

January 2013

Wednesday, January 2	2013-2014 Enrollment begins
Thursday, January 10	Parent Discussion Group 7:00 pm
Monday, January 21	Martin Luther King Day, No School
Wednesday January 23	Berrybrook Board Meeting 7:30 pm
Saturday, January 26	Admissions Open House
Wednesday January 30	Professional Day, No School



Notes from the Headmaster

*The important thing about snow is that it is white.
It is cold, and light, it falls softly out of the sky, it is bright,
and the shape of tiny stars, and crystals.*

It is always cold. And it melts.

But the important thing about the snow is that it is white.

- The Important Book by Margaret Wise Brown

January presents an opportunity for us to identify what is important and to set goals for the new year. To help with this process, I re-read *The Important Book* by Margaret Wise Brown that the Stravin family gave to me. This “children’s” book has a message for everyone. The book documents what is important about the snow, the wind, the rain, an apple, a daisy and other objects, and it ends with “The important thing about YOU.” At Berrybrook, we strive to preserve what is special and important about each child. Every student has a personality with qualities and quirks and passions that no one else has. The important thing about 2013 is to remember that each child coming through the gate is one of a kind and it is important that we encourage and support what is remarkable about each individual.

The important thing about you is that you are you.

*It is true you were a baby, and you grew,
and now you are a child, and you will grow into a man, or into a woman.*

But the important thing about you is that you are you.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year, Pat Keeley

First Year Program News

December was a busy month at Berrybrook. Our focus was on families and traditions. We began by learning about Hanukah. Children played with dreidels and even took one home. Each class made potato latkes for snack. We read stories and learned new songs. The children painted watercolor candles and placed them on our Berrybrook tree. The candles on the tree are a simple, yet unique way of displaying the unity of our Berrybrook family.

As we continued with an emphasis on families, children created gifts for their families. This is a favorite project for children and teachers. The children delight at the idea of making something special for their family. For teachers, it is a unique opportunity to watch them create their special gift with care and thoughtfulness. Sometimes it is a special color that mom likes, or it may be glitter for dad. The children decorated gift bags and cards and wrapped their own gifts with care. Some of you may have received your gift the day it came home, others may have had to wait until Christmas. Either way, know that it was created with love especially for you!

We also spent time preparing for our sing-along. The children enjoyed learning the stories and songs. Before the sing-alongs, each class baked cookies to serve to their families at this special gathering. We hope that you enjoyed the children's gift of song.

January brings new beginnings. We return to school refreshed and ready for

new challenges. The children will learn about some animal friends and what they do in the winter. Later our housekeeping area will transform into the Berrybrook Hospital. We will learn about different ways to be healthy, such as dressing warm and eating healthy. As we continue this theme we will transition to ways to keep pets healthy.

We wish all our families a happy, healthy new year!

Mrs. Barlow, Mrs. Capasso, Mrs. Delano, Mrs. Dunn, Mrs. LaForest, and Mrs. Piccuito

Enrollment 2013-2014

All first year families should have received enrollment information over our holiday break. January is the month reserved for all current and alumni families to enroll at Berrybrook for the 2013-2014 school year. The second year program offers one 5 Day morning group and two 4 Day afternoon groups. When submitting an application, parents should circle their program preference. The placement of children into classes is a process which takes into account individual needs of children, balance in the composition of each class and parent preference. While we would like to honor every preference, space or other factors may limit the number of children assigned to an individual class.

The Berrybrook Board of Directors sets aside funds for tuition assistance through the Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund. If you are interested in receiving information about tuition assistance please contact Mrs. Keeley.

Second Year Program News

Welcome back! We hope you all had a happy, healthy and safe break and enjoyed your holiday celebrations. As the New Year is upon us, so is the chillier weather. We have planned some wonderful activities for January. We will begin our discussions of cold weather, snow, wind chill factors, and most importantly, how to dress appropriately for the cold weather. We encourage the children to dress all by themselves. This includes zippers, snaps and buttons. It is helpful for the children to practice getting dressed at home and we thank you for encouraging them to do so. They feel very proud to be able to zip, snap, and button by themselves! We also ask that you send them to school every day with boots, snow pants, hats, and mittens/gloves. We try to spend a part of everyday outside, even if it is for a short period of time.

In mid-January we begin our study of health. During this study children explore different ways to live healthy lifestyles and they create a book about themselves. Toward the end of the month, we will begin a study on space. We will cover planets, comets, asteroids, and the moon.

For upcoming projects we will need greeting cards that you may be discarding (especially holiday cards) and shoeboxes of any size.

The second year holiday celebrations were a delight and we thank all who volunteered in the classroom to make latkes, bake cookies, and help with other preparations. If you have a special interest or hobby/collection/talent that you would like to share please let the teachers know. The children, as well as

the teachers, are always excited to have visitors and they benefit greatly from your experiences.

Lastly we would like to thank all of the children for their wonderful gift of song at our holiday sing-along. You may have noticed the children using sign language during some of our songs. We get our signs from the American Sign Language dictionary and the children worked very hard to learn each sign.

Thanks again for
all your help!

The Second Year
Teachers,

Mrs. Caddle,

Mrs. Fosdick,

Mrs. O'Neil,

Mrs. Neal, Mrs. Piccuito, Mrs. Rosen,

Mrs. Swan, and Mrs. Worley.



Snow Cancellation

Berrybrook will cancel school if
Duxbury Schools or the
Silver Lake School District close due to
a snow emergency.

Because many Berrybrook families and staff travel from outlying communities, it is our policy to cancel classes whenever Duxbury Public Schools and/or Silver Lake Schools are closed. Parents should watch news reports for cancellation of these school systems. The voice mail system at Berrybrook at 781-585-2307 will have a snow cancellation message if we are closed due to a snow emergency.

Parents Association News

Happy New Year! I can't believe we are entering the second half of the school year. The BPA has had a great year so far and we can certainly look forward to what is ahead!

I wanted to thank the entire Berrybrook community for its support of our giving tree for the Carolina Hill Homeless Shelter. We filled their list of holiday wishes and more! I know their meager requests certainly gave me pause to reflect on what is really important during a hectic holiday season. A special thanks to Erin Martin for heading up the project. Giving such a generous amount of items to the shelter made me proud yet again to be a part of the Berrybrook community. Thank you.

Family Fun Friday!

Be on the lookout for a January Family Fun after the New Year! We are hoping to get some sledding days in at Berrybrook this winter.

Enrichment!

January will continue with both our fitness and Native American programming. Coach Andy and Coach Carrie will be back to help engage the children in a lifelong love of physical fitness and Annawon will be back to discuss the winter season from a Native perspective.

BPA Dues!

We are excited that about 40% of families have already supported the BPA through dues this year. And it's still not too late to increase that number! Each year we ask parents to support us with \$30 in dues. We appreciate any

support and checks can be placed in the basket at the BPA table!

Happy 2013 (can you believe it!) and see you at school soon.

Allyson

berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com
617-458-1621



Open House

Please let your friends and neighbors know that on Saturday, January 26, 2013, Berrybrook will be having an open house for new families. It will be a chance to tour our school and ask questions about our philosophy and programs.

All Welcome!

Parent Discussion Group

Please join us on **Thursday, January 10, 2013** at **7pm** to explore, **Winter Days With Young Children**
Learn about and share your ideas for

*fun winter activities

*indoor and outdoor experiences

*positive behavior success

...and other ways to combat

Cabin Fever!

Mrs. Delano, Mrs. Dunn and Mrs.
LaForest

Berrybrook Book Review

Maria Barlow

The Way of Boys – Raising Healthy Boys in a Challenging and Complex World by Anthony Rao, Ph.D.

As a mother of two young boys, I always love reading about practical advice that calms my motherly nerves. The chapter headings are completely relatable, enticing you to read them, including: *Your Problem is Spelled B-O-Y, Little Girls Aren't Like This, He Doesn't Have Any Friends, He's A Bully, He Won't Sit Still, He Runs the Household, He Has to Win or Else, He Wants to Be the Bad Guy, He's Suddenly Fragile, He's Already Been Labeled*, and more.

Being part advice and part expose, the reader is able to relate to various stories about other families. One of his first points that hit home for me as a teacher was the mother that said her days were filled with anxiety about what her son may do next, something that teachers hear quite often. Parents want the absolute best for their children, which often results in the many hours of agonizing internally over the smallest behavioral details and what we can do as parents to make it better. Something I am completely guilty of!

One of the first points the author made was in regards to today's culture, faster pace = higher demands. He stated "We're rushing kids through their childhood, as the pace to keep up and compete with one another increases. The stress of our high expectations trickles down, and our young boys feel it the most. We're expecting too much from them, to sit, listen, and use social skills that won't be fully developed until they reach the second grade. The result? Greater numbers of boys aren't keeping up, are overloaded with stress, and are acting out in frustration". I must take a minute to commend Berrybrook from my parental standpoint, as we are so fortunate that these cultural pressures are left at the door for our children to focus on the true essence of preschool, exploration and socialization. We have all heard the statement "play is the child's work", in which the author adds that even when children are playing alone they begin to learn basic social skills, through listening and watching others around them and by picking up social patterns of people in the room with them.

I must admit, my favorite chapter was *He won't Sit Still*, the story of my life! The first question is how to burn off a boy's excess energy. A generation ago, children were sent outside to play and were expected to stay out there for hours on end. But in today's society, parents feel and need to keep a much closer eye on their children. The trouble is, parents do not have hours on end to supervise their child's play. Preschoolers wind up getting all their physical activity in short bursts of supervised time at a playground or during athletic lessons, all which typically last less than an hour. One tip is that parents should give boys a chance to expend energy while developing a sense of humor about strange behavior, for example crab walking around the house. Once you have given your son the opportunity to burn off excess energy, then you can focus on teaching him when and how to sit still. Practice because it is a skill. Remember, curiosity and creativity are the driving force for most movements.

This book consistently provided mini headings throughout each chapter, touching upon almost all behavior traits of boys, while providing feedback in attempts to answer questions from all angles. The author's stories and insights provide a better path of understanding when raising our young sons, encouraging proud parents for the exciting journey of child rearing!

(Mrs. Barlow teaches in the 3 Day-Room 3 Class)