



In the Center

From the Office

It has been a busy fall at Mary Johnson Children's Center—it's hard to believe that we are already to the end of November! It has been a joy welcoming new families and staff to Mary Johnson this fall. This is our first issue of the newsletter—you can look for it seasonally.

As always in the fall, the classrooms have spent a lot of time outdoors, both on and off the playground. They love exploring, taking long walks, and filling their "collection bags". We see the outdoors as a wonderful extension of the classrooms and we are fortunate to have so many lovely places to investigate. As we are now getting into the cooler weather, we want to remind everyone to send your child with weather-appropriate outerwear.

Our Genevieve's annual fall fundraiser was extremely successful netting us \$1,700 in profits. This money will help support programs for your children, so we appreciate your efforts and congratulations to you and your children on a very successful fundraiser!

We are considering a Strengthening Families session in the spring. If this interests you, or you know of a family who would benefit, feel free to let the office know. Strengthening Families is a weekly evening program for families including dinner and group activities for adults and children.

PARKING LOT SAFETY REMINDER:

Our parking lot is a very busy place.
Please be sure you use caution.

DRIVE SLOWLY,
and be sure your
CHILD STAYS AT YOUR SIDE
at all times.



Children enjoyed their skate time this fall!

Mary Johnson
Children's Center

November 2017

Calendar Reminders

- **MJCC will Close at 3 pm on December 22 and be Closed December 25-January 1**

NARNIA ~ Darcy, Lisa & Alli



The Narnians have all settled into their new school very nicely this fall. They have been busy getting to know the routine, rules and expectations and each other. Friendships have been formed and we are now starting to see a lot more interactions and play between the children. The Narnians are working on one of the hardest things for any child: sharing! We model for them and provide the words right now as many are still obtaining language skills. We also are working on having "gentle hands" and checking in with one another when frustrations arise due to lack of language. The children have been responding nicely.

We spent the warmer parts of the days out and about in the community. We have been to the college to explore leaves and various tree droppings; the "wiggly bridge" by the gym to throw sticks and rocks in the water to hear the plop and watch them float away; the library to get books; and the park across from Shafers to run in the wide open, just to name a few. We always have some children that walk and they are doing quite well.

We have spent time exploring sunflowers, leaves and flowers with jumbo tweezers, magnify glasses and then pounding them to make imprints onto cloth.

Music and song has been a large interest in the room. Whenever music comes on you can see little bodies bobbing up and down to the beats. Many of the children stop what they are doing and come to the back of the room for a dance party. Recently, dress ups are being put on and some are dancing together as they hold hands. They are very interested in the singing books that we have in the classroom and we have to read/sing them repeatedly! Patrick and Joseph began using various objects around the room to act as instruments. Darcy then brought in her old clarinet and her son's saxophone for everyone to explore. The saxophone was a hit as they touched the larger keys and tried to figure out where the sound was coming from. If anyone has any instruments they are willing to bring in for the children to explore we would love for you to come in with them or even play them for us!



The Narnians have also been doing some cooking here. They work on scooping the ingredients, smelling the spices, stirring and of course turn taking. They have made bread, muffins, graham crackers, cheese-its and applesauce.

One of our many daily rituals that you may start seeing at home happens right before rest. We get out "special spray" (lavender mist) and spritz each child as they cover their eyes and then do 3 butterfly breaths and some stretching. We

will at times also incorporate some yoga like downward dog. We then tip toe to our mats and lay down for rest. The children have responded well to this and be sure to ask them to do a butterfly breath for you!



THUNDERDRAGONS ~ Sue, Hannah & Will

The Thunderdragons have had a very exciting beginning to their school year. We are happy to welcome a handful of new friends into our classroom this year along with two new teachers. Our classroom has been changed several times to make it a better learning environment for all of the Thunderdragons.

We have had a lot of wonderful experiences throughout the beginning of this school year. We are thrilled to have Jessica returning each Thursday for Music Together. The children enjoy listening to the music, singing along, and doing the hand motions with the rest of their peers. They enjoy the music so much we have been playing our music together CD often when Jessica is not there.



We recently took our last trip to the ice rink for the year, but boy did we have fun while our skating season was in session. Whether in skates or in boots all of our Thunderdragons had a great time exploring the ice covered rink.



Earlier we mentioned that we welcomed new friends and new teachers to the classroom, but we also recently welcomed a new pet to our classroom. We adopted an adorable and friendly guinea pig named Butterscotch. However, the Thunderdragons decided the name Butterscotch was not fitting. To solve this problem we asked the



class for name suggestions. We went through the names suggested and settled upon either Ella or Bella. We then had a vote and as a class we decided that our new guinea pig's name would be Ella. In her short time here Ella has become a big part of our classroom. Children love to go and see her when they first arrive, they love when we feed her and they get to

watch her nibble on her food. However, they seem to love it the most when we take her out of her cage and let her frolic about between a circle of Thunderdragon legs.





There has been quite a lot happening in Caspia these past few months! We have welcomed Dori Flint as our new Teacher and although transitions can be a tricky thing, all of our Caspians did a good job settling into this change in the classroom. Dori comes to us from the Syracuse, NY area. She taught in elementary schools for the past couple years in Central New York and Charleston, South Carolina and feels *very* lucky to get to have this crew of Caspians!

We are learning and growing more and more each day. There is so much to learn in PreK and our crew is doing beautifully! From letters and counting numbers, to keeping a tidy room and following directions, to brushing teeth, to understanding how to interact with others during social play and learning time, we have been busy with a capital B! Something fun that teachers have been noticing is how well our friends are doing with recognizing the alphabet letters that make up not only their name but their friends' names as well! This shows that

they are really grasping the skill of letter identification and that they understand that letters play many important roles.

Our lively bunch of Caspians love the opportunity to participate in Tae Kwon Do and Music Together. Master Kellie is our Tae Kwon Do teacher and we have been learning new and important skills every week with her. This time also allows for our friends to get a different kind of movement going through their bodies while learning how to use our spatial awareness and balance. Tae Kwon Do also teaches a different type of concentration and focus while learning and practicing stretches, kicks, blocks, and punches. We are so lucky to get to learn all of this with Master Kellie!

Wednesdays bring us our awesome music teacher Molly who we love to see each week! Molly teaches us all about rhythm, tonal patterns, beats and patterns, and instruments as we listen and sing along to awesome and interactive music! And by the way, not only do we get to sing and use instruments, but we also get to learn hand motions and "dances" to the songs we sing because Molly is so great at incorporating related movement into all of our classes!



An addition that we have implemented here in Caspia the concept of Morning Center time. Perhaps you have heard about this from your Caspian at home! In the morning after we eat breakfast together, we split up into our three groups: the Hawks, the Eagles, and the Falcons. Each bird group is made up of the same Caspians every day and many students have already memorized what "bird" group they are. Every day each group is paired with a different adult to participate in their planned activity. The next day, that group will rotate to the next adult so they do a different planned activity, usually with a specific theme, with their bird group every day. This gives the Caspians an opportunity to experience working in a small group setting one-one-one with each teacher. This center time also allows our students to work with some friends that they might not socialize a whole lot with!

We were also extremely lucky to get to participate in Ice Skating on Tuesdays for five weeks. It was so wonderful to see all of the Mary Johnson children take to the ice each week! The progression we teachers saw in the students was extremely exciting. Many friends went from being very apprehensive of getting on the ice, to flying around without any worry or hesitation! They grew a bit more courageous each week in various ways, like graduating from using a crate or adult for balance, to giving it their best go all on their own. Sometimes there were falls, but very few tears if any! We see a love and excitement for the ice in many of your children and we are so lucky that we get to experience this adventure alongside them!

Every day we get to see and be a part of your child's social, emotional, and educational journey and we feel lucky to get to witness all of "little" moments that in actuality are great, big moments as they continue to learn and grow alongside their classmates! Cheers to the days and weeks to come filled with more learning, exploration, play, and memories!

DAWNTREADERS ~ Kari, Melissa & Jeff



The Dawntreader class has had a busy and engaging fall. We welcomed six new children at the start of the school year. Everyone worked hard adjusting to the new physical space, as well as learning the rules and routines of the classroom. At our daily meeting we have learned songs and greetings, practiced counting, and selected the Captain of the Day. Topics discussed include sharing, turn taking, bucket filling, use of classroom areas and materials, life cycles, fire safety, and problem solving strategies.

Special activities: Ice skating, Music Together and Taekwondo were all very popular experiences. Over the course of five weeks, children made a great deal of progress in learning to skate. Some children who have never skated before are now zipping around the ice with the help of crates. Others are beginning to move around the ice without any help at all! Their big smiles tell us that all the hard work is well worth the effort!

At Music Together each week we learn new songs and movements and try tonal and rhythm patterns.

This year the Dawntreaders are showing a great deal of growth and stay engaged with Molly for the whole session! We often hear the children singing the songs while playing or working in the garden.

Taekwondo has been going very well this year. Returning students picked right up where they left off last spring. New Dawntreaders have been catching on quickly to the kicks, punches and movement sequences.



Investigations: Over the course of the fall Dawntreaders took part in a variety of still life pictures and paintings. A colorful display of their work is located in the stairwell leading up to the room. Pumpkins, apples, tomatoes, cattails, sunflowers and a giant turnip provided inspiration as children drew what they saw using tempera or watercolor paints, markers or pencils.

The children also eagerly watched and waited for a monarch caterpillar to transform into a butterfly. They observed the activity or changes each day for weeks. While waiting, we read books about the metamorphosis, which was taking place and had conversations about what was happening. Sadly, our little striped friend never made it out of its chrysalis, but we enjoyed the process and learned lots of new vocabulary.



Dawntreaders took an active part in putting the sunflower house to bed. The children helped with taking down the stalks, stringing up the heads to dry and adding layers of compost, newspapers, and cardboard to tuck it in for winter. The stalks were used to make a small teepee on the playground. We look forward to exploring the heads with magnifying glasses and tweezers once they are fully dried out.



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

What Is Dolly Parton's Imagination Library?

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

It 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

