

BERRYBROOK NEWS

April, 2008

Thursday, April 10	BPA meeting 7:00pm (Spring Fling Planning!)
Friday, April 18 Monday, April 28	Last day before Spring Vacation School Resumes
Wednesday, April 30	Berrybrook Board of Directors 7:00 pm
Thursday, May 1	Parent Discussion Group 7:00pm
Wednesday, May 7 Thursday, May 8	School Pictures, 3 Day, 4 Day & 5 Day School Pictures, 2 Day

Notes From the Headmaster

Berrybrook possesses many special characteristics, but one of our most unique qualities is the cohesiveness of the parent community. Berrybrook parents enjoy each other. How often are there groups of parents lingering after arrivals to chat? On how many nice days do parents bringing lunch or a snack at dismissal to stay and play with other families on the playground? I wonder how many other preschools have parents arranging to meet for coffee at someone's home or coming to the school playground even when school is not in session or parents who volunteer to send home meals to families with a new baby? Our Parents Association has no problem recruiting numerous volunteers to enhance the Berrybrook experience by planning fun family events and enrichment programs for the children. Thank you to Nancy Cooney, Angélique Kania, Breanna Kirk and Peggy Dickinson for serving as BPA officers this year and to Tricia Stravin who arranged every one of our children's enrichment programs. They have made a tremendous contribution of time and energy to our school. I urge all Berrybrook parents to consider serving Berrybrook as a BPA officer for the 2008-2009 school year. In addition to being a lot of fun, it is exciting, satisfying and rewarding work. I know from experience that many families who meet at Berrybrook become life long friends. I love watching new parents who think they are simply enrolling their child in a quality preschool slowly discover that they have actually enrolled in a unique experience that includes the whole family. The parent connections at Berrybrook provide just as many rewards for adults as the classroom experiences provide for the children.

Pat Keeley

Classroom Activities

Last month, children enjoyed checking the buckets on the Maple trees to see how much sap we had collected since tapping the trees. This year, teachers took home the sap and boiled it until it became maple syrup. The 4 & 5 Day Classes enjoyed the syrup at a traditional "Sugar on Snow" party. The "sugar" is the syrup and the "snow" this year was vanilla ice cream. Donuts and sour pickles are the traditional accompaniments served at an authentic Sugar on Snow party. The 2 and 3 Day classes enjoyed their syrup on pancakes.

Thank you to all parents who provided "blown" eggs to paint last month. Teachers know that it takes practice and perseverance and we appreciate your efforts very much. Tapping the Maple trees, painting beautiful blown eggs are all traditional activities that take place each year at Berrybrook. These activities link our students with the hundreds of children who attended Berrybrook before them and also with the many children who will enjoy Berrybrook traditions for years to come.

April is a windy month, so look for kites and windsocks to be in cubbies. Also during April all classes will be watching for signs of spring. Children have already seen forsythia blooming in classrooms. The new life of living things outdoors will be the focus of activities this month.



Building Committee Update

The removal of part of the construction fencing and the installation of the new walkways last week was very exciting. We are getting closer and closer to opening the doors of the new building. Our plan to open in "early" 2008 has been pushed back some by delays we have had arranging for underground utilities to the school. Various circumstances involving easements and appropriate designs have been under discussion for months, but we feel that NSTAR and Verizon are now satisfied and will be completing work in the coming weeks. Please remember that although the building is looking complete, the area is still a construction site and parents should be sure to supervise children in the parking lot and use only our fenced in play areas.

Parents will be notified as soon as possible about a move in date.

Thank you!

School Pictures

Please mark your calendars with the dates for school pictures:

Wednesday, May 7, 3, 4 & 5 Day

Thursday, May 8, 2 Day

Kingston Photo will be taking pictures again this year. More information will be sent home soon.

How to be a Friend

It's spring. In our classrooms, friendships are coming into full bloom. However, as children grow closer, these same friendships provide the opportunity for hurt feelings. After all, a mere acquaintance can snub you and you hardly notice. Only close friends possess the power to really hurt your feelings. To a child, having a friend sit next to someone else at circle time can be devastating. At Berrybrook, we spend a good deal of our time helping children manage these delicate relationships. Encouraging children to develop empathy for others is one of the most challenging jobs of the preschool teacher. Four and five year olds are just starting to learn that their actions can have an affect on someone else. One of the ways we help children develop empathy is by being active listeners. We model good listening and encourage them to listen to each other. When children know they will be listened to, they are more apt to listen to some one else. We suggest that they look directly at each other when they have something to say. We encourage responses that include how they feel about things. Berrybrook teachers often ask children "What could you say?" or, "What could you do?," when children are working out a problem.

When we ask children, they in fact know many ways to be kind and good to friends. Intellectually, they know the right choices, but developmentally, they are just beginning to put them into practice. It is our job to provide them with opportunities to demonstrate how kind they are and to practice being a good friend.

At Berrybrook, teachers design their classrooms and curriculum to promote a sense of empathy and community, and conflicts between children are seen as opportunities for helping children become sensitive human beings.

Mrs. La Forest, Mrs. Piccuito, Mrs. Swan, Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Delano, Mrs. Caddle, Miss Bent, Mrs. Fosdick and Mrs. Neal respond to children with hurt feelings with compassion. They listen. They ask for details and, if necessary, they help children express themselves to their friends. Dealing with hurt feelings is a big part of our day. I have said before that Berrybrook is a wonderful school with wonderful traditions. Our tradition of creating an empathetic, respectful environment for children is our most important.

Pat Keeley

Pussywillow

I know a little pussy,
Her coat is silver gray.
She lives down in the meadow,
Not very far away.

Although she is a pussy,
She'll never be a cat.
For she's a pussy willow,
Now what do you think of that?
Meow, Meow, Meow, Meow, Meow,
Meow, Meow, Meow,
SCAT!

Your 9th and final tuition payment is due
April 1.

2 Day	\$ 197.00
3 Day	\$ 290.00
4 Day	\$ 359.00
5 Day	\$ 424.00

Thank you!

“Why I Love Being a Preschool Teacher”

By, Rose M. Fosdick

One afternoon while I was preparing the day’s project, one of the children asked me, “Mrs. Fosdick, why do you like being a teacher? Is it hard to be a teacher?” I, of course, answered the child with the usual, “I like being a teacher because I am able to work with children like you!” And, “No, it is not hard to be a teacher, it is fun!”

On the way home from school that day, I started to think more deeply about that child’s question. I was thinking that the answer I gave the child didn’t really do justice to the way I truly feel about WHY I like being a preschool teacher. Over the next couple of months, I pondered this question each day as I worked.

Since I am usually the teacher involved in the daily art projects, I started to think about that aspect of my job. Is it that I am able to paint, glue, color, stamp, draw, cut, and (my all time favorite) glitter, everyday? Is it that I am a grown adult who leaves work with paint still stuck underneath her manicured fingernails? Or is it the fun of having to explain to my husband why I have a painted green handprint on the back of my pants?

Then I started thinking about our “circle time”. Do I love being a preschool teacher because I am able to sit on the floor cross-legged in a circle with a group of children and take turns talking? In what other profession can you do that? Or perhaps it is the fact that I can sing to a group of people who could care less about how awful my singing is? Is it the fact that I can “Jump Josie” and the children don’t care that I am a grown up? Or is it the fact that when I read a story, I have 16 faces (usually!) looking up at me, listening to what will happen next in the story, and hanging on my every word?

What other profession enables you to spend a part of the day outdoors watching children play? I am able to go on nature walks, fly kites, sled, watch children swinging, running, climbing, jumping, and socializing with their peers. How fortunate I am!

Well, I think all of these things I have mentioned are a part of why I enjoy being a preschool teacher. But, I thought back again about the answer I gave so automatically that day. I realized I wasn’t really so far off with the answer I gave. All of the things we do everyday with the children are so enjoyable because of the children, themselves! Working with the children to help them complete a project; teaching them new songs; reading them stories; helping them to attain independence; learning about each child as an individual; learning their strengths and weaknesses; watching them accomplish things that they have been working on, be them small or large; and feeling true joy to see the expression on their face when they do; these are the reasons why I love being a preschool teacher. The conversations and the interaction I have with the children are what I truly enjoy the most!

Here are a few quotes from the children that I would like to share:

“My Mom crochets because it keeps her hands from being rusty.”

“Wait a minute, I’m thinking... it’s....it’s....it’s right here in my brain.”

A conversation between three boys while working on the day’s project: The first boy says to the second boy, “Oh, your hair looks so handsome today!” The second boy answers, “Yeah, my Mom combed me before I came.” The third boy says, “Yeah, my Mom combs me too before I leave.”

“I don’t have a car; I have a “GUV”

Regarding clean up time, one girl states, “Those children are not being very responsible.”

After I yawned, a child says, “Mrs. Fosdick, looks like you didn’t get enough sleep last night!”

“We’re getting so big, we scare ourselves.....”

“Don’t even think I have something in my back pocket, because I don’t!”

“Oh wait, I can’t think of it.....it’s.....it’s..... it’s right here, in the bottom of my belly.”

“Hi, (a boy says to one of the girls) remember, I am going to marry you today!”

“Mrs. Fosdick, the paper towels are all wasted out.”

“Is baby Jesus dead, or is he in New York?”

“Mrs. Keeley, why do you build a new school every year?”

After complimenting a child on her ability to swing so high she says, “Yeah, I’m like a professional swinger.”

“Mrs. Caddle, did you know that your hair is turning a little gray on the sides?”

After a conversation regarding how birds clean their feathers, a boy states, “Yeah, sometimes I lick myself.”

As you can see, you never know what a preschool child is going to say, or how they are going to say it, and THIS is why I love my job!

(Mrs. Fosdick teaches in the 4 day Afternoon Class)

Berrybrook Parents Association

Happy spring to all! The children enjoyed the Irish step dancers last month, and coming up on April 9th and 10th, there will be a program called Hop, Skip, and Jump!

We have a lot of upcoming plans. We are looking forward to the Spring Fling. We will be having a **BPA meeting on Thursday April 10th at 7:00PM** to plan for this wonderful tradition. If you are unable to make the meeting, but are interested in volunteering for the Spring Fling, please contact any of the BPA officers by phone or email. We will also have a volunteer sign up sheet in the entryway.

Thank you for all of the positive feedback with my last entry for the newsletter. It sounds like everyone is trying to incorporate more recycling in their lives. I think little by little I am becoming more environmentally conscious. This month, I stopped buying paper plates (not that I used a lot of them), and I'm trying to use cloth napkins. Throwing them in the wash really isn't a big deal. I've even found at the Market that I don't buy the individual packs of crackers and snacks any more. I buy the big box, and portion them into little Tupperware containers. It is less expensive this way, and I'm also cutting down on our waste. I have to work on my bottled seltzer water. At least I recycle the bottles, but I should be thinking about a reusable container. I'm working on it! I would love to hear any of your suggestions for upcoming newsletters.

I would also like to hear from anyone who would like to volunteer to be an officer or classroom parent at Berrybrook for the 2008-2009 school year. It is not too early to be thinking

about the parent volunteers who will carry on for the BPA!

Nancy Cooney, BPA President

Berrybrook Board of Directors

On Monday, March 12, Berrybrook, the town of Duxbury, the South Shore area and yes, even Mother Earth all benefited from a vote at Duxbury's annual Town Meeting. That is when the official purchase of 40 acres from the Lucretia Prentiss Bailey Trust to the town of Duxbury took place. This purchase, brought forth by the Conservation and Preservation Committee, will ensure that the beautiful open space that we see every time we go to Berrybrook will be preserved as open space *in perpetuity*. Currently, the hay in the field is mowed to feed the cows at the O'Neil farm. Isn't it nice to know that because the field will not be developed we will always have beautiful vistas from every room in our beautiful new school house. The Board of Directors is thankful to the community and thrilled with the town's decision. This is another example of where everybody wins.

Angélique Kanía



*Berrybrook Board of Directors
Thanks You for Your Generous Support*

Every year, Berrybrook conducts an Annual Appeal. In May, Current and past Berrybrook families receive a mailing from the Board of Directors asking for donations. Every dollar received in the Annual Appeal is deposited in the Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund. Those funds are set aside to provide financial assistance to families who wish to send a child to Berrybrook but cannot afford to, and also to enable current Berrybrook families who may experience a sudden financial emergency to continue at Berrybrook.

Before we reach out with our 2008 Annual Appeal next month, we wanted to thank all of the families whose combined donations in 2007 raised over \$2,000.00, and to let them know that they have made a difference in the lives of children and parents who are experiencing Berrybrook because of their generosity. Along with our sincere thanks, we wanted share a note from a family who was able to send their child to Berrybrook because of their support.

"I just wanted to take a few moments to thank you and Berrybrook for being so understanding. The reduction of tuition at this time has been a life saver for our family. Hopefully soon I can do something for Berrybrook to show my appreciation. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Please tell the people who are responsible for making this happen that I thank them very much."

Berrybrook 2007 Annual Appeal Donors

Anonymous	Robert and Angélique Kania
Kate and Doug Antaya	Pat and Jim Keeley
The Borghesani Family	Susan Lonergan
Sally Caddle	Robert and Elizabeth Loring
The Campbell Family	The McCarthy Family
Fred and Donna Clifford	Thomas and Laurie Murray
Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Clifford, Sr.	Joan Neal
The Cooney Family	Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan B. Nash
The Couto Family	The Rouleau Family
The Davenport Family	Dr. and Mrs. Russo
Tom and Kris Delano	Allyn and Pamela Ryalls
Mike and Kim Di Napoli	Andrew and Liz Stout
The Fabrizio Family	Peter and Lynda Sullivan
Mark and Jennifer Fallon	The Sundstrom Family
Richard and Hazel Gauley	Stacy and Keith Watts
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