

## Reallocate to Recreate!

by Hugh Taft-Morales, BES Leader

Now THAT was a rally! As I drove home on November 8 from the *Reallocate to Recreate* gathering in the War Memorial Building, I was “fired up!” Chants of “Reallocate, Recreate!” rang through my head. Political dignitaries, movers and shakers had just united for words of inspiration and song in support of affirmative opportunity for Baltimore city youth in an assembly spearheaded by Safe and Sound.

For fifteen years, Safe and Sound has campaigned tirelessly for Baltimore youth. This fall Karen Helm brought executive director Hathaway Ferebee to meet with the BES Board, and her energy and commitment were palpable. She explained the context of a misguided attempt to build a new youth jail rather than fund opportunities that would help our youth build a healthy future. What Baltimore needs are recreation centers, job training, and mentorship training – not more prisons!

The rally – just two days after the national election – overflowed with concerned citizens, activists, and press. Two-time presidential candidate Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr. spoke of meeting with Governor O’Malley earlier that day to urge him to fund opportunities, not dead ends. Jackson argued that for many city youths a trip to the detention center is anything but a deterrent to future crime. “Build it and they will fill it,” Jackson warned. “Amen!” many in the audience responded. “Jobs, housing, opportunities!” The Reverend launched into a call and response regarding the youth of Baltimore: “Lift up! Don’t lock up!”

Among other speakers were City Council President Jack Young, City Councilman Carl Stokes from District 12 where the prison is slated to be built, Senator Cather-

*(continued on page 7)*

Below, BES members and friends attend the rally.



### SUNDAY PLATFORMS

10:30 a.m.

*(details on pages 4–5)*

#### DECEMBER 2

### “What Would Kurt Lewin Do & How Would He Do It?”

Argentine Craig

*Faculty Emeritus,*

*Fielding Graduate University*

#### DECEMBER 9

### “The Wall for All – Protecting of Both State and Religion”

Hugh Taft-Morales

*Leader, Baltimore Ethical Society*

#### DECEMBER 16

### “Transformation and Transcendence”

Jan Seiden

*Flutist and Composer*

#### DECEMBER 23

### “Ethics and National Security Strategy”

Emil Volcheck

*President, Baltimore Ethical Society*

#### DECEMBER 30

### Pancake Breakfast/ Winter Festival

### ETHICAL HUMANIST SUNDAY SCHOOL

WITH LINDA JOY BURKE

10:30 a.m. – Noon

The Pancake Breakfast/Winter Festival is an all-inclusive family event and there will be no Sunday school.

# BESpeak

is published monthly  
September through June by  
the Baltimore Ethical Society  
306 W. Franklin St., Suite 102  
Baltimore, MD 21201-4661  
410-581-2322

## Issue 424

Managing Editor: Kathryn Sloboda  
Copy Editor: Rosemary Klein  
Proofreading & Circulation:  
Judy Katz  
Deadline: 10th of the prior month

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

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**On the web at bmorethical.org**

# BES & Marriage Equality's Win

by *Emil Volcheck, BES President*



On November 6th, voters upheld the Maryland law permitting same sex marriage. The concerted efforts of Baltimore Ethical Society members and friends contributed to this success. We appreciate and take pride in BES's contribution to advancing Maryland's civil rights.

March 1, 2012, Governor O'Malley signed the Civil Marriage Protection Act (CMPA) into law. Opponents, however, successfully petitioned for a referendum. Thus, Question 6 – beginning “Establishes that Maryland’s civil marriage laws allow gay and lesbian couples to obtain a civil marriage license” – came before voters. A vote for Question 6 would uphold the law, and a vote against would nullify it. Marylanders voted “for” by a 52 to 48 percent margin.

Soon after a June 13 launch rally organized by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) had started Maryland's campaign for marriage equality, BES met with HRC leaders and offered our help. In July, our Ethical Action Committee sought member backing for an official position committed to marriage equality. A majority quickly agreed, and on July 13 BES took an official position in favor of the CMPA and joined the coalition “Marylanders for Marriage Equality” (MDFME). A few days later, we supported an ACLU of Maryland fundraiser.

BES then integrated marriage equality into our own outreach efforts – displaying banners and signs promoting MDFME and “Vote For 6” and gathering over 150 signatures from people pledging to vote for marriage equality – at four festivals (Hamilton Street Fair, Abell Community, Baltimore Book, and Bolton Hill). We also gathered pledge signatures at Baltimore Pride and Artscape.

In August, we participated in a phone bank at MDFME headquarters, soliciting votes for Question 6. We did phone banking three more times in October and November, together making over 1500 phone calls. The appreciative MDFME staff knew us as regulars! One October phone banking was held by activists Gerry Fisher and David Kimble at their Charles Village home, where a “Marriage Equality Open House” was also held Friday nights throughout the campaign. We regularly attended, making valuable connections with other activists.

MDFME reached out to religious leaders for support, and our leader Hugh Taft-Morales signed the “Maryland Clergy for Marriage Equality – A Statement of Faith and Action,” which in part stated “Our various traditions call us to love one another and to offer compassion and mutual respect to our neighbors. Our place is not to judge, but rather, to recognize and honor the humanity of all people. Protecting marriage equality is a faithful response to ensuring that all Maryland families enjoy basic respect, dignity and equal protection under law.” This message honoring all people's humanity is one every humanist can support!

In September, we attended a Washington Ethical Society marriage equality

*(continued on page 7)*



## Room to Grow for Toddlers

A sign of our vibrant, growing Sunday school population is that BES now has a room and workers dedicated solely to the care of toddlers. This is an important addition to our already successful program that among other methods uses music, art, and discussion to encourage personal expression, intellectual curiosity, and collaboration. Repurposing a room for younger children has been suggested often over the years, and in November Kathryn Sloboda and Rosemary Klein, co-chairs of the Religious Education Committee, decided the time had arrived. Linda Joy Burke, our lively, enthusiastic regular Sunday school teacher, selected furniture, toys, and books from those already at hand, and Rosemary scoured thrift shops for additional items. Chris and Christine Yonushonis, however, really made the new room a well thought-out reality, however. These relative newcomers to BES are parents of a girl and boy who are “regulars” in the colorfully decorated environment. Chris with Rosemary decluttered the area adjoining the regular Sunday school, moved furniture, washed the floor, and tested for sound. Later Chris, despite his parents visiting from out of town, returned to paint a blackboard on one wall, put

down rugs and a play mat, glue felt to the doors and drawers of wooden furniture to lessen the noise that might result from banging, and set up a small storage unit, containing art supplies and healthy snacks. He put hooks above the door leading into the main platform space and hung a heavy blanket, hoping to minimize noise. Alas, however, the first day in the space, the children perceived the blanket to be a good hiding place and so the blanket disappeared. Em Sabatiuk, Karen Helm, Judy Katz, and the Yonushonises have volunteered to staff the toddler room during platform. Other volunteers would be most welcome; see either of the co-chairs – and come check out our happily refurbished Sunday school space.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

#### Poetry Group

Sunday, Dec. 2, 9:30 a.m.

#### BES Eating Social (B.E.S.)

Sunday, Dec. 2, 1:00 p.m.

#### Mindfulness Meditation

Sunday, Dec. 9, 9:30 a.m.

#### Moveable Treats

Sunday, Dec. 9

#### Board Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 9, 12:30 p.m.

#### Baking Night at Moveable Feast

Thursday, Dec. 13, 5:45 p.m.

#### “Drinking Ethically”

Saturday, Dec. 15, 5:00 p.m.

#### Ethical Action Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 16, 9:15 a.m.

#### Membership Comm. Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 23, 9:30 a.m.

#### HumanLight Celebration

Sunday, Dec. 23, 7:00 p.m.

#### Newcomers Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 30, 12:30 p.m.

### SUNDAY SNACK SCHEDULE

Last names starting with:

A–F: Dec. 2      G–L: Dec. 9  
M–R: Dec. 16    S–Z: Dec. 23

### THE 300 POUND CANNED FOOD DRIVE

Our Ethical Action Committee is sponsoring a Winter Canned Food Drive. They have set a goal of collecting 300 lbs of canned goods and are asking everyone to try to contribute at least 10 lbs. In our meeting room, a “Goal Thermometer” made by the Sunday school students, headed by Camille’s artistic direction, will keep track of the collection’s progression. Weekly progress will be announced at the beginning of each Sunday’s program before the students leave for their classroom. Kate LaClair who is spearheading the drive notes that “This will allow students to continuously participate in this event by marking donations on the thermometer.” A decorated collection box for the food will be placed in the lobby through Sunday, December 17.

## DECEMBER 2

### “What Would Kurt Lewin Do & How Would He Do It?”

Argentine Craig

*Faculty Emeritus, Fielding Graduate University*

Kurt Lewin is best known for his contributions in the field of organization behavior and the study of group dynamics. The work in the applied behavioral science field done by this social psychologist and scholar/practitioner, who was born in 1890 and died in 1947, continues to impact how groups of individuals can effect change in their “life space” and in the world. Through an interactive, experiential learning activity on the present relevance of Lewinian thinking and theory, we will share our perspectives on contemporary democratic processes.

**Argentine Craig** has worked as university professor, management consultant, Peace Corps trainer, and human relations/diversity facilitator/consultant over the past forty-five years. Dr. Craig has been on the faculty of, and associated with, numerous universities and learning centers, including American University, Fielding Graduate University, Harvard University, Morgan State University, NTL (National Training Laboratories) Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, University of the West Indies/Trinidad, and Vermont College of Norwich University. She has advised United States, Kuwait, and Bermuda governmental departments regarding issues of racism, sexism, and ageism. For almost a decade, she served as consultant/facilitator in human relations/diversity work in South Africa with the NTL Institute, Africare, and the United Nations. A graduate of Drexel and Temple Universities, she received a PhD in higher education administration from Union Graduate School. She is a co-founder of The Lewin Center for Social Change, Action and Research and a recently returned member of BES. Fielding Graduate University honored her with the title Faculty Emeritus.

## DECEMBER 9

### “The Wall for All – Protecting of *Both* State and Religion”

Hugh Taft-Morales

*Leader, Baltimore Ethical Society*

Ethical Humanism supports a high wall of separation between the state and religion. Thomas Jefferson noted that such a wall is “essential in a free society.” That is so because it pro-

protects the rights of citizens of religious, atheist, and non-theist perspectives. As zealots try to deconstruct this wall brick by brick, we must speak out more forcefully against those who distort its real purpose: to maintain the secular nature of the state so that the state better serves believers and non-believers alike.

**Hugh Taft-Morales** joined the Baltimore Ethical Society as its professional leader in 2010, the same year he was certified by the American Ethical Union as an Ethical Culture Leader. He taught philosophy and history for twenty-five years in Washington, D.C., after earning a Masters in philosophy from University of Kent at Canterbury, England (1986) and graduating from Yale University (1979). In 2009 he completed a three-year leadership certification program with the Humanist Institute. His presence in Ethical Culture has been termed “invigorating.” He has been active in the Washington Ethical Society, serving as director of its Coming-of-Age program (2009-2011), a Board member (2002-2005), and Board president (2006). He has also been engaged in American Ethical Union work, serving on the AEU planning committee for two years, as co-coordinator for the Presidents Council AEU for a year, and as secretary of the AEU National Leaders Council at present. He also serves as Leader of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia. Taft-Morales lives in Takoma Park, Maryland, with his wife Maureen, a Latin American analyst with the Congressional Research Service, with whom he has three beloved children: Sean, Maya, and Justin. Singing and playing guitar, practicing yoga, and watching “way too much sports” are among his enjoyments.

## DECEMBER 16

### “Transformation and Transcendence”

Jan Seiden

*Flutist and Composer*

Live music weaves through this presentation in which Jan Seiden shares her experience of working with a team of five visionary women to produce *Te Ata*, a play telling the life story of historic Chickasaw actress and storyteller, Mary Thompson Fisher (1895-1995). The dynamic tension of embracing one’s calling in life while staying true to one’s own culture and way of being comes to the fore in *Te Ata*. Having grown up in traditional Chickasaw culture, Fisher – known as *Te Ata* – dealt with recurring doubts about her life choices as her career pulled her away from her family, homeland, and Chickasaw community. In

## SUNDAY PLATFORM PROGRAMS

the play, transcendence manifests as Te Ata expands her world and becomes one with a more diverse world while staying grounded in the Native American worldview of interconnectedness. Music composed by Seiden for the original soundtrack places us in the transformational currents of Te Ata's remarkable legacy from a career that spanned over 60 years and included performances at the White House for President Roosevelt and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and at Hyde Park for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth of England.

**Jan Seiden** – much like Te Ata – is an artist and storyteller. “The pictures she paints in sound are worth many thousands of words,” said one reviewer. Her evocative music carries messages of global unity, peace, and personal empowerment to international humanitarian conferences and indigenous gatherings throughout the U.S. and Canada. She has appeared on CNN Headline News/Comcast and on Maryland Public TV for her healing work with the flute through venues such as Johns Hopkins Hospital and the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Honors for her works include a nomination for the Native American Music Award (NAMA, 2009), two nominations for Indian Summer Music Awards, an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council, and national first place in the Musical Echoes Native American flute competition (2002). Prior to pursuing a full-time career as a musician, Seiden earned an MS from The Johns Hopkins University and spent twenty-two years in biomedical research and administrative management in the integrative medicine field. For *Te Ata*, the Chickasaw Indian play, Seiden is the soundtrack's composer, recording artist, engineer, and producer. Funding for this work was provided by the Ford Foundation's Expressive Arts Program in partnership with the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and award-winning Chickasaw playwright JudyLee Oliva. The play's 2012 season included performances at Oklahoma City University and at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

### DECEMBER 23

## “Ethics and National Security Strategy”

**Emil Volcheck**

*President, Baltimore Ethical Society*

In 2010, the Obama Administration published its National Security Strategy. This document describes how the U.S. Government will employ means of national power to increase se-

curity and prosperity. Today's platform address will explain a few things that humanists should know about the National Security Strategy. The strategy reflects philosophical approaches that include pragmatism, liberalism, and multilateralism. The strategy includes social and economic goals, most notably “freedom from want.” National security has been used in the past to justify improving social conditions. The Ethical Culture Movement can apply current national security strategy to support its vision for a more humane society and a better world.

**Emil Volcheck** works as an analyst in the Information Assurance Directorate of the National Security Agency. He holds a doctorate in mathematics from UCLA and is currently working towards an MS in Strategic Intelligence at the National Intelligence University. Volcheck, former chair of the BES public relations committee, now serves as its president. He also serves as coordinator of the Baltimore Coalition of Reason.

### DECEMBER 30

## Pancake Breakfast/Winter Festival

As 2012 flies out the door, we celebrate with good spirits and excellent food. Pancakes are on flap, with a variety of expert chefs (among them Susan Henley, Karen Elliott, Ken Breneman, and Paul Furth) turning out to turn things over. Everyone attending is invited to contribute a breakfast/brunch type food, to bring a warm article of clothing such as gloves, scarves, hats, socks to adorn our mitten tree, and either to bring a sun gift (an inexpensive gift of joy) or to partake of those sun gifts 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. The Pancake Breakfast/Winter Festival is free and open to all. This year warm items provided as mitten tree decorations will be donated to Southwest Baltimore's Viva House winter clothing drive.

### BAKING NIGHT

**Thursday, December 13, 5:45–8:00 p.m.**

Join BES members and others for this enjoyable outing at Moveable Feast – check out their website at [www.mfeast.org](http://www.mfeast.org). Contact Lisa Alderson ([lialderson@gmail.com](mailto:lialderson@gmail.com)) to let her know you are coming and show up at 901 N. Milton Ave., Baltimore, MD.

**THANKS  
BART WORDEN!**

Bart Worden, new Executive Director of the American Ethical Union (AEU), is working hard visiting many Ethical societies to encourage movement-wide cooperation and rejuvenation! He shares reflections on his visits movement wide in his "Executive Blog" on the AEU website. Visit there at [aeu.org](http://aeu.org). The first column on the right side is labeled "LEARN MORE Meet the Societies." Click on "go there" – the final words in that box. Reading Worden's thoughts will help link and connect you to the larger Ethical Culture community!



Worden at BES in November.

**IRONWEED**

**Film club**

**TAKES A  
HOLIDAY**

Due to the holidays the BES Ironweed Film Club **will not meet** in December. The next meeting will be January 23.

# HumanLight Celebration

Come to the 3rd annual Baltimore HumanLight gathering hosted by the Baltimore Coalition of Reason on December 23! This is a family-friendly event with potluck dinner, song, ceremony, and community, where we will celebrate the season in humanist style. The celebration will take place at the Baltimore Ethical Society, where doors will be opened at 7 p.m. and events will begin in earnest at 7:30 p.m.

Started in 2001 by the New Jersey Humanist Network, HumanLight offers non-theists a new way to ring in the holiday season. We'll light candles representing Reason, Compassion,

and Hope and recommit ourselves to building "a future in which all people can identify with each other, behave with the highest moral standards, and work together toward a happy, just and peaceful world."

There is no charge for the event, but you are invited to bring a dish for the potluck dinner. Please RSVP, if possible, by email to [BmoreCoR@gmail.com](mailto:BmoreCoR@gmail.com) or by joining the MeetUp at [meetup.com/bmoreethical](http://meetup.com/bmoreethical).

To learn more about HumanLight go to [www.humanlight.org](http://www.humanlight.org).



## Newsworthy Glimpses

Seventeen "people who make a difference" were honored on October 27 at the Baltimore Activists Awards Dinner presented by The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Solidarity Center. Bernard "Bernie" Brown, long with BES and now serving as a Board member, was one of the activists recognized as being among "the many sisters and brothers who make our movement possible." Brown was recognized for his work as an anti-war activist in Pledge of Resistance.

Congratulations also go out to Ken Brenneman, our Public Relations Committee Chair, who has just been hired as Lead Health Physicist for the State of Maryland, a position in which he will be inspecting those facilities that use radiation and are engaged in research, energy, and medicine. For the past decade, he has worked as a

consultant providing radiation safety and health physics services to medical imaging companies.

Our Ethical Action Committee recommends the December 4, 6:00 p.m. screening of *The House I Live In* at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 615 North Wolfe Street. This documentary provides a "penetrating look inside America's criminal justice system, revealing the profound human rights implications of U.S. drug policy" and ties into the juvenile justice work of our EAC. The film's director among other speakers will offer information on what we in Baltimore can do to provide opportunities for rather than incarceration of our youth. Advance tickets required. RSVP to Kati LaClair (201-978-3191) or Karen Helm to attend or get carpool information or directions.

## **BES EATING SOCIAL (B.E.S.)!**

**Sunday, December 2, 1:00 p.m.**

Members and friends are invited to come together on the first Sunday of the month for a luncheon social. Following the platform, the group will decide which restaurant to dine in walking distance. We encourage you to wear your BES shirts or other items of visibility to help promote our organization. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Furth at pdqblues@aol.com.

## **BES & Marriage Equality's Win**

*(continued from page 2)*

fundraiser and joined First Unitarian Church, our Baltimore Coalition of Reason partner, for its "Crustacean Ball" fundraiser. October found us participating in Delegate Mary Washington's fundraiser to support the Dream Act (Question 4) and Marriage Equality and also holding a fundraiser that netted over \$900 for MDFE, a party celebrating my and Kathleen's 25th wedding anniversary. Sixty attended, enjoying gourmet tapas, rum punch and wedding cake. Rev. David Carl Olson (First Unitarian), Hugh Taft-Morales, Bud Beehler (Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Baltimore), Gerry Fisher, Michael Bernard (Marriage Equality Information Exchange), and Lucas McCahill (LGBTQ Humanist Council of Baltimore) spoke.

The final campaign week, MDFME revealed an Election Day strategy to hand out voter information cards. They identified 250 high priority polling places and asked coalition members to "adopt" one. Adoption meant promising to staff the polling place with two volunteers during the entire time the polls remained open. BES and the LGBTQ Humanist Council of Baltimore jointly adopted a Milford Mill polling place and organized 6:40 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. coverage by

eleven volunteers, who by day's end had distributed about 700 cards.

That evening, we attended the MDFME Election Watch party. When 85 percent of polling places had reported, Question 6 was ahead by 52 to 48, and leaders declared victory. Inspiring speeches by Delegate Maggie Macintosh (joined on stage by the other seven out LGBTQ state legislators), Mayor Rawlings-Blake, and Governor O'Malley affirmed Maryland's commitment to advancing civil rights.

Our effort for marriage equality marks the first time in recent memory that our Society has actively participated in a political campaign. I hope that this experience energizes more ethical action regarding public policy. Many – by my count, 42 members and friends (who'll be listed on our website) – helped in BES's efforts by gathering pledge signatures, making calls, giving information to voters, donating, and participating in fundraisers. Particularly appreciation goes to the LGBTQ Humanist Council of Baltimore led by organizers Lucas McCahill and Nicole Stanovsky. Their partnering with us throughout the campaign helped BES organize its efforts and contributed amazing levels of energy.

## **Reallocate Rally**

*(continued from page 1)*

ine Pugh, and Maryland State Delegates Mary Washington and Heather Mizeur. Pastor Todd Yeary of Douglas Memorial Community Church, who convinced Rev. Jackson to come to the rally, spoke of his recent trip to Africa with Jackson to successfully negotiate the release of two American citizens from a Gambian prison.

To me the night's highlight was being with the large contingent of BES members and friends as our own Karen Helm stepped to the podium to put this movement into historic context. She spoke of a United States, emerging slowly from the shadow of slavery, that today struggles to deconstruct the racism that throws young black youth into a criminal justice system that robs them of a future. Karen rallied the crowd and BES members to the cause!

Those cheering Karen and the others on included myself, Karen's husband Don Helm, Lucas McCahill, Cheryl Eury, Bernie Brown, Laura Griffin, Jonathan Ling, Dedrick Samuels, Kate LaClair, Ben Busby, Paul Furth, and Emil Volcheck - the last two lucky winners of door prizes!

The evening concluded with Tyrone Barnwell, community organizer with Safe and Sound, giving the crowd explicit instructions to flood Governor O'Malley's phone and email inbox with pleas to recreate, not incarcerate. Public safety is best served by bringing the best out of our young people, not by closing rec centers and opening jails. Tell the Governor what you believe is the best path to a healthy city by emailing him through his website at [www.governor.maryland.gov/mail](http://www.governor.maryland.gov/mail) or calling his office at 410-974-3901.

# BESpeak

**BALTIMORE ETHICAL SOCIETY**

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

## **NEWSLETTER**

Please do not delay!

**TIME VALUE**

## **“DRINKING ETHICALLY”**

**Sunday, December 15, 5:00 p.m.**

Come to City Limits Bar (1700 E. Fort Ave.) and spend time with old friends and meet some new ones!

## **NEWCOMERS MEETING**

**Sunday, December 30, 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 Karen Elliott or Hugh Taft-Morales for more information.

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

**Baked Goods – Sunday, December 9**

**Other Items – Every Sunday**

Support Moveable Feast in its work to feed people with AIDS or blood 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](http://www.mfeast.org).



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