Vivian Olum Child Development Center

University of Oregon

Director’s Newsletter

Carol’s Corner:

Winter term was packed with accomplishments and activity and now we are poised for spring term: warmer weather and even more growth! Our heartfelt thanks to all the VOCDC families who attended our fundraiser at Papa’s Pizza on March 9th. It definitely was a trifecta: good food, great family fun and we raised a little over $450 to buy new VOCDC t-shirts that teachers will use for their children when on walks and other field trips. Thank you also to Helen Chu for organizing food for hungry VOCDC student staff during finals week. And, thank you to all the families who brought all the wonderful food. During spring break, we had two days of staff in-service, including 5 hours of training and work on classroom environments to be ready for spring term.

We added two new lead teachers this term: Pathfinder and Dreamer rooms. I will highlight them in our staffing updates section further into the newsletter. Artist Clay Hoffman was on campus the weekend of March 5th to repair our totem pole. With the help of Deaton Love, Facilities Services, the totem was made straight again and got some new paint.

Please put these dates on your calendar for spring term:

Vivian Olum’s Birthday Celebration: Thursday, May 12th. Parade at 11am followed by family luncheon and gardening on playgrounds

Graduation Celebration for student staff: Tuesday, June 7th. Pot Luck at Many Nations Long House
Our Summer by the Week! themed camps offer children entering 1st-5th grades the chance to experience hands-on learning and discovery in a stimulating, fun and nurturing environment. Our location on the beautiful University of Oregon campus and the weekly field trips provide a living laboratory for exploration and the chance to combine indoor and outdoor activities. Current Vivian Olum families have enrollment priority until April 8, 2011. After April 8 enrollment will be available to the community so please tell your friends about our exciting summer events. Space is limited, sign up today! Registration forms are available in our main office, on our website, or you can call the main office to have a packet mailed to you or a friend. Our website also has detailed descriptions about activities and field trips for each week.

Week 1: June 20-24; Curtain Call: Step on the stage and into the spotlight with tours of the Hult Center, a movie theater, and the Wildish Theater. See live performance at Mad Duckling theater and plan and present a performance for VOCDC children and families.

Week 2 - June 27-July 1; Set Sail: Adventures at the Newport Aquarium, follow clues to find hidden treasures, learn how to tie knots, learn about the language of maritime explorers, discover the properties of buoyancy by making and launching boats.

Week 3 - July 5-8*; Green Thumb (*Center closed July 4): Dig deep, get dirty, and harvest local gardens. Volunteer at a Lane Co. Community Garden, visit an organic farm, discover native plants at Mt. Pisgah, and work on our garden at VOCDC.

Week 4 - July 11-15; Planes, Trains, & Automobiles: Wheels, rails, and wings will transport us throughout the week. Build paper airplanes, visit Eugene Skydivers, and race a car that you build. Tour the Oregon Air Space Museum, Lane Transit Bus Depot, and LCC's Plane Lab.

Week 5 - July 18-22; UO Live! We will transform the Olum Center into a newsroom, visit local TV and radio station and go to the UO radio station and be live and on the air.

Week 6 - July 25-29; Roam through the Renaissance: Travel back in time to learn the impact that the Renaissance period had on art, music and science.

Week 7 - August 1-5; Constellation Connections: It will be a week of space exploration! Visit the Science Factory, take a walk through the solar system at Alton Baker Park, build rockets, and at the end of the week, campers entering 3rd grade and up will go on an overnight camping trip with the Lane County Astronomical Society to observe stars and planets with their telescopes.

Week 8 - August 8-12; Going Green: Build solar ovens, study gas efficiency, make homemade paper, tour a local car dealer to check out the newest technology in hybrid cars. Visit wetlands, Bring Recycling, EWEB, and MECCA.

Week 9 - August 15-19; Old Fashioned Summer: Homemade ice cream, open a lemonade stand, visit Lane Co. Fair and farmer John’s farm. We’ll make our own pinwheels and Frisbees.
Introducing:  Sarah Weiher, Pathfinder Lead Teacher

My name is Sarah Weiher and I am excited to be the new Lead Teacher in the Pathfinder (older toddlers) classroom. I earned my bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education at Washington University in St. Louis and have lived in Eugene for nearly three years. I have worked with children from young toddlers to fifth and sixth graders in the past 11 years, and am thrilled to be working with toddlers again! In my free time I enjoy hiking, yoga, snowboarding, and I’m learning how to cook. I really appreciate the warm welcome I’ve received by the Pathfinder families and am excited to be working at the Vivian Olum Child Development Center!

sweiher@uoregon.edu

Introducing: Amy Raygoza, Dreamer Lead Teacher

Greetings, Vivian Olum families! My name is Amy Raygoza and I have recently started working as the Lead Teacher in the Dreamer (infant) room. I am very excited to join this team of wonderful teachers and student staff. Originally from Southern California, I have now lived in Eugene for almost three years. Early Childhood Education was my major in college, and I'm happy to be working in a field of my study and passion. Some of my previous jobs include teaching at Early Head Start as well as a privately owned child care center. Thank you for making me feel so welcome here!

araygoza@uoregon.edu
Parent Advisory Council News

This year, the VOCDC Advisory Council began meeting monthly in early winter term. They jumped right into serving in this important leadership role by helping center administration evaluate and revise our waitlist policies and practices to become more efficient and better serve university families. Providing valuable input on issues regarding center policies and practices is one important role that parents play through Council participation. Another role is the leadership they provide to help create and sustain our community through assisting with the center's annual traditions such as the celebration of Vivian Olum's birthday and participation in University Day, as well as the traditions of acknowledgement and appreciation for student and teaching staff. In addition, this year's membership is interested in exploring ways to support and enhance staff retention and recognition and in further developing our "green practices". Stay tuned for more developments and let Carol know if you would like to join any of these initiatives or have projects of your own that you would like to take the lead on.

This year's members are:

- Ashley Nehl: Staff Representative
- Rebekah Hanley: Dreamer and Inventor parent
- Jeralyn Beghetto: Voyager parent
- Samantha Hopkins: Builder and Voyager parent
- Yvonne Braun: Pathfinder parent
- Cari Moore: Explorer parent
- Helen Chu: Adventurer and Voyager parent
- Marisa Thompson: Builder parent

Classroom Wish Lists

Many times our classrooms have benefitted from items you are no longer using. Some of the teachers have put together a “wish list” and would appreciate donations of any of the following items:

**Dreamers (infants):** Touch & feel as well as board books, outdoor toys including push and riding toys, pull toys, a canopy for shade, boppy and boppy covers.

**Inventers (school age):** boy’s pants with small waist, gardening equipment and supplies, wooden spoons, styrofoam balls & plates, plastic beverage bottles (empty & rinsed out), Pringle chip cans. Most items are for crafts for Summer by the Week.

**Playgrounds:** Natural moveable parts: pine and fir cones, medium to large rocks, wood cookies, logs for balancing on, etc. Ask Carol or your child’s lead teacher if you have questions.
Children and Nature

Several parents and staff were able to attend or watch Richard Louv’s presentation on “Nature Deficit Disorder”, based on his book Last Child In The Woods. As a result, a couple parents have talked about starting a Vivian Olum Child Development Center Family Nature Club and perhaps a blog. There are families who regularly walk, hike, go to parks and other natural environments. The thought is to have a website where parents can list where the walk or “outing” is going to be as well as the time of day so other parents could join. If you are interested in meeting with Carol to discuss the possibility of getting started on this “nature focused” project, give Carol a call or email at snead@uoregon.edu with some days and times you can meet. Today, it actually looks like spring weather is coming. Let’s plan to get outside!


Sunday June 5: Lessons in the Learnscape Workshop
Creating Natural Playspaces: 1:00 to 4:00 pm
Where: Nearby Nature Learnscape in Alton Baker Park
Presented by: Erin Lamb  541-687-9699

At this workshop, participants will learn why kids need free play time in natural spaces and discover how to enrich the natural qualities of their own backyards. Design and implementation of small scale residential projects will be covered and plenty of examples of creative playspaces will be shared. Outdoor “test” playtime will be included! Pre-registration is required and space is limited. The workshop costs $30 for members, $35 for non-members, or a work trade at the Nearby Nature Learnscape. To register or for more information, call 541-687-9699. Erin Lam is a Nearby Nature lead developer and brings a love of all things outside and growing, five years of experience teaching middle and high school science and has been gardening organically since before she was born. For the last 3 years, she has been developing Neaby Nature’s Learnscape: an educational landscape designed to give kids intriguing and safe outdoor spaces.
Taking Your Child To A Live Performance

There are many opportunities in Lane County and on the University of Oregon campus for children to attend live productions that are geared to young children and families. These opportunities are a wonderful introduction to the performing arts. Whether at one of our high schools or the Hult Center, the following tips will help prepare your child for performance venues.

Before your performance:

- Call the theater in advance and ask what age children will enjoy the performance and how long it will last.
- Explain what you will see and hear during the performance. You can talk with your child about the characters, tell the story, or listen to other music in the same style. If the performance is based on a storybook, read it with your child.
- Review appropriate audience manners. Remind your child of how to behave among large groups, out in public, and during quiet times. Explain when applause is appropriate and how to be courteous to other people attending the performance.

On the day of the performance:

- Arrive early so there is plenty of time to explore the venue. Find the restrooms and where your seat will be. You might take a close-up look at the stage and/or peer into the orchestra pit.
- Recognize that it is okay to leave before the end of the performance. Preschoolers may find even a half-hour event too long. Consider taking the child who has reached his or her limits to the lobby or outdoors to play a game, move around, or read a story before returning to the performance.

After the performance:

- Talk about what you just saw and heard. Ask, “What did you think?” “What did you like best?” and “Which characters were your favorite?”
- Read a related book or do an art, music, or dance project with them. Provide dress-up clothes, puppets, props, and other materials so your child can reenact the performance.
Ten Steps to Positive Eating Behaviors

1. Provide a variety of foods at meals and snacks, especially whole grains, vegetables, and fruits.
2. Offer repeated opportunities to taste new foods.
3. Share with families nutrition resources, such as lists of foods (by category) to guide their food selections and offer new ideas for meals sent from home.
4. Apply the same guidelines to food selections in teacher’s lunches brought from home.
5. Sit with children at meals, and enjoy conversation. Talk about the taste, texture, appearance, and healthful aspects of foods.
6. Plan adequate time for all children to finish eating.
7. Respect a child’s expression of satiety or sense of being full.
8. Develop a routine for serving snacks, supplying the same rules whether offering carrots, crackers, or cookies.
9. Wash hands before snack and mealtime, encourage touching and smelling a food as a step toward tasting.
10. Find alternatives to using food as a reward or serving foods high in fat, sugar, or salt as part of a celebration.

Food Networking at VODCD

In the past we have shared ideas from other parents about items they send in their child’s lunch box from young toddlers up to school age. If you have healthy ideas you want to share, email Carol Snead (snead@uoregon.edu) with your suggestions and a list will be sent to all the parents. For some items, you might also want to include where to buy the item as some are not readily available.
New Book Titles

When books fall open, you fall in! You and your child will enjoy these new selections. Something for every age group.

For infants through toddlers:

**Animals**, by Roger Priddy, 2010. New York: St Martin's Press, 18 pages. This is a delightful board book that is chockfull of quality color photographs of animals without being cluttered or too busy. It has simple printed text to help adults properly identify the animals and engages your baby in the point and name game. Animals are grouped by category: pets, on the farm, sea life, etc.

**Things That Go**, by Roger Priddy, 2010. New York: St. Martin's Press, 18 pages. Another board book also is full of quality color photographs of all kinds of things that go: farm equipment, busy trucks, tough trucks, in the air, trains, on the sea etc.

For Preschoolers through Kinders:

**Pete the Cat: I love My White Shoes**, by Eric Litwin. Lulls. By James Dean. New York: HarperCollins, 32 pages. Pete the Cat is a banjo-playing, street-strolling, coffee-sipping, groovy cat who loves his new white shoes: “I love my white shoes, I love my white shoes” he sings until he steps in a pile of strawberries that turns them red, a pile of blueberries that turns them blue, a bucket of water (back to white but wet). A free download of an accompanying song is included and the colorful and smooth-moving illustrations perfectly capture Pete’s “it’s all good” vibe as Pete demonstrates that life is all good when we accept the bumps along the way.

**Even Monsters Need Haircuts**, by Matthew McElligott, 2010. New York:Walker & Co, 32 pages. A young boy helps close up his father's barber shop for the day. In the middle of the night of the full moon, the boy slips out of the house to open the shop again, this time serving the night-roaming monsters, who need their monthly haircuts. Tension develops when a human appears for a late-night trim. The story is conveyed with relatively little text, and the humor ranges from basic to sophisticated, giving adult readers as much pleasure as the children.

**Big Red Lollipop**, by Rukhsana Khan. Illus. by Sophie Blackall. 2010. New York: Viking, 32 pages. Rubina is thrilled to be invited to a classmate's birthday party, but things head downhill when her mother, who doesn't know about Western birthday parties, insists that Rubina take her younger sister along. Based on a true story from Khan's childhood as an immigrant from Pakistan, this is the story of a family that struggles to adapt to the ways of their new country while upholding family values from their home country. An award-winning book and a great read.

For School Age: Award winning titles

**Moon Over Manifest**, By Clare Vanderpool: Delacourte Books, 2010, 368 pages. After a life of riding the rails with her father, 12 yr. old Abilene can't understand why he has sent her away to stay in Manifesr, Missouri, a town he left years ago. A story about the depression era, Abiline stumbles on a tin filled with some keepsakes and letters that lead to all kinds of adventures.

**Flotsam**, By David Wiesner. Clarion Books, 2006. This wordless masterpiece from a two-time Caldecott medalist, a bright, science-minded boy goes to the beach equipped to collect and examine flotsam—anything floating that has washed ashore. Beautiful full color picture book for older children.