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IN THIS ISSUE

*Celebrating Our 9th Year
& the Holiday Season!*

**Restoring Etiquette
this Holiday Season**

**Healthy Eating:
Seafood**

**Children's Book Review:
Also An Octopus**

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*From Our North Shore Family to Yours -
We Wish You the Happiest of Holidays!*

WINTER ISSUE: DECEMBER 2016 - JANUARY 2017

From the Publisher & Editor

Celebrating Our 9th Birthday • Wishing You the Happiest of Holidays

by **Suzanne Provencher, Publisher/Editor**

It's hard to believe, but another year has passed. **This December marks our 9th birthday – and 9 years of being a part of your North Shore family.** I am so thankful for the advertisers and contributors who have helped to make *North Shore Children & Families* possible and available to families throughout the North Shore – including yours. And I welcome new advertisers to join us in the New Year – so we can continue to share this family-friendly, local publication and resource with you and parents throughout the North of Boston region each month. While we are free for you, our dear readers – this publication is very expensive to produce, print and distribute. So whenever you can, please tell our advertisers that you saw them in our pages – and thank them for making this publication possible for you and your North Shore family. And finally, we are so grateful for our loyal parent-readers throughout the North Shore – *all 50,000+ of you!* We are here for you and because of you and your North Shore family.

At this time of year, we also celebrate many holidays which are steeped in rich, religious traditions. While it's wonderful to celebrate the holiday we most identify with – it is also interesting to learn about the many different holidays that are celebrated at this time of year. Whether your house has a tree or menorah or kinara – whether you hang stockings or spin dreidels or light candles – may we all respect the many ways to celebrate and may we take this

opportunity to educate our children about all of the wonderful religions and cultures that make up the fabric of our world. Knowledge, understanding and respect will lead us towards peace, which our world desperately needs. May our differences bind us and not divide us.

This issue is our 2-month Winter issue, which covers December *and* January. We will be back to our monthly publishing schedule in February.

To advertise in the February issue, please contact suzanne@northshorefamilies.com by noon, Wed., Jan. 18.

Attention Summer Camps & Programs: We will launch our 10th Annual Summer Camps & Programs Showcase Series in the February issue. To feature your summer camps and programs, please contact suzanne@northshorefamilies.com for our special camp showcase ad sizes and rates. Our Showcases will appear in the February, March, April, May and Summer (June/July) issues in 2017, 5x. *North Shore Children & Families* publishes the largest camp showcases in print on the North Shore – for 10 years – and we hope your summer camp or program will join us in 2017.

I would like to thank Cathy Ballou Mealey, our devoted and talented *Children's Book Review* writer. Cathy has been sharing wonderful stories with you and your family in these pages for several years. Her review this month will be her last. Cathy is moving on to new endeavors and we wish her the very best. I can't thank you enough, Cathy. May you always find and foster wonderful stories.

In closing, please choose love and peace and kindness and gratitude – whenever you possibly can. Positive energy brings positive change – and our world is desperate for positive change. How will you and your family or classroom make a positive difference – not just at this time of year, but each and every day?

*From Our North Shore Family
to Yours ~ May Your Holidays
Be Filled With Love, Peace,
Kindness & Gratitude.*

**Until next time ~
Suzanne**



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Restoring Etiquette This Holiday Season

by **Kate Roberts**

I recently purchased Emily Post's book, *Etiquette*, because I found that, as a society, we have gotten so far away from politeness and manners and I wanted a concrete reminder of etiquette for my children.

According to Emily Post, *etiquette* means "treating people with consideration, respect and honesty and being aware of how your actions affect those around us". I also think etiquette involves trying to make the people that you're with feel comfortable.

Unfortunately today, many of us are less aware of our own rudeness and that of our children's rudeness, both in real life and online. In our fast-paced world, everything is done in shorthand and etiquette is not con-

ducive to shorthand. So abruptness, quickness and not taking time for transitions can come across as rudeness. However, the intent may be different on the part of the parent. More likely, the parent is so focused on their child and keeping them in control that they unintentionally appear rude by excluding the polite behaviors from their repertoire.

Etiquette is about making a connection in the moment that is meaningful. It's about making contact that allows both parties to feel positive and good. People today are moving in fast-forward mode, regardless of whether their children are with them or not. We are not taking the time to practice good manners when it comes to social interactions. In addition, children



role-model what they see. So if a parent is not displaying manners, children won't either.

Having good manners and conducting yourself with good etiquette brings good things to you as a person. If

you're emitting negative manners in the world and not greeting others properly or displaying other forms of bad manners, then those are the kinds of responses you're going to get back

Continued on page 4

North Shore Children & Families



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for our upcoming deadlines.

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Etiquette

Continued from page 3

from the world around you. This may not happen every time, but it's cumulative and it would happen enough to have a negative impact on how positively someone feels connected to the world around them. The holidays are a perfect time for parents to emphasize the role and importance of positive etiquette. Here are some tips to encourage etiquette in your family:



1. Use eye contact. Eye contact is huge when it comes to encouraging children's manners and politeness. It sends a message that the person is interested. It provides an opportunity for reciprocal interaction. Eye contact invites the person to engage with you. It says, "I want to be talking or interacting or engaging with you", while looking away says the opposite.

2. Be aware and encouraging. If somebody is looking at you and trying to engage with you – encourage them and start engaging! A positive environment and/or fun activity can bring out the best in someone in terms of manners and politeness.

3. Practice pre-teaching. Before heading into a social event, parents can pre-teach. Remind children to remember their manners before they interact socially. Examples include using

eye contact, saying "please" and "thank you", asking first, sharing, listening, taking turns, using a tissue instead of their sleeve and so on.

4. Self-monitoring. The best thing you can do is act polite yourself. For example, at the supermarket or drugstore, the cashiers that engage with the downcast customer tend to get a positive response back. That's because they're taking a risk by trying to break down the wall and bring out the best in the customer. What used to be called *good manners* is now thought of as social risk-taking – talking to someone who may or may not respond, just because it's the right thing to do. More likely than not, it brings out manners and positive interaction with others. *Role-modeling and being present while interacting are key when teaching etiquette to children.*

5. Self-evaluation. Ask your children to make note of when they

interrupt, make eye contact, use positive body language, take turns speaking and so forth.

6. Avoid public criticism. It's rude when parents criticize their children in public. Evaluate your child in private and even then, do it only when necessary and beneficial.

7. Help others. A big part of etiquette is the willingness to pitch in and help others who need assistance. Whether it's holding the door for someone or shoveling snow off the driveway of an elderly neighbor, offering yourself to another is positive and demonstrates etiquette.

Make the holidays a special time this year. Focus less on what people get and receive and more on how they treat each other. If we all commit to restore good, old-fashioned etiquette, we are destined to have the best holiday season ever!

Dr. Kate Roberts is a licensed child and school psychologist and family therapist with offices in Salem and Wenham. She specializes in technology management, cognitive-behavior therapy, family therapy, anxiety and learning disabilities. She can be reached at kate@drkateroberts.com and www.drkateroberts.com.



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Healthy Eating

Seafood

by Mary Higgins



Red snapper with orange-ginger glaze, teriyaki sea bass, Cajun blackened catfish, shrimp scampi – restaurants all over the country feature enticing seafood dishes on their menus. Besides being tasty and low in calories, fish has multiple benefits.

Fish is a popular meal all over the world with countries like Japan, Denmark, Norway and Iceland consuming more per capita than meat. But fish was not so popular with the first settlers to New England. Eating it harkened back to medieval times of existing on eel during religious fasting. In addition, the Queen of England in the 16th century used to proclaim “fyshe days in order to save the cattle”.

Recognizing how abundant fish was in the region, New England colonists eventually started to place eel, as well as mussels, clams, lobsters and later codfish on their tables. Our own Cape Cod is named after the codfish abundant on its shore and the codfish became a driving force in the early economy of Massachusetts. Did you know that a carving of the codfish was hung in 1798 by the Massachusetts House of Representatives and to this day still hangs in the House chamber?

Nutritional Value of Seafood

Seafood is rich in minerals such as selenium and iron. Fish, abundant in omega 3 fats, such as tuna and salmon, have health value. Seafood is also high in protein and low in fat, making it a delicious entree for moms and dads who may be watching their weight.

So essential to brain cell development, the components of fish oil, DHA and EPA, are put into baby formula. DHA, *docosahexanoic acid*, is also naturally found in breast milk. Moms always called fish “brain food”, and now we know why: DHA makes up part of the membrane around brain cells as well as the retina of our eyes.

When pregnant moms are deficient in DHA, the babies they give birth to often have attention problems, including ADHD. The interest in fish oil supplementation started around heart disease when researchers noticed how Japanese people who eat fish daily have less hardening of the arteries (atherosclerosis) compared to the Americans and Canadians, most of whom consume fish twice a week.

In the artery, inflammation attracts fatty accumulations which restrict artery walls, taxing the heart. There is always a danger that the plaque building in the arteries can break off and travel, causing a stroke. However, people taking fish oil supplements or eating fish have a lower amount of inflammation.

Introducing Fish to Your Children

Getting your children to enjoy fish is not difficult. It's easier to digest than meat. Start with filets of white fish such as flounder or sole. Although these do not have an abundant source of omega 3 oils, it is a good place to start rather than with breaded and fried, frozen varieties. Fish is full of protein, low in saturated fat and replete with the minerals phosphorous, selenium and potassium. Shellfish provides even more - iodine, iron, zinc, copper and magnesium. As the nights become colder, a spaghetti sauce using clams in a red or white sauce will be greatly appreciated.

Continued on page 6

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Seafood

Continued from page 5

Some children find scallops sweet while others will find them bitter, but most enjoy mild-tasting shrimp with cocktail sauce, light on the horseradish. If you have time, slice jumbo cooked shrimp and mix with mayonnaise and celery for a tasty shrimp sandwich.

Haddock, with its light taste, goes well with a little butter and crushed crackers or Panko bread crumbs. Children may delight in eating squid (calamari) because of its white-purple color. Boiled in water and olive oil then served with a drizzle of lemon, it should appeal to children of middle school age.

Although sardines are high in omega 3 oils, and are very low in mercury compared to tuna, they are a fish with both a strong smell and taste, which may need to be disguised. I squeeze generous amounts of lemon on the sardines then add raw red onion, dill weed and mayonnaise with some seafood spice, serving it in place of tuna.

The Problem with Mercury

There you are at the fish counter, deciding what fish to feed your family. You have read about the mercury in the air we breathe as well as the water we drink. Mercury is a toxic metal converted by bacteria to methylmercury, and when ingested, damages the rapidly growing nervous system of a fetus as well as the young child. Do all fish contain this heavy metal?

Unfortunately, large fish such as tuna do, but we have more to worry about with other contaminants in the water, such as PCB's and dioxins that get into the flesh we eat. These pollutants are linked to stroke, obesity and diabetes.

Farmed Versus Wild Fish

You're probably aware of the controversy surrounding farmed fish versus those free to pursue their own food. Often, farmed fish are held in overcrowded pens with other fish that have parasites and bacteria, requiring antibiotics. These fish may be fed foods high in inflammation-producing omega 6's and have a higher bacteria count. Many farmed fish are also full of artificial color and pesticides.

In the wild, fish are free to eat smaller fish and algae at the bottom of the ocean. But larger fish, such as swordfish, accumulate mercury from eating medium sized fish full of mercury. So what is the consumer to do?

Choose organic when possible. What the organic designation means is that the store demands a lower quantity of bacteria in the fish. It may look and smell better. The buyer for a particular store is choosy about what countries the fish is being bought from, as not all countries share the same standards of cleanliness. There are instances where shrimp from some countries were being farmed underneath the dirty cages of other animals, so droppings were a regular part of their food supply. For this reason, you may wish to avoid all imported shrimp. Do not fall for the "all natural" label, as "natural" has no defining terms.

For wild fish, find the MSC or Marine Stewardship Council label or look for fish that originates from either Denmark or Canada, which have the cleanest operating systems in their salmon farms. Also look for fish that is reasonably farmed.

The fish lowest in mercury that are also high in omega 3's are: anchovies, sardines, halibut, mackerel, sea scallops, wild salmon from Alaska or the Pacific Northwest, wild shrimp from the USA.

Continued on page 7

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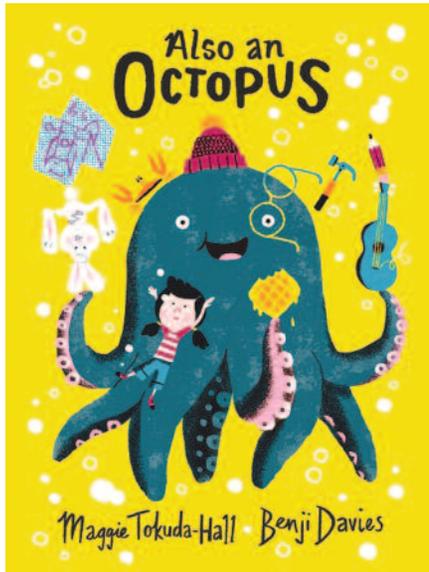
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Children's Book Review

Also An Octopus

Written by Maggie Tokuda-Hall;
illustrated by Benji Davies
(Candlewick Press, \$16.99, Ages 3-7)

by Cathy Ballou Mealey



Looking for a terrific tale about waffle spaceships and eight-legged ukulele players? Well **Also An Octopus** is definitely the book for you!

Wondering how writers come up with ideas for books about waffle spaceships? Then this is *STILL* the book for you! Debut author, Maggie Tokuda-Hall, has crafted a funny, clever

story about following the spark of an idea through wild gallops of imagination until it takes shape as a book. But this can happen if and only if one follows the basic rules of the road, which are explained with flair and humor.

The tale begins with a blank page. An unseen narrator gently reminds us that all stories do begin this way, on an empty page, screen or canvas, until a character appears. Perhaps it is a little girl, or an adorable bunny or a ukulele-playing octopus. But that grinning octopus, surrounded by bloopie bubbles and wearing a pom-pom topped knit cap, has to want something. What the character wants, explains the narrator, will make the story become interesting. And if the octopus wants an awesome purple spaceship, it has to be difficult to get. If he can simply get one from the drugstore, the story will be too silly, short and dull. So perhaps the octopus will have to make the spaceship himself, out of odds and ends, like soda cans, glue, string, umbrellas, glitter and waffles.

Have you fastened your seatbelt yet?

Because this story is just about to take off! Or is it? “I’m not really qualified to build a spaceship...” remarks the octopus, a tentacle rubbing his puzzled head. Nope, that spaceship doesn’t fly, so now our hero has an even bigger problem to solve. He has to find a rocket scientist!

Tokuda-Hall subtly teaches the constructs of story-telling within the boundaries of this absurdly whimsical tale. Step-by-step, the hapless octopus is tossed and turned through the imaginary gyrations of the narrative, experiencing the emotional highs and lows of a plot-driven concept. As illustrated by Benji Davies, the engaging and expressive characters will appeal to all readers, young and old. The seemingly retro color palette ranges from mustard yellow to blue, orange, and luscious,

deep eggplant, displayed in large, bright spreads that are nicely balanced and evenly spaced. Davies tucks amusing random details into the scenes, like a curly-tongue armadillo and motorboat-driving hamster. Those details, in turn, will inspire young listeners to create new stories of their own.

Create new stories? Yes, because everyone has a bit of nothing, a virtual “blank page” on which to begin. And thus **Also An Octopus** comes full circle after a rollicking adventure that is as awesome as a purple spaceship dotted with waffles. Remember those bloopie bubbles that swirl around our eight-limbed hero? They burst into sparkly stars once he reaches outer space, a twinkling celebration of this delightful adventure into the world of story-making.

Cathy Ballou Mealey is a picture book writer and mom to two great kids. She lives in Lynnfield and shares book reviews through Twitter via @CatBallouMealey. Cathy borrowed Also An Octopus from her local library, where she discovers wonderful new stories every week.
Editor's Note: This is Cathy's last book review for NSC&F. We thank her so very much for sharing so many wonderful new stories with us for so many years – and we wish her the very best in her next adventure. Good luck, Cathy. You will be missed.

Seafood

Continued from page 6

When buying canned tuna, look for light as opposed to chunk white and choose skipjack tuna when possible.

It comes down to balancing the omega 3 benefits with the downsides of mercury and other pollutants. The US government has formally recommended that if you are pregnant, nursing or about to become pregnant, that you should avoid these four fish entirely: king mackerel, tilefish, shark and swordfish – all very high in mercury content.

Eating sushi while pregnant comes with risks. If you are making it yourself, be sure your hands are very clean. At a restaurant, choose salmon or shrimp, which are low in mercury. Whatever you choose, I hope you enjoy eating fish!

Mary Higgins, M.Ed., is a nutrition educator who writes about food for several websites. She has a Bachelor's degree in both Nutrition and Education. She studied exercise science and received her M.Ed. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She has worked as a Sports Nutritionist and personal trainer at YMCAs in the greater Boston area and is certified by both the American Council on Exercise and the American Academy of Sports Dietitians and Nutritionists. Mary is also the author of Daddy Trains for the Marathon, a book written about the Boston Marathon and available on Amazon.com.

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