Director:

February may be the shortest month in the year, but with the extra "leap day" we were able to do quite a bit... on Groundhog Day we looked for our shadows in our PJ's; Mother Goose visited to do a *love*-ly program for the children; on Valentine's Day we had a special *treat* for the parents at drop off and ran a successful Crumbl Cookies fundraiser; a naturalist from the Walker Nature Center visited the older classes to teach them about "Animals in Winter"; and we enjoyed fun "leap day" activities on the 29<sup>th</sup>! To get ready for our June "Silent Auction", we began collecting items donated from nearby businesses. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of Wegmans and PetSmart. Wegmans not only donated a gift card for the auction, but also donated a \$300 gift card for us to buy milk. PetSmart donated over 100 dog toys, valued at over \$550! I will save a few for the auction, but have already been selling them to teachers, parents, and alumni, too. As a pet parent to four dogs, I have enjoyed seeing the pictures of family pets snuggling (and destroying!) these toys. I was also excited to give each classroom a dragon toy to celebrate the "Year of the Dragon" for the Chinese New Year.

Now, I am looking forward to whatever March "madness" may come our way! 😊

- Leila





## Assistant Director:



I want to say how *lucky* I am to be part of the Simon Center community! Being able to bring all three of my children to RESCC has been an amazing adventure for my family. I started here in January 2010, and it's like I have grown up here. Simon Center is my 2nd family. My children still remember all the fond memories they created here. March brings warmer weather, watching our geese come back to the pond, and of course... St. Patrick's Day! At the Simon Center, we have a crazy, little Leprechaun that runs around and creates a little mischief in each classroom. The children have a *blast* with this surprise March "madness". 😊

Reminders: We will be closed March 8th for our Professional Development Day, the spring Scholastic Book Fair week will follow, and then on March 22nd is our dress-up in your favorite color day.

- Jessica



## Board of Directors:

Happy Leap Year! We hope your February was great, starting with Punxsutawney Phil bringing cheer with his prediction for an early spring. I know our family is looking forward to the areas' farmers' markets opening again and getting out for more hikes and outdoor time with the better weather coming soon.

I especially enjoyed the FEB cookie fundraiser. Crumbl Cookies were a great way to celebrate Valentine's Day! Thank you to everyone who supported the Center by buying these delicious treats. It was an awesome turnout, and we hope to hold this same fundraiser again in the future.

If you have a fundraising idea you would like to see the Simon Center host, please reach out to one of the board members. We are always looking for fun, creative ways to support the Center.

Every fall and spring, parents get together to volunteer their time to make Reston a little greener, as we clean up trash along Reston Parkway between South Lakes Drive and Lawyers Road. This is a wonderful opportunity to share some laughs and give back to the local community. We will provide information on the date and further details after our next board meeting in March.

Looking forward to the next big fundraising event on June 7th, we have already started planning. Each year, students, parents, and staff get to celebrate the end of the academic year and the upcoming start of summer camp! For those who are new to the Simon Center, we are excited to introduce you to the annual Family Fiesta and Silent Auction; this will be its 22<sup>nd</sup> year! More information will be provided as the celebration gets closer, but please save the date for entertainment, treats, and the silent auction!

- Kellyn (Mom of "Giraffe" Madelyn)

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## Nursery 1 Penguin class:

With the beginning of March already here, we are excited to also begin enjoying warmer weather. As spring approaches, we are ready to be outside and enjoy our stroller rides and playground visits. It will be “fun in the spring sun”!

Our Penguins are growing and developing fast, and all the babies are happy at play. 😊 Oscar is very excited to be eating food from the catering menu. He loves to try different foods and different flavors. Oscar is crawling and standing up everywhere in the room, even in his crib! He loves to play with pop-up toys & balls, and he also enjoys reading books & clapping his hands when we finish singing songs.

Evie is sitting up without any support. She is scooting backwards and around the room. Evie eats all purees and loves fruits & vegetables. She likes to play with the soft books, rattles, and the stacking rings. Evie is working on the crawling position and will be moving as a crawler... soon!

Tessa is moving in an army crawl. She is working on pulling herself up to stand on the furniture and sitting by herself and laying down again. Tessa loves to play with the pop-up toys and the stacking cups. She has made progress and is now eating purees.

Pearl enjoys moving... everywhere! She loves to play under the table, under the exersaucer, and is working on pulling up along the shelf. Pearl enjoys going through the tunnel back and forth and likes to play with the bottle shakers and the stacking rings. She is eating the purees and enjoys all flavors of fruits & vegetables.

Franklin is a very strong baby. He moves around in circles and can quickly move to another place in a matter of seconds. We help support him by holding his hands and Franklin works hard to pull himself up. He loves to play with the soft toys and rattles, but his favorite toy is the snake.

Max was excited to move next door to be a Monkey, but he likes to peek at us through the door window and enjoys seeing his Penguin friends in the gym or outside, too. Everyone enjoys reading books and singing different songs. We are continuing to explore new things together and having fun learning through play. Happy St. Patrick's Day! Happy Spring! Happy Easter!

- Luz, Arline, and Rosanete





## Nursery 2 Monkey class:

In February, our little Monkeys kept busy learning and exploring. 😊

We made footprint dragons to decorate the classroom door and celebrated Chinese New Year by making spring rolls and dancing to traditional Chinese music.

For Valentine's Day, we made footprint strawberries and painted hearts. Our class loved the Mother Goose performance about Valentine's Day too. Thank you for the

presents and cards on Valentine's Day. They were *love-ly*! 💕

To celebrate President's Day, we pretended to cast ballots to vote and played with American currency. Also, the Monkeys enjoyed our marching activities with ribbons. During the month of February, we read Lion Dancer, I Can Be President, too, Llama Llama, I Love You, and many more. In March, we are looking forward to checking out new books at the Scholastic Book Fair. We will also celebrate Dr. Seuss books, like The Cat in the Hat and One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish.

At the end of the month, we said good-bye to Michael and wished him great fun in the Dolphin room. That same week, we welcomed Max to our room from the Penguin class. We are happy to have him as our newest Monkey friend.

In March, we will do activities on Dr. Seuss, St. Patrick's Day, Holi, and the weather. Welcome spring!

- Reena and Alicia



## MARCH BIRTHDAYS:

Ms. Shirin

Ms. Rozita

Eve

Nora

Luca V.

Logan

Eleanor

Nico



## Junior 1 Dolphin class:

The Dolphins spent the month of February surrounded by love and friendship in the air and had fun celebrating Valentine's Day.

During the 1st week, the children learned about different "Feelings" through songs and stories and had fun making paper plate faces with paint, tissue paper, and cutout pieces. They also enjoyed a visit from Mother Goose who invited some children to put on costumes and act out a story of friends sharing valentine cards and gifts.

Then during the week of "Valentine's Day", the Dolphins got busy making special gifts for their parents. They made handprints and stamped "I LOVE U" inside a big heart decorated with cute heart stickers. The children stamped pink hearts with paper rolls for an art activity and added stickers to the letters L.O.V.E. taped on the classroom walls. For our "Community Helpers" theme, the Dolphins learned about different people who work hard to help people in our community. They loved playing with the community helper figurines (police officer, firefighter, mail carrier, doctor, etc.) while singing songs or reading books about them. The children also painted red firefighter hats and used sponges to paint blue police cars.

During our "Transportation" week, the Dolphins had fun painting tire tracks using toy cars & trucks and making train track art with pool noodle pieces. We loved looking at books with pictures of different cars, trucks, airplanes, etc. and learning more about them with fun songs, including the favorite "Wheels on the Bus" song, of course! The Dolphins were very sad to say goodbye to Lucas last month and we all wished him and his family the best. Have a wonderful time with your grandparents! Then, we welcomed Michael to our room. Michael joined us from the Monkey class and his old friends were very happy to see him.

There will be more goodbyes in March with two Dolphins turning two and being promoted to Goldfish room soon. Happy Birthday, Nora and Eve!! Both of you have been fantastic Dolphins and you are more than ready to be awesome Goldfish. We will miss you very much and wish you the very best!!

It looks like the winter season is coming to an end. While it wasn't a very cold or snowy winter, we do look forward to a sunnier and warmer spring season. Have a wonderful month of March!

- Julia, Ellaine, and Shirin





## Junior 2 Goldfish class:

Wow, February is over! The Goldfish were busy all month long but started off with the Lunar Year celebration. We talked about Chinese traditions and celebrated the “Year of the Dragon”. Next, we moved on to a sweet Valentine’s week. Our friends went above and beyond to make Valentine’s Day special for our parents. 🍷

The following week we discussed Presidents’ Day, and we finished the month with discussions for Black History month. Our creativity ran wild during the entire month!

Our latest group artwork is on our door. Please... take a peek! 😊

We read and listened to books related to each theme, such as My First Chinese New Year, How to Catch a Dragon, Kiss, Kiss, Plant a Kiss, Saving the Day, and many

more! We sang and danced along to some fun songs, too! 🎵

Our fishbowl went through some changes in February. After Ms. Rama left, we had Ms. Rosanete, Ms. Fettouma, and Ms. Ellaine help in our class. Then, we welcomed Benny as a new student, and Ms. Warda as our new teacher to the class. They both fit right in! We will be starting March with a **Dr. Seuss** weekly theme to celebrate his birthday. We have some gooey and fun activities planned, and then more exciting activities for our **St. Patrick’s** weekly theme. We will also welcome **Spring** and finish the month talking about spring holidays, like **Nowruz and Easter**. March, here we come!!

- Mayi, Warda, and Fettouma



## UPCOMING EVENTS:



- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| March 1       | Dr. Seuss-inspired <i>silliness!</i>                                |
| March 8       | CLOSED for Professional Development Day                             |
| March 11 – 15 | Scholastic Book Fair week, set up in SR 1.5 Kangaroo room           |
| March 18      | St. Patrick’s Day <i>shenanigans!</i>                               |
| March 19      | Spring begins with fun Center “march”-ing and “spring”-y activities |
| March 22      | Dress up “Favorite Color” day                                       |



### Junior 3 Panda class:

Hello, Panda parents! During February, we talked about Groundhog Day, and we made our very own prediction if the Groundhog was going to see his shadow or not. Most of us said yes! Next, celebrating the Lunar New Year 🇨🇳 was a fun week. We learned what festivities and traditions are observed for Lunar New Year. Thank you, Ms. Mary, for sharing your Korean dress with us - it was beautiful! We also learned that this holiday is celebrated in a few Asian countries.

Thank you to all the parents that participated with our Valentine's Day exchange; the class had a great time giving and receiving valentines. Next our Dental health week was fun, and we enjoyed painting a tooth with a toothbrush 🪥. We learned how important it is to keep our teeth clean and to brush. We also learned about some foods that are good for our teeth and some that are not so good.

To end the month, we celebrated Dr. Seuss. The Pandas not only enjoyed reading his books but really enjoyed making Seuss-inspired artwork. We learned that Dr. Seuss was an author and that an author is a person who writes books 📖.

We can't believe how well all the children are doing... they are taking turns, sharing with each other, using their kind words (even if someone has taken their toys away from them!). They are all using their words well. We are very proud of our Pandas.

Reminder: As a potty-training room, it is hard for the children to pull their pants up and down while trying to use the potty in time if they wear jeans 🖴 or a onesie. Elastic waist bands always work best. Thank you so much for your help.

Our March themes will be Dinosaurs, St. Patrick's Day, Spring, Caterpillars & Butterflies. We can't believe March is already here, and time is flying by just like our Panda friends are growing way too fast. Happy St. Patrick's Day!

- Sarai and Mary



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## Senior 1 Bear class:

Last month, we learned about Chinese New Year, Friendship, Air Transportation, and Dr. Seuss. We also reviewed the letters M & N, and the numbers 12 & 13.

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, as well.

In February, Sarah's mother came to our class to read a story to the class (thanks, Megan!), and the children also had a fun visit from Mother Goose.

Then, we hosted Ms. Kelly, from the Walker Nature Center, who talked about "Animals in Winter". Next, we enjoyed a virtual storytelling session with Ms. Kelly, the librarian from Reston Regional Library.

In February, we said good-bye to Dani and Grace. We will certainly miss both girls. Our March themes will be about the Post Office, Land Transportation, Nowruz, and Spring. We will review the letters O & P, and the numbers 14 & 15. We will also introduce the math concept of addition to the class.

In March, we are hoping to welcome another new friend, Ayra, from the Pandas... soon!

Happy Nowruz and happy spring!

- Rozita, Maryam, and Sameey



## 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 February, we learned many new and interesting facts about different kinds of transportation. Transportation takes people and things from one place to another, and it often includes a vehicle. Some methods of transportation need machines to operate like planes, trains, or automobiles. Some work with our own muscles, like walking and biking. On the water, sailboats need a sail and wind. We learned new vocabulary while discussing air travel, like how we may need a “passport” if we travel outside the US, and a “boarding pass” and a “photo ID” for “domestic flights”.

For Valentine’s week, we made special cards for our parents, and we had an exchange of valentines with our friends. Each valentine came with a hug! 😊

For our Food and Health theme, we made a collage of pictures of healthy foods. At meals, we identified the food we ate as food that help us *GO*, *GROW*, or *GLOW*.

During our space week, we used our virtual *SPACE GALLERY* and the interactive planetarium to remember our past activities on the same topic. We all love space!

As always, we had Music for Life with Mr. Diego; Yoga with Ms. Nora; Spanish with Ms. Sarai; an interactive storytelling program from Mother Goose; and a book reading by the Librarian from Reston Regional. February was a busy and enjoyable month!

Marching through this coming month, our themes will be In the Garden; It’s Spring; Pets; and Farm Animals.

WELCOME SPRING!

- Pompeii



**Special “thanks” to Wegman’s for donating a gift card for us to use to purchase milk... what a generous neighbor!**

**We would also like to thank the following families for FEB donations:**

**Dodd family - COVID-19 test kits**

**Kesselman family - Extra clothes, cot blanket, books, and extra clothes bin**

**Marku family - Extra clothes**

**Lampton family - Paint set and lullaby CD from our Amazon wish list**



### Senior 3 Star class:

During the month of February, the Pre-K students learned about African American icons and leaders, from two books called Little Leaders Bold Women In Black History and Little Legends Exceptional Men In Black History (both books written by Vashti Harrison).

Next, the Stars learned about the post office and how the USPS works. We looked at how they use mail trucks for mail deliveries and had a chance to write friends “letters” (aka valentines) for Valentine’s Day. Then for a cooking project, our friends made delicious chocolate chip cookies.

During our week talking about friendship, the Stars worked together and made partner art projects.

The class finished the month with a week focusing on Dr. Seuss and learning about leap year.

Marching right out of February and into a new month, we will be discussing Dinosaurs, Caterpillars & Butterflies, Spring, and Spring Cleaning. We will also be reviewing alphabet letters.

We are looking forward to new adventures and experiences together this March. 😊

- Roselle and Shatara

