



November, 2010

Tuesday, November 2	Professional Development Day, No School
Wednesday, November 10	Second Year Trip to Plimoth Plantation
Thursday, November 11	Veteran's Day, No School
Wednesday, November 17	BPA Evening at the Toy Box, Hanover
Thursday, November 18	Parent Discussion Group 7:00 pm
November 24, 25, 26	Thanksgiving Break

Notes from the Headmaster

Thank you to the Berrybrook Parents' Association for a dazzling Harvest Festival on October 16th. It was lots of fun and the proceeds will make it possible to schedule some exciting enrichment programs for the children this year. Thank you to Mimi Gallagher, BPA president and Cheryl Kilduff, Harvest Festival chair, who organized the wonderful event. I would also like to thank all of the parents who volunteered and let them know how much their contributions of time and energy and enthusiasm are appreciated, and how important their participation is to the life of our school. All of the families who attended the 2010 Harvest Festival join the hundreds of Berrybrook students, parents, teachers and board members who have made Berrybrook a "family" school for the last 55 years. It is amazing to me that our current students, born since 2005, are experiencing the same wonderful environment as the first Berrybrook students who were born in 1950. Since Mrs. Katharine Mann started Berrybrook in 1954, the school has been a magnet for people who are genuine advocates for children. Parents choose Berrybrook because they want the very best for their children. Teachers join Berrybrook because they know how important it is for children to have a good start in a beautiful, developmentally appropriate environment. Board members volunteer their time because they want to ensure Berrybrook continues for future generations. Through changes in our society, the economy, and early childhood education, the essence of the Berrybrook experience has remained the same because it attracts people who feel the same way about children. Mrs. Mann created Berrybrook as a "family" school and it still is. On the day of our Harvest Fest I could feel her presence. I could almost see her mingling with children and parents and enjoying a hayride through the beautiful land she chose for us. It was an exquisite day and it really captured the true spirit of her wish to have a family oriented, child-centered school. Keep up the good work.

Pat Keeley

First Year Program News

October brought cooler weather and changing leaves. Berrybrook children were able to enjoy the beauty around them as we watched the fall colors unfold. First year classes were busy learning about apples, the different colors and types. Children painted apples, sang about apples and even tasted different types of apples. We enjoyed making and eating applesauce.

Our classes also learned about fire safety. Classrooms were transformed into fire stations, complete with a large Berrybrook fire truck. Later in the month Duxbury firefighters came to talk to us about fire safety. The children listened intently. After the presentation we were given a tour of the fire truck.

Next we turned our attention to the beautiful changing leaves. We created nature collages from items collected on a nature walk. We sang songs about acorns and leaves. Orange and black became a focus near the end of October. Paper bag pumpkins and spider webs were seen throughout the school and classrooms. Classes squeezed their own orange juice. Thank you to the families who donated class pumpkins. The children enjoyed designing and carving jack-o-lanterns during class. On our last day in October the 2 and 3 Day groups enjoyed a harvest celebration with a special snack.

During the month of November, we will once again be busy. Children will learn about woodworking - classrooms will be transformed into wood working shops. Children will learn to use simple tools. We will also learn about Thanksgiving. Classes will enjoy a Thanksgiving Feast with food items made by the children. Each class will also be working on special ornaments for the Festival of Trees.

The month of November also provides us with an opportunity to confer with parents about their children. Teachers will be contacting you about conference times. As we have had time to get to know your child, this is a wonderful time to talk with you.

We wish everyone a
Happy Thanksgiving!

Mrs. Capasso
Mrs. Delano
Mrs. Dunn
Mrs. La Forest
Mrs. Piccuito
Mrs. Pisani



Classroom Calendars

Each month, teaching teams meet to discuss what activities will be appropriate for their particular group and post calendars by the cubbies to let parents know what activities will be included during the month. Parents should know however, that activities listed for each day may be changed from time to time for a variety of reasons. Teachers, as their first priority, must plan each day based on the needs of the children. It is not uncommon to reschedule an activity because another approach is more appropriate for the group. As a general rule, all activities happen during the month, but the curriculum remains fluid to meet the needs of the children. That is also why teachers refrain from sending home calendars. We would not want to disappoint children who are expecting an activity that has been rescheduled. In addition, we want to accentuate the joy of discovery children experience when they reach their own conclusions about what is going to happen in their classrooms each day!

Throughout the school year children will have the opportunity to explore and experience various activities that have become traditions at Berrybrook. As the children develop and grow, the second year teachers offer more challenging projects and activities relating to these traditions. One example of this, which begins in October and continues throughout the rest of the school year, is in our study of pumpkins. The children study the life cycle of pumpkins using all of their senses.

HEARING

- The children listen to stories and songs about pumpkins.

TOUCH

- The children have opportunities to touch the outsides of a pumpkin.
- They remove all the slippery seeds and stringy insides.
- They compare the various weights. Which one is heavier? Which one is lighter?
- Through practicing the skill of estimating they guess how much their classroom pumpkin weighs.

SMELL

- As the children scoop out the insides of their pumpkins they smell the fresh fragrance of the pulp and seeds.
- They experience the smell of baked pumpkin seeds.
- At the end of November they smell the aroma of fresh pumpkin baked goods.

TASTE

- The children have the opportunity to taste baked pumpkin seeds and fresh pumpkin baked goods.

SIGHT

- The children compare the different shapes, sizes, and colors of various real and pretend pumpkins.
- They visually observe the inside of a pumpkin.
- They observe pumpkin seeds germinating over a period of time.
- Starting in November and continuing through the rest of the school year, the children observe the natural changes occurring to their jack-o'-lanterns.

Before the classroom jack-o'-lanterns are taken outside, we read "Mousekin's Golden House," by Edna Miller. It is a story of the seasons changing from autumn to winter and a mouse finding a home in a jack-o'-lantern. It is with great anticipation that the children find a particular spot outside in hopes that Mousekin will move in. As they watch for Mousekin they will also see their jack-o'-lanterns decay and return to the earth. If you see a jack-o'-lantern around the Berrybrook property, please remind the children to just use their eyes because these jack-o'-lanterns are an important part of an on-going science experiment.

PICK-A-PICK-A-PUMPKIN

Pick-a pick-a pumpkin
from the pile.
We can give him eyes
and a great big smile.
Pick-a-pick-a pumpkin
round and clean.
Then we'll be ready
for Halloween.
Halloween, Halloween.
Then we'll be ready
for Halloween.

Another tradition at Berrybrook is our trip to Plimoth Plantation which will be on Wednesday, November 10th. All second year children with their chaperones will

meet at the Plantation by 9:00 AM. We will begin our tour with a short movie and then everyone is free to walk through the live exhibits on their own. Please feel free to stay in the exhibits for as long as you wish. Remember to wear warm clothing and comfortable shoes. This trip is mostly walking and because of its location by the ocean, can be very cold. There are a couple of gift shops on the property and a small restaurant in the main building.

Before our visit we will have group discussions at Berrybrook with the children to help them understand that the people in the village are only pretending to be Pilgrims and will answer questions as though it is the year 1627. We also explain that the people in the Wampanoag homesite may actually be descendants of the Wampanoag tribe and will answer questions in the present. They prefer to be called Native People.

At Plimoth Plantation the children will have the opportunity to experience a glimpse of life in 1627. They will learn through exploration about the Pilgrims' and Native Peoples' homes and visually observe the various period garments. They may also see some daily activities occurring such as scraping out a "mishoon" (canoe), building a new home, pottery making, woodworking, and/or preparations for a mid-day meal. This visit helps children to begin to understand and appreciate our local history.

When we return to Berrybrook we will participate in activities which will help summarize all that was learned. The children will be creating their own individual dioramas displaying both the Pilgrims' and Wampanoag tribes' lifestyles. This project will take many days to complete and one that the children feel very proud of.

Throughout November, we will be talking about family traditions and being thankful. We will be preparing for our "Feast" including another tradition at Berrybrook – freshly made butter. The children will chant these words as they shake the cream into butter.

Shake, shake, shake the cream,
Shake and make it flutter.
Shake, shake, shake the cream,
And turn it into butter.

Happy Thanksgiving!
The Second Year Teachers,
Miss Bent, Mrs. Caddle, Mrs. Fosdick,
Mrs. LaForest, Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Neal,
Mrs. Rosen and Mrs. Swan

Welcome
Ian Kennedy
in the 4 Day room 1 Class
has a new brother.

Callum James

Congratulations to the Kennedy family!

When It's Thanksgiving

The kitchen's full of the nicest sounds:
Of pans and ladles stirring,
Of bubbly pots, and kettles on,
And spoons and beaters whirring.

The kitchen's full of the finest smells:
Of dinner in the making,
Of turkey on, and cranberries,
And pumpkin pies a-baking.

The kitchen gives it all away
As sure as you are living -
You never have to look at all
To know when it's Thanksgiving.

- Aileen Fisher

Parents Association News

Wow, amazing, a new adventure- The BPA is so thankful for all the support and help from the Berrybrook community, family, and friends for a great Harvest Festival this year. This year's festival was a little different from past years, with the BPA trying some new things like the bake sale and the raffle. Those activities were well received with participation from many families and the sales of tickets and baked goods helped to raise additional funds to support enrichment programs for the children this year.

It was nice to see all the children and adults with smiles on their faces coming off the hay ride, enjoying pizza, playing games or doing some fun crafts. The BPA is very thankful for all the volunteers and generous donations we received. We would like to thank Mrs. Keeley for being by the gate and welcoming everyone to the event.

On Wednesday, November 17 from 7:00 -9:30 PM, the BPA has reserved **The Toy Box** in Hanover for a "Berrybrook Parents Only" night of shopping, wine and cheese. The Toy Box is generously donating 20% of all purchases made by Berrybrook families on that day to the Berrybrook Parents' Association. If you cannot make it to the store that evening, they will accept phone orders too. They also offer complimentary gift wrap and free home delivery!

As the holiday season approaches, the BPA will be organizing two community service events. Again this year, the BPA is organizing decorations for a tree that will be on display at the **Festival of Trees** at Plimoth Plantation. The tree has been donated by Dr. Patel and Dr. Durante of South Shore Sleep Diagnostics. We would like to thank them for their generous donation. The theme this year

is the children's story, *The Mitten* by Jan Brett. Karen Gallagher, Finn and Maeve's mom, is working with teachers on the decorations. (We are looking for knitters to knit some miniature white mittens for the tree. Let us know if you'd like to help!)

The Festival of Trees celebrates the joys of the holiday season and supports the care given by Cranberry Hospice. Many trees, uniquely decorated by talented individuals or groups from local communities are on display. All contributions to the Festival of Trees go directly to patient care and the Children's Bereavement program of Cranberry Hospice. The Festival is December 3rd-December 5th. For more information on the Festival of Trees, go to <http://www.cranberryhospice.org/festival/>

The second community service event benefits the Pilgrims Hope Shelter and begins right after Thanksgiving. The BPA will distribute a list of needed items and families may place their contributions in the boxes by the BPA table.

Because this time of year is so busy, the BPA does not schedule any meetings in November and December. We will keep in touch with you by communicating updates or announcements through email.

We look forward to scheduling the next meeting in the new year to plan activities for the winter and spring. Thank you very much.

Mimi Gallagher,
President

Pam Campbell,
Vice President

Heather Canty,
Secretary

Cheryl Kilduff,
Festival Co-Chair



Einstein Never Used Flashcards

A presentation by Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, co-author of Einstein Never Used Flashcards: How Our Children REALLY Learn - And Why They Need to Play More and Memorize Less

Thursday, Nov. 4th -- 7:30 pm presentation, 7:00 pm reception -- Duxbury High School Auditorium Presented by The Parent Connection in partnership with Bay Farm Montessori Academy with support from Berrybrook School.

Long gone are the days when kids were told, "Just go out and play." Many of today's kids are over scheduled, over programmed and just plain over tired. Well-meaning parents trying to give their kids an edge miss the important role of play in learning.

Child development expert and bestselling author Kathy Hirsh-Pasek will talk about why free and guided play is so important, the challenges today's parents and teachers face trying to "fit it all in" and how to get more play time in kids' lives.

In this presentation, you will:

- Learn how positive play experiences are the foundation for children's intellectual, social, emotional and physical development.
- Discover the many ways to nurture children's natural love of play.
- See how unstructured, everyday experiences set the stage for life-long learning.
- Hear the benefits of more play time for kids, including: developing problem solving skills, encouraging creative thinking and building decision-making skills.

Tickets for this event are \$7.00 in advance, and \$10.00 at the door. Advance tickets are available for purchase online or in the office.

Join us for Parent Discussion Group!

Our October Parent Discussion Group entitled Volunteer Participation in the Berrybrook Environment was well attended by many who came to learn about how they can be involved in their child's classroom and experiences at Berrybrook. Topics such as respect, professionalism, observation and modeling were explored in reference to our Parent Volunteer Handbook. Additional copies of the handbook, as well as many articles and handouts, are located in the hall above the cubbies across from the kitchen. Please visit this area throughout the year for all handouts pertaining to the Parent Discussion Group.

Volunteer Sign-Up Sheets are now posted in all First Year Classrooms and Interest/Hobby Sign -Up sheets are posted for all Second Year Classrooms. We so appreciate your involvement in your child's experience here at Berrybrook.

A Special Invitation...

A very special Parent Discussion Group that has been "in the making" for many years will at last be offered on Thursday, November 18th at 7pm. Look for invitations soon in your child's cubby that may be passed along to grandparents, nannies, babysitters and caregivers to join us for an enlightening discussion where we will, together, share and explore strategies and techniques for raising children. These special people in your child's life have a lot to share about their experiences. We invite them to join us so we can all share and learn together.

Looking forward to a wonderful evening!

Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Delano, Mrs. LaForest

Berrybrook After Hours

The weather has been so nice this fall, there have been many great days for families to linger after school and play. It is fun for children to extend their playground time and enjoyable for parents to chat and get to know each other better. Berrybrook welcomes families to stay as long as they would like, and we also welcome careful supervision of your children while you are here.

Berrybrook indoor and outdoor spaces are child friendly, but **children still need supervision from adults at all times.** If your child needs to come back into the school for any reason they must be accompanied by an adult. Outdoors, children need to play where you can see them. Children are very familiar with these rules because teachers enforce them everyday.

Feel free to start your sentences with
“At Berrybrook...”

we hold hands in the parking lot.

“At Berrybrook...”

we play where adults can see us.

“At Berrybrook...”

we include everyone.

“At Berrybrook...”

we are careful of all living things.

“At Berrybrook...”

we use kind and respectful words.

“At Berrybrook...”

- parents sign children out and check cubbies before playing after school.
- parents supervise children, including brothers and sisters, at all times.
- children walk up the ramp to the slide and sit feet first coming down.
- children know it is not safe climb on top of the horizontal ladder.

Thank you for making Berrybrook a school where we share responsibility for a safe and happy environment!

Community Service

With Thanksgiving approaching and the start of the holiday season, the Berrybrook community puts emphasis on helping others.

The Berrybrook Parents Association coordinates community service projects to benefit the Pilgrims Hope Shelter and to patient care and the Children's Bereavement program of Cranberry Hospice.

Children in our second year program will coordinate donations for animals at the Kingston Animal Shelter. All Berrybrook children may bring in donations for the animals and place them in the decorated boxes in our lobby. Mrs O'Neil has spoken to the shelter to find out what items the animals really need. If you could donate just one of these items it would be greatly appreciated.

2010 ANIMAL SHELTER WISH LIST

- Litter, Litter & More Litter
- Purina Kitten Chow
- Canned Dog Food
- Canned Cat Food
(Small 6 oz. cans, (not beef)
No diced or sliced, they don't like it)
- Baby Food (chicken/turkey)
- Paper Towels
- Laundry Soap
- Q-Tips
- Palmolive anti-bacteria dish soap

Also at the shelter, the animal care fund assumes medical expenses for the cats and dogs. At Berrybrook we are collecting only pennies to help the animals. We call it, “Pennies for the Pound.” There will be jars outside the office for the pennies.

Thank you so much for your donations!

The Importance of Writing

by Joanne La Forest

“How will we know that belongs to you?” are words often heard in both First and Second Year classes when a teacher asks a child about a picture they’ve drawn or painted, or a project they’ve created. A child’s response is always, “My name!” And so the connection is made: lines and shapes made on paper, created by the maker of those lines and shapes, equals meaning... equals power... equals importance.

In the First Year classes the words “I don’t know my letters” or “You do it” may come from some children at first. However, as the teacher explains that “This is your work so that would be your job” and “Did you know that any mark you put on there, whether it be a line or a dot, we’ll know it belongs to you because you made it?” Children are also exposed to their printed name to practice writing the letters when they are ready. This exposure consists of their names representing ownership of their belongings in the classroom such as their cubby, extra clothes bag, photo on their class board, family photos, as well as finding their name on supplies needed for a project, or a class list. Teachers are often seen writing a child’s name near their work so that the child sees how the letters are written and they become familiar with “their letters”. After all, the letters “belong” to them! A child’s name is the first important “word” they will write. Other important names soon follow – MOM, DAD, sister’s name, brother’s name, GRANDMA, GRANDPA, etc. or maybe the name of their favorite character from a book. Focus then typically moves to feelings or the communication of thoughts such as “I LOVE YOU” and “PLEASE BE CAREFUL OF MY BUILDING”.

In the Second Year Classes, words such as “How do you spell ‘I worked hard on my tower so be careful and walk around it?’ “ are heard and friends, as well as teachers - because we are all “teachers”, model how letters are written. Some children need to see the letters to then copy them; other children simply need to be told the letters in a word and will then write them. Writing occurs every day for every child in the Second Year program where a variety of writing materials are always offered ranging from crayons to markers, pencils to pens, all in various lengths and widths to practice proper grip and form when writing. Shorter writing utensils strongly enforce proper grip due to the limited space provided for holding it. Teachers will often comment, “Your fingers are becoming so strong while you’re writing and drawing. Can you feel the muscles in your fingers?” Words such as these empower children and provide a positive experience connected to writing. Writing with meaning rather than simply “practicing letters” provides an even more positive experience. Notes written to mom or dad about how much they love them, helping with a grocery list so we remember to buy apples, a list of games they want to play on Saturday so everyone knows and will remember teaches far more about letters and words than simply, “Today we’ll learn how to write the letter A”.

The process of writing is truly developmental and individual to each child where children are naturally at different levels along the journey. Interest in writing, fine motor skills (muscle strength and control), how strongly their writing is connected to a meaningful experience, all affect the level at which a child may be in their writing. It is important to remember that your child is always working on something. You writing the words they want to say may be more important at the time than the opportunity for your child to write. Your child seeing their thoughts and feelings in written words holds important meaning, validation and respect. It is a very powerful thing.

Who knew “writing” could be so important? Or have we always known yet simply needed to be reminded?

Enjoy the journey!
Mrs. LaForest

(Mrs. LaForest teaches in the 3 DayRoom 3 and 4 Day Room 1 Classes.)

Berrybrook Board of Directors

Halloween is over and for many parents the holiday stress is here. It is hard for families to balance the demands of the season. There are gifts to buy, foods to prepare, holiday events to attend, volunteer opportunities at every turn. We all take on additional responsibilities and stresses during this time of year. I thought it was appropriate to take a moment before the craziness begins and remind everyone in the Berrybrook community that we have so much to be thankful for.

Berrybrook families send our children to school where they have the comfort of routine and the stimulation of exciting new projects. The children come through the doors of Berrybrook and into the capable hands of our teachers. The staff at Berrybrook have mastered the art of staying calm and diffusing stress for our children. Our children are learning to calmly handle conflict and are taught skills they will use all their lives to cope in a stressful world. I am thankful that Berrybrook has such a talented group of teachers and staff.

I am also thankful for the Berrybrook campus and the beautiful open fields adjoining Berrybrook that will remain protected for generations to come. Take a moment and look around you when you are at school, there are beautiful natural areas everywhere.

Finally, I am thankful for the Berrybrook community of families. When the stress of the season hits hard, lean on one another. Ask for help with a carpool, offer to host a play date, or prepare an extra dinner and share it with a friend. There are resources within our community. Sometimes all we have to do is ask for help. Berrybrook is a unique school with so many wonderful things to be thankful for.

Betsy Davenport, Berrybrook Board of Directors

From the Lunch Bunch Teachers!

Thank you to parents for carefully packing lunches that are safe for everyone. We appreciate your cooperation, understanding and your attention to ingredient labels.



Tuition payment #4 is now due.

2 Day \$ 235.00

3 Day \$ 345.00

4 Day \$ 428.00

5 Day \$ 505.00

Annual tuition is divided into 9 payments.

Payment #1 is the non-refundable payment due with your enrollment agreement.

Payments #2 - #9 are due the first of the month from September through April with no tuition payment in May.



*The BPA is looking for volunteers to knit a few miniature white mittens for the Berrybrook Tree at the **Festival of Trees** this year. Our theme is - you'll never guess - "The Mitten" by Jan Brett. Please contact Karen Gallagher at kgallagher120@gmail.com if you would like to help out.*

Thank you!

The Berrybrook Staff would like to thank the Parents Association for arranging snacks for our monthly after-school meetings. Each month we have a 2 hour meeting to discuss curriculum and other matters that impact our interactions with children and families. These meetings are scheduled from 4:00-6:00 and we so appreciate having a snack to fortify us.

We are thankful for all of the support and encouragement we receive from parents. It is very thoughtful of parents to take time from their busy schedules to prepare beautiful and delicious refreshments for us.

Thank you very much,
Berrybrook Staff

"Say Hello to Mrs. Keeley!"

I enjoy arrival time. I think it is important to greet every child who comes to Berrybrook each day and it gives me the opportunity to meet and to get to know the entire family, including younger and older siblings. Saying hello to everyone is a favorite aspect of my job, and I am not offended in the least if a child does not say, "Hello Mrs. Keeley" in return. I notice many parents encouraging their child to return my greeting because it is a social skill that certainly is important, but please know that I understand that some children, especially our first year students may not feel ready to return a greeting just yet. I know from experience that soon, children will feel very comfortable giving me a hello at arrival and a goodbye at the gate. It is such a thrill for me the first time a child says, "Hi Mrs. Keeley!" spontaneously.

In Berrybrook classrooms, teachers model and encourage respectful, courteous and polite behavior and we know through working with your children, that parents do the same at home. So, feel free to encourage your children to "Say Hello to Mrs. Keeley" but please know that I do not consider it a requirement!

Mrs. Keeley