

Celebrating a Victory for Science Education!

by Hugh Taft-Morales, BES Leader

I want to draw your attention to the inspiration of my last platform talk of 2015, entitled *The Humility and Integrity of Science*, to take place on December 27th. That will be exactly one week after the anniversary of an important legal victory for true science education. Rarely have advocates of reason and defenders of the principle of separation of church and state had so clear a reason to celebrate. On December 20, 2005, Judge John E. Jones III, a Republican appointed by George W. Bush, ruled in the landmark case *Kitzmiller v. Dover School District*. In a nation full of climate change deniers and young earth creationists, Jones' ruling reaffirmed the integrity of science education in America.

This case involves a school board in the borough of Dover, Pennsylvania, stacked with science skeptics. It voted to insert into the public school science curriculum "intelligent design" – the current favorite manifestation of pseudo-science favored by the creation science crowd. To counter this nearly Orwellian effort at distorting truth, students, parents, and teachers reached out to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU) and the law firm of Pepper Hamilton and the trial was on!

What happened then is part of a rich and fascinating story that culminated in a ruling that reverberated across the nation. Judge Jones wisely concluded that intelligent design is not science. He said the school board could not promote intelligent design or "denigrate or disparage the scientific theory of evolution." Lauri Lebo, a reporter for the *York Daily Record* and author of *The Devil In Dover*, appreciated the national implications of this trial. Lebo wrote, "What happened in Dover is a tiny sliver, a broken shard of glass mirroring what plays out across the country. A war of fundamentalist Christian values versus secularism. A battle between evangelical fanaticism and tolerance. And for those who must live in both worlds, we are caught in between."

Even though the principles involved seem pretty clear to me, in a way Ethical Humanists are caught in between – not in between science and intelligent design. We



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SUNDAY PLATFORMS 10:30 a.m.

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DECEMBER 6

"The Experience of Homelessness"

Bonnie Lane and the
Baltimore Area Faces of
Homelessness Speakers Bureau

DECEMBER 13

"Innovation in Social Work"

Michelle Zabel
Director, Institute for Innovation

DECEMBER 20

"Human Rights and U.S. East Asia Policy"

Frank Jannuzi
President/CEO
Mansfield Foundation

DECEMBER 27

"The Integrity and Humility of Science"

Hugh Taft-Morales
Leader, Baltimore Ethical Society

ETHICAL HUMANIST SUNDAY SCHOOL

Every Sunday
10:30 a.m. – Noon

Separate programs for preschool
children and school aged students.

TODDLER CARE

Separate supervision provided
for children up to age two.

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bmorethical.org. For general
questions: ask@bmorethical.org.

On the web at bmorethical.org

The Future is Now with Ethical Education

by *Paul Furth, BES President*



In the summer of 1950, a diverse group of free-thinkers gathered at The Johns Hopkins University. They had searched for religious institutions that would offer their children an ethical education.

Finding none, they formed the Baltimore Ethical Society. As reported in a 1951 Afro-American newspaper, BES had the first integrated Sunday School in Baltimore (and thus, I suspect, in Maryland). This first was no easy task considering the prevailing prejudicial attitudes of the time. Back then, Maryland had laws banning integrated public schools. As our founding members discovered, even the religious institutions enforced segregation, propagating an “us vs. them” mentality based on race. Despite those obstacles, or perhaps because of them, our founders understood that segregation was detrimental to the health of a democratic society, propagated inequality and dehumanized groups of people. Finding Baltimore’s religious institutions supporting and propagating racial segregation, this diverse group of humanists established BES specifically for the formation of an ethical and fully integrated Sunday School for their children.

The tradition of an inclusive education, encouraging critical thinking and wisdom, continues through our Ethical Education Committee (EEC). Dr. Argentine Craig has been our EEC Chair since 2013. She became a member of Ethical Culture in 1965 while in Philadelphia. Arriving in Baltimore in 1970, she visited BES at the Gwynns Falls location, but reconnected only in 2010. By then, she had retired from the university and was active in politics. After attending the BES 60th Anniversary event, she formally joined BES.

The immediate past Chair was Karen Helm when the committee was called Religious Education. She wanted to cut back on BES committee involvement to focus on other actions. Emil Volcheck, then BES President, asked Argentine to take the Chair. She agreed, but only with the proposed name change “Ethical Education,” a precedent set by other Ethical Societies. The name change was voted by the Board followed by the membership at two consecutive Annual Meetings, becoming official in 2014.

The teaching principles of the Sunday School are based on the 12 values of humanist education, which include responsibility, sharing, cooperation and helping others. Argentine has worked for a comprehensive tots-to-teens program. Currently, Ruth Schoonover (long-term Ethical Culture member who is a product of our Sunday School, with two children of her own) cares for our toddlers (pre-3), Jill Gordon, a recent hire (October 15th), teaches our pre-K (ages 3-5). Since 2010, Linda Joy Burke (a respected performing artist and poet, who was brought in by Rosemary Klein) has been charged with teaching our preteens (6-12+). For the

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HumanLight Celebration with Baltimore CoR

Wednesday, December 23, 7:00-10:00 p.m.
at First Unitarian

Join Baltimore Coalition of Reason friends to celebrate HumanLight on Wednesday, December 23. HumanLight is a celebration of the winter season conceived by the New Jersey Humanist Network as a humanist or secular alternative to traditional religious celebrations. HumanLight features music and the lighting of three candles celebrating Reason, Compassion, and Hope. HumanLight was first celebrated in 2001 in New Jersey and has since spread throughout the country. This year is the sixth celebration of HumanLight by the Baltimore Coalition of Reason. To learn more, visit the HumanLight website at www.HumanLight.org.

This year we are celebrating Hu-

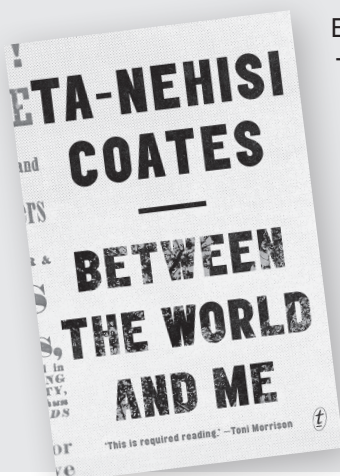
manLight at First Unitarian. We will have a potluck dinner and desserts, music, and the candle lighting. This is a family-friendly event, and children are welcome. The Organic Family Band is back by popular demand! They will entertain us again with Irish jigs, Klezmer tunes, and Bundeslieder songs.

Please tell us you're coming (RSVP) and tell us what food you'd like to bring. Sign up for the potluck dinner here: <https://goo.gl/uV4i0a>. If you can't access the Google Doc, then email BmoreCoR@gmail.com or call 443-267-8585. Join the Facebook event at www.facebook.com/events/1511800442452745/ or join the Meetup event at <http://meetup.com/ps/2QDCvN>.



PLAN AHEAD:

BOOK DISCUSSION OF TA-NEHISI COATES'S *BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME*



BES member Kirk Mullen and Leader Hugh Taft-Morales will lead a series of book discussions of the #1 *New York Times* bestseller, *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Toni Morrison called it "required reading" a bold and personal literary exploration of America's racial history by "the single best writer on the subject of race in the United States." The discussions will begin in late January – time and place to be determined. Email leader@bmorethical.org to sign up!

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Poetry Group

Sunday, December 6, 9:30 a.m.

Diversity Salon

Sunday, December 6, 1:00 p.m.

Baking Night at Moveable Feast

Thursday, December 10, 5:45 p.m.

Mindfulness Meditation

Sunday, December 13, 9:30 a.m.

Board Meeting

Sunday, December 13, 12:30 p.m.

Ethical Action Meeting

Sunday, December 20, 12:45 p.m.

Family Board and Card Games Party

Sunday, December 20, 3:00 p.m.

HumanLight Celebration

Wednesday, December 23, 7:00 p.m.

BES Eatery Social

Sunday, December 27, 1:00 p.m.

Newcomers Meeting

Sunday, December 27, 12:30 p.m.

Sunday Assembly Baltimore

Sunday, December 27, 2:00 p.m.

SUNDAY SNACK SCHEDULE

All are invited to bring snacks for our coffee hour following platform. Snacks are especially welcome from those whose last names start with:

A to F	December 6
G to L	December 13
M to R	December 20
S to Z	December 27



DECEMBER 6

“The Experience of Homelessness”

Bonnie Lane and the Baltimore Area
Faces of Homelessness Speakers Bureau

Speakers who have personally experienced homelessness will share their stories of that experience and talk about ways that the general public can get involved in ending this injustice. A panel of three speakers will be led by Bonnie Lane, who experienced homelessness intermittently over 10 years in Michigan and Maryland. Ms. Lane is now a legally filed candidate for Mayor of Baltimore in 2016.

The **Baltimore Area Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau** is a collection of individuals who have all experienced homelessness personally. Members of the Bureau will share their personal experience of homelessness and talk about ways that we all can fight to end this injustice.

DECEMBER 13

“Innovation in Social Work”

Michelle Zabel
Director, Institute for Innovation

The Institute for Innovation and Implementation (the Institute) of the University of Maryland serves as a resource for technical assistance and policy for the Maryland Children's Cabinet and its member agencies. The Institute supports state and local governments and organizations to implement effective systems and practices to best meet the needs of children and youth with complex behavioral needs and their families. Professor Zabel will be speaking about the work of the Institute.

Ms. Michelle Zabel is the Director of The Institute. In her role, she has transformed a small technical assistance center for Maryland's Children's Cabinet into a multi-million dollar, nationally recognized, best practice center for systems of care. Previously, she served as Associate Vice President of Ambulatory Services for a Behavioral Health Network, as Director of the Department of Pediatrics at Albert Einstein Healthcare Network, and Director of the Burlington Partnership SAMHSA Grant and member of the state executive leadership team for New Jersey's Children's System of Care Initiative. Ms. Zabel graduated from Eastern College with Bachelor's degree in Sociology, and from Bryn Mawr College

with a Master of Social Service degree, with a specialization in Clinical Social Work.

DECEMBER 20

“Human Rights and U.S. East Asia Policy”

Frank Jannuzi
President/CEO Mansfield Foundation

Frank will briefly share personal experiences attempting to integrate human rights concerns into U.S. foreign policy in two challenging countries: China and North Korea. He will talk about what worked, and what didn't, when he was on Capitol Hill working for Senators Biden and Kerry and when he was at Amnesty International. He will also try to convey a sense of how human rights sometimes get shunted aside by U.S. policy makers focused on other priorities – usually national security and trade. He will speak a bit about what grassroots activists can accomplish, based on his time at Amnesty International. He hopes the talk will stimulate our thinking about what we can do as citizens to advance human rights far from our shores, even though he knows and appreciates that there is much that needs to be done right here in Baltimore.

Frank Jannuzi joined the Mansfield Foundation as President and Chief Executive Officer in April 2014. The Mansfield Foundation is dedicated to promoting cooperation and understanding between the United States and the nations and peoples of East Asia. He previously served as Deputy Executive Director (Advocacy, Policy and Research) at Amnesty International, USA. There he shaped and promoted legislation and policies to advance universal human rights, protect individuals and communities at risk, and free prisoners of conscience. He has traveled throughout Asia and has written extensively on East Asia policy issues, including U.S. relations with Japan, China, and North Korea. He lives in Baltimore with his wife, Dr. Jennifer Martin, and their two daughters.

DECEMBER 27

“The Integrity and Humility of Science”

Hugh Taft-Morales
Leader, Baltimore Ethical Society

On the 10th anniversary of the “Intelligent Design” court case *Kitzmiller v. Dover School District*, humanists appropri-

ately celebrate the liberation of science education from religion. But this single victory has not ended the culture wars. Despite efforts to establish fruitful coexistence, religion and science continue to be portrayed as mortal enemies. Creationist museums are as popular as ever and research is still hampered by religious dogma. Hugh Taft-Morales reflects on the Kitzmiller decision and the need to reinforce both the integrity and humility of science.

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 also serves as Leader of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia. His presence in Ethical Culture has been termed "invigorating." 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.

SOMEONE GETTING MARRIED?

The Baltimore Ethical Society has a Leader and a team of officiants who are trained and licensed to conduct weddings, memorials, and other life passage ceremonies. For more information about our ceremonies or to make arrangements, please contact our Officiant Team Coordinator, Kathryn Sloboda, at weddings@bmoreethical.org.

bmoreethical t-shirts

GET YOURS TODAY!

Available in black, purple, and white

ONLY \$15

BAKING NIGHT AT MOVEABLE FEAST

**Thursday, December 10, 5:45–8:00 p.m.,
901 N. Milton Ave., Baltimore**

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



FAMILY BOARD AND CARD GAMES PARTY

**Sunday, December 20, 3:00-6:45 p.m.
at the home of Marjeta Cedilnic**

Join members of the Baltimore Parenting Beyond Belief Meetup for a board and card games party at the home of Marjeta Cedilnic in Howard County. Feel free to bring a game or play one of the many there. Please bring a snack or drink to share (or make a small monetary contribution to the host instead). Come when you can while the party lasts. Ms. Cedilnic is the lead organizer of the Maryland Chapter of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

Address and directions provided when you RSVP: to do so or to have questions answered, please call 301-642-1065.

DIVERSITY SALON

Sunday, December 6,
1:00 p.m.

An evolving discussion about how perceptions of the Other affect our relationships. Meets on the first Sunday of every month at BES. If you have any questions, contact Lane Berk at 410-727-1880 or Dianne Hirsch at diannehirsch1776@aol.com.

DID YOU MISS A PLATFORM? WATCH IT ON VIMEO!

Were you out of town? Couldn't get a ride? Don't have an Ethical Society near you?

We video record our platform presentations and post them on Vimeo! Go to bmorethical.org and click the Vimeo icon or go directly to <https://vimeo.com/user4409178> to watch.

CHARM CITY

film

SERIES

Due to the winter holidays, the Charm City Film Series **will not meet** in December but will return in January.

BES to Join Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development

On November 8, the vote to join Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD) passed 44-0, with 7 abstentions and 35 members not voting.

BUILD is a broad-based community power organization, rooted in Baltimore's neighborhoods and congregations. They are non-partisan, interfaith, and multiracial.

Formed 35 years ago, they work to improve housing, increase job opportunities, and rebuild schools, among other issues. They are affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation (www.industrialareasfoundation.org) a national coalition of like-minded organizations founded by Saul Alinsky. For more information on BUILD's history and accomplishments, visit www.buildiaf.org.

BUILD One Baltimore - making two

cities one - is the theme of BUILD's latest campaign to craft a non-partisan agenda for the 2016 Mayoral and Municipal elections to increase employment among city residents in distressed neighborhoods, such as Sandtown-Winchester.

BUILD's approach resonates with how Ethical Culture emphasizes relationships. BUILD states "We rely on a radical tactic: We meet people face-to-face and build relationships that help to re-knit the frayed social fabric of our life."

BUILD also has a way for individuals to sign up for their BUILD ONE campaign. The link to join is on their website, or directly here: <https://act.myngp.com/Forms/-3652999171048142848>.

Please keep an eye out for upcoming BUILD related announcements.

SUNDAY ASSEMBLY BALTIMORE

Sunday, December 27, 2:00 p.m.

Come to the next Sunday Assembly Baltimore! What happens at a Sunday Assembly? A Sunday Assembly service consists of songs (pop songs mainly) sung by the congregation, a reading (usually a poet), an interesting talk (that fits into live better, help often or wonder more), a moment of reflection and an address, which sums up the day and hopefully gives a take home message. Afterwards we have tea and cake (well, in Britain anyway!) to encourage people to stay and mingle with one another. Visit us on Facebook at fb.com/sundayassemblybaltimore.

The Sunday Assembly is a global movement for wonder and good. It is an international not-for-profit that helps people start and run their own godless congregations. Our motto: Live Better, Help Often and Wonder More. Our mission: to help everyone find and fulfill their full potential. Read more at sundayassembly.com.

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NEW MEMBER WELCOMING

BES recently welcomed new member Rajesh. If you have not done so already, please take a moment to introduce yourself to him.



The Future is Now with Ethical Education

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teenagers, Monique Stins acts as liaison with Navigators USA (an international, inclusive scouting group with parallel goals and values to BES).

Our Sunday School runs from 10:30 a.m. through 12 noon during Sunday Platform from September through May. BES has invested greatly in our education services to help teach our children as well as offering parents the opportunity to attend Sunday Platforms with a safe space for their children. Argentine has experimented with summer school in a effort to increase both child and parent participation in BES. Parents always have the opportunity to participate in these educational and childcare venues. Attendance of both children and parents has much room for improvement. I personally hope that more parents will bring their children to BES on Sundays to benefit from our programs.

Also, EEC organizes child-inclusive events outside Sunday School. For example, the past two years, BES Boo! has been a fun Halloween event for both child and adult. This year, Argentine, Monique, Mary Beth Sodus, and Susan Henley worked very hard organizing this event. And Mary Beth

has been organizing the November Festival/Stone Soup, which includes BES children putting on skits, with the guiding hand of Linda Joy.

Current members of the EEC include Argentine, Rosemary, Monique, Susan, Ben Busby and Brian Dorsey (and until she recently moved out of state, Em Sabatiuk). Ex-officio members are Hugh Taft-Morales and myself. There's plenty of room available for others who are interested in the caring, well-being and education of our youth. Please consider joining. And if you have children, please bring them with you on Sundays.

The future is now. To create a better world, deeper relationships in an ethical community and succeeding to bring out the best in others and ourselves, education is key. Critical thinking is a trait best established when we are young, and EEC plays an important role. But only with your help and the support of parents can we hope to help our children to succeed to be ethical adults.

For more information about Ethical Education or interest in joining EEC, please contact Dr. Argentine S. Craig (ascraig@comcast.net).

Science Education

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are firm defenders of science. Rather we are caught between our desire to work with others with diverse views and our desire to protect science education from the corrosive anti-intellectualism that masquerades as piety. In reaching out to others, including theists of all stripes, in an effort to emphasize deed before creed, we cannot sacrifice reason just to "get along." And back in 2005 Ethical Culturists could rejoice in the *Kitzmiller* decision. We can agree with Lebo in concluding, "Something beautiful played out here."

Ten years later we can all celebrate this beauty – the beauty of a judicial system that worked; the beauty of an educational system that, at least in this case, was saved from dogma; and the beauty of science itself – a way of looking at the world that both elevates and cautions us about human limitations.

BES EATERY SOCIAL

**Sunday, December 27,
1:00 p.m.**

Members and friends are invited to go out together for lunch. We'll gather in the lobby at about 12:45 p.m. following post-platform snacks to decide what restaurant to visit. Everyone is encouraged to wear their BES shirts or other items to help promote the society.

If you have questions, please contact Nathan Whitmore at nww10@hampshire.edu.



BALTIMORE ETHICAL SOCIETY

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

NEWSLETTER

Please do not delay!

TIME VALUE

ETHICAL ACTION MEETING

Sunday, December 20, 12:45 p.m.

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

NEWCOMERS MEETING

Sunday, December 27, 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 Wayne Laufert or Janey Solwold for more information.

MINDFULNESS

meditation

Sunday, December 13, 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 it comes naturally in stressful times. Join us as we sit (on chairs) and breathe (just the way it comes naturally) and listen to the words of Thich Nhat Hanh, one of the world's best-known teachers of mindfulness.

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Visit bmorethical.org and look for us on Facebook, Twitter, and MeetUp.com @bmorethical

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