

# BESpeak

JANUARY 2012

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALTIMORE ETHICAL SOCIETY

## My Lunch with Reverend Jesse Jackson

by Hugh Taft-Morales, BES Leader

Sometimes it pays to be in the right place at the right time. That's how I felt about my lunch with the Reverend Jesse Jackson – I lucked out. I was visiting the Interfaith Tent at Occupy Philadelphia, and suddenly Rev. Jesse Jackson emerged from a cab and came right up to me and shook my hand. He then continued greeting the others in the growing crowd. I was satisfied with my brief brush with the famous civil rights leader, two-time candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, and current leader of Rainbow/PUSH. When he left, he suggested a press conference for the next day, Monday, November 21, at the Interfaith Tent.

The next day at noon, Rev. Jackson directed a press conference urging the Occupy movement to keep its eyes on the prize. Whether protesters hold their ground or have to move for the winter, "...the Occupy movement is not about this space. It's about the space between rich and poor, the space between those who have access to medical care and those who don't, the space between the 1% and the rest."

When all the news trucks and reporters were gone, Rev. Jackson called me over and invited me and a couple of others from the tent to lunch. I didn't feel I had earned the thrill of lunch with such an inspirational leader. I was struck by his calm, almost soft-spoken, manner.

He spoke gently about President Johnson's genius in deracializing the civil rights debate. He noted that the president began his "War on Poverty" in predominantly white rural Appalachia, assuring the broadest support possible. In the same way, today's Occupy movement must work in broader and broader coalitions, avoiding the splintering that so often plagues progressive movements. This will take, he said with a wry smile, convincing the black clergy that Occupy can be more than a "white hippy and derelict movement." It's about inclusion.

*(continued on page 6)*



CELEBRATING

# 60

YEARS

**SUNDAY PLATFORMS**

**10:30 a.m.**

*(details on pages 4-5)*

**JANUARY 1**

**Pancake Breakfast  
& Winter Festival**

**JANUARY 8**

**"The Immigrant Experience—  
a Psychological View"**

Deepan Chatterjee, PhD  
*Clinical Psychologist*

**JANUARY 15**

**"When Children Lead: Bringing  
Out the Best in Birmingham"**

Hugh Taft-Morales  
*Leader, Baltimore Ethical Society*

**JANUARY 22**

**"Three Parts Shakespeare"**

Jill Giles  
*Associate Managing Director*  
Michael Boynton  
*Associate Acting Member*  
Frank B. Moorman  
*Company Member*  
*Chesapeake Shakespeare Company*

**JANUARY 29**

**"Urban Food Access  
in Baltimore"**

Angela Smith  
*Project Director, Baltimore Food & Faith*

# BESpeak

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## Issue 415

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**Hugh Taft-Morales** *Leader*  
**Fritz Williams** *Leader Emeritus*

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by @bmorethical.org. For general  
questions: askBES@gmail.com.

[www.bmorethical.org](http://www.bmorethical.org)

# Unexpected Flowers

by Rosemary Klein, BES President

Late one December evening (as I worked desperately to get the Board agenda together and out), I stopped for a moment to look at the sumptuous pages of a book on gardens recently designed by a good friend (*Exploring Gardens & Green Spaces: From Connecticut to the Delaware Valley*, Magda Salvesen, Norton, 2011). In its front matter was this quote from esteemed landscape designer Russell Page: “A Garden really lives only insofar as it is an expression of faith, the embodiment of hope, and a song of praise.” Startlingly those words resonated equally as a description of BES, which I thought had been “tucked in” successfully at least for the night.

The next morning (as I still struggled with the Board agenda), I heard a knock followed by the doorbell. The man at the door thrust (mindful of the Jack Russell barking vigorously at heel level) at me a large, deep red poinsettia, offset by an equally large complex swirl of a bow that sparkled with gold snowflakes. Its accompanying card read simply “Rosemary, Happy holidays, Love, Mom.”

It’s almost a decade since my mom bypassed assisted living, which – though she was able – she felt would require too much from her, to be ensconced happily and comfortably in a nursing home, where without question everything would be done for her at all moments. After that move, though she remained (and remains) quite sentient and with minimal physical pain or discomfort, she was also in a position, which she quickly grasped the advantage of, from which she never had to write anyone a birthday/Christmas/New Year card or wrap anyone a present again. And neither my brother nor I have found that easy even as we’ve remained available, assisting with all that’s been doable.

So it was grand that the very next evening my brother called, excited that he and his wife had also received a beautiful poinsettia. “Of course,” he said (certain I was behind it as for many years had been the case with cards and gifts others received from mom), “you knew all about it.” But really I knew nothing – and that felt so very, very good.

The very unexpected gift from my mother brings to mind a story recently told me by an avid gardener and BES member. One April day she had set out to plant a plot with “basic summery stuff.” Her new playful kitten, however, zipped along right behind her, joyously digging soft earth and slinging dirt and seeds. That June the garden she welcomed – while gorgeous – lacked all arrangement. Rather than the ordered circles of poppies and rows of marigolds and zinnias she had set out to achieve, her flowers had popped up quite haphazardly. What she took from that “chaos” was that we don’t always get the response we want, but the response we do get is praiseworthy.

How wise her reaction! What she learned is another unexpected gift, one that I intend to keep close this new year. And for you in 2012, I hope the coming days blossom in ways both expected and unexpected that affect you deeply as expressions of faith, embodiments of hope, and songs of praise.

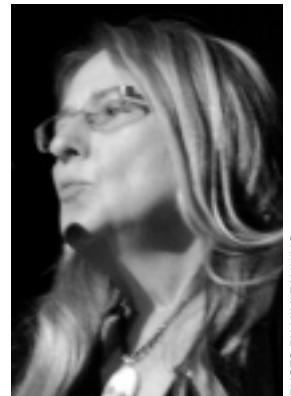


PHOTO BY MIMI ZANNINO

# Member News & Updates

BES recently received a letter from member Carol Mays who writes “I miss everyone there and in fact often dream of being somewhere like Baltimore and at some gathering like BES again.” She and husband Gary Blanchard live in West Brookfield, MA, and Carol reports that “Gary is the only additions’

counselor for miles around,” which has helped grow his practice and that she has “started a poetry group which, amazingly enough, has been quite successful and meaningful to the people involved.” She has also self published two books and is working on a third in conjunction with a couple of her friends from the poetry group.

## BES WELCOMES MAV VAUGHAN



BES Leader Hugh Taft-Morales welcomes Mav Vaughan as a new member of BES.

**MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 7:30–9:30 P.M.**

## *The Day the Universe Changed*

*An engaging video and discussion series!*

In *The Day the Universe Changed*, James Burke explores links between knowledge and reality through stories about the history of western civilization. Join Ethical Culture Leader Hugh Taft-Morales every month, September

through May, for fun discussions of these videos. The fifth installment is on Monday, January 16, from 7:30-9:30 p.m.: *Infinitely Reasonable: Science Revises the Heavens*. Free and open to the public.



## ETHICAL HUMANIST SUNDAY SCHOOL

WITH LINDA JOY BURKE

Every Sunday, except Jan. 1  
10:30 a.m. – Noon

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### Poetry Group

Sunday, January 8, 9:30 a.m.

### Baking Night at Moveable Feast

Thursday, January 12, 5:45 p.m.

### Moveable Treats Sunday, January 15

### Board Meeting

Sunday, January 15, 12:30 p.m.

### Video and Discussion Series

Monday, January 16, 7:30 p.m.

### Mindfulness Meditation

Sunday, January 22, 9:30 a.m.

### BES Ironweed Film Club

Wednesday, January 25, 7:30 p.m.

### Newcomers' Meeting

Sunday, January 29, 12:30 p.m.

### Great Thinkers Discussion Series

Sunday, January 29, 12:30 p.m.

## SUNDAY SNACK SCHEDULE

Last names starting with:

A to F	Jan. 8
G to L	Jan. 15
M to R	Jan. 22
S to Z	Jan. 29

## BES MEETUP

If you would like to receive emails about upcoming events, register on our MeetUp site at [meetup.com/bmorethical](http://meetup.com/bmorethical).



### JANUARY 1 Pancake Breakfast & Winter Festival

What better day than the first of 2012 to celebrate at BES with good spirits and excellent food. Pancakes are on flap, with turn-over by a variety of expert chefs, including Susan Henley, Richard Lewis, Karen

Elliott, and Ken Brenneman. Everyone attending is invited to contribute a breakfast/brunch type food, to bring a warm article of clothing such as gloves, scarves, hats to adorn our mitten tree, and to bring a sun gift (a inexpensive gift of joy) or to partake of those that will be on hand. Coffee, tea, and juice beverages will be provided, and our Sunday School will contribute a surprise or two to the merriment.

### JANUARY 8

#### “The Immigrant Experience— a Psychological View”

Deepan Chatterjee, PhD  
*Clinical Psychologist*

The tension between majority and minority cultural views on mental health – especially as it relates to immigrants – will be discussed with examples provided of the differences in perception of mental health disorders between Eastern and Western cultures. Dr. Chatterjee will also offer examples from personal experience of being an immigrant in this country and will facilitate discussion about hidden prejudices and biases that may affect attitudes toward immigrants.

**Deepan Chatterjee** is a licensed psychologist in Maryland and the District of Columbia, who is also certified in Maryland as a board-approved drug and alcohol supervisor. He earned his PhD in clinical psychology with a minor in developmental psychology from Howard University, where the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences awarded him the rare Hawthorne Dissertation Fellowship. His master’s in clinical psychology was also completed at Howard. His BS in psychology was received from Bethany College, where he obtained an International Student Scholarship (only two awarded worldwide), one of many honors he would receive during his academic

studies. With over a decade’s experience in providing diagnostic evaluations, individual and group psychotherapy, crisis counseling as well as psychological assessment services to children, adolescents, adults, families and criminal offenders, Dr. Chatterjee works currently as part of a medical team at Psychogeriatric Services, LLC, where he provides psychological evaluation and psychotherapy to nursing home and acute rehabilitation residents. Additionally, he has medical staff privileges at five area nursing homes in Baltimore, Frederick and Prince George’s counties. He has published a number of papers and presented at professional conferences, seminars, and workshops on the topics of addiction, optimism, dual diagnosis, and immigrant psychology.

### JANUARY 15

#### “When Children Lead: Bringing Out the Best in Birmingham”

Hugh Taft-Morales  
*Leader, Baltimore Ethical Society*

Few moments in the civil rights movement were as critical or risky as the Children’s Crusade of May 1963. Martin Luther King Jr., perhaps at the low point of his civil rights leadership, opposed involving children in protests – and tragedy could have occurred. As history has proven, however, the roadblock to justice that was segregated Birmingham was overcome with the courage, singing, and smiles of thousands of children. In honor of Martin Luther King Day, Hugh Taft-Morales speaks on this incredible moment in history, how it brought out the best in the human spirit, and how it motivated Ethical Culture to go to Birmingham.

**Hugh Taft-Morales** serves as Leader for both the Baltimore Ethical Society and the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia and also works as Consulting Leader to the Ethical Society Without Walls (ESWoW). A Yale College graduate (1979), he also earned a Masters in Philosophy (1986) from University of Kent in England and for twenty-five years taught philosophy and history in high school. In 2009 Taft-Morales completed a three-year leadership certification program with the Humanist Institute. Taft-Morales and his wife Maureen, a specialist in Latin American affairs for the Congressional Research Service, live in Takoma Park, Maryland; they have three children, Sean, Maya, and Justin.

## SUNDAY PLATFORM PROGRAMS

**JANUARY 22**

### “Three Parts Shakespeare”

Jill Giles

*Associate Managing Director*

Michael Boynton

*Associate Acting Member*

Frank B. Moorman

*Company Member*

*Chesapeake Shakespeare Company*

*The Merchant of Venice*, a many-themed tragic comedy, is the focus of this platform, which opens with Jill Giles recounting this Shakespearean tale. Then Michael Boynton explores the play through the lens of “The Quality of Mercy as Relative: Gender, Ethnicity, and Justice” and Frank B. Moorman contributes, presenting “I Don’t Know What Justice Is – or Mercy.”

*The Merchant of Venice* will be presented by the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company (CSC) in Columbia during February and March 2012. **Jill Giles** handles marketing, box office, and community relations for CSC. A St. Edward’s University graduate with a BA in Theatre Arts, she has worked in professional theatre for over 20 years. Positions she has served in include company manager for Actors Theatre of Houston, community outreach instructor for Theatre Under the Stars in Houston, outreach director for Katy (Texas) Visual and Performing Arts, and workshop coordinator for Queen City Stage in Poughkeepsie, New York. **Michael Boynton** is a PhD candidate at the University of Maryland, College Park in the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies. He also holds two MFAs: one in Graduate Musical Theatre Writing from NYU, Tisch School of the Arts and the other in acting from Wayne State University, home of the Hilberry Repertory Theatre. Boynton works professionally as an actor, writer, and director, and in addition to his CSC role, he is the co-artistic director of the Pallas Theatre Collective. **Frank B. Moorman** has been with CSC since its first summer production in 2003, performing in a wide range of comedies and dramas, including the lead in *King Lear* and *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Other theatre work has often involved him in plays that challenge people’s expectations and assumptions, including *The Exonerated*, based on interviews with people who had been wrongfully condemned to death, *Gross Indecencies: The Trials of Oscar Wilde*, and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, which he has both acted in and directed. Other directing credits in-

clude a movable production of *Julius Caesar* for CSC, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and several short plays by Samuel Beckett.

**JANUARY 29**

### “Urban Food Access in Baltimore”

Angela Smith

*Project Director, Baltimore Food & Faith*

In Baltimore, the food system comes up short for many city residents – corner stores are common; supermarkets are scarce; diet-related diseases are on the rise; and healthy, affordable foods can be hard to find. We will discuss some of the factors that have led to this situation and share examples of how local faith communities are working to bring about a more just, healthy food system for those most in need.

**Angela Smith** directs the Baltimore Food & Faith Project with the Center for a Livable Future’s Eating for the Future at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She has an MA in environmental studies from Brown University, where she studied religious-environmental organizations and their efforts to promote an environmental ethic among “people in the pews.” She worked on an organic community-supported agriculture farm in Baltimore County and continues to grow food at the Druid Hill Park garden of the City Farms Program, operated by the Horticulture Division of the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks. Smith is a trained master gardener/composter in Baltimore City and enjoys volunteering at community gardens, school gardens, and for other greening projects in her neighborhood.

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## IRONWEED

# Film

## CLUB

Wednesday, January 25,  
7:30 p.m.

Join us this month at the BES Ironweed Film Club when we screen *Chemical*.

*Chemical* explores the life cycle of everyday household cleaners and hygiene products to prove that, thanks to our obsession with cleanliness, we are drowning in a sea of toxicity. The film is at once humorous, as we watch the Goode family try to turn a new leaf by creating and living in a toxic-free home, and informative, as director Andrew Nisker works with many experts to give audiences the tools and inspiration to live toxic free. *Chemical* tackles “the toxic debate” in a truly revelatory and entertaining way, not only by raising awareness, but by providing simple solutions. View the trailer at [www.ironweedfilms.com/films/chemical](http://www.ironweedfilms.com/films/chemical).

Screenings are open to members of BES and the BES Ironweed Film Club. Contact Email at [volcheck@acm.org](mailto:volcheck@acm.org) about free membership. *Donations are requested for refreshments.*

*Note: This film had been scheduled originally for a screening in November that was postponed.*

## GREAT THINKERS DISCUSSION SERIES

Join Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader of the Baltimore Ethical Society, for a series of stimulating conversations about some of the most important American thinkers connected to humanism and freethought.

Free and open to the public.

**Sunday, January 29, 12:30 p.m. – Benjamin Franklin**

*The Curiosity of Ben Franklin: Freethought and Citizenship*

**Sunday, February 26, 12:30 p.m. – Ralph Waldo Emerson**

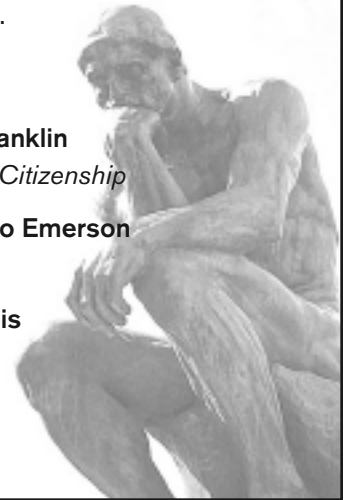
*Emerson, Adler, and Transcendence*

**Sunday, March 25, 12:30 p.m. – W. E. B. Du Bois**

*Du Bois, Inclusion, and Power*

**Date to be determined – Jane Addams**

*Ethical Relationships and Jane Addams*



## BAKING NIGHT AT MOVEABLE FEAST

Thursday, January 12, 5:45–8:00 p.m.

Join BES members and others for this enjoyable outing at a great organization – check out their website at [www.mfeast.org](http://www.mfeast.org). Let Lisa Alderson know you are coming ([lialderson@gmail.com](mailto:lialderson@gmail.com)) and show up at Moveable Feast, 901 N. Milton Ave. Baltimore, MD, at 5:45 p.m. Park on the street in front of building. Enter through the door closest to Ashland Street. Let Lisa know if you'd like to carpool, and she'll try to match you up with another BES participant.

## My Lunch with Reverend Jesse Jackson

*(continued from page 1)*

Near the end of our meal, another minister asked Rev. Jackson, “What sustains you?” He answered, “Well, we’ve had some victories. It excites me. And you young guys here at this table right now – you are my ‘angels.’”

I know full well that I have not earned such metaphorical wings. So many others have paid a much higher price than I for speaking truth to justice – the ones on the front lines, they are the angels. But Rev. Jackson’s humbling words inspire me to do more to earn his faith.



Rev. Jesse Jackson visiting the Interfaith Tent at Occupy Philadelphia. BES Leader Hugh Taft-Morales is seated at right.

# Bi-Racial Sunday School Assembly Formed Here

*(Reprinted with permission from the October 6, 1951 issue of The Baltimore Afro-American, <http://afro.com>.)*

Baltimore has gained something unique in the way of race relations with the organization, recently, of the Children's Sunday Assembly, composed of youngsters from a variety of racial and religious backgrounds.

The project is sponsored by the Baltimore Ethical Society, and the assembly, which held its first meeting Sunday, meets every Sunday in Levering Hall on the campus of Johns Hopkins University at 11 a.m. A few more children will be accepted for enrollment.

Kenneth C. Milford, president of the Ethical Society, an associate member of the American Ethical Union, pointed out that the assembly's purpose is to teach youngsters "a way of life in which faith in man is paramount and ethical conduct is regarded as the highest form of worship."



Five classes have been organized, including the nursery for two to three-years olds, taught by Miss Florence Landon; kindergarten, 4-5 years, Mrs. Sarah Milford; Junior I, for 6-7 years, Miss Rose E. Brousman; Junior II for 8-9 years, Mrs. Florence Chodak; and Senior, 10-11 years, Paul Kangas, chairman of the children's committee.

*Our thanks to Gordon Stills for tracking down this historical document.*

## PODCASTS ARE HERE!

BES (thanks to Emil Volcheck and Tommy Park) now offers podcasts of some of our platforms on our website, [bmorethical.org](http://bmorethical.org). To subscribe to our podcast RSS feed, click the link on the right of the home page and you will be notified when a new podcast is available.

## COMPUTER TO DONATE? HELP THE SUNDAY SCHOOL!

Are you ready to upgrade to a new desktop computer and looking for a good home for your current machine? Are you putting off buying that new laptop you really want because the one you have works okay?

Please consider donating your computer to the Sunday School!

Our Sunday School teacher Linda Joy Burke is using web videos in the curriculum and has plans for the students to do video projects and blogs. The refurbished laptops we have are slow and unreliable, and they often choke on streaming videos. Linda Joy could do more if she had a computer with at least 1 GB RAM and a 14-inch screen. If you think you can help, please speak to Kathryn or Emil.

## MINDFULNESS

# meditation

Sunday, January 22, 9:30 a.m.

Mindfulness is a tool we can use in our daily lives to act in a more ethical way. We practice mindfulness meditation so that mindfulness comes naturally in stressful times. Join us as we sit (on chairs) and breathe (just the way it comes naturally) and listen to some words from Thich Nhat Hanh, one of the world's best-known teachers of mindfulness.

# BESpeak

**BALTIMORE ETHICAL SOCIETY**

306 W. Franklin Street, Suite 102, Baltimore, MD 21201-4661

**NEWSLETTER**

Please do not delay!

**TIME VALUE**



## *BES's 60th* **ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

April 21–22, 2012 – You won't want to miss it!

### **NEWCOMERS' MEETING**

**Sunday, January 29, 12:30 p.m.**

New to the Society and interested in learning more? Attended a meeting or two? Thinking about joining? Come to the Newcomers' Meeting, held following the last platform of every month, and learn more about Ethical Culture and about our Society – its history, its philosophy, and its organization. Meetings last about one hour and attendance is recommended before becoming a member. See John Reuter or Hugh Taft-Morales for more information.

### **MOVEABLE FEAST AND MOVEABLE TREATS**

**Baked Goods – Sunday, January 15**

**Other Items – Every Sunday**

Support Moveable Feast in its work to feed people with AIDS, blood cancer, or breast cancer and their families. Guidelines for donations are posted at the Society. For more information about Moveable Feast and their many additional programs, visit them on the web at [www.mfeast.org](http://www.mfeast.org).



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