

Ethically Speaking

53 Prospect Park West
at 2nd Street in Park Slope
www.bsec.org
bsecdirector@yahoo.com
718.768.2972

Sundays at the Meeting House

10:00 am: Members' Sharing Circle, Library

10:30—12:30 pm Children's Sunday Assembly

11:00—12:30pm Platform, Meeting Room

1:00pm or as noted Afternoon Program

Sunday Platforms

Oct 5, 11 am
An Ethical Culture with **Susan Rose**

Oct 12, 11 a.m.
To Love What Is: A Marriage Transformed with **Alix Kates Shulman**

Oct 19, 11 a.m.
The Ethical Classroom with **Lisa Servon**

Oct 26, 11 a.m.
Queering Democracy: James Baldwin, Bayard Rustin and the Quest for Democracy with **Rev. Osagyefo Sekou**

Clergy Leader of Ethical Society Without Walls shares with Brooklyn Society

What does it mean to live an Ethical Culture life? Susan Rose, who grew up in the Brooklyn Society and is now clergy leader of Ethical Society Without Walls, an internet based congregation for those who do not live near a society, will reflect on that question based on her 50 years in the movement, and ask the congregants to think about it together.

Susan Rose attended the Children's Sunday Assembly from the age of three. She was certified as an Ethical Culture Leader in 1999 after extensive training in Interfaith Chaplaincy and education on Advance Planning for End-of-Life issues. She also serves as Dean of the American Ethical Union Leadership Training Program. The mother of two, she lives in Cambridge, MA. She is pleased to be able to work for two organizations which actively work to make the world better.
(Special Music by MARITRI)



Susan Rose

Author, Alix Kates Shulman Speaks



Sunday, Oct 12, 11 a.m. To Love What Is: A Marriage Transformed

One day it happens, the dreaded thing that will change your life forever. For Alix it happened on July 22, 2004, when she woke to find that her beloved husband had fallen nine feet from their sleeping loft and was lying deathly still on the floor below. Though he would survive, he suffered an injury that left him seriously brain impaired. Shulman, the author of a new memoir, describes life on the other side: the ongoing anxieties, risks, and surprising rewards she experiences as she reorganizes her world and her priorities to care for her husband and discovers that what may have seemed a grim life-sentence to some has evolved into something unexpectedly rich. *(cont. on page 2)*

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October 3rd

Adults: \$10 | Kids: \$6

***Appalachian Traditional
Singer/Musician Brett Ratliff***

October 10th

Admission: \$15

***Special Performance
by Maritri***

October 17th

Adults: \$10 | Kids: \$6

***Third Friday with the Park
Slope Food Coop***

October 24th

Adults: \$15 | Kids: \$6

***Singer/Blues Guitarist Paul
Geremia Traveling Troubadour
Concert Series***

October 31st

Closed-Halloween

DIRECTIONS BY MASS TRANSIT:

Q train to 7th Av station in Brooklyn; F
train to 7th Av; 2or 3 train to Grand
Army Plaza; B69 bus to 2nd St; B75
bus to Prospect

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Alix Kates Shulman is the author of three children's books, four novels, and three memoirs, including her latest *To Love What Is*. Oliver Sacks said about her new book, "An extraordinary and important book...Shulman with elegance and deep insight moves between the past and the present, and magically unites them. TO LOVE WHAT IS celebrates the deep resilience of self, and the power of a loving relationship in the face of devastating brain damage."

(Special Music by Jean Rohe)

**Lisa Servon, BSEC Member Leads Platform on The
Ethical Classroom
Sunday, October 19, 11am**

Lisa Servon is a BSEC member, Sunday School parent and the new dean of Milano, the New School's graduate school of management and urban policy. This spring, she was recognized for the quality of her teaching with a university-wide teaching award. Her teaching and research areas include urban poverty, community development, economic development, and issues of gender and race. She is also a Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Work Life Policy. Lisa is the author of two books: *Bridging the Digital Divide: Technology, Community, and Public Policy* (Blackwell 2002), and *Bootstrap Capital: Microenterprises and the American Poor* (Brookings 1999). *(Special Music by David Sweeny & Jazz Ensemble)*



**Queering Democracy: James Baldwin, Bayard
Rustin and the Quest for Democracy**

Sunday, October 26, 11am



Rev. Osagyefo Sekou

As an election approaches in which the Right has tried to create a lightning rod out of gay marriage, it is time to reflect on the contribution to democracy in thought and practice by these two major black, gay thinkers and civil rights leaders. Rev. Sekou is the author of the critically acclaimed *Urbansouls* and a social justice minister at Middle Collegiate Church in NYC. He is also an interfaith organizing fellow with the Fellowship for Reconciliation, a promoter of nonviolence and intercommunity understanding.

Editor's Column

Thinking about the upcoming Presidential election I realized that ethical behavior in what passes for political discourse has become something of a rarity. Although the mantra, "Change," has been adopted by both parties, it seems, at least to me, to lose its significance in the way it's used. To "change" in any meaningful way requires far more radical alterations in our behavior than anyone in mainstream politics seems willing to adopt. What is on my mind now is that this election campaign seems to confirm that the politician who can lie most convincingly to the public is the one more likely to win an election. For instance, when Tom Friedman recently suggested that the solution to our problems of the future of the planet lay within our hands through the development of clean energy, he seemed to be suggesting the kind of solutions that would be embraced in some ways by both candidates who are promising a future of prosperity, "growth" and "consumption" as their way of courting supporters. To my way of thinking, "consumption" evokes its earlier meaning: "tuberculosis"-- an eating away of one's substance from within. "Growth" has no joyful ring of economic triumph but the far more sinister implication of a cancerous plague ravaging this earth. In contrast, the ethical appeal to voters should be for "conservation" and humane "population control."

It doesn't take a Malthusian disciple to realize that this planet cannot be enlarged to accommodate our enlarged appetites although Americans are in the habit of believing that natural resources are as infinite as our aspirations and delusions. The real test of an ethical politician is his or her willingness to tell the truth, even if it means losing an election, a truth geared not to satisfy the short-term appetites of voters today but to give their grandchildren a chance to survive on a livable planet.

Ethical political discourse should include discussion of the necessity for a basic change in diet from meat and poultry to vegetables; reducing the general standard of living for those whose standards have gone beyond sustainability to low-energy-consuming, essential elements of life; and acknowledging the necessity that the relationship among people in general should move from competitive to cooperative, sharing of resources, communal. Ethical political discourse should ask the electorate not only if they are "better off this year than last" but how the earth will be in a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand years at the rate of environmental degradation that is presently occurring. But who could possibly hope to win an election today with such a program?

Ethical Culture has an important role to play in demanding a "mature" political discourse to replace the adolescent behavior in the political arena today. It has to stress that any politician that wants to truly serve the public must do so by first acknowledging that the world is becoming a very fragile place that is being heedlessly destroyed by greed and stupidity. It should begin with the proposition that war is no longer a luxury that this planet can afford and therefore a good start in addressing our problems would be for all munitions manufacturing to be systematically converted to producing more useful things or, in the interest of the environment, cease operations altogether.

If the world electorate—not just ours—can move toward a higher form of moral and intellectual development, the pep rally, instant gratification mentality that rules present-day politics might yield to one of real hope for the future of the planet and humankind.



"On My Mind"
by Joel Shatzky

BSEC's Mission Statement

The Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture is a humanistic, religious and educational fellowship promoting knowledge, love and practice of ethics-centered living. As a diverse and welcoming community, we assist each other in developing ethical ideals, exploring choices, navigating our life journeys, and working to realize a more just and compassionate world.

BSEC belongs to a federation of Ethical Culture & Ethical Humanist Societies and/or Fellowships in the U.S. known as the American Ethical Union

www.aeu.org



SAVE THE DATE



Jean Rohe, BSEC Member
CD Release Party
October 12th

With her debut record release, *“Lead Me Home”*, Jean shares her stories of people, places, and sounds through her own unique and lively performance. Jean and her quintet explore the intersections of several musical styles of the New World as well as North American folk music and jazz through Jean’s compositions and fresh arrangements of songs from the Southern Hemisphere.



CSA Tag Sale
October 18th



Terry Tempest Williams
@ BSEC
October 20th

Terry Tempest Williams is the Annie Clark Tanner Scholar in Environmental Humanities at the University of Utah.

Come out and hear Terry Tempest Williams discuss her new book, **“Finding Beauty in a Broken World.”**

Sponsored by: Community Bookstore 7th Ave & Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture



October:
5th: Abby Scher
13th: Nettie Paisley
26th: Tasha Paley

Be Well!



Children’s Sunday Assembly (CSA)

A family program of the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture (BSEC)
53 Prospect Park West · Brooklyn, NY 11215 · (718) 768-2972

HI CSA Friends and Families,

We have begun the season with the theme of peace. Making a giant collaborative-earth-poster, children discussed how they would want to be treated if their own body was the earth. We read out loud the UN declaration of Human Rights, and then created peace posters for the BSEC community to march with in honor of International Peace Day. As CSA-BSEC marched through the streets and then through the Church of Gethsemane itself with a message of peace from all ages, we sang the song taught to us by our very dear Jean Rohe at platform, "Peace is the world smiling; Peace is a gentle dove; peace is sharing; Peace is caring; Peace is filling the world with love!" We represented the Humanist vision among people of all faiths.



Looking ahead... we will embark upon the voyage of Non-Violent-Communication to learn "Giraffe language," sleep out under stars, celebrate the crisp arrival of fall, cheer on the marathon runners, invite friends to the Happy Bones Festival and then to Wampanoag. I hope many of you will consider registering for the conference about Ethical Education on the weekend of November 7th-9th. The fall looks like this: *(cont. on page 5)*



(cont. from page 4)

- October 4-5** Parent-run Sleep Over is planned for Saturday night.
*Advance RSVP required
- October 5:** **CSA #4:** Parent-led projects



October 11-12 (Columbus Day Weekend):
NO CSA

October 19: **CSA #5:** Ethical Education: Parent, Lisa Servon speaking at Platform

October 26: **CSA #6:** Outreach Party to invite friends: Happy Bones Party: a CSA Tradition

November 2: **CSA #7:** Field Trip: NYC Marathon

November 7-9: **NO CSA** -- but instead, please plan to come to:
Religious Education/ Ethical Education WEEKEND at Stony Point Conference Center. If you or your family wishes to attend, contact aimee_neumann@hotmail.com or aeu.org
*We can arrange carpools to go up on Friday afternoon and return Sunday afternoon.

November 16: **CSA #8:** Fall Nature Observation

November 23: **CSA #9:** Wampanoag: Intergenerational Gratitude Ceremony at BSEC led by Remi Gay
Pot Luck Lunch hosted by CSA families

November 30: **NO CSA** Thanksgiving Break

Audrey Kindred, Director

Children's Programs/BSEC Family Programs

Phone (212) 920-4483

E-mail: akindred@gmail.com, ethicalkin@hotmail.com

International Peace Day Celebrated September 21st

The PEACE campaign is getting bigger and bigger. We have received several hundred messages so far. Have a look at **HYPERLINK** "<http://www.peaceday2008.org>"

Kudos to Audrey Kindred and CSA families for their Peace Walk and participation at Gethsemane Church for our IDP event. The children marched around the Church during the service. Audrey spoke very clearly about our humanist convictions before a gathering of Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, and different Christian denominations in the community. International Peace Day does not begin and end on September 21st. Check out the following: CNN's iReport, a special page for the International Day of Peace "<http://www.ireport.com/dayofpeace>" Register and put your personal peace stories in videos, photos and texts online to everyone to see. We would love to know about what YOU think of peace and do for peace! And if you are lucky your story will be broadcasted by CNN. *Martha Gallahue*

The Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture (BSEC)

Damal Edmond,
Administrative Director
bsecdirector@yahoo.com

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Next Newsletter Deadline:

October 25

Send submissions to
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Editor: Joel Shatzky
Proofreader: Vandra Thorburn

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Joel Shatzky
Audrey Kindred

Can a Village be Saved?

Brooklyn Ethical has a handful of community partners, justice-oriented groups that the Society tries to support. Fonkoze, a grassroots organization in Haiti, is one which members forged ties with years ago. When the hurricanes struck the island with such devastation, Fonkoze seemed like a group to share our Sunday collection with. Brooklyn for Peace is another community partner, so even if the Ethical Action Committee is not signing on as a cosponsor of an event, we offer the group reduced rates for renting the building for programs. Sometimes Ethical is not able to help, for instance on September 23 when Brooklyn for Peace hosted a panel including an Israeli, an American, and two villagers dedicated to saving Aqaba, a Palestinian village in the north of the West Bank near Israeli Army training camps that is targeted for demolition by the Israeli



Army. Ethical does not yet have wheelchair access, and the mayor of Aqaba who was one of the speakers is paralyzed by a bullet shot during

(cont. on page 7)

Announcements



The **BSEC Creative Writers Group** is meeting at BSEC from 1:00p.m. to 3:00p.m. on the following Sundays - **October 12th, November 9th and**

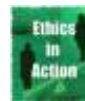
December 14th. All writers are welcome (poets, novelist, short story writers, etc.) Each session begins with an ice breaker exercise. Next, each writer reads prepared works and receives group feedback (feedback is optional.). Please contact us at Kimdarniece@optonline.com for more information.



BSEC needs volunteers to assist with the **Good Coffeehouse (GCH).** The GCH meets on scheduled Fridays from 8:00p.m. to 10:00p.m. Volunteers are asked to commit to one Friday per month where they will work with others to provide set-up, sound, and clean-up after the event. This is a great opportunity to hear some great music and meet some people. Please contact the office @ bsecdirector@yahoo.com if you are interested in helping.



Newcomer Supper, Friday, October 24, 2008 from 6:00p.m. to 8:00p.m. If your interested in finding out more about BSEC, please join us. Contact carolynmei@aol.com to R.S.V.P or for more information.



Ethical Action Taskforce Meeting, Sunday, October 26, 2008 @ 1pm. All are welcome!



UN Based Programs presented by the National Service Conference of the AEU

The Working Group Universal Ethics and Global Concerns with The Committee Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns invites all to experience programs that will take place in the **UNICEF House on 44th St. between First and Second Aves.** These programs are **free.**

This year is the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In recognition of this occasion, two special programs have been scheduled. **Wednesday, October 22nd**, *The Spiritual history of the UN* from 1:00pm-3:00pm and *The Ethical and Spiritual Dimension of Human Rights Law* from 3:00pm-5:00pm. On **Thursday, October 23rd**, *Making Human Rights Come Alive with the Feminine Principle.*

Please contact **Martha Gallahue 347-495-0665** or marlalar@mindspring.com to register for these **FREE** events.

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an Israeli Army training exercise when he was 16. So Brooklyn for Peace, Adalah-NY, and the Rebuilding

Alliance (the U.S. group supporting the village), allied with the Society of Friends for the presentation in their wheelchair accessible downtown Brooklyn meeting house.

Over the years, fifty villagers have been killed or injured because of the proximity of the training camps, said mayor Haj Sami Sadiq Sbaih at the event. “After the Oslo accords, we thought peace would prevail,” he said. “We went to the Israeli High Court.” The Israeli High Court even ordered the closing of one of the three training camps, but that order was soon followed by a demolition order of the whole village from the Army. In April, the High Court confirmed the demolition orders. But over the years, an international campaign has supported the village, including the Rebuilding Alliance, a California-based group which raised money to build a kindergarten in Aqaba, the Norwegian government, and Bimkom, an organization of Israeli planners for “planning rights.” The mayor traveled to the United States with Rawhieh Sbaih, who heads the Rural Women’s Alliance and the kindergarten, and Shmuel Groag, an architect and founder of Bimkom, to ask “the American people especially to help us.”

For Palestinian villages in the West Bank like Aqaba, Groag said, “it’s a catch 22.” “They have a demolition order because they don’t

have a master plan.” But they don’t have a master plan because the Israelis do not allow them to have one. “We think the rights to have a house and the right to have a community and the right to have a kindergarten... is basic and clear cut to support.” There are 221 Israeli settlements in the West Bank housing one million Israelis that are illegal according to international law but that do have extensive planning rights accorded by the Israeli government. “They are only 1.5% of the West Bank but each settlement has a master

plan for greater development.” Meanwhile, for villages like

Aqaba, the threat of demolition is strong as the demolition itself. Seven hundred villagers already left rather than live with that threat.



Photo by Matthew Weinstein

The visitors asked Brooklynites to let their Congresspeople know they care about the fate of this village. They also invited us to make simple “pinwheels for peace,” like the schoolchildren of the village have done, since, as Donna Baranski-Walker, the director of the Rebuilding Alliance said, “the children could help wake up the adults and remind them what peace could be like.” -- Abby Scher



Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture
53 Prospect Park West
Brooklyn, NY 11215-2629