

North Shore Children & Families

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Sunday, May 12

MAY 2019

From the Publisher & Editor

Happy Mother's Day! Enjoy the Spring!

by **Suzanne Provencher, Publisher/Editor**

Hello again, dear readers! Those April showers are certainly bringing beautiful May flowers, as everything is starting to bloom into little bursts of rainbows. Once again, we are renewed, refreshed, reborn – as the colors return to our

landscape and our cheeks as we spend more time outdoors.

We'd like to wish all mothers, grandmothers, aunts and caregivers – even pet mamas – a very Happy Mother's Day! We hope you enjoy your special day exactly as you wish – whether that means a day at the spa, a few hours with

a good book, lunch with the girls or breakfast in bed (princess toast, anyone?), then an afternoon walk on the beach with your family. However you choose to spend your day, I hope it's a happy one.

It's hard to believe, but summer will soon be here! Have you made plans for your kids' summer yet? **Check out page 7 in this issue for more great summer options for your children!** We urge you to register for camp today and before the final slots are filled for this summer. **Visit our online Camp Directory** at www.northshorefamilies.com/camp-directory-2019/ – click on a camp – and get connected to our camps' websites to learn more and to register.

Speaking of summer, I want to let you all know that North Shore Children & Families will be taking a break for the summer. We need that time to regroup and figure out the best way to continue in the fall when school resumes in

September. We may transform to a completely digital product, as the affects of the internet have finally caught up with us – making this print publication extremely expensive to produce, print and distribute. We simply no longer have the advertising support we need to keep going in our present form. I am hopeful we'll rise like the phoenix in a way that is interesting and helpful to you and your family, with a more cost-effective platform that appeals to digital-age advertisers.

For now, I'd like to thank you for reading this issue and for picking us up at the places you frequent throughout the North Shore. Thank you for sharing some of your busy day with us and for engaging with us. Thank you to our editorial contributors, past and present, who generously shared their wisdom with all of us. Thank you to our production and distribution teams and to all who helped me share North Shore Children & Families with you for over 11.5 years. Most of all, I thank our loyal advertisers, who have made this publication possible for you and your family. We could not do what we do without all of you and your valued support for these past 12 years. Perhaps the most loyal is Shore Country Day School, our longest and most constant sponsor. We can't thank you enough. Check out their feature on the back cover in this issue, and please consider Shore if you are exploring your independent school options.

We hope you enjoy your summer – and we hope to see you back in the fall. Check back on our website in later August at www.northshorefamilies.com for updates and more information. And please "like us" on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NorthShoreFamilies/ to keep in our loop.

It has been a pleasure, an honor and a labor of love to share North Shore Children & Families with you since 2007. I truly appreciate the time and interest you have shared with us and for making us a part of your North Shore family. All the best to you this summer!

**Until Next Time ~
Suzanne**

Honoring All North Shore Mothers

Happy Mother's Day on Your Terms

by **Dr. Kate Roberts, PhD**

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 12. What do you have planned? The purpose of Mother's Day is to celebrate Mothers for all they do for everyone around them. It's a day to show respect and appreciation to the Mother who sacrifices and puts her needs last, because that's part of the job of being a good and dedicated Mom.

Mother's Day was started nearly 150 years ago when Anna Jarvis organized a day to raise awareness of poor health conditions in her community, a

cause she believed would be best advocated by Mothers. In 1914, Anna's hard work paid off when President Woodrow Wilson signed a bill recognizing Mother's Day as a national holiday.

Given all that has changed in our culture since the time Mother's Day first originated, I wonder what we are really celebrating on Mother's Day and who is really benefiting from all the celebrating? Sometimes it appears that the advertisers benefit the most. Advertising and pop culture dictate

much of what we value today and Mother's Day is no exception. The flowers, the buffet brunches, the movie like descriptions of what Mother's Day will look like fill our heads with hopes and expectations and may lead to disappointments.

In our current culture, Moms are typically more overwhelmed and overworked than ever before. Managing a child's technology use alone is a full-time job that a mom typically overseas, day in and day out. With all these demands and the fast

pace of life, I wonder if the focus of Mother's Day should change from a day of family to a day of Mom's choosing? It may be time to promote Mom spending the day on her own terms, which for some Moms will mean going off to a spa while other's will choose to watch their child's Sunday soccer game. Allowing Mom to choose, without judgement, how she spends her one day of recognition a year is a strong statement regarding how she is valued by our society.

Although we've seen the television commercials where Mother's Day is

Family Finances

What's Keeping You From Protecting Your Family's Future?

by Edward Jones

Think about your loved ones. What will their future be like? Can you picture them living in your house many years from now? Can you picture your children going to college? Can you picture your spouse or partner enjoying a comfortable retirement? These are all pleasant visions – but what if you weren't in these pictures?

If you were no longer around, you'd leave a gaping hole in the lives of your survivors. The emotional element would be tough enough, but the financial aspect – the permanent loss of your income – could be devastating to all the hopes you've had for your family members. Fortunately, you can help prevent this "worst-case" scenario from happening – if you have sufficient life insurance.

Unfortunately, a lot of people don't – even when they recognize the need. LIMRA and Life Happens, two organizations that provide education on life insurance, report the following:

- Only four in 10 Americans own an individual life insurance policy – although 85% say that most people need life insurance.
- More than one-third of all households report that they would feel an adverse financial impact within one month of losing a primary wage

Continued on page 4

depicted in true *Hollywoodesque* style, with a beautifully prepared breakfast in bed, a spotless house, people actually picking up after themselves (a true miracle in the happening), a conflict-free day of pampering and a new car in the driveway that the kids saved up for, we need to remind ourselves that this is not real. When families do try to put on a big to-do for Mother's Day, it is often more work for the Mom who ends up supervising or cleaning up and trying to help others feel okay about whatever went awry in the well-intended plan.

And then there's the disappointment factor, where some Mothers will really expect a perfect day and become disappointed or disillusioned when reality sets in that there is no such thing as a "perfect" family day because there are too many variables at play at once. Realistically, what Moms can hope for on Mother's Day is less hassle when they ask for some help

or for some "me" time. So whether a Mom decides to spend the day with the family or at their kids' sports games, or flying solo at the spa, she should enjoy it and see it for what it is – a society wide American holiday that honors Mom despite the flaws and setbacks all around her. Allow Mom to choose how to spend her special day. If she chooses to be away from the family for a few hours, put yourself in her shoes. Wouldn't you do the same if you were her?

Remember that despite whatever Mom decides she'd like to do this Mother's Day, appreciation for Mom does not have to be staged. In fact, it's most authentic when it is not preplanned. Let's hope that we all have an attitude of love, gratitude and appreciation towards Moms every day, and particularly in the moment when we feel it most. Happy Mother's Day to all North Shore Moms, however the day is spent.

Dr. Kate Roberts is a licensed psychologist. She can be reached at kate@drkateroberts.com and www.drkateroberts.com.

North Shore Children & Families



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Family Finances

Continued from page 3



earner's income, while nearly half would feel an impact in just six months.

What's keeping people from providing adequate insurance for their families? Here's a sampling of the most common reasons:

- *"I just don't want to think about it."* Let's face it – like almost everybody, you probably don't like to think about death. And consequently, you may well be inclined to postpone thinking about life insurance. But if you can just envision what your loved ones' lives would be like without you, in terms of their financial situation, you will find it easier to address your insurance needs in a calmer, more analytical manner.

- *"I have other financial priorities."* You will always have financial obligations – mortgage or rent payments, car payments, credit card bills, student loans, etc. You can't ignore these expenses, but ask yourself this: Do any of them really take priority over the future happiness and welfare of your loved ones? Since the answer to this question is obviously "no", you will likely conclude that maintaining adequate life insurance is one of the most important financial moves you can make.

- *"I can't afford life insurance."* If you think life insurance is prohibitively expensive, you're not alone. In fact, 80% of consumers think life insurance costs more than it does, according to LIMRA and Life Happens, while nearly half of the "millennial" generation estimates the cost at five times more than the actual amount. In reality, some types of life insurance, such as term insurance, is highly affordable.

- *"I don't know how much insurance I'll need."* To determine an appropriate level of coverage, you'll need to consider a variety of factors, such as the number and age of your dependents, size of your mortgage, spousal income, amount of employer-provided insurance, and so on. A financial professional can help you calculate the amount of protection you need.

As you can see, none of the reasons listed above should really keep you from adding life insurance to your overall financial strategy. So, take action to help ensure that your wishes for your family's future will become reality.

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Raising Compassionate Children



Teaching Kids to Give Brings Happiness, Healing and Purpose

By Leah Okimoto, Executive Director/Founder

Imagine if the world were able to receive all the gifts that lie within every human being.

One sentence captures what Aaron's Presents is all about. This powerful sentence reminds us that each of us has a meaningful role to play in the world, and we are needed exactly as we are. It also brings to mind the millions of people whose gifts we are missing out on, because they do not have the freedom, nourishment, resources or education to develop and express their true selves.

We believe that in order for people to make their unique mark on the world, they need to first feel valued and supported for who they are, and then empowered with the tools and resources to think beyond themselves and use their unique gifts to benefit others and their communities. The earlier these things happen, the better!

Here are a few examples of what kids

have been doing around our communities:

8th graders Vanjiru, Grace, Stephany, Esther, Abigail and Faith went to the Eliot Church soup kitchen in Lowell to serve dinner to 100+ homeless adults last week. It was an instant dose of perspective for all of us, and the kids felt fortunate to be able to give them their compassion, lack of judgment and positive energy for an hour. After they had cleaned all the

tables, they asked, "Can we come back every night?" We also had meaningful conversations about community, family, support networks and addictions.

5th graders Hannah, Emma and Anna love animals and especially horses, and they came up with the idea to take other kids to have a riding experience. We

partnered with Ironstone Farm in Andover, and they were able to make it possible for 9 other kids, all from the cities of Lawrence and Lowell, to learn how to groom a horse and then ride.

Thank you to all the volunteers and staff at Ironstone for this collaboration! We are always looking for ways to make traditionally more exclusive activities like equestrian sports more accessible to a more diverse population, so this was a tremendous experience.

8th grader Emely was planning to visit her family in the Dominican Republic



and wanted to be able to bring some much-needed school supplies and clothing to people in their village. Her friends, Dalinette, Kiara, Wildalis and Adelines also have relatives who are going there in the coming weeks, so they all went shopping to choose items to be taken to the D.R. to be given away. The kids and their parents felt so happy to be able to help people. We know those gifts will bring a lot of joy, and we feel so fortunate to have such an extended community in other countries around the world now, connections all initiated by our youth!

If we can give this next generation a chance to truly experience what it feels like to care about the needs of others and take action to connect and help them, we can change the world together. They each have so much to give, and the world needs it all! For more information about how we can help a child you know to create and lead such an experience, please visit aaronspresents.org or contact one of our staff members below. Our application is now on our website in English and Spanish.



Leah Okimoto is the Executive Director of Aaron's Presents, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that she founded in 2014 in memory of her infant son, Aaron. Feel free to contact Leah at lokimoto@aaronspresents.org or (978)809-5487; Kimberly LaBonte-Kay, North Shore Regional Director, at kimberly@aaronspresents.org; Ebony White, Lynn Mentor, at ebony@aaronspresents.org; Franchesca Arias, Lawrence Mentor, at franchesca@aaronspresents.org; Jenry-Ann Diaz, Lawrence Mentor, at jenry@aaronspresents.org; Monica Veth, Lowell Mentor, at monica@aaronspresents.org; or Matt Wolterding, Lowell Mentor, at matt@aaronspresents.org.

Children's Book Review

Run Wild

Written and Illustrated by David Covell
Published by Viking, Penguin Young Readers,
New York

We Are the Gardeners

Written by Joanna Gaines and Kids
Illustrated by Julianna Swaney
Published by Tommy Nelson, HarperCollins
Christian Publishing, Inc., Nashville, TN

Reviewed by Ann Britton Ranger

For this month's book review, I chose two picture books that are all about getting the children outdoors. Gazing at these two inviting covers, while outdoors the grass is not yet green and the tree branches are mostly still bare, is a great reminder of what is coming any day now. Young readers can look forward to running barefoot in the grass and chasing butterflies very soon. *Run Wild*, which is recommended for ages 3 and up, is the story of two happy children who run free, just as the author did in his



childhood. They chase the wind, race a rabbit, splash in the mud, talk to a worm and race across the burning sand into the cool water, where they meet a clam. The antics continue in sunshine and rain, from sunup to sundown. They slip and fall, jumping up and ambling over stumps and rocks, smiling and laughing through their adventures. Hopefully this

engaging tale will inspire your little ones to go outside to explore.

Regardless of whether you are a fan of the home improvement show *Fixer Upper*, starring author Joanna Gaines and her husband, Chip, you are sure to be captivated by *We Are the Gardeners*. The towering zinnias, crunchy carrots and juicy berries on the cover made me want to start planting right away, even though my garden was still covered in last fall's brown leaves. I recommend this book for ages 5 and up, although younger children will adore the colorful illustrations. Each page is chock full of information for budding gardeners. The Gaines children narrate the story of how their interest in gardening began with a single potted fern, which unfortunately died from over watering and too much sunlight. The family tried again, adding more and more houseplants until they were ready to start their own outdoor plot. They planned, planted, watered, weeded and



persevered, even as they encountered setbacks like plant-eating aphids and hungry animals sharing their bounty.

Soon we New Englanders will once again be running barefoot through the gardens. Enjoy your time outdoors!

Ann Britton Ranger is the Early Childhood Education Program Director at Beverly Children's Learning Center. She began collecting picture books when her own three children were young, and enjoyed sharing these stories while teaching preschool for many years.

Special Contribution

Growing a Family Garden

by Lauri Diamantis

It finally feels like Spring come May. Daffodils and hyacinths color yards, the chirping of birds fill the air and extended daylight beckons kids to play longer outside. In our home, May also signals the time to start planting our vegetable garden.

I grew up in an apartment, so I never had the experience of my own backyard. I dreamed of the day I would be able to plant flowers and cultivate a vegetable garden. When I was a teacher, I created a butterfly sanctuary, which was my first attempt at formal gardening. After moving into our house almost a decade ago, planting flower gardens became my hobby. My children, however, really wanted a vegetable garden. So for one Mother's Day, they bought me raised garden beds and our Family Garden was created.

After years of trial and error, we have learned a lot about gardening in New England. We are by no means experts, but we love it and aren't afraid to try anything. First of all, we save planting for Mother's Day. At that time, the nightly temperatures aren't so low and stay consistent during the day. Each child picks fruit and vegetables they would like to plant and take care of throughout the growing season. Our consistent favorites are tomatoes, cucumbers, sugar snap peas, peppers, pumpkins, carrots, various lettuces and herbs such as basil, oregano, mint and cilantro. We have also tried zucchini, broccoli, kale, yellow squash, potatoes, corn and asparagus, but these haven't

managed to stay on our Top 10 List. Apple trees were even added last year. Our collection is ever changing and makes trying new things fun.

Having a vegetable garden is work! However, it has been a way to foster a connection with my children in ways I didn't expect. Side by side we till the soil, grow seedlings, plan the placement of crops, weed and try to incorporate what we grow into our meals. My youngest likes to measure the plants and keep records of the progress. My son enjoys coming up with ways to keep out hungry rabbits. My oldest daughter takes delight in labeling each and every plant. There is a sense of pride as we watch our little plants grow into vegetables we eat at our dinner table.

After school and on the weekends, we can be found in our backyard with dirty gloves and rakes in hand. Together, we problem solve on how to hold up the tall tomato plants and devise a plan to make sure the lawnmower doesn't cut our pumpkin vines. I can't help but stand back and admire my children for their physical strength, ingenuity and commitment. There's something peaceful about working with your hands in a garden that allows you to forgo contemplating problems, homework assignments or scheduling conflicts. For those few moments, we work together with a common goal...one that tastes really good!

Our bounty has been so plentiful over the years that we give away a lot of our vegetables, not only to our neighbors, but also to a local meal center, *Cor Unum*, which means 'one heart'. There is great satisfaction when our hard work is feeding others in our community who may not have access to fresh fruits and vegetables. In essence, our Family Garden has become a place to nourish our bodies, our souls and our hearts.

Lauri Diamantis is a former elementary school teacher and mother from Andover. Her blog, www.thethanksgivingfamily.com, aims to enrich family through gratitude.

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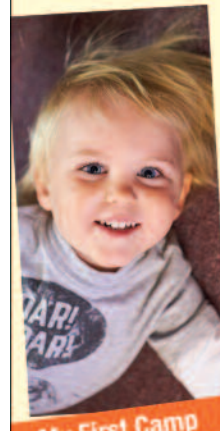
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May Checklist:

- ☒ Sign up for camp!
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Shore Country Day School

National Parks Are Rich Terrain for Fourth Grade Researchers

The National Park System turned 100 years old on August 25, 2016. To celebrate this milestone, park visitors, partners, volunteers, and rangers participated in a variety of programs and special events throughout the country. At the same time, National Parks became a core part of the fourth grade social studies curriculum at Shore Country Day School, through a yearlong investigation of topics ranging from the parks themselves to the concepts of adaptation, environmental protection, and more. The extensive unit, now in its third year, also affords opportunities for Grade 4 students to practice a variety of critical skills, such as researching a complex question, creating informational writing, and presenting information visually.



Explains Shore fourth grade teacher James Hubbard, the National Parks project begins at the start of school in the fall, when students examine the concept of adaptation. "This is a moment when they themselves are adapting to a new grade level," says Hubbard. They also learn that parks are much more than

spaces for hiking, camping, and recreational activities. Parks can also include museums, historical monuments, and places of refuge for endangered species. "The fourth graders consider these different options," Hubbard recounts, "and identify the topics that are most interesting to them individually, leading them to their own research-based project."

Next, continues Grade 4 teacher Amanda Berg, students are challenged to formulate an "essential question"—one that can't be answered with a simple Google search. "An essential question," explains Berg, "is one that requires multiple sources—books, magazine articles, websites, databases—to synthesize an answer." From there students begin the research process, reading everything that they themselves can find or that a teacher guides them to. They write "notefacts" and keep track of their sources. "Students learn that in order to write good notes," Berg says, "they need to put the facts into their own words. This sets the stage for turning notefacts into an informational book."

Students weave nonfiction text features throughout the "essay" format for their book. According to Berg, "They have already learned the essay structure using more



personal information, so it's relatively easy for them to transfer their knowledge of essay structure to newly learned information about their essential question. Putting their notefacts into a logical order is one of the more challenging aspects of the writing process."

The fourth and final phase of the project is for the students to come up with a creative way to present their knowledge for a real audience—their parents. Students first write proposals, and once approved, they use a good

deal of class time creating what they envisioned. "Frequent reflection leads some students to change their idea completely," says Berg. Students who finish with more time help out classmates who need an extra hand. "Dioramas, board games, videos, 'Kahoots,' and models are just some of the creative projects that are made." For the final presentation, students speak to parents about the multi-faceted nature of the project. They then proudly stand by their project in a gallery-type display and eagerly answer questions for their visitors.

Fourth grade teacher Stacy Tell reflects on the impact of the National Parks project. "We wanted to ensure that the opportunity was interdisciplinary," she says, "reaching across our content areas and tying back to our learning goals for fourth graders." For example, students spend a significant amount of time prior to the unit practicing different reading strategies that apply to informational text. They learn to 'chunk' small amounts of information at a time to build gradual understanding of their reading. They practice putting information into their own words in a way that is clear and age appropriate. "This gives them the necessary background knowledge to begin exploring text and online resources expertly," says Tell.

Similarly, in writing, Tell explains, "We turn our focus to paragraph structure, writing sample paragraphs that include a topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding sentence. Once it comes time for students to write their informational booklets, they're familiar with this format and are able to record their information."

Yet the more significant takeaways for students go well beyond the scope and sequence of the social studies curriculum, says Tell. "Opportunities for critical thinking, building resilience, teamwork, public speaking, and time management are seamlessly integrated throughout each phase of the project," she says. "We often reflect in Morning Meeting or Class Chats about the hard work it takes to synthesize information for a 'non-Googleable' question. We talk about the level of perseverance required if research hits a dead end, or a project idea doesn't quite meet the expectation of the initial sketch. We become problem solvers when challenges arise to meet a deadline. We are teammates when hesitation arises about speaking in front of an audience, and we encourage one another to show their best."

For Shore's fourth graders, the National Parks project has become a shared experience to embrace together, a rich environment for intellectual and personal discovery that's just as inspiring as the landscapes at its core.

www.ShoreSchool.org

The information contained in this education feature was submitted by Shore Country Day School, and published in partnership with North Shore Children & Families; www.northshorefamilies.com.