

BERRYBROOK NEWS

May, 2010

The Little Plant

In the heart of a seed buried deep, so deep,
A dear little plant lay fast asleep.
“Wake!” said the sunshine, “And creep into the light.”
“Wake!” said the voice of the raindrops bright.
The little plant heard, and it rose to see,
What the wonderful outside world might be.

- Kate Louise Brown

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| Thursday, May 6 | Parent Discussion group 7:00 pm |
| Wednesday, May 12 | Annual Trip to Duxbury Beach 2 Day, 3 Day & 5 Day classes @ 9:00 am 4 Day class @1:00 pm |
| Tuesday, May 18 | Kindergarten Bus Trip for 4 & 5 Day 5 Day 9:30 (regular 9:00 arrival time) 4 Day 12:30 (children arrive at 12:15 !) |
| Tuesday, May 18 | BPA Spring Fling 4 - 6 pm |
| Wednesday, May 26 | Berrybrook Board meeting 7:30 pm |
| Wednesday, May 26 | Ice Cream Party Last Day of School for 3 Day Classes |
| Thursday, May 27 | Ice Cream Party Last Day of School for 4 Day Class |
| Friday, May 28 | Ice Cream Party Last Day of School for 2 & 5 Day Classes |
| Wednesday, June 2 | BPA Staff Appreciation Luncheon |

Notes from the Headmaster

May is a busy month at Berrybrook, but not too busy to take some time to look back at what has happened since September. Because Berrybrook teachers are so skilled at documenting what happens during the year in photographs, they provide families with a very enjoyable way to look back. There were four memory book meetings this past week at Berrybrook. It was nice to see so many parents gather to go through all of the photographs teachers took this year, and plan a special keepsake for their children. These memory book meetings are an opportunity for a parent to reflect on the past year and see just how much their child has grown, and it is an opportunity for parents to gather together to celebrate their own success at the most challenging job in the world. A Berrybrook Memory Book is a very special item. There will be 99 of them made this year.

This past year, Berrybrook teachers were busy on another book project. As part of our accreditation process for the National Association for the Education of Young Children, teachers created a "Classroom Portfolio" for each group to demonstrate how their program meets over 400 criteria set by the NAEYC. The portfolios required many hours of time and energy beyond the hours spent planning for the children. The portfolios will be available in the multipurpose room this week. Please take some time to view the books and see how they illustrate our commitment to serving young children. They are an excellent capsule of a Berrybrook year.

The BPA can look back on a very successful year, from the Playground Visits before school started and the Harvest Festival to the Spring Fling on May 18th. Thank you to Jane Redman, Devon Kohler, Trisha Stravin, and Stacy Watts who did a terrific job as BPA officers and additional thanks to Martha Dennison who coordinated all of the interesting enrichment programs for the children.

During the month of May teachers and students will begin reflecting on the year at Berrybrook in their classrooms. They will remember favorite songs they sang throughout the year. Don't be surprised if you hear "Five Little Pumpkins" or "Jingle Bells" in the halls. Children may be asking teachers to repeat some of the activities and games they enjoyed during the fall and winter. Children will be saying to teachers, "Remember when you came to my house?" recalling the day when their teacher came to their house way back in September.

Remembering and appreciating what has happened in the past is both happy and sad. It's a little sad to say goodbye to friends you have learned and played with all year, but what fun to look at a picture or hear a song or read a story that re-creates a special moment. Looking back we can see how much we've grown and to know how ready we are for the future.

Thank you all for a wonderful, wonderful Berrybrook year.

Pat Keeley

2 & 3 day Classroom Activities

The month of April was often rainy outside, but inside Berrybrook the children were sunny and energetic, anticipating the true onset of spring weather. The housekeeping areas in our classrooms were transformed into supermarkets and restaurants. Interesting food and colorful containers filled the supermarket shelves and the restaurant's kitchen. Customers were cheerfully served in both establishments and the children worked cooperatively.

Easter was celebrated with the traditional painting of blown eggs. Thanks to all who contributed to our collection and performed the delicate process of blowing out the egg middles. Another Easter tradition was making "wacky" cake. The children helped prepare the cake and then were delighted to see it transformed into a bunny with the addition of cool whip, jelly beans, pink construction paper and pipe cleaners!

After April vacation the children started exploring insects such as caterpillars, butterflies and ladybugs. We will touch upon their life cycles and the transformations these insects make in the spring. We will explore the vast ocean and the creatures that inhabit it. Children will be making beach collages and will enjoy a school wide beach day. The **Annual Trip to Duxbury Beach** has been happening at Berrybrook for many years and the children enjoy going to the beach with their entire class.

The trip for all classes will be on Wednesday, May 12, with a rain date of Thursday, May 13. All parents are invited to join us for a day at the beach with all their Berrybrook friends and teachers. Parents who are not able to make the trip are encouraged to make carpool arrangements for their children. Teachers will supervise children whose parents cannot attend. More details of this trip will be sent home soon.

As the bulbs planted in the outdoor gardens around Berrybrook have become beautiful, strong flowers, so have the children grown and flourished this past year. While the children enjoy their last few weeks at Berrybrook, teachers will be pulling out activities that have been enjoyed throughout the year so that the children may enjoy them once again. The last week of school the children will be making ice cream for the final day of school.

Teachers will not emphasize "the end" of the year, rather, we will allow for a natural Berrybrook ending with an ice-cream scoop countdown of the last few days. Ice cream day has proven to be a relaxed and enjoyable way to say goodbye to good friends. On Wednesday, May 26 the 3 Day children will arrive at 9:00 as usual, and all parents are invited to return at 10:30 for ice cream. The 2 Day Class will have their ice cream day on Friday, May 28.

Thank you to all of the parents who have volunteered this year. It has been a pleasure having you all and sharing your precious children.

4 & 5 Day Classroom Activities

It doesn't seem possible that the year is coming to an end. The children have been busy all year long experiencing new adventures. They have grown in many ways learning important lessons. They are able to assert themselves as needed, be responsible, be respectful of all living creatures and much, much more. In addition they have made many new friends and had a lot of fun.

During the month of May the children will be finishing up some on-going projects and enjoying the outdoors. There are also some field trips planned for the 4 and 5 day classes which in the past have turned out to be especially memorable.

The annual trip to Duxbury Beach has been happening at Berrybrook for many years and the children enjoy going to the beach with their entire class. The trip for all classes, will be on Wednesday, May 12, with a rain date of Thursday, May 13. All parents are invited. Morning classes will meet at the beach at 9:00 am and the 4 Day Class will meet at the beach at 1:00 pm. Any parents who may not be able to make the trip are encouraged to make carpool arrangements for their children Teachers will supervise children whose parents cannot attend. More details of this trip will be sent home soon.

On Tuesday, May 18, the Duxbury Community Partnerships for Children has arranged for the 4 & 5 Day Classes to take a **Kindergarten Bus Trip** to the Chandler Elementary

School in Duxbury. The 5 Day morning class will start their trip at 9:30. The 4 Day Class will start their trip at 12:30, so parents must arrive at Berrybrook at 12:15 on that day.

While at Chandler, the children will walk through a kindergarten classroom, peek at the bathrooms, and see the library, nurse's office, cafeteria and playground. The goal of this visit is to help children anticipate Kindergarten positively by providing children a glimpse of what their school will be like next fall. Teachers will be providing permission slips for parents to sign.

The ice cream party on the last day of school is a special event. On Thursday, May 27, the 4 Day Class will arrive at 1:00 pm and their families will return to join us for ice cream at 2:30 pm. On Friday, May 28 the 5 Day Class will invite families to return at 10:30 for their ice cream day. It is our last day together as a class, but the children are always welcome. The teachers always enjoy a visit from past Berrybrookers and their families.

Before children join their families on the playground for homemade ice cream, the children gather for their last circle time.

Make new friends,
But keep the old.
One is silver,
And the other's gold.

A circle's round,
It has no end.
That's how long
I want to be your friend.

Reminder from 4 & 5 Day Classes!



Check for the full moon on May 27th!
Also, keep your eyes open for Venus
and Saturn during the month of May.
Venus rises in the west and Saturn
rises above the south eastern
horizon.

Thank you

Berrybrook teachers want to let parents know how much we appreciate the many parents who volunteered in so many ways to help make the school year a success. There is always a parent willing to help when Berrybrook teachers have a request.

We also want to thank all parents for working with us to provide the best possible experience for the children. The conversations we have at pick up, the phone calls and parent conferences that you share with us demonstrate a true partnership between school and home. Your hard work at home makes our job at Berrybrook a pleasure.

Thank you,

Mrs. Delano, Mrs. Piccuito,
Mrs. Watts, Mrs. La Forest,
Mrs. Dunn, Miss Bent, Mrs. Fosdick,
Mrs. Rosen, Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Caddle,
Mrs. Neal, Mrs. Capasso, Mrs. Pisani
Mrs. Swan and Mrs. Keeley



Berrybrook Summer Nature Program

Over 63 Berrybrook students have enrolled in our summer program. We have also enrolled children from the local community.

If you have friends or neighbors who might be interested in visiting Berrybrook for a week, they are welcome to call the school for information.

At the moment, there is availability in:

| | |
|--------|-----------------|
| Week 4 | July 6, 7, 8 |
| Week 6 | July 20, 21, 22 |
| Week 7 | July 27, 28, 29 |

Parents who have enrolled will receive a handbook and an Authorization and Consent form this month. Forms and the balance of tuition are due by May 21, 2010.

Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Delano and Mrs. La Forest are looking forward to seeing Berrybrook friends during the summer!

Only One

- George Cooper

Hundreds of stars in the pretty sky;
Hundreds of shells on the
Shore together.
Hundreds of birds that go singing by;
Hundreds of bees in the
Sunny weather.

Hundreds of dewdrops to
Greet the dawn,
Hundreds of lambs in
The purple clover,
Hundreds of butterflies on the lawn;
But only one mother
The wide world over.

Happy Mother's Day!



Berrybrook Outdoors

The warm weather is here and with it comes lots of outdoor time. Please apply sun block to your children before they come to school. Teachers apply insect repellent to children before they go out to the playground. If you happen to be staying to play for a longer period, please remember that there is repellent available in the school if parents want to reapply. Also, please plan on sending children to school in closed-toe shoes - sneakers are a good choice. This allows children to run and climb safely and keeps sand and wood chips away from little feet.
Thank you!



Lunch Bunch

The last day for Lunch Bunch will be Thursday, May 24. There will be no lunch the last week of school.

Thank you to all of the families who participated in our Lunch Bunch program. Mrs. Delano, Mrs. Piccuito and Mrs. Neal enjoyed having a casual lunch with the children on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Thank you so much to all parents who were so careful to pack allergy safe lunches for their children. Only at Berrybrook would you find that many families who take the extra time to make sure all Berrybrook children are safe.

Tuition

Because of our tuition payment schedule, families will have paid all 9 tuition payments for 2009-2010. There is no tuition payment due in May.

Thank you

Berrybrook Board of Directors

The more things change . . .

One of greatest motivations for me to serve as a Board member is that it allows me to remain immersed in the wonderful world of Berrybrook, despite the fact that my children are no longer Berrybrook students. One specific perk for me is that I still get the newsletter, and time and again I am impressed and often deeply touched by Mrs. Keeley's "Notes from the Headmaster". Her article in March certainly qualified on both counts. The words could not ring more true for me and I would assume most of the parents who read it. Two quotes in particular are worth reemphasizing: "although some things today are different than they were during [Mrs. Dunmore's] tenure, the essence of the Berrybrook philosophy and values remain" and "Our teachers possess the same standards of training, experience, commitment and caring set by Katharine Mann and Jinny Dunmore".

As a parent when my children were still Berrybrook students, I was so often aware of the fact that being at Berrybrook felt like stepping back in time, in a way that allowed me to let go of the preoccupations and stresses of modern life and relish the simplest of pleasures. In fact, even now that I am a far less frequent visitor I still feel this in an almost palpable way whenever I open the gate and pass through. This feeling has remained persistent and consistent despite the fact that I had children attend school both in the old farmhouse and the temporary buildings (during construction). At times it seems as though there is a spell cast on this place that makes it so undeniably delightful.

However, being a board member has given me a peek behind the curtain at the actual workings of the school and I am more aware than ever that the magic is directly attributable to the individuals who work here, specifically Mrs. Keeley and all the Berrybrook teachers. Over the past 2 years I have had the great privilege of meeting regularly with the staff and getting an inside view of all the awe inspiring thought, preparation and attention to detail that goes into each activity on any given day. It is not by accident that the atmosphere at Berrybrook is so soothing and conducive to personal growth for both the children and the families that come here.

It is worth mentioning that the staff at Berrybrook have lives outside the school that are comprised of most of the same elements that we all have. That means they share many of the pressures, stresses and burdens that we all face on a daily basis. However, when they walk through the gate they have an uncanny and I would say enviable ability to set all that aside and focus on the monumental task at hand . . . to nurture our children and promote their well being on all levels.

And I have no doubt that their smiles and kind words and gentle demeanor are entirely sincere, despite whatever difficulties they may have faced or may face each day. They have chosen to take on one of the most important and challenging jobs that exists, one that is typically quite messy, both literally and figuratively. One in which no two days are the same and each day they are faced with a room full of individuals still struggling to master control over their bodies, minds and emotions. A job that requires them to have

mastery in so many areas that it is almost impossible to name them all, but here is just a sample: mathematician, musician, magician, pediatrician . . . artist, ornithologist, entomologist, epidemiologist. . . and it would be remiss of me to not mention child psychologist. And yet they do it willingly, with enthusiasm and passion.

As with any individual who demonstrates mastery in a given area, they make it all look so easy. However, this is only achieved through countless hours honing their skills and great devotion to the tasks at hand. It is important to note that they are not driven by visions of fame, fortune and glory but rather a genuine desire to make a difference in the lives of their students and their families by guiding us all through the critical and challenging years of early education.

Yet, never in all my years at Berrybrook have I witnessed anything even close to resembling chaos, despite the perfect storm of ingredients for it that exist at any given time. I have witnessed on any number of occasions members of the staff tackle very difficult situations, involving children and parents alike, with great composure and empathy for those involved. They treat everyone with the same degree of dignity and respect. Despite all the structure and consistency, there is never a doubt that they highly value individuality and do everything in their power to provide what is needed for each member of the Berrybrook community to flourish.

And flourish we all do. Even though my children have outgrown the tiny chairs in the Berrybrook classrooms, the residual influences are still quite apparent. My family and I are forever changed for the better by the time spent at this magnificent place, in the company of these extraordinary people. So as another year comes to a close, I would like once again to most sincerely thank Mrs. Keeley and all the Berrybrook teachers and assure them all that they continue to achieve the goal of serving the entire Berrybrook community with "love and grace".

*Kristen Diamond,
Berrybrook Board of Directors*

Some Things Don't Make Any Sense at All

My mom says I'm her sugarplum.
My mom says I'm her lamb.
My mom says I am completely perfect
Just the way I am.
My mom says I'm a super-special
wonderful-terrific little guy
My mom just had another baby.
Why?

- Judith Viorst

Congratulations to the
Campbell family on the birth of
their baby boy, John

Addie (3 Day) and Jane (5 Day)
have a new brother!

Berrybrook Parent's Association

It is hard to imagine that this is the BPA's final newsletter for the school year! It seems like only yesterday we were organizing the schedule for the playground "meet and greet". What an amazing year it has been and it is all thanks to our wonderful Berrybrook community. To those who helped with the organization of the Harvest Festival, Directory of Students, enrichment programs, community outreach projects, the KidsArt, Inc. fundraiser, the upcoming Spring Fling and Teacher Appreciation Luncheon... we say thank you!

In April, Pat Hague, a local nutritionist, joined us to discuss healthy eating. She helped us to better understand what organic food is and decipher food labels. She also encouraged us to make healthier choices for our families. Jennie Mulqueen from the South Shore Conservatory visited in early April for a classroom sing along, and ended our month with a visit from Storyteller "Lady Laura." In May, the Duxbury Maritime School is scheduled to visit some of the classrooms and also be a part of our annual Spring Fling. Thank you to Martha Dennison who helped schedule all of our wonderful enrichment programs this year!

The KidsArt, Inc fundraiser orders arrived just in time for Mother's Day. Our talented artists created some beautiful stationary! Again, thanks to all the families who supported this fundraiser!

Our annual **Spring Fling** is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 18** from 4-6pm. This is a free event sponsored by the BPA. It is our way of saying thank you for a wonderful school year. It will be a fun filled afternoon for our Berrybrook families. Mama Steph is scheduled to perform from 4:30-5:30, DBMS will be setting up a hands-on exhibit, and Cravings will be providing pizza and wraps for dinner! So grab a picnic blanket, bring your family, and help us celebrate a wonderful year!

The **Teacher Appreciation Luncheon** is scheduled for **June 2** from 11-1. The teachers really look forward to this event and we are hoping to make it very special. A sign up sheet will be at the BPA table. We are in need of parents willing to help set up and provide food and drinks. Please drop off your items to the multipurpose room between 9-11am on that day.

We are still looking for more parents who might be interested in becoming an officer next year! We have scheduled an evening out for those who might be interested in hearing about the various roles and how you can be a part of the BPA! Please join us at the **Winsor House in Duxbury on Thursday, June 10th @ 7pm.**

It was our pleasure to serve as officers for the Berrybrook Parents' Association. We wish all the Berrybrook families a safe and wonderful summer!

Fondly,

Jane Redman, President Devon Kohler, Vice-President
Stacy Watts, Treasurer Trisha Stravin, Secretary

Helen Wheeler Scholarship News

Every year, the Berrybrook Board of Directors conducts an Annual Appeal to raise money for the Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund. Every dollar donated to the Annual Appeal reinforces our commitment to provide tuition assistance for families who wish to send a child to Berrybrook but cannot afford to. The funds also enable current Berrybrook families who may experience a sudden financial emergency to continue at Berrybrook.

Before we reach out with our 2010 Annual Appeal this month, we wanted to acknowledge the generous donors to the 2009 Annual Appeal which raised over \$3,550.00 for the scholarship fund.

We are so grateful for your financial support and your dedication to Berrybrook. Your gifts to the annual Appeal have made a lasting difference in the lives of many children and their families who are experiencing Berrybrook because of your generosity.

The Board of Directors

2009 Berrybrook Annual Appeal Donors

3M Foundation

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Mr. and Mrs. Frederic M. Clifford, Sr.

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The Couto Family

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Jeannine Stanwood

The Stravin Family

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Nancy and David Woods

Jennifer Zaniboni

Parents Discussion Group

The **April PDG** focused on ***“Transitions and Moving On”***. This time of year children are hearing and wondering about end of the year, summer, next year, new teachers, new classmates, etc. Parents are working thru this transition also. Life provides us with many transitions. Discovering how best to handle these changes and move on is important.

We discussed how people expect and handle change in different ways. Some need to know when, where, how and why. Others simple take change as it happens.

Some of our discussion focused on preparing both children and parents for kindergarten. Berrybrook along with local schools provide opportunities to talk about and visit kindergartens. Transitioning at Berrybrook from one classroom, classmates and teacher to another is done with care. We talk about closure to one experience and preparing for the next. This is done with books, songs, Memory Books, Visiting Day, summer playdates, etc.

We closed our evening discussion with the feeling that we all have others who support us as we *Transition and Move On* together. Good Luck to all.

Please join us for the final PDG.

Last Chance Café
Thursday May 6, 2010 7pm

We will address and discuss any parenting concerns you may have. A variety of handouts will be available. Special refreshments will be served.

See you then!
Mrs. O’Neil, Mrs. LaForest & Mrs. Delano

