

November 2013

<b>Wednesday, November 6</b>	<b>Second Year Trip to Plimoth Plantation</b>
<b>Monday, November 11</b>	<b>Veteran's Day, No School</b>
<b>Wednesday, November 13</b>	<b>Parent Discussion Group 7:00 pm</b>
<b>November 27, 28, 29</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>
<b>Thursday, December 5</b>	<b>BPA Shopping Night</b>



Notes from the Head of School

I would like to congratulate the Berrybrook Parents Association on the wonderful Harvest Festival they organized in October. The event reflected all the values important to our Berrybrook community. Team work, generosity, caring, and fun were the characteristics of the day. I know how much thought and energy it takes to organize an event like the Festival. BPA officers Donna Hillary, Karoline Martin, Danielle MacKinnon, Sherry Monroe and the many volunteers who helped with the festivities had every detail under control. The crafts and games were age appropriate and the music was just right. Hay rides at Berrybrook are always special and this year was no exception with O'Connor Landscape in charge. Our grounds never looked more lovely and inviting due to the work of Berrybrook parents. Thank you to the families who donated the complimentary cider, apples, and popcorn, which were healthy and delicious snacks for attendees. Many talented volunteer bakers created beautiful items and took the extra time to carefully label the ingredients to make sure everyone could enjoy the pops, cookies, cupcakes, and breads - thank you! Mothers and fathers who volunteered to make the festival happen worked hard to make sure all of the children attending the festival were safe, happy and engaged. Of course, this year's Harvest Fest, like almost every other festival for the past 13 years, had the traditional last minute worry that it might rain. And just like every other year, the clouds miraculously disappeared between 10:00 and 1:00! The event really brought out the best in all of us and demonstrated what we can achieve when we work together. The Berrybrook Parents Association is a strong organization that combines the enthusiasm of new parents and the experience of seasoned ones. I think that Katharine Mann, our founder, would be very proud of the BPA and its sustained support of the school and I know she would have enjoyed the Fall Festival as much as I did. Keep up the good work!

*Pat Keeley*

## Beginners

The month of October allowed the Beginners Class to actively learn about understanding feelings such as happy, sad, mad...including feeling afraid or feeling tired...all through songs, stories and every day play interactions. Stories such as Scaredy Mouse and Mouse Was Mad helped us to do just that!

Fall is all around us! Fun group and individual projects can reflect a child's experience with the season and the idea of Halloween, all while participating in sensory and creative art activities that foster self-expression. Exploring with Goopy Gunk, making group and individual spider webs with paint and string resulted in smiling faces, lots of laughter, and an abundance of vocabulary as children described their experiences with such goopy art mediums!

November will focus on the special people in our lives. We've been learning so much about ourselves, now we can share with each other the people we care about! Fun with glue and feathers awaits us, as well as singing more songs and sharing more stories.

Teachers will be scheduling Fall Conferences and look forward to discussing with you how your child is adjusting to the daily routine now that we are all getting to know each other. Our time on the Big Playground has been very much enjoyed and your continued help at Dismissal Time by gathering at the picnic table is greatly appreciated as this takes practice!

We are very thankful to you for entrusting your children with us each day!

Happy Thanksgiving!  
Mrs. Delano, Miss McNulty,  
Mrs. LaForest

## First Year Program News

The children in the first year program have quietly settled into our class routines. During October, we explored several themes: Apples, Firefighters, Nature and celebrating Halloween. We have taken our first nature walks and begun a Nature Journal. Each class carved a pumpkin and turned it into a Jack-o-lantern. We explored how to harvest fall seeds in several forms. Sunflower seeds, apple seeds, pumpkin seeds, and acorns are all around us during the fall. We learned a fun song about acorns, ask you children to teach it to you!

### The Acorn Song

I'm an acorn small and round,  
Lying on the cold, cold ground,  
People walking step on me  
That is why I'm cracked you see!  
I'm a nut, click, click!  
I'm a nut, click, click!  
I'm a nut, click, click!  
I'm a nut, click, click!

First Year students enjoyed a visit from the Duxbury Fire Department. The children may ask you if your family has a meeting place in case of an emergency at home. The firefighters helped us learn how to be safe. We practiced our school emergency evacuation procedure this month for the first time and will practice this once every month.

As November arrives, we will focus our themes on celebrating our family. Connecting home and school are an important part of Berrybrook. During this month, we ask the children to bring a family photo. Our families are an important part of our lives and we hope to value each part of our extended Berrybrook Family.

Parents are encouraged to visit their class Shutterfly site. There are many great photos of the children working and discovering in our classrooms. The images give parents a “behind the scenes” peek at all of the activity that takes place each day.

Teachers appreciate families volunteering to make playdough for the classrooms. Now that children have become comfortable coming to school and separating from caregivers, we look forward to having parents join us by volunteering in the classroom. We value your time and efforts and we are thankful for all of your contributions!

Happy Thanksgiving!

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



## Join us for Parent Discussion Group!

Thank you to everyone who attended our Volunteer Orientation evening in October! Teachers discussed the Parent Participation Handbook which outlines things to remember when volunteering in the classroom such as:

- referring to children by name
- speaking calmly and quietly to children at eye level
- encouraging children to be independent rather than doing for them
- playground safety rules

Teachers also spoke about the importance of role modeling appropriate behavior and words and the importance of respecting the confidentiality of all students.

Copies of the handbook are now available in the office.

Please note:

First Year Classes (2 and 3 Day) have posted volunteer sign-up sheets on their class bulletin boards.

Families of Second Year Classes (4 and 5 Day) can speak to teachers to arrange a time to share a hobby or interest, help with a cooking project, or volunteer in other ways.

The Beginners Class (Thursday and Friday, Room 3) continues to adjust to their daily routine, therefore teachers will let families know when volunteering and visiting the classroom will begin.

Thank you for your help and involvement in your child's class. It is very much appreciated and enjoyed by all of us at Berrybrook.

This month, please plan to attend ...

### **Berrybrook Curriculum Night Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm**

...teachers from each class will demonstrate and discuss curriculum areas pertinent to your child's developmental level. This is sure to be a very informative evening, giving families a better understanding of their child's Berrybrook days!

We look forward to seeing you there ~  
Happy Autumn!

## Second Year Program News

October was a busy time for the children. They created Halloween decorations, participated in a class play based on the story, "The Little Old Lady Who Wasn't Afraid Of Anything", learned about the life cycle of pumpkins, made personal pizzas, and visited with the Bones family from Hawaii.

The month of November begins with the "Annual Berrybrook Community Service Project". To receive these donations, boxes will be decorated by the children with cut-out pictures of dogs, cats, and other animals glued onto a colorful background. These boxes will be placed in the lobby and near classroom doors along with "Pennies For The Pound Jars". There will be class discussion about "What is an animal shelter?", "Adoption of pets", and "Being respectful of all living things be it animal, plant, insect, or other". It is important for children in these formative years to develop empathy and practice kindness. Childhood is short, and these children will, in the not-too-distant future, be the adults of tomorrow. It is the hope of the Berrybrook teachers that what children learn from this project will remain with them forever.

### **Hurt No Living Thing**

Hurt no living thing;  
Ladybird, nor butterfly,  
Nor moth with dusty wing,  
Nor cricket chirping cheerily,  
Nor grasshopper so light of leap,  
Nor dancing gnat, nor beetle fat,  
Nor harmless worms that creep

*Christina G. Rosetti*



Berrybrook is located in a history rich area once inhabited by Native Americans and Early Settlers. One of the ways preschoolers learn history is by connecting past to present. For many years it has been a long time tradition to go on a field trip to Plimoth Plantation each November. Children are particularly interested in viewing kitchens and bedrooms of Pilgrim houses and comparing them to the kitchens and bedrooms in their own homes. There is always the question, "Where are the bathrooms?"

After returning from the field trip there will be a follow-up activity of making Plimoth Plantation dioramas. Each child will make one to take home for the holiday. This project takes many days to complete, perhaps a week or more, and will include a Pilgrim house, stone wall, garden, wood pile, wetu (Wampanoag Home) and mishoon (dugout canoe).

Note of interest: Amelia Poole, former student of Berrybrook, is featured as Sarah in the book "Sarah Morton's Day, A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Girl", published by Scholastic, Inc. 1989.

Additional note of interest: Katharine Mann (founder of Berrybrook School) was very much interested in local history. Mr. Mann had a replica of a Pilgrim house built on the hill behind their antique cape home on Brookdale Ave in Kingston. Berrybrook children would dress in Pilgrim costumes and travel to the "Pilgrim House" for a feast of cornbread, cranberry sauce, and homemade butter.

The Berrybrook tradition of making cornbread and homemade butter continues. Children will have their Thanksgiving feast on Tuesday, November 26. Each child will make a floral arrangement to decorate his/her place at the table and then take it home to enjoy with their families on Thanksgiving Day.

### Let's Be Thankful

Let's be thankful for this day,  
for our friends and for our play.  
Let's be thankful, let's be glad,  
for the food and things we have.  
Let's give thanks for you and me,  
and our home and family.  
Let's be thankful for this day,  
for our friends and for our play.

We wish everyone a  
Happy Thanksgiving!

The Second Year Teachers,  
Mrs. Caddle, Mrs. Fosdick, Mrs. Neal,  
Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Piccuito, Mrs. Rosen,  
Mrs. Swan and Mrs. Worley

### 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 checking ingredient labels.



Thank You

## Snow Cancellation

Berrybrook will cancel school if **Duxbury Schools** or the **Silver Lake School District** close due to a snow or other emergency. Please watch 7NEWS (NBC) for cancellation notices. Parents may call the school to check the voice mail message if they are unsure about a snow cancellation. As the weather changes be sure to dress children appropriately for outdoor play. Now is a good time to locate all hats, mittens, gloves, and warm jackets that will be necessary as we head into November. As always, it is a good idea to label all clothing. Once the snow flies, children should bring snow pants, and snow boots. Children are welcome to keep slippers, sneakers or crocs at school to make sure they are comfortable in the classroom.

## Thanksgiving Thoughts

The month of November and the Thanksgiving Holiday remind us to focus on our special gifts. As a parent there are moments when it is difficult to remember how thankful you are to have your precious child. But oh, how wonderful your child is. How thankful you are!

Being a Head of School there are moments when it is difficult to remember how thankful I am to have this job. But oh, how wonderful *you* are. How thankful I am!

I am thankful to Mrs. Mann for creating and nurturing this school, to the board of directors for keeping us headed in the right direction, to the teachers who inspire me, to the parents who support me, and to the children who teach me something new every single day.

*Happy Thanksgiving,*

*Mrs. Keeley*

## Parents Association News

Hello November! Thank you all for supporting Harvest Festival. The day was a success because of all of you. A special thank you to Mrs. Keeley, Mrs. Watts, and Allyson Frazier.

We also want to thank Nessralla Farms, Sunshine Nursery and That Bloomin' Place for their generous decorative donations as well as Stop & Shop, Hannaford, and Roche Brothers for the bottled water donations.

### Enrichment

The BPA has been busy planning enrichment activities for the year. We are excited to be bringing back monthly yoga and the musician Eddie Spaghetti (Ed Sorentino) from the South Shore Conservatory.

### Family Fun Fridays

We had a great turn out at last month's Family Fun Friday at Bog Hollow. The weather was perfect for pumpkins and hay rides. The November FFF is the 15th. Back by popular demand we are going to have a Pajama Party at Berrybrook with storytelling by Big Ryan. More details to follow.

### Shopping Day at Rock, Paper, Scissors -Thursday, December 5th

Please mark your calendar and plan to join the BPA for an all day shopping event at Duxbury's Rock Paper Scissors Toy Store on December 5th. This is the first year that the store will grant us the sale all day! The BPA has arranged for 10% off and 10% of sales will come back to the BPA to help support enrichment and special Berrybrook needs. Look for an Evite with all the details.

### Holiday Giving

Last year we were blown away by the generosity of the Berrybrook community in supporting the Carolina Hill Shelter in Marshfield. This year the BPA will again be hosting a giving tree in the lobby of Berrybrook. On the tree you will find ornaments that list a child's gender, age, and holiday wish. The tree will appear after Thanksgiving and all details will be posted near the tree. Thank you in advance for your support.

Thank you to the 30% of families who have already supported the BPA through dues this year. It's still not too late. Checks can be made out to the BPA and left in the basket by the BPA table.

Our next meeting will be **Tuesday, November 12 at 7pm**. We hope that you will join us and get involved in the upcoming events.

As always we thank you for your participation and support.

Karoline Martin & Donna Hillary



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. These meetings are scheduled from 4:15-6:15 and we 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 refreshments for us.

Thank you very much!

# Berrybrook Book Review

Joanne LaForest

## The Berrybrook Way

No, the above is *not* a title of a book I read...oops! I should rephrase that: I read a book with a title *other than* The Berrybrook Way. Did you catch that? I recreated the tone of my opening sentence from negative to positive. We do that often at Berrybrook:

***Don't run!*** becomes ***Please walk.***

***Don't whine!*** becomes ***Please use your regular voice.***

***Get off the table!*** becomes ***We sit in chairs at the table.***

Respect and validation become the focus when speaking to children this way. When we consciously choose to speak in a respectful manner we create a teachable moment filled with opportunity for children to learn rather than space for resentment and failure to exist. Teachable moments lead to success and understanding of the desired behavior. Feelings of failure and resentment can actually lead to repetitive instances of the behavior you are trying to correct.

In the book I *did* read, *The Explosive Child*, author Dr. Ross Greene emulates Berrybrook's way of speaking respectfully to children when providing teachable moments as opportunities for the greatest learning and understanding. Dr. Greene focuses on children who strongly lack the necessary skills of flexibility and tolerance in daily life experiences such as disappointment and frustration. As a result, children often become "explosive" in their behavior and may need a unique way of perceiving, interpreting and therefore reacting to these stressful situations. I believe if we were to try his ideas when children are at the developmental level of learning about their feelings and how to deal at a young age with frustration and disappointment, then we will be preparing them for when they get older and frustrations and disappointments undoubtedly become larger.

Dr. Greene refers to "the explosive child" when discussing his Collaborative Problem-Solving, or CPS, Approach. This approach involves families and educators working together (a common goal for Berrybrook), sharing the understanding that "children do well if they can" (an important element of Berrybrook's philosophy), and offering empathy while children learn life skills (a daily occurrence at Berrybrook). Although Dr. Greene creates this approach to help "explosive" or "non-compliant" children, I would suggest that whenever a child feels too tired, too hungry, strongly needs a turn with a toy the very instant they desire it, or so enjoys a friend that they will do anything to be able to sit next to them at snack ...that they may *feel* explosive or *choose to be* non-compliant. Adults, too, can feel over tired, easily frustrated, starting with a cold, needing to meet a work deadline, be expected to cook dinner while caring for a crying child ... and, with the right circumstances presenting themselves, can also *feel* explosive or *want* to be non-compliant.

Our reactions and responses to a child's "explosions", no matter how large or small, can make a world of difference to the prevention of future explosions. Dr. Greene asks us to visualize the choices adults have in their reactions to children as if they were contained in different baskets. At Berrybrook, we use baskets daily. Ironically, they are for children to choose materials for a project, a popsicle at a birthday celebration, or a book they may want to look at with a friend. It's all about choice.

Here are Dr. Greene's choices (parentheses mine):

Basket A	Basket B	Basket C
Imposing your own will ("Because I said so!")	Empathy/Validation (Invitation: "Let's...")	Do Nothing ("Choose Your Battles")

Basket A, Greene says, contains commands such as, "No, you must, you can't".

Basket B allows for solving the problem together with words such as "Let's think together on this, because you are feeling so angry right now...".

Basket C involves ignoring the behavior, which at some times can be appropriate, but can also be a way of giving up on the opportunity to teach our children.

An adult example I often use when speaking to families about validating a child's feelings is about my morning coffee. My morning coffee is very important to me. One morning, as a result of not preparing for my day the night before such as ironing my clothes, making lunches, having work and school bags ready to go, etc...I was running very late and in a very irritable mood. My husband had many choices in his response to my irritability:

Basket A : "Well if you just prepared yourself as you should have last night, like I always do before an important work trip..." (Imposing his will/ideas/opinions)

Basket C: Going about his morning and leaving for work without saying a word.  
(Doing nothing)

Basket B: "You must be so frustrated you're running late. I put your morning coffee in a travel mug to take with you to work. I know how much you love and need your morning coffee. I hope your day gets better. I love you."

I am very happy and proud to say that my husband chose Basket B and it made all the difference in the world. I was met with love and understanding and as a result I am (usually!) well prepared now for getting out the door in the morning. With love and understanding our children will be better prepared for life. Although it is uncommon to experience truly explosive behaviors daily at Berrybrook, *The Explosive Child* has reminded me of the profound effect we have on children by the choices we make in our responses to them.

So, from which basket will you choose today?

*(Mrs. LaForest teaches in the Beginners and First Year Program.)*



## From The Board of Directors

### Thanksgiving Wishes

I wish you all that pen and ink could write, and then some more!

I hope you can not even think of half you're thankful for.

I hope your table holds a wealth of Thanksgiving fare,  
And love and peace and joy and health will all be seated there.

I trust your guests will all be bright,

But none them too wise,

And each will bring an appetite

For mince or pumpkin pies.

I hope the fowls will be fat,

The cider sweet to quaff,

And when you snap a Wishbone,

That you'll win the larger half!

Written by Arthur Guiterman

Happy Thanksgiving!

(The Verity family)

