



Issue 2: November 16, 2010

In This Issue

- :: You Floored Us!
- :: One Parent's Atrium Story
- :: Classroom Themes Now Online
- :: Admissions for Younger Siblings
- :: What Ted Hewlett Learned at Math Night
- :: BFG Day Wrap-Up
- :: Try this Afterschool Riddle & Recipe

You Floored Us!



Click to enlarge

Once upon a time, all the Atrium floors were black cement -- unfinished, cold and hard. Although they lent a kind of modern, loft-like look to the school, they weren't so great for cozy reading groups or active gym classes. Generous families helped carpet the classrooms and hallways... but the gym floor loomed large, both physically and financially. And yet,

You Floored Us!



On October 25, the Atrium welcomed all those who had helped

Dear Atrium Families,

Welcome to the second edition of *Compluvium* for 2010-2011! Please read on for dates and information you'll want to have on hand.



Two essential items:

- 1. PLEASE invite your friends to an Atrium Open House!** Help spread the word about the Atrium! Hang posters at playgrounds, tell your Facebook friends, and call your child's former preschool director. Open Houses are coming up on December 3 and 5. [Click here to email Meredith](#), and she'll put posters in your mailbox.
- 2. Snow Days! How to find out:** Love 'em or dread 'em, they're on the way. We'll announce school closings and school delays:
 1. Via the message on our school phone: (617) 923-4156
 2. Via the e-mail system through the PTA
 3. Online at www.thebostonchannel.com
 4. On the Atrium website at atrium.org

Warmly,

Susan and Linda

Classroom Themes now online

At the Atrium, each classroom ignites curiosity and integrates students' knowledge by exploring a single, multi-faceted, year-long organizing theme. This year's themes -- and a full explanation of how and why themes takes shape in the classrooms -- are now online! Click below to read each one:

- [PreKindergarten: "What is Change?"](#)
- [Kindergarten and First Grade: "What happens in Harbors?"](#)
- [Second and Third Grades: "What is a Human Being?"](#)
- [Fourth and Fifth Grades: "Who are we as Innovators?"](#)
- [Sixth Grade: "How do we make choices?"](#)

Calling All Younger Siblings!

It's time to start planning for next year. Siblings who will be 4 years old in September 2011 can enter the Atrium's Pre-K classroom, the Originators. Siblings who will be 5 years old in September 2011 can enter our K classroom, the Travelers. [Click here for the dates and deadlines](#) of the admissions process, which are the same for siblings as for new families.

What I Learned at Math Night:

by Ted Hewlett, father of Ethan

"On two different Wednesdays in recent weeks, parents and teachers gathered in the music room with current and former Atrium faculty to learn about (cue dramatic music) ... Math. Almost all of us had been taught in ways that are different from INVESTIGATIONS, the curriculum used at Atrium, and indeed, in many schools across the country. What I experienced personally was a sense of ownership and success, an interest in people rather than just the numbers, and more insight into how math could and should be brought to bear in everyday life.

in this flat-out effort and gratefully thanked them all, with a special toast to four families: Betsy Goodrich and Andrew Jones; Bonnie and Paul Rocklin Waltch; Edie and Andy Jirak; Ann-Mara and John Lanza. [Click here to see all the amazing donors](#) and [click here for full details on the evening](#), which featured bright champagne and a true treasure: a series of scenes presented by Atrium parents and actors Adrienne Krstansky and Ted Hewlett.

And now, a word from our parents...

**Good Teaching:
The Gift that
Keeps on Giving**
by Ashley Nazemi
Atrium Parent

"This fall, our daughter Katherine (Atrium '07) joined the Mather tutoring group at The Winsor School where she is currently a tenth grader. Every Wednesday afternoon she travels to Dorchester to tutor ESL students." [Read the rest...](#)

What has the Atrium meant to your child and your family?
Please share your experience! Personal stories provide such powerful perspectives for current and prospective families.

If you are inclined to share -- even just a short comment -- [please email Susan](#).

I'm excited by what, and more importantly, **how** Ethan is learning in Math."

[Click here to read what Ted says and learned](#) about how the Atrium engages his child and your child in math every day.

BFG Day & Harvest Assembly



Atrium welcomed over 60 guests for BFG Day - Bring a Friend or Grandparent Day - on Friday, October 29. Grandparents, relatives and friends came from as far afield as Wisconsin, New York and New Hampshire to visit our school and spend time in their hosts' classrooms. With

enthusiasm and industry, students and their guests did art projects together and shared stories about school. You can check out the resulting planters decorating the wall near the Visionaries (6th grade) classroom.



The morning culminated with Harvest Assembly (one of our four special assemblies of the year). For years, Atrium families have gathered together to sing, honor our children and celebrate our community as the seasons change and at Graduation. When alum families come back to the school, these are some of

the moments they remember best and the shared tradition is part of what binds our community.

This year, we sang songs like *Baskets Upon our Shoulders* and *Gather in the Harvest* that have been in the repertoire of generations of Atrium students. Among several special presentations, we enjoyed hearing about what is important to the Originators and, fittingly, a poem from the Explorers. Many thanks to Beatrice, Larry and the classroom teachers for a beautiful and moving celebration.



An Afterschool Riddle:

What runs around the yard all day but never moves?

Afterschool at the Atrium often begins with a riddle or a joke. Hagar asked us this one. Both adults and kids had to think about the answer.

Here in afterschool, our days are full and happy. We are busy building with and painting blocks, making paper maché animals, exploring our art materials as well as playing outside whenever we can. Our enrichment classes expand our experiences. We offer art on Tuesdays and chess on Wednesdays, along with tennis for 4th-6th graders and yoga on Thursday. These classes will be offered again in the winter session and we will be adding sports clinics with Emelia.

As we settle into our routines we have begun to cook. During this first week of daylight savings time we tried a recipe for "cake-in-a cup." [Click here for the recipe -- and the answer to the riddle!](#)

And [click here to email Meredith](#) if your child would like to try afterschool for an afternoon.

A Pre-K-6 school in Watertown, MA, The Atrium engages children in hands-on experiences and meaningful learning. For nearly 30 years, an Atrium education has delivered small classes, passionate faculty strong academic foundations and innovative approaches. Our warm, involved and diverse community is what makes Atrium so special.

Thank you to each and every one of you for your insights, ideas and engagement.

With appreciation,
[Linda Echt](#) and [Susan Diller](#)
Co-Directors, Atrium School

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