

BERRYBROOK NEWS

May, 2009

For the spring is really springing;
You can see a skylark singing,
And the blue-bells, which are ringing,
Can be heard.

-The House at Pooh Corner by A.A. Milne

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|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thursday, May 7 | Parent Discussion group 7:00 pm |
| Monday May 11 | Year in Review Get-togethers 9 am & 1 pm |
| Tuesday, May 12 | BPA Spring Fling 4 – 6 pm |
| Wednesday, May 13
(Rain date – Thur, May 14) | Annual Trip to Duxbury Beach
2 Day, 3 Day & 5 Day classes @ 9:00 am
4 Day class @1:00 pm |
| Friday, May 15 | NAEYC Parent Surveys due |
| Tuesday, May 19 | Kindergarten Bus Trip - 5 Day Class 9:45
4 Day Class 12:45 (Children arrive early!) |
| Wednesday, May 20 | Ice Cream Party
<u>Last Day of School for 3 Day Classes</u> |
| Thursday, May 21 | Ice Cream Party
<u>Last Day of School for 4 Day Class</u> |
| Thursday, May 21 | BPA End of Year Party – 7:00pm |
| Friday, May 22 | Ice Cream Party
<u>Last Day of School for 2 & 5 Day Classes</u> |
| Wednesday, May 27 | BPA Staff Appreciation Luncheon |
| Wednesday, May 27 | Berrybrook Board meeting 7:00 pm |

Notes from the Headmaster

I am always thankful to the families who have chosen to entrust their children to us. As we approach the end of this year - the first year in the new Berrybrook school house - I want to give special thanks to our current families who enrolled their children even before construction was complete, without setting foot in our new school house. The faith and trust implied in your commitment is appreciated by all of the Berrybrook staff. Every single family who has attended Berrybrook since 1954 has played an important role in making Berrybrook what it is today, but families attending in 2008-2009 made a unique investment and your participation in this first year in new classrooms is historic.

The Strategic Plan adopted by the Board of Directors set goals for our physical space including handicapped access, a multi-purpose space, and environments appropriate for children three years of age by September 1st. These goals led to the construction of a new school house. During the design process, Berrybrook staff had the opportunity to use all of their experience and knowledge of early childhood development to create learning environments that combined extra space and modern features with the cozy feel we loved about our original setting in the farm house. Once we were able to move into the new space, every single item in each class was carefully selected and thoughtfully placed to provide the best possible arrangement for the children.

While feeling right at home, the staff also feels we won't be completely moved in until we experience an entire school year. Once we reach ice cream day at the end of this month, we'll have a complete picture. The general consensus of teachers is that the space has turned out even better than we thought it would. Along with the new classrooms, some highlights are the teaching kitchen, the courtyard and the multi-purpose room. The opportunities for new experiences are endless. For example, children are learning to move in a safe and orderly manner in a corridor. We've never had that opportunity before. It's good to practice that skill before entering kindergarten!

The Berrybrook Parents Association certainly made the most of our new environments. The Harvest Festival on the playground was a huge success and the many events the BPA sponsored in the multi-purpose room were very well received by families. Their BPA Table was a comfortable spot for parents to visit and check out news and volunteering opportunities. Thank you to Tammy Kirk, Stephanie Handfield, Denise Faul, and Carly Wee who did a terrific job as BPA officers this year and additional thanks to Mollie O'Hara who coordinated all of the interesting enrichment programs for the children.

Along with the transition to our new space, teachers and I have begun work on NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) re-accreditation. Berrybrook has a long history of maintaining accreditation and we

look forward to the self-study process. This is a collaborative process that involves families, administration, teaching staff and our Board of Directors. Families Surveys are part of our Self-Assessment and will be distributed May 5th. Since its founding in 1926, the National Association for the Education of Young Children has been working to define quality in programs for young children. More detailed information about the NAEYC accreditation process is available on-line at www.naeyc.org.

Looking toward the future, the possibilities for Berrybrook are endless. The parent surveys distributed by the Board in the fall came back with many ideas including programming for younger students, a kindergarten group and “alumni” summer programs. With research and planning some of those ideas will become realities over the next few years. Staffing, financing, licensing and the impact on our current program must be taken into account when planning new curriculum. Every addition or change we make must be considered carefully. Parents and teachers alike are excited about growth, but survey responses from both groups emphasized how important it is to grow slowly to maintain the Berrybrook atmosphere and philosophy.

The world has changed significantly since 1954 and Berrybrook has also made some changes with the times, perhaps the biggest being our move into the new school. Throughout, Berrybrook has been true to the core principles Katharine Mann believed in when she started this school. Thank you again to all of the children, parents, teachers and board members who supported the school in its big leap into the future this year. The essence of the Berrybrook experience is within all of you.

Pat Keeley

The Year in Review

In addition to the NAEYC Family Surveys which all families will have the opportunity to respond to anonymously and confidentially, I'd like to give parents opportunities to offer feedback on all areas of program functioning in person. In addition to the surveys, I would be interested in hearing directly from parents about school policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction and your knowledge about community awareness and satisfaction.

I have scheduled 2 “Year in Review” Get-togethers for Monday, May 11. They will take place after drop off at 9:00 am and 1:00 pm. If you cannot make either of those meetings, please feel free to call me with feedback, or email me at pkeeley@berrybrookschool.org.

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 13, with a rain date of Thursday, May 14. 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 20 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 22.

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 13, with a rain date of Thursday, May 14. All parents are invited. Morning classes will meet at 9:00 am and the 4 Day Class will meet 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 19, 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 9:45. The 4 Day Class will start their trip at 12:45, so parents must arrive at Berrybrook 30 minutes early 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 day will be like next fall. Parents can expect permission slips in cubbies

The ice cream party on the last day of school is a special event. On Thursday, May 21, 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. It is our last day together as a class. However, the children are always welcome to visit Berrybrook and we hope they will do so for many years to come. The teachers always enjoy a visit from past Berrybrookers and their families.

Before we taste the delicious homemade ice cream the children will sing one of their favorite songs. It tells it all.

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 the
4 & 5 Day Classes!**



Check for the full moon on May 9th!

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. O'Neil, Mrs. Caddle, Mrs. Neal, Mrs. Capasso, Mrs. Pisani and Mrs. Keeley



**Berrybrook Summer Nature
Program**

Over 45 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	June 30, July 1, 2
Week 5	July 7, 8, 9
Week 6	July 14, 15, 16
Week 7	July 21, 22, 23
Week 8	July 28, 29, 30

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 15, 2009.

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 15. 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. LaForest 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 2008-2009. There is no tuition payment due in May.

Thank you!

Berrybrook Parent's Association

Dear Parents,

It doesn't seem possible that the school year is wrapping up, and this is the last newsletter communication from the BPA! First, we kicked off April with an extremely educational (and very entertaining) event for couples – *Parenting Together*. Jeanine Fitzgerald provided great, no-nonsense advice for parents on creating a joint vision, identifying their top three values, defining their family rules, and creating appropriate consequences and motivators for behavior. Additionally, in April, we introduced our Sibling story times, family hike, and enrichment programs including the Snake Lady for the older children's classrooms and the herb garden plantings for the younger children. Our Lemonade Stand was also a huge hit with refreshing drinks, delicious fruits, a fabulous cookie selection, and a big crowd! Thanks to all those families who contributed drinks and snacks!

During the month of May, the BPA will continue to offer many exciting events for the Berrybrook students and their families. We are looking forward to celebrating the joys of spring with our annual Spring Fling! Don't forget to fill out our flyer, if you plan to attend our "carnival" event on May 12th. Volunteers are still needed -- please sign up at the BPA table! Also, during the Spring Fling, we will be having a special sale on all Berrybrook apparel -- 20% off! Pick up a baseball cap, tote bag, vest, shirt, etc. and take a piece of Berrybrook with you this summer! Other upcoming special events for Berrybrook families include our Spanish program on May 5th at 4:00 pm to celebrate Cinco de Mayo in the main meeting room (Sign up at the BPA table). Also, on Wednesday, May 6th from noon to 1:00 pm is our Sea Life program, which will be held under the porch overhang. Explore the touch tanks of sea creatures and learn more about life on Duxbury Beach.

In the remaining weeks, all parents will be working hard to finish their children's Memory Book. Thanks again to the class room parents for all your efforts! In addition to organizing the book materials, the classroom parents are coordinating the end of year gifts. We offer our sincere appreciation to all the classroom parents this year -- Heather Abban, Rachel Sama, Alison Ceesay, Pam Campbell, Becky Darsch, Mimi Gallagher, Devon Kohler, Laura Melton, Becca Garrett, Sherry Monroe, and Lori Mullin. Please take a moment to express your thanks to them for a job well done! Don't forget to get involved, and sign up for the (2009-2010) school year as a classroom parent or BPA officer by contacting me or leaving a message with Mrs. Keeley.

Thank you to all the teachers who encourage, guide and capture our children's first learning experiences and their precious friendships. Also, thank you to Mrs. Keeley – the "gatekeeper" of Berrybrook for all her assistance and Mrs. Watts for making everything run smoothly. As a symbol of our gratitude, the BPA will be hosting a Teacher/Staff Appreciation Luncheon on May 27th. Signup sheets will be on the BPA table, and please drop off from the goodies between 9:00am to noon.

Many thanks to all who helped with all our new initiatives this year including the...

Family Directory

Harvest Festival

Book Share

Website

Sledding party

Sibling story times

Puppet Show

Holiday Tea Party

Memory Book Education night

Silhouette fundraiser

Family Hike

Lemonade Stand

Sea Life Program

Spanish Party

There are many people who deserve praises for their contributions this year. Most importantly, I would like to recognize the efforts of our BPA group this year – Stephanie Handfield, Denise Faul, Mollie O-Hara, and Carly Wee. Thanks for being wonderful friends and supportive board members! I feel very fortunate to have been part of the Berrybrook community these last three years. Not only have my children developed and fostered lifetime friendships, but I have as well, during our time at Berrybrook. At the end of the day, the greatest gift that we can give our children is simply enjoying them each for who they are and allowing them to be comfortable sharing that 'self' with their friends and community. Berrybrook School definitely is a place to find meaningful connections... what better way to start our children off on their life adventure.

Thank you again, and enjoy a safe and joyful summer!

Warm Regards,

Tammy Kirk, BPA President

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

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 financial 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 2009 Annual Appeal this month, we wanted to acknowledge the generous donors to the 2008 Annual Appeal which raised over \$3,000.00 for the scholarship fund. In addition, we would also like to thank all of our families who donated items to our recent tag sale which raised another \$1,000 for the scholarship fund.

We are so grateful for your generous financial support and your dedication to the mission of 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.

Sincerely,
The Berrybrook Board of Directors

2008 Berrybrook Annual Appeal Donors

Dan and Tara Campbell
Mr. and Mrs. Frederic M. Clifford
Fred and Donna Clifford
The Cooney Family
Scott and Carolyn Couto
Sam and Betsy Davenport
Tom and Kris Delano
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher DeOrsay
The Diamond Family
The Fabrizio Family
Jennifer and Mark Fallon
Robert and Angélique Kania
Pat and Jim Keeley
Lauren and James Kinsherf
Chris and Joanne La Forest
Gary and Alison Long
Poppyann and Mark Longsjö

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Lori and Ayaz Mahmud
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The Monroe Family
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Joan Neal
Carl O'Neil
David and Sharon Pisani
Donald and Elizabeth Randall
The Rouleau Family
The Rubin Family
A. Allyn and Pamela Ryalls
Keith and Stacy Watts
The Zaniboni Family
Matching Gift Program

Notes from the Headmaster, continued

In my position, I am responsible for administrative tasks including strategic plan implementation, accreditation and licensing but it is my contact with children, and their growth and development that is most important and the most rewarding to me. Their perspective on life is so refreshing and the observations they share provide me with an effective reality check. Children know what is important. I learn something from a child every single day.

The last day of school is right around the corner. Teachers, children and parents are going to be experiencing many “last ones” this month, and so many “lasts” are going to tug at our heart strings. For families who are leaving Berrybrook for kindergarten, there will be the last circle time, the last piece of Berrybrook artwork, and the last block creation. Even for families who are returning in the fall, ice cream day will be the last time they will be together with their very first Berrybrook class. But, there will be no “last time out the gate” because at Berrybrook the gate is always open.

We have lots in store for the month of May. Please take the time to enjoy every last minute of this school year. I say this every year, but I can't believe how fast the year has gone by. It has been so good... but it is not over yet!

Enjoy.

Mrs. Keeley

