



Brooklyn Community Action Network (BCAN) First General Meeting February 23rd

On Sunday, February 23rd, at 3pm, BSEC members and friends are invited to a general meeting at BSEC to help establish BCAN (Brooklyn Community Action Network). Our board has agreed to be BCAN's fiscal sponsor and the Ethical Action Committee has contributed funding. Reverend Finley Schaefer, a long-term human rights and peace activist, has generously agreed to lead the organization for six months. Besides BSEC, several other organizations have joined BCAN, including Brooklyn Parents for Peace, Brooklyn chapters of the Women's International League for Peace & Freedom and the National Congress of Neighborhood Women, the Social Action Committees of the Park Slope United Methodist Church and the Brooklyn Society of Friends (Quakers), the Park Slope Greens, and the Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats. A BCAN brochure will soon be mailed to BSEC members and friends.

BCAN is our most recent effort to provide substantial support to a social justice network since the demise of the Brooklyn Ecumenical Cooperative (*BEC*) several years ago. *BEC* was composed of 45 churches, synagogues, and community groups that successfully worked together on affordable housing, public housing, and credit unions for many years. BSEC members attended *BEC* meetings with up to 1,000 *BEC* members representing many Brooklyn-based racial, ethnic, and religious communities. Rev. Schaefer was one of the *BEC* founders, and Lisel Burns was an active supporter.

Following the 2/23 meeting, at 5pm, there will be a social hour with light refreshments. Please contact the BSEC Office if you plan to attend. For more information, contact Lisel Burns or Charley Horwitz.

February Platforms

This Season's Platform Theme is *The Heart of Ethical Culture: Faith in All People; Eliciting the Best from Ourselves and Others*. Following the themes of community, social action, and personal journey, we will offer opportunities to engage with the community in new ways throughout the year.

February 2: *Core Values for a Lifetime: What Do We Really Stand For?*

When the chips are down, what set of values and bottom line principles best serve us? If we are not already clear on our core values and their implications for everyday decisionmaking, then what are we waiting for? Intergenerational differences, both in our values and in our approaches to living them, will be introduced by special guests from Generations X and Y.

February 9: *Race & Social Justice In the United States: How Far have We Come Since the Sixties?*

A discussion of how social justice struggles launched in the sixties have become stagnant and why we need a new wave of activism to reduce economic disparities and bring workers and people of color into the mainstream of American life. With Mark D. Naison, Professor of African-American Studies & History and Director of Urban Studies at Fordham University. A long time Park Slope resident, Dr. Naison is the author of *Communists in Harlem During the Depression* and the recently published *White Boy: A Memoir*.

February 16: *Opera Reflections on the Theme of Love*

A celebration of Valentine's Day. Many kinds of love as they are depicted in opera will be discussed and demonstrated. Hosted by BSEC President and singer Constance Pigozzi.

February 23: *Colloquy*

A more meditative Ethical Culture ceremony, with sharing, music, and reflections.

March 2: *When You Strike a Woman, You Have Struck a Rock*

Woman, not as victim, but as familymaker, farmer/food producer, mother, nationbuilder, healer — a mighty force in the reconstruction and healing of torn society — is the "foundational" perspective of the African women's movement. What are some critical differences between "Western" and "Southern" feminism, and the "rock" of grassroots women and their organizations around the world? BSEC Leader Lisel Burns will preside, with guests such as Achola Pala-Okeyo of GROOTS International, Kali Ndoye of the Fifth Avenue Committee, and Jan Peterson of the UN Huairou Commission, sharing their perspectives.

Platforms are held every Sunday morning from 11am to 12:15pm in the main hall of the Meeting House at 53 Prospect Park West, followed by a convivial and delicious buffet lunch.

Ethical Action News: Major Peace March

United Nations to Central Park Saturday February 15th at Noon Meet at BSEC 11am

On Saturday, February 15th, many BSEC members and friends are joining a diverse group of religious, community, and progressive organizations to oppose the war against Iraq. Together with BCAN (Brooklyn Community Action Network), Brooklyn Parents for Peace, and dozens of other groups, we plan to march from the United Nations to Central Park South at Noon.

We plan to gather at BSEC at 11am, Feb. 15th and walk to the Grand Army Plaza subway.

Because war seems imminent, up to a million people are expected. Similar events are planned in dozens of cities across the world. A new, non-violent, non-sectarian, democratic, national peace group, *United for Peace and Justice*, is spearheading organizing efforts in nearly every city in the United States.

On moral and ethical grounds, virtually all mainstream religious groups support the march, which is expected to be the largest in our city in decades. Many Republicans and conservative leaders are moving against the war also. Reverend Peter Gomes, a Harvard Professor of Morals and ardent Republican, said recently: "I demand a better excuse than revenge or oil for the prosecution of a war that is likely to do more harm than good, that will destabilize, not only the region, but also the world for years to come, and that will confirm our country's reputation as an irrational and undisciplined bully."

Opponents of the war also argue that it will not make us safer, but further undermine our civil liberties and divert funds for essential domestic needs.

For more information contact Ethical Action Chair Charles Horwitz, at 718-230-3537.

Art Workshop for Peace 2/8

Saturday, February 8, 11am-5pm, BSEC and Brooklyn Parents for Peace will host an Art Workshop for creating signs and large puppets to be used at the February 15th Rally. All are invited to participate; no artistic talent or experience is required. It will be fun! Call 718-624-5921 to reserve a workshop slot, or to volunteer with organization or setup & cleanup, or to donate materials or supplies.

**THE BROOKLYN SOCIETY
FOR ETHICAL CULTURE**

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FEBRUARY 2003 BSEC CALENDAR

Saturday 2/1

3-6pm: Monthly Life Reflections, at Lisel Burns' house. Call 718-783-2298 for details.

Sunday 2/2

10am-12:30pm: Children's Sunday Assembly.

11am: Sunday Platform: *Core Values for a Lifetime: What Do We Really Stand For?* with BSEC Leader Lisel Burns.

12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch.

3-5:30pm: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Campaign to Challenge Corporate Power.

Monday 2/3

7-9pm: *Stone Soup Storytelling Group*, a monthly workshop for storytellers of all levels of experience. Led by professional storyteller Mary Savage.

Tuesday 2/4

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus* directed by Bev Grant. We believe every woman can sing! Call 718-965-0720 for details.

Wednesday 2/5

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan with J.P. Harpignes. \$12/class; \$40 for 4; BSEC members free.

6:30-10pm: *Pinewoods Folk Open Sing* with potluck supper & snacks.

Friday 2/7

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series presents multi-talented singer/songwriters *Janie Barnett* and *Ilene Weiss*.

Saturday 2/8

11am-5pm: *Art Workshop for Peace*. Call 718-624-5921 for details.

Sunday 2/9

10-10:50am: Yoga Class, call 718-748-7084 for information.

11am: Sunday Platform: *Race & Social Justice In the United States: How Far have We Come Since the Sixties?* with Mark D. Naison.

12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch.

1-3pm: Newcomers Workshop.

Tuesday 2/11

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

Wednesday 2/12

7-9pm: Newcomers Workshop.

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Saturday 2/15

Major Peace Demonstration. Meet at BSEC Meeting House 11am and collect at United Nations Plaza at Noon.

6:30pm: Valentine Potluck Supper and Artmaking Exchange.

Sunday 2/16

10am-12:30pm: Children's Sunday Assembly.

11am: Sunday Platform: *Opera Reflections on the Theme of Love*.

12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch.

Tuesday 2/18

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

Wednesday 2/19

7pm: Brooklyn Flix: *Spike of Bensonhurst*, directed by Paul Morrissey.

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Friday 2/21

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series presents Third Fridays with the Park Slope Food Coop: *Roberta Piket* with *Alternating Current*; also *Jezra Kaye* and friends.

Sunday 2/23

10am-12:30pm: Children's Sunday Assembly.

11am: Sunday Colloquy.

12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch.

3pm: *BCAN General Meeting*.

Tuesday 2/25

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

Wednesday 2/26

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Friday 2/28

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series presents *The Love Handles*.

Saturday 3/1

3-6pm: Monthly Life Reflections, at Lisel Burns' house. Call 718-783-2298 for details.

Sunday 3/2

10-10:50am: Yoga Class.

10am-12:30pm: Children's Sunday Assembly.

11am: Sunday Platform: *When You Strike a Woman, You Have Struck a Rock* with BSEC Leader Lisel Burns and special guests.

Membership News

We are very sad to announce the death of BSEC Member and longtime Trustee Isabel Ross. Her niece Barbara has given the Society a Memorial Gift in Isabel's name, for which we are extremely grateful. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to all family and friends.

More sad news: Annabelle Glasser, longtime Lay Leader at the Ethical Culture Society of Queens, and former president of the American Ethical Union, also passed away last month.

The BSEC ceremony couples group is planning a potluck Valentine's Supper and Art-making Exchange for Saturday February 15, beginning at 6:30pm. Shirley Kaplan, founder of the Paper Bag Players and longtime head of the Theater Department at Sarah Lawrence College, will bring some students to assist in the merrymaking. Singer-songwriter Steven Clair and others will join in a musical jam.

BSEC Member Annette Bernstein has been leading the BSEC Theatergoing Group for the past few years, finding discount tickets to some of the best shows on Broadway. Some of the shows the group has seen are *Ragtime*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Invention of Love*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Dance of Death*, and *Proof*. Annette would like members to support the theater, and is proud of what the group has done so far. However, she will only continue if there is more support. (It is not an easy job!) Call Annette at 718-369-3321 if you are interested.

BSEC is planning a Human Faith Project Weekend Retreat for March 7-9. Included in the program will be an introduction to the Faith Project, a review of the Life Reflections process, and training for people who would like to lead colloquy discussions at BSEC and elsewhere. Contact Diane Kirschner (kirschnerd@hotmail.com) for more information and to apply.