

## Science Literacy Starts Early With The Children's Museum Preschool Outreach

Achieving a high level of science literacy has become a Connecticut mandate for students and it starts at the earliest levels. The Children's Museum and The Children's Museum Preschool are widely recognized for their unique and age-appropriate programming that gets children off to great starts in the sciences. That's why we help preschools and childcare centers build the necessary foundations to inspire students to discover, explore, and learn the wonders of science and nature by bringing hands-on outreach programming straight to preschool classrooms.

Last year, the Museum brought this valuable programming to over 1,000 preschool students. More than 75 percent of these students attend priority schools and participated for **free**. This would not be possible without our generous Preschool Outreach sponsors:

**Fisher Foundation**

**The Hartford Courant Foundation**



## President's Corner



**Kevin Sullivan, President and CEO of The Children's Museum**

At The Children's Museum, winter comes in special ways. Little Foot, our Canada lynx, gets his seasonal coat. Kids are looking through microscopes at snowflakes instead of leaves. The summer garden at Roaring Brook Nature Center becomes home to the winter bird feeders. Our annual fundraising appeal is in the mail just in time for the season of giving. And a new year gives us a chance to look back and look ahead.

Looking back, we continue to weather one of the worst economic times in recent memory. For The Children's Museum, it's been a challenging time. Unlike other places that are so well funded with taxpayer dollars, we rely on earned and contributed revenue. So, we celebrate the hard work that went into a good year in terms of members, visitors, programs, and donors. We thank our friends like you, as well as an amazing staff that brings science and nature to more than 200,000 children and families.

Looking ahead, expect to see some changes, too.

- A new exhibit focused on flight, and hopefully a major change in our main exhibit hall as well
- More special events and classes every month, including some just for members
- Fun learning opportunities for kids like our new Junior Keepers Club at the Wildlife Sanctuary
- New planetarium shows
- A more active Website that connects what kids see and do here with what they can see and do at home
- More professional development for elementary school teachers who are so hungry for science and nature to bring into their classrooms
- And the expected launch of our capital campaign to relocate in West Hartford by 2014

All of this will be at the one and only place in Connecticut that offers both science and nature education for younger kids that's truly hands on and fun.

Winter is a great time at The Children's Museum and at our Roaring Brook Nature Center - please join us. Happy holidays.

## Thinking About Gifts? Think **The Children's Museum.**

**Holiday shopping at The Children's Museum is a great way to give the joy of learning about science and nature to the special people in your life. And all purchases help support our educational programs, so you'll be spreading this joy throughout your community, too.**

### **Make the Museum Experience Your Gift to a Family This Year**

Membership to The Children's Museum allows a family to enjoy the Museum's exhibits and daily activities as often as they like, for a full year. Take advantage of a year of free visits and Travelers Science Dome shows, generous discounts on programs and events, great deals on gifts in our Explore Store, and opportunities for free admission at hundreds of reciprocating museums nationwide. Don't delay, memberships purchased as gifts will receive an extra month of membership. That's 13 months for the price of 12.

To purchase a membership, call 860.231.2830 x56, e-mail [pwood@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](mailto:pwood@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org), or go to [www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](http://www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org) and click on "Give the Gift of Membership" for a quick and easy online purchase.

### **Adopt an Animal and Support the UTC Wildlife Sanctuary**

You can help care for the more than 100 animals housed in the Wildlife Sanctuary at the Museum by "adopting" an animal. Adoption fees pay for food, bedding, enrichment, veterinarian bills, and medications. For a \$25 adoption fee, you will receive an 8x10-inch picture and bio of your animal, an official adoption certificate, a magnet, and a quarterly e-newsletter from the Wildlife Sanctuary Director. For more information, e-mail Cindy King, UTC Wildlife Sanctuary Director, at [cking@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](mailto:cking@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org).

### **Adopt a Star in the Travelers Science Dome**

Sponsor a star in the planetarium sky. The donor, or the recipient of his or her choice, gets a certificate of adoption, a sky map with the star's location, and recognition in the Travelers Science Dome for five years. Stars are priced from \$25. Call Planetarium Director, Kristie Mazzoni, at 860.231.2830 x40 for more information.

### **Shop Online or in The Explore Store**

Visit our online store at [www.cafepress.com/TCMstoreCT](http://www.cafepress.com/TCMstoreCT) for T-shirts and sweatshirts for kids and adults, and our magnets, too. And the Explore Store in the Museum always has a great selection of educational toys, science kits, jewelry, gifts and books. Remember, members get a 10% discount all year long.

### **Save the Date!**

Our **Annual Gala** will be held **Saturday, May 8, 2010** at the distinctive Tumble Brook Country Club. If you would like to join the planning committee or would like information, including corporate sponsorship opportunities, please contact our Development Office at 860.231.2830 x23 or [rdeberry@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](mailto:rdeberry@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org).

### **Holiday Schedules**

The Museum is open on **Monday, December 28; New Year's Day, Friday, January 1; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, January 18; and President's Day, Monday, February 15.**

Visit our Website to see what's happening on these special days, including planetarium shows, animal demos, Vacation Science camp, and more.

The Museum will close early on Thursday, December 24 and is closed on Christmas Day, Friday, December 25.

### **Become a fan of The Children's Museum on Facebook.**

You'll see photos of our animals, an inside look at our greatest experiments, news about upcoming events, links to great science Websites, and more.

# kids korner

## THE STATIC WAND

Hey, kids! Winter is the best time for experiments with static electricity. Ever rubbed a balloon on your hair then stuck it to a wall? Here's something similar:

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A soda can
- A piece of cloth - Most cloth will work. Wool, cotton, silk, or a flannel shirt works great.
- An oblong piece of plastic - A piece of PVC pipe is perfect. A plastic broom handle will do.

### WHAT TO DO

If you haven't already, drink the soda. Don't dent the can. Instead, lay it down lengthwise on a table. Take the length of plastic pipe and rub it with the cloth a lot. Then hold it near (but not touching) the can. Try moving it back and forth on the table. To make it look even weirder when doing this, use a balloon, a rubber food storage container, or a snorkel instead of the pipe.

### HOW IT WORKS

Static electricity. Rubbing the plastic on cloth moves really tiny pieces called electrons from the cloth to the plastic. The electrons build up a static charge in the plastic, and this charge attracts (pulls on) the metal can.

### STRANGE BUT TRUE

The attractive power of the static charge works just like a magnet does. But try sticking a magnet to the aluminum soda can.

## Amazing Stargazing Returns to the Travelers Science Dome at the Gengras Planetarium



The planetarium program "Amazing Stargazing" has returned to the Travelers Science Dome schedule. The show features new artwork by Julia Huntsman. In this introduction to naked-eye sights for young children, animated radio "DJs" lead us from meteors and comets, to stars and planets and the motion of the Earth, to satellites and seasonal constellations.

This show is free for members or with General Admission.

Visit our Website at [www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](http://www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org) for our show schedule and information on all of our Travelers Science Dome programs.

## The Spirit of Giving

Remember to include the Museum in your end-of-year gift-giving plans.

A contribution to our Annual Fund, or a gift in memory or in honor of a loved one, will be put to use immediately at the museum, providing support for the exhibits, animals, programs - **everything** you love at The Children's Museum!

For more information, contact the Development Office at 860.231.2830 x51 or e-mail [ddiana@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](mailto:ddiana@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org).

To make a donation, visit our Website (Support TCM, Giving link), or use the gift envelope included in this newsletter to mail your donation directly to:

The Children's Museum  
Development Office  
950 Trout Brook Drive  
West Hartford, CT 06119-1437

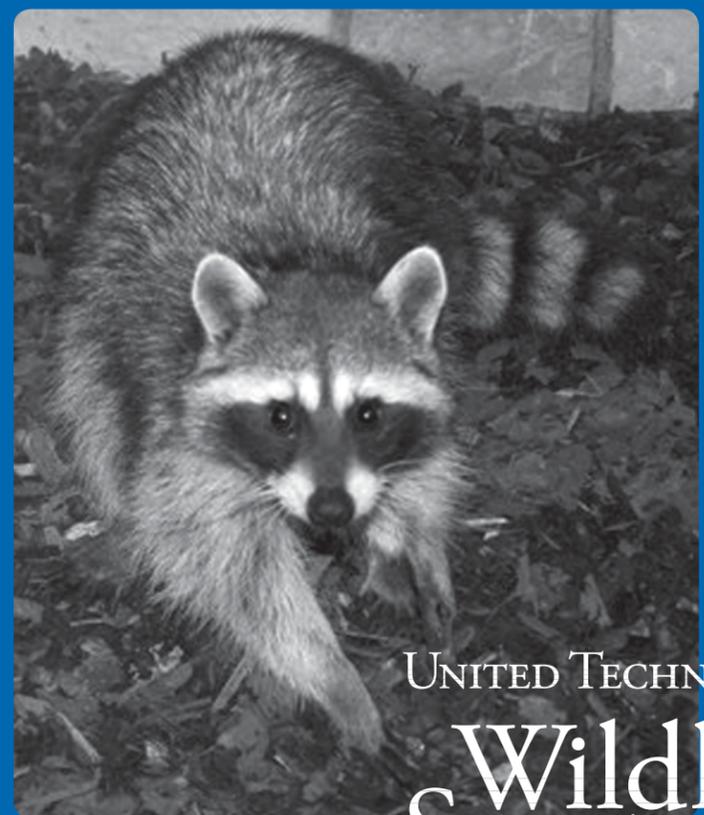
All of us at The Children's Museum extend our heartfelt thanks to the hundreds of individuals and institutions who make contributions to our programs, exhibits, and operations. Thank you for understanding that ticket sales and program fees do not cover the entire cost of running the Museum, and that we rely on support from the community to make up the rest.

***Together, we can continue to inspire children about science, nature, and the world around them!***



## New Benefit for Family Plus Members

Now, when you become a **new** member at the Family Plus level, you can get your picture taken with an animal from the UTC Wildlife Sanctuary. Love our animals? Thinking about membership? Get a Family Plus-level membership today and get a voucher for a family photo with one of our wild residents. The voucher can only be redeemed on weekends between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. This offer is for new members only and is available until January 31.



UNITED TECHNOLOGIES  
**Wildlife Sanctuary**

## Welcome, Loki!

Last month, the Museum announced a contest to name the young, male, non-releasable raccoon who recently joined the UTC Wildlife Sanctuary family. The winning entry is Loki, which is the name of the Norse god of mischief. The name was submitted by Alana Stein of Avon. Come visit Loki soon.

# Fun Family Events All Winter Long

To register for any of the programs you see here, call **860.231.2830 x44** or email **Events@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org**. On-line registration is also available for many of our events. Check our Website at **www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org**.

Member prices are for members of The Children's Museum/Roaring Brook Nature Center. All prices are per person.

## Friday, December 18 Winter Solstice Celebration

**5:00 pm to 8:00 pm (snow date: December 19)**

Celebrate the Winter Solstice with us in the Travelers Science Dome. The Museum's halls will be decked for the holidays! In the planetarium, we will explore the science behind our year's shortest day. Watch our holiday planetarium show "Season of Light" to experience solstice traditions from around the world that date back to ancient times. Guest Musician Mary Jo Maichack will engage the audience in an interactive performance with a holiday theme. Afterwards we'll celebrate the season with crafts, a bonfire, and telescope viewing. \$5 for members, \$6 for non-members

## Friday, January 8 Science Carnival

**6:30 pm to 8:30 pm**

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, step right up and try your luck at the Science Carnival. Join the fun to see if you have what it takes to beat the classic carnival games. Learn the science behind them all and figure out the tricks of the trade. \$8 for members, \$10 for non-members

## Friday, February 12 Chinese New Year Celebration

**6:00 pm to 9:00 pm**

We will be celebrating Chinese New Year in the Travelers Science Dome with traditional food, crafts, and stories led by Andre Keitt, the Greatheart Griot. If the weather is clear, we will use our telescopes in the courtyard. \$7 for members, \$8 for non-members

## Sunday, February 21 A Morning for Children on the Autism Spectrum

**9:00 am**

The Museum opens early for families with children on the Autism Spectrum. We encourage your children to come and be themselves as they explore our exhibits and see the stars in the Travelers Science Dome. Families are welcome to come just for the morning or to stay after the Museum opens to the general public at 11:00 am. Pre-registration is not required but is welcome. Free for members, \$12 for non-members

## Thursday, March 4 Homeschool Day

**9:30 am to 3:00 pm**

You came! You participated! You wanted more! Due to the popularity of our Homeschool Day in September, the Museum is hosting a second day dedicated to homeschool children. Children get the chance to socialize with other young people while exploring the wonders of science through hands-on classroom programs or Travelers Science Dome presentations. We understand the challenges that homeschool educators face tackling science topics. The Children's Museum bridges the gap with programs that foster the personal engagement that led you to homeschool in the first place. Visit our website for prices and program options.

## Friday, March 12 Hard Hat Challenge

**6:30 pm to 8:30 pm**

Build a bridge to span the distance. Construct and race a bobsled to the finish. Design a device to corral a run-away critter. Only YOU can build them. Stretch your inventing muscles as you embark on an evening of engineering challenges.

\$8 for members, \$10 for non-members

# Vacation Science For Grades 1 to 5

Join us for action-packed days of scientific investigation, crafts, games, Museum exploration, amazing planetarium shows, up-close encounters with live animals, and more.

## December Vacation Science Monday, December 28 Science All Stars

Experiment with physics, chemistry, combustion, electricity, and more as we investigate the discoveries of some famous scientists.

## Tuesday, December 29 Animals Under Cover

Take a peek at how animals spend their winters as we uncover their tricks for staying under the radar. Learn about camouflage and hibernation and meet some of the animal experts.

## Wednesday, December 30 Freezer Burn

Freeze it, melt it, and make it go pop! Put solids, liquids, and gases to the test as we create crazy compounds and perform amazing chemical reactions.

## Thursday, December 31 Frogtastic

It's a frog's life. Hop to it and discover their habitats, diets, and where they live in the wild as we get up close and personal with a variety of our Museum amphibians.

## Martin Luther King Jr. Day Monday, January 18 Operation Dissection

Get your lab gear on and climb right into dissection science. Plants, animals, machines, you name it. We're going inside!

## February Vacation Science Monday, February 15 They Only Come Out At Night

There's a whole different world out there after you're tucked into bed. Take a peek at what nighttime creatures do after the stars come out.

## Tuesday, February 16 I Want My Mummy

Unwrap the world of pyramids and hidden treasures. Take a trip into ancient discoveries, mummification, and secret codes.

## Wednesday, February 17 Lighten Up

Bounce, bend, and shine a light on optics as we investigate lasers, rainbows, and some of science's brightest ideas.

## Thursday, February 18 Take It To The Limit

Discover the limits of the human body through sensory experimentation. Play games, navigate obstacle courses, and communicate with your friends in new and different ways.

## Friday, February 19 Decorate It Dirty!

Taking care of the environment is easy with recycling projects where nothing goes to waste. It's time to put trash to the test!

To register, call 860.231.2830 x44. For details, visit our Website.

When: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Who: Children in grades 1 to 5

Cost per day: \$60/day for members, \$70/day for non-members

## News from The Children's Museum Preschool The December Vacation Program is Back!

The December Vacation Program for children ages 3 ½, 4, 5 and 6 is back by popular demand. With many preschool and kindergarten programs closed for the holidays, we will be open to engage your children in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. "A Winter Wonderland" is the theme for the week of December 28 to 31. Full-day and half-day options are available. Call the Preschool at 860.523.7449 for registration information.

## New Extended Program Starting in September 2010

The Preschool is adding a new program beginning in September 2010. It is an extended afternoon session running Monday through Friday until 4:00 pm. Call the Preschool at 860.523.7449 for more information on this or any of The Children's Museum Preschool's programs.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Neil Gordon

### Why did you want to volunteer at The Children's Museum?

I wanted to give back to my community and it seemed like a fun and interesting place to volunteer. It's also a great way to interact with other people and get to see animals you don't get to see everyday.

### What was your favorite activity?

Being a docent in the wildlife sanctuary. I enjoyed answering people's questions and telling them the stories of how our animals came to be here. Many are abandoned pets and I enjoyed educating people on the importance of responsibility when choosing a suitable pet and how to respect animals and nature.

### Why would you encourage others to volunteer here?

TCM is an incredible institution for learning about the environment, sciences, and nature, and it is hands on. The atmosphere is very personable and the wonderful staff makes it easy and fun to learn more about our world.



## The Children's Museum Needs YOU!

We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers who want to donate their time and talents during the holidays. Young or young at heart, you can help spark imaginations and encourage lifelong learning. Positions are available in Education, Guest Relations, Planetarium, and other exciting departments. Inquire about December and February opportunities. Call 860.231.2830 x38 or visit our volunteer page at [www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org/volunteer.asp](http://www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org/volunteer.asp).

the  
children's  
museum

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## Where Science and Nature Are Fun

## ROARING BROOK NATURE CENTER



### WINTER 2009

70 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019

860.693.0263 [www.roaringbrook.org](http://www.roaringbrook.org)

Nature Center Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sunday, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Trails through Werner's Woods open daily from dawn to dusk.

All costs are per person unless stated otherwise.

### BIRTHDAY PARTY OPPORTUNITIES

The Nature Center offers birthday parties on Saturdays (morning parties from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm, afternoon parties from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm) and on selected weekday afternoons from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm throughout the year. Parties include a live animal demonstration, nature walk, and use of our auditorium for holding the party. Cost of a party is \$100 for members, \$125 for non-members. Call the Nature Center for additional information.

### SCOUT PROGRAMS

Leaders of Daisies, Brownies, and Junior Girl Scouts and Cub Scout Den Leaders will find that numerous badge requirements may be fulfilled with a visit to the Nature Center. Winter programs include the "Frosty Fun" badge for Junior Girl Scouts. Call 860.693.0263 for additional details.

### DECEMBER VACATION PROGRAMS FOR GRADES K-5

#### THE WILD SIDE OF WINTER

December 28-31 (Mon.-Thur.) 9:00 AM - Noon

The forest may seem quiet, but there is much going on behind the scenes. While the days are short and the temperatures low, we'll wander through the woods to discover hidden animal signs in the wild side of winter. Cost is \$85.00 for members, \$95.00 for non-members OR daily rate of \$30.00 members, \$35.00 non-members.

#### STORY HOUR CONTINUES THROUGH WINTER

Story hours for young children continue through the winter season with a program on the second Monday of each month from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm. There is no charge for this program, although pre-registration is requested. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Winter story hours will be held January 11 and February 8.

### DISCOVERY DAYS PROGRAMS

Discovery Days, the Nature Center's enrichment series for children, continues through the winter season with a brand new series of programs. The cost of each four-week session is \$40 for members, \$50 for non-members. Discounts are extended to families with multiple children attending during the same time period. Registration is now open for the following programs during the winter season:

#### EXPLORING TOGETHER

##### FOR AGES 3 AND 4, ACCOMPANIED BY PARENT

This series introduces preschool children to seasonal changes in the natural world and gives parent (or grandparent) and child an opportunity to learn together. A younger sibling may attend for a \$10 discount and there is no charge for siblings under age 2. Portions of the program are held outdoors; please dress accordingly.

#### January/February Sessions

Session I: Thursdays, 10:00 am to 11:00 am  
January 7, 14, 21, 28

Session II: Fridays 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm  
January 8, 15, 22, 29

#### February/March Sessions

Session III: Thursdays 10:00 am to 11:00 am  
February 25; March 4, 11, 18

Session IV: Fridays 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm  
February 26; March 5, 12, 19

##### FOR AGES 4 AND 5

Programs for kindergarten students and children in kindergarten readiness programs are held on Thursday mornings from 10:00 am to 11:00 am and afternoons from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm. These programs are for children without parents accompanying them.

#### WHERE DO THEY GO IN WINTER

Meets January 7, 14, 21, 28.

How do animals adapt to our New England winter? Where do they go; what do they do when the cold and the snow arrive?

#### SIGNS IN SNOW AND MUD

Meets February 25; March 4, 11, 18

What do they tell us? Has an animal passed by here? Is this an animal "restaurant" I see? Look for the signs animals leave behind as they seek out food and shelter late in the winter season.

### FEBRUARY NATURE CARNIVAL

February 16 to 19 (Tues. to Fri.), 9:00 am to 12:00 pm  
Fun with snow, ice, animal tracking, and, depending upon weather conditions, snowshoeing or even maple sugaring will be part of this four-day vacation program. Cost is \$85 for members, \$95 non-members or daily rate of \$30 for members, \$35 for non-members. Pre-registration with payment is required for these programs. Participants should bring a snack and dress for the outdoors in winter. A \$10 discount is available for families with a second child enrolling in the same vacation program. Call the Nature Center at 860.693.0263 for additional information.

### WEEKEND EVENTS

#### JANUARY BIRD WALK

Saturday, January 2  
7:30 am to 9:00 am

Dress for potentially frigid weather conditions as we start the New Year searching for as many bird species as we can find on an early January morning. Hot beverages in the warmth of the Nature Center auditorium follow the walk. It is not geared for younger children. Cost: \$2 for members, \$3 for non-members

#### ONCE IN A BLUE MOON!

Friday, January 29

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

So what is a blue moon, anyway? Dress warmly to take a walk to the open field for some moon gazing, astronomy and listening for Great Horned Owls, followed by an appearance by a special surprise guest and hot cider and cookies in the Nature Center auditorium. Cost: Members: \$4 for adults, \$2 for children; Non-members: \$6 for adults, \$3 for children. Pre-registration is requested.

#### GOIN' ON A BEAR HUNT

Sunday, January 31

2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Do bears really hibernate? Will the Groundhog really see his shadow on Tuesday? Walk gently through the forest to uncover the mysteries of wildlife habits in mid-winter. Cost: Members: \$4 for adults, \$2 for children; Non-members: \$6 for adults, \$3 for children. Pre-registration is not required.

#### FAMILY ORIENTEERING/WINTER SURVIVAL

Saturday, February 27

2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

What do you do if you get lost in the woods in winter? Learn to find your way using map, compass and your own ingenuity for surviving a night outdoors. Dress for winter weather. Not geared for children under age 9. Cost: \$5 for members, \$6 for non-members; \$15 maximum per family for members (\$18 for non-members). Pre-registration is requested.

#### MAPLE SUGARING IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

Sunday, March 7

2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Our annual demonstration teaches you how to make maple syrup the easy way. We'll cover the entire process from identifying the tree to the best part - tasting the final product. Cost: Members: \$4 for adults, \$2 for children; Non-members: \$6 for adults, \$3 for children. Pre-registration is not required.

### ANNUAL MID-WINTER BIRD SEED SALE

January 23

For information on the bird seed sale, or to receive an order form, please contact the Center by phone (860.693.0263) or e-mail [rbnc@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](mailto:rbnc@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org).