



October 2023

October 9
October 14
October 25

Columbus Day - no school
BPA Harvest Festival 11am - 2pm
Berrybrook Board Meeting 7:30 pm via Zoom



Notes from the Head of School

“One day or Day One”. I heard that phrase on a podcast a few weeks ago and find myself frequently returning to that intriguing phrase. When I hear “Day One” I think of the elusive healthy eating or exercise plan I feel that myself and many others are always supposedly starting on the start of a new week or new year. “Day One” symbolizes the start point of something bold, new, and supposedly life-changing. “One day” reminds me of what I joke to be as my never-ending ‘should’ list....also known as all those things I *should* be doing or have done....I should go through my iPhone photos to put them in labeled albums, I should sift through the junk drawer to finally get rid of the chargers that just never seem to match to anything, I should clean out the outgrown toys and donate them, and I really should be making general better food choices. DAY ONE is yelling at me, where one day is a softer “psst - hey, get to it when you can because we’re not going away”.

As my children get older (now 18, 15, & 9 years old) I thought I’d have more one hours in the days to tackle all the things on that should list, the one that has been growing like a tumbleweed over the years. Alas a little over a month into the new school year, the one where we don’t have a child on the college search so it was looking to be a quieter year, yet it doesn’t seem to be that much less demanding. Yes, we’ve added a fall sport to the daily schedule that was a last minute addition and added some carpool scrambling and later-than-usual dinners. True, there are all the back-to-school Open Houses, meetings, and other evening commitments that all seem to occur for weeks on end in September. Throw in an early-in-the-season head cold or overwhelming

allergies, and it seems like there's no light at the end of the tunnel and that this schedule is destined to be my 'forever'.

I'm not going to get all "cherish these days!", "time goes so quick!", "don't blink!" but yet as I see former students getting married and my own children turning into adults (and the 9 year old thinking *she's* the adult!) I can't help but know that time is such a fickle measurement. The days sometimes are brutally long, but then you look and realize how quickly the years have gone. Cherish these beautiful Berrybrook Day Ones whether it is your first or last child attending, and know that in a blink of an eye you'll be pulling out their preschool photos and wondering where all the (one) days and years have gone.

~ Mrs. Watts



Lunch Bunch



The lunch bunch teachers

would like to thank parents in advance for being so careful to pack allergy safe lunches for their children. We appreciate our families taking the extra time to ensure all Berrybrook children are safe.

Teacher's Notes

Three Important Words

Right above the cubbies,
right next to Bear...
Every year in Room 2,
the three important words are there.

They are different each year,
depending on the "feel".
The words somehow come,
and, through the year, become real.

This year already,
the words ring true.
The three important words
perfectly chosen ~ there's proof!

Children in both classes,
living in Room 2...
demonstrate these three words:
KINDNESS, **PATIENCE**...and **RESPONSIBILITY**, too.

Smiling at one another,
With a "Hi there!" and "Hello!"
Listening and caring,
taking turns as they go.

Showing their **kindness**
with every gentle word said,
Practicing **patience** by watching classmates
who have modeled and led.

Being **responsible** for their actions,
those both verbalized and heard,
Tell us, as teachers,
we chose the right three important words.

Welcome to the new school year!



~ Mrs.LaForest

(Mrs. LaForest teaches in the 4 and 5 Day classes)

Berrybrook Parents Association Notes

We've been busy finalizing details for our annual **Harvest Festival** on **Saturday, October 14th from 11- 2!** Thank you to those of you who have already donated and volunteered your time. The Harvest Festival would not be a success without the support and generosity from Berrybrook Families. We're still actively seeking volunteers and donors for the event. If you would like to participate, please refer to the sign up genius link that went out in the latest BPA email.

This year we have lots of exciting things in store including a silent auction, raffle baskets, hayride, photo booth and arts and crafts tables. Food is also included in the ticket price. Early admission tickets are available now through October 6th for \$30 and can be purchased via Venmo @BerrybrookParentAssociation, cash, or check. Be sure to buy your raffle tickets now to save time at the door. We hope to see you there!

Family Fun Fridays

It was great to see everyone on the playground at our first Family Fun Friday. Our next event will be at Sauchuk Farm on October 20th from **2 - 4pm**. The registration deadline for this event is October 13th.

Enrichment

The planning for this year's enrichment programming is already underway. Yoga with Miss Kim will start up for the 4 and 5 Day classes this month and will be introduced to the 3 Day, 2 Day and Beginners in January. Miss Kim has been visiting Berrybrook for many years and is always well-received and enjoyed by the students. We also have Jesse Stiglich returning this spring to engage the 4 and 5 Day students in a few fun drumming classes.

Thank you to everyone who has already paid their annual BPA dues. If you have not already done so, the suggested \$40 contribution goes directly to our student enrichment program. Every Berrybrook parent is automatically a member of the Parents Association and are welcome to attend the BPA meetings. Please note our next meeting will be held in mid October. Keep an eye out for our next email with the details.

Thank you for your support! For any questions or feedback, please feel free to email the BPA at berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com.

Alex Casamassima and Stephanie McGarry
Co-Presidents

From The Board of Directors

Taking my five children to the library is always an adventure. There have been many occasions when I have reveled in the size of the basket under my stroller, but the fact that it can accommodate 30 or more books is certainly a perk that wasn't listed in the manual. I love to sort through their book selections when we return home. I know who has selected each book without even asking; a non-fiction book about electromagnetism, the picture book about Golden Retrievers, a board book about trucks (thrown in by an adoring big sister), and a chapter book about fairies among others. A few weeks ago, I was delighted to find a new book I hadn't seen before.

Sophie Blackall's stories have been favorites in our house for a while now, but her newest entitled "Farmhouse" was particularly beautiful. The author had recently purchased an old farm in upstate New York and to her delight the property came with a dilapidated old farmhouse. A willow tree was growing out of a hole in the floor by the time she discovered it and there was much evidence that the most recent residents had been a variety of local wildlife (including mice, bats, raccoons, squirrels and even a bear who had hibernated in the basement for winter). But within the home there was also a plethora of physical artifacts; moldy school books, a pile of muddy rags which turned out to be 21 beautiful handmade dresses, a parlor organ, a wedding dress, and a calendar still open to July 1970. It was through the discovery of these treasures and the generous stories, scrapbooks and oral history provided by local descendants of the family, that Sophie Blackall was able to tell the charming story of the Swantak family who had lived and raised their 12 children in the home.

As I read, I was immediately reminded of stories that I have heard about the old farmhouse where our little schoolhouse had its beginnings. Blaine Phillips built the house around 1733 and it was in that farmhouse that he and his wife Christian had their own 11 children. Imagine if those walls could talk! By the time our founder Katharine Mann chose the property to house her "new" preschool, the farmhouse had already been standing for 221 years and its title passed down to 28 different individuals. It is fascinating to think about how many memories and beloved traditions must have been made in that house. In the 54 years that Berrybrook operated the school out of that old farmhouse and in 15 years since the new schoolhouse was constructed, thousands more have called this piece of property home.

In the end the Swantak's old farmhouse like Blaine Phillip's, was no longer inhabitable and was eventually razed to the ground. A bulldozer destroyed the physical house, but Sophie Blackall believed that the story of those who had loved that house could live on for as long as their story was told.

At Berrybrook, tradition has become an invisible thread that connects current students with the many students that came before them and the countless more that will come in the future. The deep-rooted traditions of Berrybrook, like those of the Swantak family have been kept alive by oral history, fond memories, stories, scrapbooks, and songs. Physical treasures enjoyed by families help recall some of the details; painted blown eggs brought out each Easter, homemade grape jelly enjoyed on morning toast in the fall and Thanksgiving scenes displayed for the holiday. I love hearing my neighbor recount her son's home visit with Mrs. O'Neil over 20 years ago, when someone's farm animals unexpectedly stormed through the yard or listening to an alumni in spring recall how they tapped the very same maple tree as their own child.

Families who have become a part of this special school, whether in the old farmhouse or in the new, know that Berrybrook is much more than a physical place; it is a community, a philosophy, a friendship, a method of interacting with our children, a feeling. So it is no wonder then, that memories, from this “place” are remembered and shared so fondly by the many children who started part of their story here.

I hope that you will cherish the mountains of projects, candid stories and catchy songs that your children will bring home during *their* chapter here at Berrybrook. They truly are treasures that will fill both your home and your heart.

“...imagine the things that took place in the home where twelve children were born and raised, where they ate and slept and worked and played and laughed and loved and grew quite old, where they’ll live on, now, in this book that you hold, like your stories will, so long as they’re told.”
- Sophie Blackall “The Farmhouse”

Emily Balboni
President
Berrybrook Board of Directors



Berrybrook Families are growing!!!!

Welcome

Callum Biscoe

(big brother Declan is in the 4 Day Room 2 class)

Eliza Wagoner

(big brother Sawyer is in the 3 Day Room 1 class)

Betsy Parker

(big brother Teddy is in the 3 Day Room 1 class)

Thomas Kender

(big sister Eleanor is in the 4 Day Room 1 class)

Keller Beck

(big brother Levi is in the 3 Day Room 1 class)

Maxwell Dennison

(big brother Sam is in the 3 Day Room 3 class)

Toshio Picciotto

(big sister Sadie is in the 5 Day class)

Miller Rudolph

(big sister Charlotte is in the 3 Day Room 1 class)





Berrybrook Harvest Festival

October 14th, 2023

11am-2pm

Please join us for food, games,
raffles, crafts, and fun!

We hope to see you there!

All proceeds to benefit our students'
enrichment programs.

Scan here to donate!

