



## In the Center

### From the Office

As we round out the first half of the school year, we look back on a wonderful fall and December here at Mary Johnson. We have placed a few calendar reminders on the right side of this page about upcoming Inservice dates this winter.

Speaking of winter, the children have enjoyed getting out to play in the snow this month—we seem to be making up for last year! Don't forget to send your child in every day with appropriate outdoor clothing—boots, snow-pants, hat and mittens. Extra mittens are a good idea. After vacation, be sure to bring back extra clothing and your rest blanket. If you are having trouble providing any of these items, let us know and we will see if we can help in any way.

We wish each of you a wonderful holiday break, and look forward to seeing everyone back at MJCC when we re-open January 3<sup>rd</sup>—Happy 2017!

*Children are enjoying the many opportunities to "test drive" the early snow...*



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Mary Johnson  
Children's Center

December 2016

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### Calendar Reminders

- December 23-  
January 2  
Center CLOSED
- January 3  
Center REOPENS
- January 23  
Center CLOSED for  
Inservice
- February 24  
Center CLOSES at  
1 pm for Inservice

## THUNDERDRAGONS ~ Kristin, Sue & Summer

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It's hard to believe that we just met our group of Thunderdragons almost four months ago. These little people that have so much personality have become very important to us. They have also become important to each other as their friendships grow stronger every day.

The teachers have seen such amazing growth in the children's development as we observe and participate in their play. Most of the Thunderdragons play cooperatively as they practice role playing in their dramatic play. They hang out together on the top of the loft holding their babies and laugh as they observe what's going on in the classroom. Cooking has been a great past-time as they serve (wooden) pizza and cookies to their peers as they sit around the table. Recently, the children have been moving the table and chairs to different spots in the classroom—then they sit down and laugh. The little chairs are brought to the book area where they sit and read. A few Thunderdragons have started to collect materials and then make a huge pile under the loft. They are very proud of their stash. These children are learning to sort the materials and put them where they need to go at clean up time.



The Thunderdragons have been experimenting with watercolor paints and watercolor cakes, using both textured and regular paper. They have also used different tools to dip the paint, such as Q-tips, and different sized paint brushes. They loved painting with tempera paints and using cars' wheel tracks as a tool to move the paints around the paper. Some Thunderdragons also explored with found materials in the studio and were exposed to gluing materials on cardboard.

We continuously have opportunities for the Thunderdragons to challenge their bodies. Jumping has become a favorite sport in our classroom. Their skills improve each time we set up this activity. They have become so good at taking turns, making sure there's no one in the way. They jump higher and farther out each time.



Sledding has also been a blast for Thunderdragons. They shout with glee as they fly down the hill. Then they pull their sled up on their own.

Sensory play is very important to the Thunderdragons—their go-to place first thing in the morning is the sand/rice table and the playdough. Other sensory play they enjoy includes building with foam blocks using shaving cream; ice exploration, and helping to bake.



As 2016 comes to an end we are excited to start the new year. We look forward to setting up new areas in our classroom and inspire new explorations. So when they come back after our break the classroom will look a little different.

Have a great Holiday everyone!





We have had a fun-filled, energetic, and very busy couple of months in Caspia. While we have accomplished a few big projects, we are continuing some activities and have introduced a few new ones based on the Caspians' interests and skills.

We finished our six-week ice skating session in November. We went skating every Thursday at the Middlebury Park and Recreation ice rink. Albeit some days were cold to walk to and from the rink, friends enjoyed being in the rink and learning a new skill. Even the friends who didn't choose to wear their skates enjoyed walking and running on the ice in their regular winter boots. We will resume another skating session in February.

Similarly, we finished our twelve weeks of Music Together with Molly McEachen. The Caspians enjoyed participating in music lessons every Monday. Everybody loved playing musical instruments, singing and dancing along, and copying musical rhythms and dance moves. We look forward to the next Music Together session in January!



The other big project that the Caspians completed was a beautiful, Paw-Patrol themed, gingerbread creation under Matt's guidance. The project has been submitted to the Middlebury Folklife Center for the annual gingerbread creation competition. We, as a class, took multiple trips to the center to view the display.



Apart from the aforementioned projects, the Caspians have been busy with other varieties of activities such as snow play, board games, and gross-motor space activities. Doctor play has been a continued interest for the Caspians as they enjoy taking turns being a doctor and a patient. Likewise, the Caspians enjoy their time outside, making snowmen and coloring snow. Moreover, friends have been great at helping teachers with regular chores such as preparing lunch tables, snack, and cleanup. As the weather is getting colder, we have been spending more time in the gross-motor space. The Caspians love the swing, bicycles, obstacle courses, and piano. The children's gross-motor skill development is apparent from their involvement in these activities; they peddle bikes with ease and have started playing piano—treating each note as a separate unit rather than punching on several notes at once.

The Caspians have shown growing interest in puzzles. So to further develop their problem solving skills, we have been introducing them to board games and other activities such as "who's missing?" that require the children to follow pre-set rules and regulations. Big thanks to Missy, our head-start teacher, for bringing in and sharing her games with the Caspians.

A few reminders: we go outside almost every day, so please make sure that your child has all the winter gear (mittens/gloves, hats, snow-pants, boots) in his/her cubby. And, knowing that this season brings a lot of sickness, please use your best judgment on whether your child is ready to spend time at school. Happy Holidays! We hope you all have a merry time with your families and loved ones. Enjoy!

## DAWNTREADERS ~ Kari, Jackie & Melissa



The amazing fall weather lent itself to many walking adventures for the Dawntreaders. We re-visited the wiggly bridge, water wall, library, college ball fields and track, art installations at the Mahaney Center, marble works and also explored the new park near the traffic circle.

We finished up our skating session in mid-November. The Dawntreaders worked so hard and made great strides across the board. Some skills we accomplished are skating without a crate, using a crate, and incrementally keeping our skates on for longer and longer each session. We look forward to our next session in the spring.



TaeKwon Do has been going very well! The class responds to Master Kellie and has learned so many things. In addition to a variety of kicks and punches, the children have also learned how to show respect, count to 10 in Korean and meditate like a ninja. Some of the kicks we have learned are the down kick, banana (crescent) kick, table kick and Thomas kick (ask them about the train kick). Most recently the class learned the Star Pattern, which is a series of blocks and punches. We enjoyed to demonstrating all that we've learned!

We have explored several art mediums including watercolors, sand art, large easel painting, as well as a variety of types of clay (air-hardening, sculpting and fimo). Recently, the Dawntreaders tried their hand at printmaking. They used pencils on styrofoam plates to sketch out a design. Then used special brayers and printmaking ink to roll on color to the plate. The final step was pressing paper onto the plate. It was exciting to see how their designs looked after printing. The group also worked collaboratively on a felt gingerbread house, which is now proudly displayed at the Folklife Center in the front entryway.

Our class has been very interested in building, creating and exploring! The engineers at work in the Dawntreader room are always creating with magnetiles, pattern blocks, wooden blocks, train tracks and legos. There is a real interest in building on the light table with translucent blocks and other materials. We have been noticing shadows and have experimented with the overhead projector.



As a whole, the class has talked a lot about kindness and how to be a good friend. We established some classroom rules that we revisit frequently. We agreed to have kind words and safe bodies, and respect and care for the classroom materials. We have practiced how to clean up our room as a group at clean up time and are working towards cleaning up materials after using them before moving on to something else.



## NARNIA ~ Darcy, Lisa, Wendy & Jeff



Hi Families! It has been a busy few months in the Narnian classroom!! We have changed seasons outside and certainly interests inside have shifted too. We are currently focused on being kind to one another, hanging out with Traveling Bear, practicing our TaeKwon Do, getting our "jobs" done, and having dance parties!

The theme of our classroom right now (and probably for the rest of the year) is *KINDNESS*. The Narnians read the book *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* by Carol McCloud, and have been working hard to put the book into action. We are working on being kind, lending a hand, listening to others, and doing the right thing. Being kind helps us "fill other people's buckets" and make them feel good, so in turn they will be kind to us and fill our buckets. A little bit of kindness goes a long way.

In addition to "filling buckets" we have also focused on being a "Helping Hero". Helping Heroes are people who do kind things without being asked and who take care of themselves and their responsibilities in and outside of the classroom. Coupled with being a Helping Hero, we have new classroom jobs. Each week we have a new meeting helper, bell ringer, line leader, cup and plate passer for snack, and plant waterer. The

jobs are very important to the kids and are helping to teach a sense of shared as well individual responsibility.

We also welcomed back the Narnian Classroom Traveling Bear! If you haven't already met Traveling Bear, you will soon! Traveling Bear goes home with families for the weekend or sometimes on vacation (lucky bear) and loves to go on adventures with you and your child. Friends love dressing up Traveling Bear and telling their friends all about their time together. Traveling Bear has a journal, which families write in that we share at meeting each week.

The classroom has a large group of budding engineers who really enjoy building with different materials, and in particular constructing robots. Many Narnians made actual robots out of metal wire, cardboard, recycled plastic, and many other materials. The robot theme carried over into shaping our gingerbread creation for The Folk Life Center holiday gingerbread competition. We had a great time baking, shaping, putting on frosting, and decorating.



The Narnians also have TaeKwon Do with Master Kellie every Wednesday! The Narnians love practicing their ninja skills of listening, sitting still, being respectful of other's abilities, counting to 10 in Korean, as well doing different kicks, punches, and blocks.

Dance parties have become a big hit in our classroom for all students. Friends get to move their bodies in anyway they want, lead the group in a "follow the dance leader" type game, jump, swing, stomp, sway, and most importantly, laugh and have fun together. We are always looking for new music, so if your child has a favorite CD or song, please feel free to bring it in and we can make a copy.

And finally, please welcome James David Hudson to proud parents Lisa and David and big brother Luke! James was born on December 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:06pm, weighing 7lbs 10 oz. Everyone is very happy and healthy.



# FYI — Addison County Readers & Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

## What Is Dolly Parton's Imagination Library?

**Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is...FREE!**

**I**t sounds almost too simple to be true, but by reading regularly with your children during their preschool years, you are giving them the biggest boost toward a successful education they will ever get.

**Dolly Parton's Imagination Library** will help you read with your child. There are many reasons parents do not read to their child, but we can eliminate one of them. Every child will have books of their very own, **at no cost to you**, thanks to **Addison County Readers, Inc.** and Dolly Parton.

Each month a new, carefully selected book will be mailed in your child's name directly to your home. He/she can look forward to new and exciting reading adventures from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library until he/she turns five years old as long as you remain a resident of **Addison County, VT**. Should the child move outside **Addison County, VT**, he/she automatically exits the program.

**Dolly Parton's Imagination Library** is a **FREE GIFT** to our children! **All you have to do is read to your children.**

### Who Is Eligible?

**Preschool children** (birth until their fifth birthday) **of Addison County, VT.**

### What Are My Responsibilities?

1. Be a resident of **Addison County, VT.**
2. Submit an official registration form, completely filled out by parent or guardian (form must be approved and on file with **Addison County Readers, Inc.**).
3. Notify **Addison County Readers, Inc.** any time your address changes. Books are mailed to the address listed on the official registration form. **If the child's address changes, you must contact your friends at the address on this brochure in order to continue receiving books.**
4. Read with your child.

### When Will I Receive Books?

Eight to ten weeks after your registration form has been received, books will begin arriving at your home and will continue until your child turns five or you move out of **Addison County, VT.**

### How Can I Help?

Do you know a preschool child in **Addison County, VT** who is not receiving Dolly Parton's Imagination Library? Give their parents a brochure/registration form and encourage them to fill it out and mail it to the address below. Telling them about this **FREE program** can make a huge difference in their future and the future of our community.

If you know of a business, organization or individual who would like to donate funds to support this gift to your children, donations can be sent to:

### United Way of Addison County/ Addison County Readers, Inc.

2 Court Street  
P.O. Box 555  
Middlebury, VT 05753  
(802) 388-7189

### Dolly Parton's IMAGINATION LIBRARY Official Registration Form (one per child required)

*Privacy Statement: This information will not be used for any purpose other than the Imagination Library.*

PLEASE PRINT

Preschool Child's FULL Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: M F Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

Mailing Address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

"This child is a resident of **Addison County, VT**" \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:** Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Group Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sign up your  
child today!**

Simply fill out the above form and mail to:

**United Way of Addison County/  
Addison County Readers, Inc.**  
75 Main Street  
Middlebury, VT 05753  
(802) 388-4097

