

SACC Art to Aid Japan

Children in almost 30 School Age Child Care centers are participating in the Students Rebuild project, which is collecting paper cranes to raise money to aid relief efforts for Japan. The Oak Hill SACC center in Herndon, where the idea for SACC participation originated, mailed their origami cranes to Students Rebuild in April.



The goal of the international project is to collect 100,000 paper cranes from young people around the world. The Bezos Family Foundation has pledged to send \$2 to Architecture for Humanity for each crane received.

The funds will help reconstruction efforts in Japan, which was hit by a devastating earthquake and tsunami in March.

The idea to participate in the paper cranes project started with the mother of a child enrolled in Oak Hill SACC. The child brought the idea to SACC staff.

“As children, they’re often not able to do anything to help out in a situation like this,” explained Oak Hill SACC Center Supervisor **Kristi Redwine**. The children were excited about participating in the project

because they saw that raising money by making origami cranes “was something they could do to make a difference and be part of something bigger,” **Redwine** said.

According to a Japanese legend, anyone who folds 1,000 paper cranes will be granted a wish by a crane. Students Rebuild will weave the cranes received into a large art installation that will be sent as a gift to children in Japan.



The children of Oak Hill SACC contributed 1,000 cranes to the cause. The combined total number of cranes that will be sent from the 28 participating SACC centers is approximately 7,500.

SACC Peeps in Post

Each spring since 2007, the Washington Post has held a Peeps Diorama Contest. (Peeps are marshmallow chicks and bunnies made by the Just Born candy company.) The Post asks contestants to “Make a diorama of a famous occurrence, scene or pop culture phenomenon. It can be a historic, current or future event; it can nod to something local, national, global or intergalactic. The one rule is that all the characters in the diorama must be played by Peeps.”

The Pine Spring SACC center’s diorama was one of five entries selected during this year’s contest to be featured in the Kids’ Post. When asked how the children decided the subject of Peeps diorama, Center Supervisor **Mary Anne Shea** responded:

“Intrigued by inventions and the space shuttle Discovery’s last trip, children enrolled in the Pine Spring SACC came up with the idea to create the space station of the future.”

Shea continued, “As peeps are notorious for their ability to survive the harshest conditions, the SACC peep explorers are not affected by the vagaries of space. They soar through space with lighted jet packs and travel to far-off galaxies in their tiny ships. They grow space plants in their garden, as SACC peeps are



vegetarians. Their view of the universe is breathtaking!”

This year SACC’s curriculum focus has been on technology and futuristic creations, including investigations of trends in inventions, robotics and techno-art. “It is always inspiring to see the creative ways SACC teachers encourage children to expand on what they are learning,” said SACC Director **Anne Goldstein**.

VPI Audit



VPI team, left to right: **Carol Osborn, Linda Miller, Ginger Welch** and **Tina Lee**.

The county’s Virginia Preschool Initiative had a state audit this spring. VPI is an early childhood education program for 4-year-olds from families with low-incomes. VPI is offered in Head Start classrooms in public

schools, and in a number of child care centers and family child care homes in the community. OFC’s VPI staff offer ongoing coaching, information, resources and training to VPI child care professionals.

OFC staff administer the VPI program and were very pleased to receive excellent reviews from the VPI auditor.

“She expressed how much she was impressed by the programs and the structure of the Fairfax County VPI program,” said OFC’s VPI Director **Carol Osborn**. “[The auditor] said she would like to indicate this program as one of the model programs that she has visited.”

The audit included an examination of VPI documentation, curriculum, enrollment, eligibility requirements, teacher licensure, professional development plans, reports, steering committee work, and budget. Starting with the 2011-2012 program year, VPI programs will be received annually.

Readers Rally at ECCC Book Fair



County employees and Pennino building visitors browsed at the Employees' Child Care Center book fair. Readers could choose from books for children and cookbooks for adults, as well as a table full of Spanish-language books. "The majority of our sales are from the newer hardback picture books and sturdy board books for infants and toddlers," said **Lucy Mastantuono**, an ECCC teacher who helped organize the book fair. Proceeds will be used for books, toys and materials for the ECCC.

Sales Tax Holidays

Family child care providers with permits are required to have emergency preparedness plans, which includes some emergency supplies. Office for Children child care specialists have notified family child care providers about the state's Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday, which runs from May 25-31.

Virginia shoppers will receive a discount on emergency supplies and equipment, such as:

- Batteries (including cell phone batteries)
- Bottled water
- Fire extinguishers
- First Aid Kits
- Flashlights
- Manual can openers
- Portable, self-powered radios, and weather radios
- Smoke detectors



School Supplies and Clothing

The state will also offer a School Supplies and Clothing Sales Tax Holiday August 5-7. Child care providers, teachers and families will be offered discounts on back-to-school items, art supplies, baby blankets, diapers, and musical instruments.

More to Celebrate

Results from the 2010 Census confirm that our community is more diverse than ever. The number of Asian residents has grown by 50 percent, making them the largest minority group in Fairfax County. Hispanics are the second-largest minority group, followed by African Americans. Fairfax County Public Schools report that more than 100 languages are spoken by county residents.

As we plan Office for Children programs, events and activities, please continue to be aware of holidays and cultural celebrations that are important to coworkers and the people we serve.

Employees planning events and activities for this fall should be aware that Ramadan will be celebrated August 1-31; Rosh Hashanah is September 29-30; Yom Kippur is October 8, and Diwali is October 26.

Recently, the Child Care Assistance and Referral program enjoyed a special staff event for Nau-Raz,



CCAR employees **Elizabeth Ivy, Ann Hargrove, Helen McCane, Lidia Abdelwahed, Mariam Nadi** and **Susan Jackson**.

a holiday celebrated on the first day of the solar year in Afghanistan, Iran, Tajikistan and Zanzibar. Human Service Worker **Mariam Nadi** shared a homemade feast with her coworkers. "It makes me feel good working here, and being part of this big family," **Nadi** stated.

What's This?



You've probably seen images like this on pieces of mail, and in newspapers and magazines. Quick-response codes were created in Japan in 1994, and have proliferated in the U.S. in the last two years. QR codes can be used to transmit web addresses, phone numbers, text messages, and other information. You can decode them using a smart phone that has a QR reader (a free app). Scan the QR code here to see an OFC-related resource.

O F C Office for Children

This employee newsletter is published by the Office for Children, a division of the Fairfax County Dept. of Family Services. If you have any questions, contact Lois Kirkpatrick at 703-324-7162 or Nancy McDonough at 703-324-8042. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.



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