

BES Endorses the Healthy Maryland Initiative

by Hugh Taft-Morales, BES Leader

As part of the Baltimore Ethical Society's responsibility to create a more humane society, we have endorsed the Healthy Maryland Initiative sponsored by *Health Care for All*. Following procedures approved at the 2011 BES membership meeting, the Ethical Action Committee proposed the measure to the membership. By signing a petition, or through e-mails or phone calls, a majority of BES members indicated their approval of endorsing this initiative. BES joins with 272 organizations such as the American Heart Association, the Greater Baltimore Urban League, Progressive Maryland, and Maryland chapters of AARP and the NAACP. We add our voice to this important policy discussion just as Annapolis begins committee hearings about the initiative.



Some of what our legislators will hear you already know: that tobacco kills tens of thousands of Marylanders, costs us hundreds of millions of dollars in health care costs, and is on the rise in the form of teen use of cigars and smokeless tobacco products. They will also hear that taxes on tobacco products do effectively nurture healthier living for our citizens and their families. Should the state legislatures pass this initiative, it would increase the state cigarette tax by \$1 per pack, along with a similar increase to the tax on other tobacco products, and those revenues would help support the state tobacco control program and other community-based health initiatives, including those that address childhood obesity and senior care.

BES's endorsement of this initiative is particularly meaningful to me as my mother died five years ago from lung cancer due to smoking. In some ways, the cancer was mercifully swift and it scared her less than the emphysema that was slowly smothering her. She was a strong woman – strong enough to kick addiction to alcohol and prescribed anti-depressants. But she could not give up cigarettes, even though she tried many times. Nicotine is a powerful drug, and she got hooked on it at a time when the tobacco industry was busy lying about the effects of their product.

When industry is so manipulative and when the dangers are so great, I think the

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SUNDAY PLATFORMS

10:30 a.m.

(details on pages 8-10)

APRIL 1

“Building a Larger, Inclusive Environmental Bandwagon”

Fred Tutman
Riverkeeper & CEO

APRIL 8

“Growing Up Humanist: Framework for a Better Society”

Katherine “Kati” LaClair
*PhD Candidate,
Cellular and Molecular Medicine*

APRIL 15

“Justice: Why So Elusive, So Often?”

Judge Andre Davis
*U.S. Court of Appeals
for the Fourth Circuit*

APRIL 22

“Memories and Reflections”

Fritz Williams
*Leader Emeritus,
Baltimore Ethical Society*

APRIL 29

“Existential Faith: Choosing Ethical Culture”

Hugh Taft-Morales
Leader, Baltimore Ethical Society

ETHICAL HUMANIST SUNDAY SCHOOL

WITH LINDA JOY BURKE

Every Sunday
10:30 a.m. – Noon

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

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questions: askBES@gmail.com.

www.bmorethical.org

More than a Celebration of Longevity

by *Rosemary Klein, BES President*

“Save the dates” has been our mantra of the past few weeks. Now the blanks finally get filled in – to the relief of many who likely wondered what was ever and actually going to take place.

On April 21 (the actual date of the 1952 signing that incorporated the Baltimore Ethical Society) and April 22, we’ll hold a series of events that promise to be affirming, uplifting, and just plain fun.

We’ll start Saturday evening with a plated dinner in the elegant Octagon, an historic jewel among the 68 lush, flowered, rolling acres of the Mt. Washington Conference Center. Michael Franch, whom the American Ethical Union (AEU) accepted as a Leader-in-training in 1973 and who served as our Society’s Leader until 1986, will brush us up on BES history in more depth than *BESpeak* could ever aspire to. The evening will also be enlivened by the energy and inspiration offered by our current Leader, Hugh Taft-Morales.

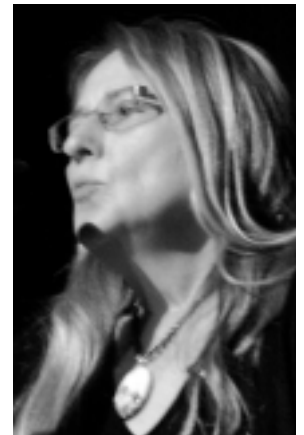
It seems fitting that a venerable institution such as the Baltimore Ethical Society should hold its celebratory dinner in the Octagon, equally rich in local history. Now among the last remaining edifices of its style in Baltimore, the Mt. Washington Octagon was built in 1855 under the direction of the Reverend Elias Heiner of the German Reformed Church and until 1861 operated as the Mt. Washington Female Academy. Following the Civil War, the college failed, and the Sisters of Mercy bought the building and established Mount St. Agnes College, whose graduate most notable in the present day is Senator Barbara Mikulski but which also turned out the infamous spy for the Confederacy – Belle Boyd – whose name written by diamond ring is scrawled into an Octagon window pane. A 1971 merger with Loyola College resulted in Mt. St. Agnes moving from its Mt. Washington site and ceasing as a separate degree-granting institute. Most recently – in 2003 – The Johns Hopkins University purchased the acreage called home by the Octagon, termed an “unheralded historic spot” and a secret of our city by the 2009 *Baltimore Magazine’s* City Guide.

We hope to rouse things during the evening through our silent auction (which each and all should consider contributing to) – and, perhaps, a musician or two.

The next day Fritz Williams, beloved BES Leader Emeritus, will offer his thoughts on his time with us. The presider for his talk will be Ron Solomon, an equally beloved long-time member of Ethical Culture. We are grateful for the presence of Ron – and his wife Carol, who played the guitar at a 37th anniversary celebration of BES that was held in 1987.

Fritz’s thoughtful illustrations that accompanied his observant children’s stories will be side by side with the dramatic and sensitive watercolors of Susie Ketzis, BES member and current music director, in an art exhibit, displayed in the well-designed

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ROY ZIMMERMAN IN CONCERT

Wednesday, April 4, 7:00 p.m.

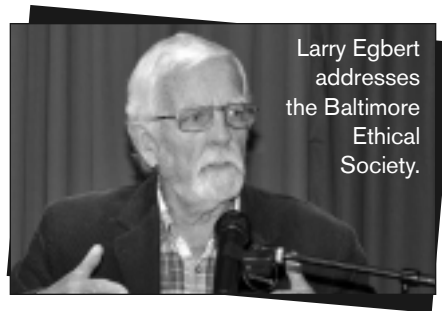
Hear Roy Zimmerman in "Live from the Starving Ear" at the 2640 venue (St. John's Methodist Church, 2640 Saint Paul St). Join Baltimore CoR and hear funny songs about ignorance, war and greed from a latter-day Tom Lehrer. Tickets \$10-\$25 sliding scale. Visit www.redemmas.org/2640.

Cases Against Egbert Resolved

A much-watched case that never came to trial is of particular interest as one of the defendants was Lawrence "Larry" Egbert, retired Baltimore anesthesiologist, a founding member of Final Exit Network (FEN), and twice (2009, 2010) BES's nominee for the Elliott-Black Award bestowed by the AEU. Early this February a precedent was set when the Supreme Court of Georgia held that a state law that limited certain assisted suicides was unconstitutional in that it violated free speech rights. The decision resulted in charges brought by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation being dropped against Egbert, FEN former medical director, and three of his colleagues.

This ruling followed the not guilty verdict received by Egbert at the culmination of a jury trial held April 2011 in Phoenix, Arizona. The charge

against Egbert in this trial had been conspiracy to commit manslaughter by aiding in a suicide.



BES member Em Sabatiuk has kept the Society informed regarding both trials. Sabatiuk has been a volunteer with FEN, a small group of right-to-die activists with a focus less oriented toward affecting legislation (that falls to their counterpart organization Compassion and Choices) but more toward people. FEN primarily attends to providing knowledge about the options to

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THE DAY THE UNIVERSE CHANGED

A philosophically fun video and discussion series!

Sunday, April 8, 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Come view and discuss a video series by James Burke, *The Day the Universe Changed*. Burke entertainingly explores links between knowledge and reality. Join Ethical Culture Leader Hugh Taft-Morales for the eighth installment: *Fit to Rule: Darwin's Revolution*. Free and open to the public.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Poetry Group

Sunday, April 1, 9:30 a.m.

Moveable Treats

Sunday, April 8

Ethical Action Meeting

Sunday, April 8, 9:15 a.m.

Board Meeting

Sunday, April 8, 12:30 p.m.

Video and Discussion Series

Sunday, April 8, 4:00 p.m.

Baking Night at Moveable Feast

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

Mindfulness Meditation

Sunday, April 15, 9:30 a.m.

60th Anniversary Dinner

Saturday, April 21, 6:00 p.m.

Art Reception & Potluck Brunch

Sunday, April 22, 12:00 p.m.

Great Thinkers Discussion Series

Sunday, April 22, 2:00 p.m.

BES Ironweed Film Club

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

Newcomers Meeting

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

Book Discussion of *The New Jim Crow*

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

SUNDAY SNACK SCHEDULE

Last names starting with:

A to F	April 1
G to L	April 8
M to R	April 15
Potluck Brunch	April 22
S to Z	April 29

Fritz's Stories Now on DVD

by Em Sabatiuk, BES Member

Many of you remember with great fondness the wonderful stories Fritz Williams, leader emeritus of the Baltimore Ethical Society, told us about his childhood growing up in Pennsylvania. He presented them with his own illustrations in true storyteller fashion, keeping us totally engrossed.

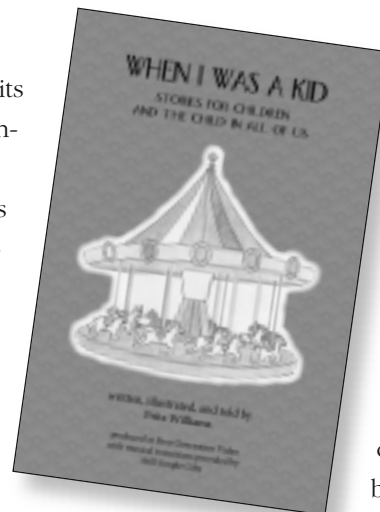
With Fritz's encouragement, Les Bradley, a long-time BES member, produced a 2006 DVD presenting eleven of Fritz's stories – narrated in front of a live audience of BES children and adults. Then Fritz's friends at BES provided him with a generous gift for which he remains very appreciative as it enabled him to put out a new DVD version of *When I Was A Kid: Stories For Children and the Child In All of Us*. The new DVD features more than 40 new drawings and was professionally produced at First Generation Video, a company with more than two decades of bringing visions to life as finished products. Music on this 2011 version is provided by a Pennsylvania-based folk music group, Still Simple Gifts. The six founding musicians of Still Simple Gifts still form the ensemble twenty-five years later! The group is known for creating delightfully varied music played using unexpected instrumentation. And it's no

surprise that this DVD's credits honor Belva Williams as Essential Volunteer!

Hearing Fritz's stories allows us to become intimately involved in the life of his family and community. We are made aware of a close, loving family, guided by an unusually wise and compassionate mother and a somewhat stern but deeply caring father.

Each person who views the DVD will have his or her own favorites. The first story is "We Were Sorry Together." It describes his feelings of guilt when he keeps secret things he has done unintentionally that do not feel good "down inside." When he spills tincture merthiolate (a very colorful reddish remedy used for cuts) on his bureau, staining his grandmother's embroidered bureau cloth, he cannot keep it secret. Rather than scold him, his mother describes her feelings of sadness and tells him, "You must feel terrible too. I guess we'll have to feel sorry together."

The stories are diverse. "I Was Brave" describes the fear and adventure of going to the hospital to get his tonsils out and the happy reward of ice cream when he and his brother come home. In "Locked In," his cu-



riosity gets the best of him. Inside the family bathroom, he decides to push the lever on an old lock remaining on the door. Unfortunately he cannot move it back, leading to the necessity of his fa-

ther having to break down the door.

The warmth and richness of these well-written and dramatically narrated stories are not revealed through the preceding brief descriptions. Other titles in this excellent collection – which will be appreciated anew by those who haven't and again by those who have heard Fritz narrate them – are "Acrobatics," "What Did You Do At Granddad's House?," "The Rescue," "Pick Me!," "The Goose," and "My Sky King Ring."

For \$17.50 (\$15 for the DVD plus \$2.50 for postage), the nine stories – accompanied by new illustrations and music – that make up the 2011 DVD version of *When I Was A Kid: Stories For Children and the Child In All of Us* may be directly ordered from Fritz Williams, 1029 Fox Hollow Road, Shermans Dale, PA, 17090.

MINDFULNESS
meditation

Sunday, April 15, 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.

Volunteer Opportunities at Moveable Feast

April Baking Night

Thursday, April 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. Let Lisa Alderson know you are coming (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.



May Baking Night

Thursday, May 10, 5:45–8:00 p.m.

In May Moveable Feast will be looking for double the usual number of volunteers to bake cookies for the riders participating in the Ride for the Feast bike ride, so please save the

date and plan on coming out to help this great organization.

Ride For the Feast

May 19–20, 2012

Ride for the Feast is a 2-day, 140-mile bike ride event throughout the state of Maryland, from Ocean City to Baltimore City. The ride is 140 miles because that is the exact distance a Moveable Feast driver must go to deliver to the farthest client.

The ride began in 2003 and it has become one of Move-

able Feast's largest fundraising events.

Volunteers are needed both before and during the ride. Join Lisa Alderson and other BES friends to help Moveable Feast and all the riders to make this another successful event. Learn more about the ride at www.rideforthe Feast.kintera.org. Please let Lisa (lialderson@gmail.com) know if you are interested in helping.

Healthy Maryland Initiative

(continued from page 1)

government of the people has to respond. I understand some people's resistance to initiatives like this one. They say it is an example of paternalistic government over-reach. For me, however, this is just good public policy that makes sense, such as seat belt laws and FDA regulations about food additives.

Finally, I am pleased that the

process for taking a policy stance at BES seemed to work. Not all we do as a community, nor the fact that we DON'T do some things, will please everyone all the time. Reasoned disagreement and respectful discussion are necessary for democracy to work, both within BES and in society at large. Thanks to everyone for participating with integrity!

IRONWEED film CLUB

**Wednesday, April 25,
7:30 p.m.**

Join us this month when we screen *Ethos*.

Woody Harrelson blows the lid off our corrupt system in this powerful new documentary. *Ethos* examines the flaws in our systems that work against democracy, the environment, and society as a whole, unraveling the complex relationships between unregulated corporate power, the media, and our system of government that guarantees the failure of our society at almost every level. With a stunning depth of research and breadth of analysis, this film delves deep into the interconnected worlds of politics, multinational corporations, and the media. But more, *Ethos* offers a very simple but powerful solution that could change the world we live in. (68 min.)

Screenings are open to members of BES and the BES Ironweed Film Club. Contact Emil about free membership in the film club (volcheck@acm.org or 410-929-3399). Donations are requested for refreshments.

Join the Film Club Meetup at <http://meetu.ps/7WV4n>.

60th Anniversary

History Brought Us to this Moment

2012 was chosen as the year in which to celebrate the 60th year of our congregation convening in Baltimore based on our 1952 incorporation as a non-profit organization termed the Baltimore Ethical Society (BES).

In 1950 the formation of our fellowship – referred to in that first “informal” year simply as the Baltimore Group – under founder Ken Milford’s initiative began to take shape. Impressed by his discovery that year of the New York Ethical Society, Milford quickly realized that what it offered would well replace the traditional religious experience he and others had been seeking to supplant.

Among the early “settlers” who populated that Group were Jerome D. Frank, professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University Medical School and author of the influential *Persuasion and Healing: A Comparative Study of Psychotherapy* and *Sanity and Survival: Psychological Aspects of War and Peace*,

a Goucher College senior, Zelda Goldberg (active in BES almost until her death in 2006); Roy Patterson, a shoe repairer who taught in vocational schools and the first from the black community to join; and Pell Kangas. Both Patterson and Kangas – along with Milford who had become the first president – signed and witnessed the incorporation documents during the Group’s first “formal” year 1951-1952, the year Dr. Gilbert and Marian Banfield and Abe and Eva Granek joined and the Society became thirty-two strong with a \$1850 budget.

Thanks to diligent work by Gordon Stills, who last year researched BES’s historical origins as captured by the local papers, we now possess the October 6, 1951 *Baltimore Afro-American* article, which announced under the

headline “Bi-Racial Sunday School Assembly Formed Here” that under the organization and sponsorship of the Baltimore Ethical Society “Baltimore has gained something unique in the way of race relations...the Children’s Sunday Assembly, composed of youngsters from a variety of racial and religious

backgrounds.” Among the students in the early years were Diane Milford, Ken’s daughter, now Diane Ulman, who delivered the platform at our 2011 membership meeting and the Banfield siblings Sondra and Leslie, whose sister Karen Banfield Evans also spoke at the 2011 meeting.

The importance of BES being at the forefront as the city’s first integrated religious organization and establishing the city’s first integrated Sunday school can be put in perspective. 1954 and 1955 are given the distinction of being the years that birthed the modern civil rights movement, its existence sparked by the crucial Supreme Court “Brown” decisions speeding segregation in public schools. With the 1954 decision the only segregated Southern city whose school board without dissent voted for prompt compliance with the law was Baltimore. Exactly 20 years following that, Antero Pietila (a 2011 platform



“...for the purpose to engage as a non-sectarian religious and educational fellowship without formal creed or dogma which aims to unite men in the belief that the greatest spiritual values are to be found in raising the quality of human relationships and to promote the intellectual and temporal welfare of its members and the community at large.

To hold religious assemblies and children’s classes.”

— wording of the incorporation of the Baltimore Ethical Society under the laws of the State of Maryland signed April 21, 1952

ary Celebration

“Since our Sunday school was integrated from its beginning in 1950, our children learned the lesson of true equality of all peoples. It was a rare opportunity not available hardly anywhere else in Baltimore. It has had a life long impact on these children. With teachers like Marian Banfield, Helena Wright, Sarah Milford, June Kangas and Bert Booth [who also spoke at our 2011 membership meeting and sadly died just a few short months later]... Our children will never forget them. Marian Banfield continued directing the Sunday School until the last year of her life.”

— from Pell Kangas's platform “37 years of the Baltimore Ethical Society: Remembrances and Commentary”

speaker and the recent author of *Not in My Neighborhood*) noted that in doing so “The board's leadership saved the city from the kinds of ugly confrontations at the school house doors that in many other segregated cities embittered race relations well into the 1960's.”

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 6:00–9:00 P.M.

Anniversary Dinner

The Octagon at Mt. Washington Conference Center

Please join us for an evening of fellowship and good food as the Baltimore Ethical Society proudly celebrates 60 years of working together to create a more just, humane, and peaceful world.



Ticket prices are \$45 for members, \$55 for non-members, and \$80 for sponsors. Sponsors will receive a bmorethical t-shirt, a set of Leader Emeritus Fritz Williams' platforms published in booklet form, and the latest DVD of Fritz's children's stories.

Go to bmorethical.org/dinner for more information and to make your reservation. Space is limited. **All reservations and payments must be made by April 15.**

**JOIN US!
April 21-22**

SUNDAY, APRIL 22, 12:00 P.M.

Art Reception and Brunch

Featuring the Work of Fritz Williams and Susie Ketzis

Following a special platform presentation by Leader Emeritus Fritz Williams entitled “Memories and Reflections” (more information on page 9) we will host an art reception honoring the featured work of Fritz as well as BES member Susie Ketzis. This will be accompanied by a potluck brunch. Free and open to all.

SUNDAY, APRIL 22, 2:00 P.M.

Great Thinkers Discussion Series

Ethical Relationships and Jane Addams

Join Hugh Taft-Morales for the final installment of our Great Thinkers Series, this time also our 60th Anniversary Weekend edition! Hugh will discuss Jane Addams, a fascinating thinker, activist, and settlement house founder who spoke at Ethical Societies a century ago!



APRIL 1

“Building a Larger, Inclusive Environmental Bandwagon”

Fred Tutman
Riverkeeper & CEO

In the movement that deals with environmental causes, critical opportunities for inclusion and diversity can be missed. Cultural background, sense of place and social identity cause people to view the “environment” subjectively and to view environmental problems very differently depending on their experiences, access, privilege, and social perspective. Grass-roots needs and concerns may not be reached and served if the funded environmental community, which thrives off “messaging campaigns,” loses its connection or cultural competency. Such a loss creates an inadvertently segregated environmental movement increasingly divided by factors such as class, ethnicity and world view. This talk will examine what might be done to make these divisions less severe and how to create a more inclusive moment.

Fred Tutman, born and raised along the Patuxent River as were seven generations of his ancestors, in 2004 founded Patuxent Riverkeeper – a nonprofit watershed advocacy organization affiliated with the Waterkeepers Alliance in New York. Prior to that he operated a business providing professional media and mass communication services internationally. In his current position, he works to protect the Patuxent and the natural environment of his watershed. Just a few of the various boards, task forces, and commissions Tutman has served on are the Environmental Integrity Project Board, Scenic Rivers Land Trust, The Anne Arundel Community College Foundation, the State’s Patuxent River Commission, and the international Waterkeepers Alliance Board. As an adjunct instructor at St. Mary’s College of Maryland, he teaches an upper-level course in environmental law and policy. An avid kayaker and backpacker, in his spare time, he also helps to maintain trails on the Appalachian Trail.

BES ON MEETUP.COM

If you would like to receive emails about upcoming platforms and other events, register on our MeetUp site at meetup.com/bmoreethical.

APRIL 8

“Growing Up Humanist: Framework for a Better Society”

Katherine “Kati” LaClair
PhD Candidate, Cellular and Molecular Medicine

Young people in today’s American society face many challenges. Tumultuous economic conditions, continued discrimination leveled against large segments of the population, and progressive climate change are all serious issues that we as a nation have failed to deal with effectively. Can the current American moral framework, which seems lacking and foundationless, be cited as a source aggravating these problems? Can Humanism provide the generation now entering adulthood effective solutions?

Katherine “Kati” LaClair grew up in New Jersey, attending Essex Ethical Cultural Society in Maplewood for much of childhood. Two years ago, she graduated from Drew University in Madison, NJ, with a BA in neuroscience. She then moved to Baltimore, where she is pursuing a PhD in cellular and molecular medicine at Johns Hopkins and currently studying the disease mechanisms of and therapeutic strategies for Alzheimer’s disease. Last November, LaClair, by then a regular visitor, joined the Baltimore Ethical Society. She recently co-founded BES-Youth Action (BES-YA) to involve the next generation of Ethical Humanists in direct action with the Society and the larger community.

APRIL 15

“Justice: Why So Elusive, So Often?”

Judge Andre Davis
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

In a democratic republic such as ours in the United States, there are many competing concepts of justice. Drawing on a lifetime of experience as a leader within our judicial system, Judge Davis will examine, in particular, institutional impairments to the achievement of justice. In an October 2000 *Baltimore Sun* article, Judge Davis offered insight into his judicial philosophy: “I want the loser – and I know there’s always going to be a loser, that’s the nature of the beast – but I want the loser to be able to say, ‘I lost, but I was heard, and I believe that judge gave me every consideration in hearing my side.’” What makes this talk extra special is that it will be delivered by the son of our long-time and very valued BES member, Gordon Stills.

SUNDAY PLATFORM PROGRAMS

60th
ANNIVERSARY
EVENT

APRIL 22

“Memories and Reflections”

Fritz Williams

Leader Emeritus, Baltimore Ethical Society

Between 1989 and 1992 and between 2001 and 2009, Fritz Williams served as half-time Leader of the Baltimore Ethical Society. During that period, he also worked as a writer and producer on Detroit Public Television's "City for Youth" and "Parenting Puzzle" projects and also produced "Peacework," a statewide media-based campaign against family violence in Pennsylvania. In today's special celebratory visit, he reflects on his part-time, long-distance relationship with the Baltimore Ethical Society and with Ethical Culture in general. He speaks about always feeling a little out of step while finding genuine happiness in a relationship consistently marked by deep mutual respect and love.

Fritz Williams is Leader Emeritus of the Baltimore Ethical Society, and he and his wife Belva remain long-distance members. After graduating from Muhlenberg College and Philadelphia Lutheran Theological Seminary, he worked as parish priest in the Episcopal Church between 1962 and 1968. From 1970 to 2000, he wrote and produced documentaries and educational programs at public television stations in Harrisburg, PA, and Detroit, MI. His service as Leader of the Baltimore Ethical Society began when he was working in Detroit and continued after his retirement from public television. Since leaving Baltimore, he has produced a DVD of some of his children's stories and has been busy writing poetry and fiction and editing a couple of books based on BES talks. He is currently Perry County, PA, poet laureate and a board of directors' member of the Perry County Council of the Arts, which has recognized him as "an all-around Renaissance Man." He and Belva also enjoy making music with musical friends, and they are active members of the Cumberland Valley Harp Circle.

APRIL 29

“Existential Faith: Choosing Ethical Culture”

Hugh Taft-Morales

Leader, Baltimore Ethical Society

Declaring oneself an existentialist draws a variety of responses – suspicion, interest, pity, blank stares. Many assume

(continued on next page)

Fourth Circuit Judge **Andre M. Davis**, born in Baltimore in 1949, received a BA degree in American history from the University of Pennsylvania and graduated cum laude from the University of Maryland School of Law. Upon earning his JD, he completed one-year clerkships with Judge Frank A. Kaufman on the U.S. District Court in Baltimore and Judge Francis D. Murnaghan, Jr. on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Thereafter, Judge Davis served as an appellate attorney for the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington and as an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, handling both civil and criminal cases. He was in private practice and an assistant professor at the University of Maryland School of Law from 1984 until 1987, the year he was appointed as associate judge of the District Court of Maryland for Baltimore City. In 1990 he was appointed associate judge of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, serving until President Clinton appointed him to the U.S. District Court in 1995. Past president of the executive committee of the Maryland Judicial Conference and a former member of the board of directors of the Judicial Institute of Maryland, Judge Davis, for many years, was a member of the Maryland State Bar Association's Section Council on Correctional Reform and served a one-year term as chair of the Conference of Federal Trial Judges. His numerous civic and professional leadership roles include a two-year term as president of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Central Maryland and a two-year term as president of the Legal Aid Bureau, Inc. A member of the board and vice chair of the Open Society Institute-Baltimore, he has also served for ten years as chair and member of the board of Community Law and Action, Inc., a law-related high school leadership development program and as chair of the board of the Baltimore Urban Debate League. Through membership on the Judicial Conference of the United States/Committee on International Judicial Relations; the Einstein Institute for Science, Health and the Courts; and the Federal Judicial Center, Judge Davis has been active in numerous national and international judicial education and Rule of Law training programs. President Obama nominated Judge Davis to fill the vacancy on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit created by the death of Judge Murnaghan. Following Senate confirmation, Judge Davis entered on duty on November 12, 2009. He continues to teach as an adjunct faculty member at University of Maryland School of Law and also serves as a member of that school's Board of Visitors.

that existentialism breeds dark brooding cynicism. It demands we accept responsibility for choices in a short life full of uncertainty. For Hugh Taft-Morales, however, existentialism is a source of commitment and joy – is he crazy? Come hear about his existential choice to become a Leader in Ethical Humanism.

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. Following his

mid-1990s discovery of Ethical Culture, he served the Washington Ethical Society as a board member from 2003-2006, the last year as president. In 2009 he completed a three-year leadership certification program with the Humanist Institute and in 2010 became a certified Leader in Ethical Culture. Other current Ethical Culture positions he holds are faculty member of the 2012 AEU Lay Leadership Summer School and secretary of the National Leaders Council of the American Ethical Union. 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.

Egbert Cases

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end suffering to its members when they are mentally competent but profoundly ill.

Sabatiuk volunteers as a first responder whose job is to fulfill coordinator requests to interview persons seeking help for the purpose of completing an intake questionnaire. As a first responder, she then provides an evaluation and recommendation that includes as much information as possible about the person's medical status as well as familial situation and security to the regional coordinator who forwards it – supplemented by a wealth of additional information, including medical records, letter of intent, and confirmation of FEN membership – to the FEN medical committee for further action.

The right-to-die activist and Elliott-Black Award nominee Larry Egbert has spoken at the Baltimore Ethical Society several times, most recently last November when he gave the platform "Hastening Death: An Argument with Society."

OPEN FOR DISCUSSION: A NEW SECULAR BIBLE?

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

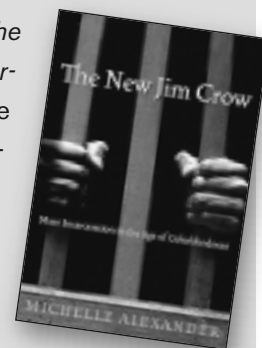
Many in BES have recommended Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Now members and public, who have (or have not) read this debut volume, can attend an April 29 discussion of the book lead by Hugh Taft-Morales. Alexander's argument, already termed "seminal," has also been lauded as a "stunning work of scholarship" and described as "alarming, provocative and convincing."

With great precision and care, Alexander develops her contention that mass incarceration "operates as a tightly networked system of laws, policies, customs, and institutions that operate collectively to ensure the subordinate status of a group defined largely by race."

The Executive Director of the National Black Police Association has noted that as "a powerful analysis of why and how mass incarceration is happening in America, *The New Jim Crow* should be required reading for anyone working for real change in the criminal justice system."

Cornel West begins the book's foreword with this powerful opening statement: "Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* is the secular bible for a new social movement in early twenty-first-century America."

Winner of a 2005 Soros Justice Fellowship, Alexander, a longtime civil rights advocate and litigator, now holds a joint appointment at the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity and the Mortiz College of Law at Ohio State University.



Simon Snags Award Nomination

Established forty-one years ago, the American Ethical Union's (AEU) Elliott-Black Award is an honor commemorating the lifelong activism and community service of two much esteemed and long-term Ethical Culture Leaders: Algernon D. Black and John Lovejoy Elliott.

Among the famous reformers and activists honored with this award are Frances Fox Piven (2011), Dr. M. Joycelyn Elders (1995), and Dr. Helen Caldicott (1986).

Each year the Baltimore Ethical Society puts forth a nominee, voted on – as required by the AEU – by its Ethical Action Committee and its Board.

This year the AEU much revised its criteria for the award, allowing the nomination of either an individual or organization whose ethical action has made a significant positive impact on society and the achievement of ethical ideals, whether or not – as had previously been a requirement – significant personal risk or cost was involved in accomplishing that impact.

This year too the AEU directed us “to search for a nominee whose efforts have noticeably affected the criminal justice system’s treatment of prisoners

or brought about a meaningful change in the larger community.”

This charge melded the 2012 AEU Assembly theme: “Humanizing the Criminal Justice System.” We were also charged with considering if the nominee’s deeds reflected a commitment to ethical action that ideally had received the attention of the national media.

David Simon – writer, television producer, and journalist – who through his stories of addicts trying to survive and recover, drug dealers who were recruited as children into “the game,” and police officers frustrated by a bureaucracy that prefers to manipulate statistics rather than fight violent crime has put a human face on drug addiction, organized crime, and law enforcement, is this year’s BES Elliott-Black Award nominee.

Simon has received national attention and critical acclaim especially for his HBO television series *The Wire* and his book and Emmy-winning HBO series *The Corner*; both of which portray the criminal justice system from every perspective connected to narcotics crime. Simon is clear about the intent of his work, saying “...if I can make you care about a character, I may

make you think a little longer about certain dynamics that might cause you to reconsider your own political inertia or your own political myopia.”

Locally, Simon has spearheaded creation of the Ella Thompson Fund, which supports programs for city youth, as well as Rewired for Change, a nonprofit empowering at-risk youth and their families. All while reminding us that nationwide “America now jails more of its people than any country, including all totalitarian states. We pretend to a war against narcotics, but in truth, we are simply brutalizing and dehumanizing an urban underclass that we no longer need as a labor supply.”

Simon’s work to wake us to the continuing injustices perpetrated in our national community has properly been accorded respect. A 2010 recipient of a \$500,000 MacArthur Foundation “genius award,” Simon in 2011 was chosen an *Utne Reader* visionary, an honor bestowed yearly by the magazine on those who transform the world not just by having – but by *acting* – on exceptional ideas.

Even President Obama has lauded “The Wire” as his favorite television show.

More than a Celebration of Longevity

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by Bob Corbett BES meeting space. A reception will be held simultaneously with a potluck brunch in honor of the artist.

Following that we’ll conclude with a glimpse into one of Ethical Culture’s true heroines Jane Addams as Hugh Taft-Morales breathes life into her considerable work as part of his Great Thinkers Discussion Series that has in-

cluded Benjamin Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and W. E. B. DuBois.

Whether you choose to attend one event or all, your presence will be cause for pleasure to our Ethical Society, an organization that while steeped in a rich and important history also gets better and stronger, more resilient and more inspired even as it ages.

BESpeak

BALTIMORE ETHICAL SOCIETY

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

NEWSLETTER

Please do not delay!

TIME VALUE

ETHICAL ACTION MEETING

Sunday, April 8, 9:15–10:15 a.m.

Come help plan the Ethical Action strategy for the Baltimore Ethical Society!

NEWCOMERS MEETING

Sunday, April 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.

SUPPORT MOVEABLE FEAST AND MOVEABLE TREATS

Baked Goods – Sunday, April 8

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 can be obtained at the Society. For more information about Moveable Feast and their many additional programs, visit them on the web at www.mfeast.org.



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