

Classic Birthday Party Basics

Classic and Dinosaur* Parties

Our educational birthday parties are designed for children ages 5 and up. We are happy to do parties for younger children, but please be aware that it is often necessary to shorten the length of the animal presentation and hike to accommodate the attention span of younger guests. The headcount includes everyone attending the party including the birthday party child, parents, siblings and invited guests. Children ages 2 years and younger are free and not included in the party headcount. Parties are offered on Saturdays at 10am and 2pm and on Sundays at 2pm.

*Dinosaur Parties are offered only while our *Dinosaurs Live!* exhibit is here (typically fall through early winter—see www.heardmuseum.org/dinosaurslive for info). Like our Classic party, a live animal presentation is included, but instead of a hike on the Hoot Owl Trail guests are taken on a guided trail of the *Dinosaurs Live!* exhibit.

Party Facilities Birthday parties are held in the Ladybug Classroom and adjacent amphitheater on the lower level of the main building. Child-height trapezoid shaped tables are arranged together to seat up to 20 children. There is room for a couple of adult-sized chairs in the corner of the room; additional adults may stand or sit in the amphitheater. The maximum number of guests this location can accommodate is approximately a total of 40-45 people, including up to 20 children seated in the classroom.



Order of Events Birthday parties begin in the amphitheater where your staff Party Host will give a live animal presentation with your choice of two of our animal ambassadors that guests may touch if desired. Our party ambassadors include several snakes, turtles, lizards and small mammals (ask for current list of available animals). After a short break to sanitize hands, the Party Host will lead everyone on a guided nature hike on the Hoot Owl Trail or through the *Animals of the World* exhibit. The *Dinosaurs Live!* trail can also be selected when the exhibit is here. After returning to the classroom, the remaining time (typically about 30-40 minutes) is available for you to celebrate with a cake or light refreshments, etc.

Decorations Simple decorations that do not require being attached to the walls or ceilings are permitted, such as table cloths and table-top decorations. Small banners or signs may be taped to the white board. No confetti or glitter is allowed. At the end of the party, you are responsible for removing all decorations and hanging material. Any damage to walls, tables, chairs or displayed items in the room may be assessed a damage fee.

Refreshments If you bring refreshments, there is plenty of counter space you can use for your items. Please bring your own flatware, plates, napkins, serving utensils, cups, matches, etc. There are no appliances, so we recommend selecting food that does not require heating and to bring a cooler to keep things cold if needed. No food deliveries to the museum front desk are allowed. Please arrange to meet any deliveries yourself outside the museum building. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

Keep It Safe and Fun for Everyone As the host of your child's party, you help set the tone for a successful celebration. We're counting on you to take responsibility for the conduct of your guests. By making your reservation, you acknowledge that you accept responsibility for any injuries, damages, or theft that occur on the premises as a result of your group's involvement. Please help us maintain a safe, clean and fun environment for all guests to enjoy!

Guest Attire Because we will go outside on a nature walk, please encourage your guests to wear closed-toe shoes appropriate for walking on uneven gravel, dirt or boardwalk paths and to dress to be comfortable outside—bring rain coats, jackets, gloves, etc. Insect repellent and sunscreen may also be desired, especially during spring, summer and fall.

What About the Weather? Unless it is raining very hard, thundering and lightning, or there is too much ice on the ground, we can go outside. If possible, we often simply adjust the order of events to catch an opening in the weather. For example, we might do the hike first if rain is expected later. If the decision is made to not go outside, we can visit the indoor exhibits instead and/or extend the animal presentation. We will not cancel a party unless the museum has been closed—in which case we will reschedule or refund your party. If you choose to cancel it yourself, we will do our best to reschedule your party, but no refund will be given and a change fee may be charged. For Dinosaur Parties—please note that the dinosaurs may not run if the temperature is below about 45°F and may occasionally experience mechanical issues. A discount will not be given if the dinosaurs are not running.

When Can I Arrive to Set Up? You are allowed access to the party room 15 minutes before the start of your party to set up (i.e. 9:45am for a 10:00am party or 1:45pm for a 2pm one). If you require additional time, and the room is available, an additional fee may be charged.

When Do We Need to Depart? You must have the room clear of all your items, including decorations, by 15 minutes after the party time ends (i.e. 12:15pm for a 10:00am party; 4:15pm for a 2pm party). Your staff Party Host will take care of wiping down tables and sweeping the floor, etc. You and any of your guests included in the party headcount are welcome to stay and enjoy the museum afterwards.

What If I Have More than 20 Children or a Total of More than 40 Guests? You can request Laughlin Hall for an additional fee (see website for current pricing). Laughlin Hall is a larger room on the upper level of the main building that can accommodate up to 75 guests. (Groups larger than 75 must be booked in the SRC through our venue rental department, see below.) In Laughlin Hall, the room is set up with adult-sized rectangular 6 foot folding tables and stacking chairs. Decoration and refreshment guidelines are the same as those for a classroom party and use of the kitchen facilities is not included. The usual set up for Laughlin Hall is 6 tables in a U-shape, with chairs on both sides of the tables, 2 tables at the front of the room for items you bring, with additional chairs along the edge of the room.

What Is the Difference Between Education Birthday Parties & a Heard Venue Rental? Education parties are a package party booked through the education department with a focus on the educational activities (animal presentation and nature hike). If you would like your party to last longer than 2 hours, have more than 75 total guests, need to be scheduled at different times than education parties, to be catered and/or need use of a kitchen, or have more elaborate decorations than can be set up in 15 minutes, then we suggest that you consider booking your party as a Heard Venue Rental. Rental bookings are not scheduled through education and do not include the animal presentation, hike or museum admission. These education activities may be scheduled for your venue rental for an additional fee if there is education staff available (prices start at \$100 per activity). See www.heardmuseum.org/venue rental for information.

Where Should We & Our Guests Park? As you enter the Museum gates, park in the first lot on your right if space is available. If all these parking spots are taken, continue past the Main Museum to the first available parking space in one of the overflow parking lots. There is no fee for parking.

Do You Have an Elevator to Get to the Lower Level? There is not an elevator in the building, but there is a ramp outside the gift shop that will take you to the lower level. You are welcome to use a cart or wagon to haul items.

Can I Drop By and View the Party Room? Yes, you can. However, you must contact us to schedule a viewing ahead of time so we can make sure that the room is not in use and an education staff person is available to show you the room.

Other Questions? Contact Us at skennedy@heardmuseum.org