



Celebrating 60 Years

October 2014

Saturday, October 4	BPA Harvest Festival 10:00-1:00
Monday, October 13	Columbus Day, No School
Wednesday, October 22	Berrybrook Board meeting 7:30 pm
Thursday, October 23	Parent Participation Orientation 7:00pm
Monday, October 27	Professional Development Day, No School

Notes From the Head of School

Every year is different at Berrybrook. Every year we have a unique mix of children, parents, teachers, and board members. The particular qualities that each individual brings to our shared experience makes the year remarkable. This year, however, our community has an opportunity to focus on the past 60 years and on all of the ways those years have been *alike*. It is clear that although some things today are different than they were in the 1950s, the essence of the Berrybrook philosophy and values remain. The wide open fields have given way to playground fencing, but children still enjoy lots of outdoor play in a beautiful environment. Our beautiful new school house with handicapped access, air-conditioning, and a large multi propose room has replaced the cozy farm house that was the original site of Berrybrook School, but Berrybrook environments continue to be warm and inviting. Our families arrive in SUV's instead of "automobiles" but still know that it is "safety first" in the parking lot. Today, digital photos on a Shutterfly website capture unforgettable memories just as special as the black and white photographs taken with a Brownie camera. Berrybrook teachers have not changed at all. They possess the same standards of training, experience, commitment and caring set by our founder Katharine Mann and Berrybrook teacher, Helen Wheeler. Many of their classroom activities (like jelly making) began in the 1954 are now Berrybrook traditions incorporated into a curriculum supported by contemporary standards of best practice. Today, we have students whose parents were also students at Berrybrook! Children, parents, teachers and board members continue to be dedicated caretakers of Mrs. Mann's legacy and enjoy an early childhood experience that families have loved for 60 years. Happy Birthday, Berrybrook!

Pat Keeley

Beginners Program



Hello _____,

Hello _____,

Hello _____,

We're glad you came to school!

The Beginners are greeted by teachers each morning with this song as we gather for our Story Time. It has now become routine and repetitive so that it now provides security and a knowing for children that "Oh yes, this is where I belong!"

Areas in our classroom such as the Water Table, Dramatic Play Area, Blocks, Playdough and Sand reflect the true interests of our Beginners. The materials used provide a backdrop of fun and meaningful experiences while students can continue to get to know their teachers and classmates.

Our daily routine provides ease of flow from one activity to the next. From Independent Choice Time, Story and Project Time to Outdoor and Snack Time, children move easily in fun and laughter. Circle Time provides a joyful end to our day with gathering in fun and song, ending with:

Goodbye _____,

Goodbye _____,

Goodbye _____,

We're glad you came to school!

September focused on the important theme of "ME". Who am I? What interests me? I'm growing every day. I can do lots of things! October will extend this idea as we focus on "FEELINGS". What are they? What do they look like? How do I feel? What makes me sad? Mad? Happy?

Through play, story, song and experience we will have fun exploring the idea of FEELINGS and how we can learn from them.

Please visit our Beginners Shutterfly Site to see all that we do!

We look forward to meeting with families soon as we will have sign-ups for Parent-Teacher Conferences which will be held during class time, at your convenience.

Happy Autumn!

Mrs. LaForest, Mrs. Piccuito, Mrs. Rosen



First Year Program

Our First Year students (2 Day and 3 Day) are learning how to say good-bye and are beginning to find ways to explore our environments. By October, many are very comfortable washing hands, making decisions, and playing near new friends.

During the year, we will observe several types of play in our First Year Classrooms. Most common is parallel play. Children engage in play near a classmate. They each may be doing their own thing, but the children would describe this as "playing with my friend".

Some children will be exploring group play. This type of play is characterized by mutual interactions and conversations, but children may still be working out how to play with their peers. There is much trial and error in these interactions, as children begin to negotiate with one another.

Cooperative Play occurs when children work together. All involved decide upon the theme of the play, and the play is very interactive. Children are working together, taking turns, and working toward a common goal. In essence, they are “all on the same page”.

Berrybrook emergency evacuation drills started in September and will continue during the year. During our drills, teachers discuss the necessity of being able to get all children and teachers out of the school in case of an emergency. It is a good idea for families to talk about safety at home, and to agree on a safe meeting place. This month, children will have a visit from the Duxbury Fire Department and explore fire safety.

In addition to Fire Safety, we will be we will be discussing the changing of the seasons. Nature projects will be part of our days. We will be learning songs, hearing stories and playing games around these topics. October wraps up with a friendly celebration for Halloween. We will carve a class pumpkin and make a special snack in school. **Because of severe food allergies, we ask that candy be enjoyed at home.** This is especially important to remember after Halloween when children may want to bring candy to school in pockets or backpacks.

We look forward to getting to know you and your child as we venture together into this exciting school year. A year filled with learning and exploring while having fun!

Mrs. Barlow, Mrs. Capasso, Mrs. Delano,
Mrs. Dunn, Mrs. McDonough, and
Ms. McSharry



Parent-Teacher Conferences

By Mrs. Delano

Berrybrook strives to provide a positive, nurturing and open environment for children, parents and staff. Day to day interactions provide an opportunity to address questions and concerns and starting later in October, parents of first year students will have the opportunity to schedule individual conference time with one of their child's teachers.

Conferences are an essential ingredient for quality early childhood education. They provide an opportunity for teachers and parents to discuss a child's progress, identify concerns and to set future goals. If possible, it's nice to have both parents attend and parents are encouraged to prepare in advance thoughts, questions or concerns.

Through open communication a strategy can be agreed upon. Children respond best when they receive similar responses in both their school and home environments. Teachers and parents should agree on a plan to follow-up on any school/home approach discussed at the conference. Parents and teachers work as a team - being open minded, respectful and honest while supporting each other for the benefit of the child.

From the Office

Tuition payment #3 is now due.

Annual tuition is divided into 10 equal payments. Payment #1 is due at time of enrollment, and Payment #2 was due in September. Families have received an electronic invoice for payment #3 due October 1.

Thank you!

Second Year Program

It takes time to get to know teachers and classmates and to adjust to a new routine. The Second Year Classes have been singing, building and creating all September long!

Singing takes time. We learn new songs, traditional Berrybrook songs and old favorites, along with some sign language. There is much pride in learning, practicing and coming together as a group to sing along with others. Ask your child to share with you some songs we've been singing together. Here is one that we've been practicing about a fish:

Little Fishy

**Little Fishy went out to play,
He wiggled his fins and swam away.
Down he went in the water bright,
Opened his mouth and took a bite!
Mmm, Mmm, tastes good!**

Building in the Block Area takes time. Friends work together to discuss which blocks they will use, where they will be placed, how to make the creation stable and sturdy and what it will be used for. Visit our class Shutterfly sites to see our block creations!

Creating takes time. Art projects come to life over a span of days. Projects in September pertained to sea life and involved watercolor, glue and paint. Art projects that have not come home in cubbies are displayed in the classroom. Please feel free to visit your child's classroom at Dismissal Time to see their displays.

Preparation takes time. Teachers gather materials for projects that relate to a child's experience. Where children live near the coast, one of the important and traditional Berrybrook Second Year art projects is a Quahog Garden. Quahogs, for years, have

been donated by Berrybrook families who have fun participating in Clam Digging. They are carefully selected for their purple coloring. The children learn that long, long ago, the Native People used the purple Quahog shell beads, called wampum, as money. Teachers order the beautiful purple Statice flowers and white Baby's Breath for the children to fill their Quahog and carefully create their garden. It takes time as they learn to place each flower where they choose, stem first, to create a unique display of color and nature.

In October, families will see and hear about more projects that children will take their time to carefully create. These will include their Halloween Scenes, "Pickles" the Fire Cat, props for telling the story of The Little Old Lady Who Wasn't Afraid of Anything and more. Families will also hear about the life cycle of pumpkins, another area of study in October.

To celebrate Halloween, children will be making their own individual pizzas. We ask that costumes remain at home for this special celebration.

Happy Halloween!

Mrs. Caddle, Mrs. Fosdick,
Mrs. LaForest, Miss McNulty, Mrs. Neal,
Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Piccuito Mrs. Rosen

Arrival & Dismissal

Please remember the front door will be locked 15 minutes after arrival time. Families arriving late may ring the doorbell and Mrs. Watts or Mrs. Keeley will let you in. Thank you to parents for waiting until 9:00 in the morning and 1:00 in the afternoon to enter the classroom. Teachers need every minute to prepare for the children. Likewise, thank you for arriving on time for dismissal. Children worry if parents are late. If you have an

emergency, please call the office so we can let your child and teachers know you are on your way.

- **Drive Slowly.**
- **Supervise children after signing out.**
- **Latch the gate behind you.**
- **Hold hands in the parking lot.**
- **Children must never be left unattended in cars.**

A helpful Berrybrook tradition has been for parents to meet another parent with younger children in the lot. One parent can watch younger children in the cars, while the other parent walks Berrybrook students to or from school. Please remember anytime you have an emergency or need help at arrival or dismissal, you may call the office and we will assist you!

Family Matters

Our new school year begins! ***Family Matters***, formerly the Parents Discussion Group, is an online and face to face opportunity at Berrybrook. It is an opportunity for parents to communicate with teachers regarding family matters. The link on the Berrybrook website is available for questions and anonymous responses. This month's ***Big Room/Chat Room*** discussions are scheduled for Tuesday, October 7th at 9:10-10 am and Wednesday, October 15th at 1:10-2 pm. Our chat will start with "*Exploring the New School Year*" and go from there! Parents and children are welcome to join us in the Big Room.

Berrybrook is offering it's annual Parent Participation Orientation on Thursday, October 23 at 7 pm. Parents interested in volunteering/visiting in their child's classroom should attend this informative presentation. Teachers will explain how to best enjoy your visit in the classroom. Any questions you may have about volunteering will also be addressed.

We look forward to seeing you in October!

Mrs. Delano, Mrs Dunn & Mrs. LaForest

PS - Look for the new ***Family Matters*** information board located near the Big Room doors.

"Say Hello to Mrs. Keeley!"

I enjoy arrival time. I think it is important to greet every child 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, 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. Berrybrook teachers model and encourage 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. K

Congratulations to families on their new arrivals!

Chloe Dobric
Payton Gilligan
Brayden Hetrick
Clare Martin
John McCormick

Parents Association News

Fall is in the air and it's been wonderful to see new and familiar faces as the school year gets underway. The BPA has been very busy planning for the 2014 Harvest Festival. We are so thankful for the volunteers and the generous donations that have already come in. We have an exciting calendar of enrichment activities planned for this year.

Harvest Festival, October 4th

We are in great shape for the annual Harvest Festival next weekend! We are excited to welcome all families to the join the festivities on Saturday, October 4th from 10-1. I know it will be a great event because of the help we have received from so many of you! A big thank you to Mrs. Keeley, Mrs. Watts, BPA officers, classroom parents and volunteers who have come together to help make this day a success. This event is our largest fundraiser and all funds go to pay for the outside enrichment activities our children receive throughout the year.

Family Fun Fridays

Mark your calendars. The 3rd Friday of each month is our BPA Family Fun Fridays. We hope you can make the first one at Bog Hollow Farm on Friday, October 17th at 1:30. There will be a hay ride, games and pick your own pumpkin. Be on the lookout

for more information and sign-up sheet at the BPA table. Siblings are always welcome!!!

Parent Enrichment

We will be hosting our first parent enrichment of the year on Wednesday, October 15th at 7:30. Allyson Frazier will be offering a parent CPR training session on this evening. Again, please be on the lookout for more information and a sign-up sheet as the event nears.

Every Berrybrook parent is automatically a member of the Parents Association and welcome at all BPA meetings. We encourage you to join us at the monthly meetings to share ideas and volunteer to help in any way you can. The next meeting for October, is **TBD**.

Each year we ask parents to support us with \$30 in dues. Checks can be made out to the BPA and placed in the dues basket by the BPA table.

Thank you for your support and participation.

Donna Hillary

berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com



Dear Parents,

When you arrive on Saturday for the Harvest Festival, there will be extra parking in the field. Please enter the Berrybrook parking lot and follow the signs.

The BPA has lots of fun planned for the whole family including hay rides, face painting, crafts, snacks and more. They also have some great raffle items available to help raise funds for enrichment programs.

It is going to be a beautiful day, but if we have to cancel due to weather, an email will go out to families and there will be a message on the school answering machine.

See you Saturday!
Mrs. Keeley

A Lasting Berrybrook Friendship... Best Friends/Best Man

Mrs. Delano

My son Steve met Joey Maher in September 1989 in Mrs. O'Neil's upstairs classroom in the Berrybrook Farm House. Their friendship was immediate and sincere. When Steve married his long-time girlfriend Megan, and had to select a best man among his tight-knit group of friends, Steve said his best man was "of course, Joey."

During Joey's best man speech at the wedding last August, he mentioned how unique and long lasting their friendship had been – how they met at age 5 at Berrybrook. He also mentioned that "Mrs. O'Neil had to speak to us because we were laughing so much." The crowd of 170 laughed as not much has changed in 25 years!

The two young men attended different school systems, played on different sports teams, graduated from different universities, however their friendship has remained strong through it all.

Thanks Berrybrook for helping to make my son Steve and Joey Maher the men they are today and forming bonds that will hopefully last a lifetime!

Celebrating 60 years

Over the years, there have been many lovely poems written about Berrybrook by parents and other friends. This 60th year at Berrybrook seems like a fitting time to share some of them with our community. This beautiful poem, which captures the essence of Berrybrook, was written by Betty Carroll. Betty and her husband Charlie were caretakers of the school from 1979-1990. They kept the school clean and welcoming and enjoyed being with the children and being a part of Berrybrook.

Margaret "Betty" Elizabeth (Hunter) Carroll passed away in August. We are very grateful to Betty and Charlie Carroll for their deep interest in Berrybrook and to Betty for her lovely poem.

Berrybrook

by Betty Carroll

There is a spacious piece of land
Where firs and oaks and cedars stand
Beyond terraced slopes of green
A tiny, wandering brook is seen,
Flowing past lilacs and trees of cherries
Blue and black and other berries.
With this beauty and quiet you can tell
The name, it fits this spot so well
Berrybrook

There's a lamb and chickens to
watch and feed
And many birds that wait for seed.
A little guinea pig to share
Which teaches children how to care
At Berrybrook

A rocket ride to outer space,
A boat to sail upon a lake,
All kinds of wheels for a big race,
Oh what a busy happy place
Is Berrybrook

There are things galore for girls and boys
For quiet play or games of noise.
Indoors or out, it's plain to see
It's such a pleasant place to be.
At Berrybrook

With blocks and toys and slides and swings
And all the lovely, living things,
Everyone and everything is so nice
It is a childhood paradise,
Berrybrook

The children's needs are understood
And teacher-pupil contacts good,
Which breeds content and harmony
As one big, loving family.
That's Berrybrook

And at the closing of the day,
When everything is put away,
A lovely sunset paints the sky.
Serenity – and God is nigh
At Berrybrook.

Berrybrook Board of Directors

Snap, Crackle, Pop!

As I'm sure is the case in many households these days, the topic of Halloween costumes is at the forefront of our conversations with our kids. Catalogues have been pouring in (since it feels like July) with images of cute black cats and pirates, and now with the countdown on to October 31, chatter is high. My children, who are 8, 6, and 3, have always been fairly easygoing about costumes; they will certainly come to decisions about what they'd like to be, but even just last year my middle daughter, Meredith, happily put on a hand me down costume from her sister from a few years before. Often times the decisions are made just the week before Halloween. This year, however, they mutually came to a firm decision one morning over breakfast.

"Mom!" they exclaimed, "We know what we should be for Halloween!" And they proceeded to wheel around the box of Rice Krispies, displaying Snap, a redhead, Crackle, a blonde, and Pop, a brunette, and declaring, "Look! They're just like us!" Ever since, they have been hounding me, almost daily, to hone my virtually non-existent DIY skills to get these costumes together for them.

I don't consider myself an overly ambitious or Pinterest-worthy mom; I save the important pieces of school artwork, I do what I can to throw together a periodic batch of homemade cookies, I try to take them to the library as often I can. But I'm in the same camp as everyone else- in an era where parents are constantly trying to put their best faces forward on social media, I'm tired and just doing my best to keep them fed and bathed and clothed. But something about their request for these costumes has me so proud and so eager to do my best for them; I might just actually take the plunge and get a sewing machine. Because anyone who has met my three children probably knows - they are all very different. They do their heavy share of arguing at home, and I struggle to not compare my two oldest, who are both girls, each and every day. The fact that they are a) excited to be a team for something like Halloween, b) acknowledging their obvious physical differences yet embracing them, and c) putting aside their nearly constant bickering to band together, is providing me with a true sense of joy.

My daughters have moved on from Berrybrook, but my youngest, Michael, has begun the 3-day program this fall. I'm thrilled that he gets to have the same experience that his sisters did by attending our wonderful school. But by no means do I think it will be an identical experience. Our teachers do their very best every day to get to know each individual child and what makes them tick. They understand that even siblings, while raised under the same roof, can have extremely different temperaments and motivations. I have always felt comfort knowing that my children's first real school setting has been here at Berrybrook, where everyone understands and respects their Snap, Crackle and Pop personalities.

Lauren Brown

President, Berrybrook Board of Directors