



Peace Site Day and Garden of Peace and Remembrance Dedication, May 16, 2004

The Peace Site of the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture was the dream of a group of members dedicated to the ideals of peace and was inaugurated in 1983. Each year in May a person or group is selected to be honored, and invited to speak at our Sunday Platform about their work. We celebrate and are inspired to continue the work of peace and justice. The Ethical Action Committee is pleased to announce this year's Peace Site Awards and hope you will join us on March 16 for our Peace Site Platform.

The Parents Circle: Israeli Palestinian Bereaved Families for Peace. The Founder of Parents Circle, Yitzhak Frankenthal, was born in Israel into a religious Zionist family. From 1970-1974 he served in the Israel Defense Forces and fought in the Yom Kippur War. After the war, Yitzhak worked for his family's successful business, married, and eventually became the father of five children. In 1994, on his way home for a weekend break from army service, Yitzhak's 19 year-old son, Arik, was abducted and murdered by Hamas militants.

The following year, Yitzhak liquidated his business and invested all his energies and assets into the Parents Circle, made up of Israeli and Palestinian families who have lost a relative due to the ongoing violence in the Middle East. Since its founding, the Parents Circle has united hundreds of Israeli and Palestinian bereaved parents committed to promoting tolerance, peace and reconciliation. Some 500 families are spreading this message at home and out into the world through programs such as High School Lectures and project Hello Peace, a free Israeli-Palestinian chat line and a summer camp for Israeli and Palestinian children. Visit www.theparentscircle.com and www.hellopeace.net for more information.

Rachel Corrie, Peace Activist, 1979-2003. On March 16, 2003, American college student and peace activist Rachel Corrie was killed by an Israeli Defense Force bulldozer in the town of Rafah in the occupied Gaza Strip. Rachel, a 23-year-old student at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, traveled to the occupied

Palestinian territories to join with the International Solidarity Movement to protect Palestinian civilians and promote a peaceful solution to the conflict. She died while attempting to stop the destruction of a Palestinian home by the Israeli army.

Rachel's parents, Craig and Cynthia Corrie, offered the following statement on the one year anniversary of their daughter's death: "After a year spent learning more, and after experiencing so personally the loss that thousands of Palestinians and Israelis share with us, we echo once again Rachel's plea for it all to end. In an e-mail, Rachel wrote, 'This has to stop. I think it is a good idea for us all to drop everything and devote our lives to making this stop. I don't think it's an extremist thing to do anymore. I really want to dance around to Pat Benatar and have boyfriends and make comics for my co-workers. But I also want this to stop.' Rachel's brutal death illustrates dramatically the madness of war."

The Corries ask you to contact your members of Congress and urge them to support House Concurrent Resolution 111, calling for the U.S. government to undertake a full, fair, and expeditious investigation concerning the death of Rachel Corrie; and encouraging the U.S. government and the government of Israel to work together to determine all the circumstances that led to this incident and to ensure that an incident of this kind never occurs again. The award will be received on behalf of Rachel's family by a relative, Molly Mackaman, who lives in Park Slope. Visit www.rachelcorrie.org.

And finally, a very special recognition of Bea Rubin, long-time peace activist in Brooklyn and co-founder of the BSEC Peace Site. Having been involved in many causes and organizations over the years, Bea is now focusing her advocacy on a prisoner art project.

On May 16, we will also dedicate our new Garden of Peace and Remembrance, which will serve as a living symbol of our commitment as a Peace Site. We will place Debbie Almontaser as the first name on our Garden of Peace and Remembrance Honor Roll, in recognition of her work in interfaith and anti-hate education and advocacy since 9/11 (please see p.3).

May Platforms

May 2 *Just Matrimony and Same Sex Marriage*

Polls report an increasing percentage of Americans accept the basic fairness involved in ceasing discrimination regarding a marriage license and its privileges. What are ethical issues we face when we talk to allies and opponents on these matters? Join the BSEC Community in sorting out the issues and moving forward. With BSEC Leader Lisel Burns.

May 9 *Mother's Day Colloquy*

A meditative Ethical Culture ceremony with sharing, music and reflections. This week we will reflect on the theme: "Heart"

May 16 *Peace Site Day and Garden of Peace and Remembrance Dedication*

Our annual Peace Site Awards, this year given in honor of peace activist Rachel Corrie, (1979-2003); the organization Parents Circle, Bereaved Israeli & Palestinian Families; and longtime Peace Site Chair and activist Bea Rubin. Join us in our Garden for music, poetry and inspiration. There will be a workshop on the honorees programs after lunch.

May 23 *Translating the Ethical Manifesto: Discovering Our Connections*

How does BSEC support members in their community activities and activism? For this platform, we will help make visible the larger communities that we are part of, the causes we support, and the ways in which Ethical Culture, by providing a personal resource for its members, is a part of a larger web of organizations and movements.

May 30: *Memorial Day Platform*

Members and friends will light candles in honor of anyone they wish and speak in remembrance if they wish.

June 6: *Auditing the 2003-2004 Season at BSEC: Intentions and Results*

When we discuss organizational efforts, do we want credit for our good intentions or do we focus on results? Can we look at BSEC intentions and results for this past Season without taking difficulties or honest feedback personally? With a community audit we can see our organizational "footprint" and take responsibility for it.

Membership News

THE BROOKLYN SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

53 PROSPECT PARK WEST
BROOKLYN, NY 11215
(718) 768-2972

BSECOffice@aol.com

Leader: Lisel Burns

President: Constance Pigozzi

Vice President: Tony Severo

Treasurer: Kurt Johnson

Recording Secretary: Gary Schechter

Pledge Secretary: Ruth Pikitch

Board Members: Maureen Egginton,
Tracey Jindyeh, Joan Donnen Klips,
Bruce Leibowitz, Melanie Richardson,
Rita Wilson.

Business Office: Rita Wilson 768-2972

Ethical Action: Charles Horwitz 230-3537

AEU Board: Martha Gallahue 768-2972

Membership:

Melanie Richardson 768-2972

Fundraising: Ruth Pikitch 256-6739

Caring & Sharing:

Roger Kaufman 972-0468

Platform: Constance Pigozzi 331-1137

Sunday School: Tracey Jindyeh 748-7084

Building Rentals:

Rita Wilson, Linda Stallard 768-2972

Operations Manager:

James Alford 768-2972

Bd. Special Projects: Maureen Egginton

Peace Site: Maureen Egginton 638-4767

Coffeeshouse: Linda Stallard 768-2972

Environment: Kurt Johnson 768-2972

Youth Group: 768-2972

Newsletter: Martha Hoffman

mhof@mindspring.com

Ethically Speaking is published 6-10 times a year by BSEC. This month's issue was produced by Martha Hoffman, Maureen Egginton, Lisel Burns, Constance Pigozzi, Bob Strock, Dorothy Wood, Roger Kaufman, Ruth Pikitch, and Celeste Leibowitz.

Happy Birthday in May to members Coreen Matthews (19), Anne Klaeyen (21), and Lydia Last-(31).

A memorial service for Marshall Dubin will be held on May 8, at 1pm at the 1199 Union Hall 330 W 42 St. in Manhattan. Several members and friends of BSEC will be taking a van in order to attend, leaving from the Society at 11:30am. The Union Hall is also a block from the subway if that is easier for you. Please let Rita know if you plan to go and by what travel means so we can arrange to assure the 30 or so people we hope will want to represent the BSEC's love for Marshall.

We wish to thank our Operations Manager Jim Alford for fine tuning and completing the work on our sound system which was originally put in place with much dedication by Christiane Siebert. We are grateful to Christiane and to Jim for giving their time and expertise towards creating a very fine system of which we can be proud.

- Constance Pigozzi

Lisel Burns and BSEC PeopleShare delegates are planning to attend the June 25th-27th conference "Local Currencies in the 21st Century," to be held at Bard College. The program will include international guest speakers and a performance by Pete Seeger in honor of local and family farmers. Themes of the conference are Understanding Money, Building Local Economies, and Renewing Community. Conference details and registration material are at www.localcurrency.org. To join our group that's going, contact Lisel.

CONSTANCE PIGOZZI HONORED

Please keep May 23rd open: we will be honoring Constance Pigozzi for her devotion and dedication to the Society over the years and recognizing the completion of her term as President of the Board of Trustees. Contact Ruth Pikitch at 718-256-6739 to help out.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS: The fiscal year will end on June 30th. Those of you who have not completed your pledge, please do so, and those who have not yet made a pledge, please try to make a contribution. Your pledge money has helped improve the building considerably. Please note the lovely garden, refinished floors, bathrooms, and basement: all are just a pleasure to use now. Also the kitchen is being improved, but there's a lot more to do. When the work in the basement is completed, we will be selecting photographs and artwork donated by our friends and members to be hung to complete the picture.

NOTICE TO FRIENDS: We will be delighted to accept any contribution toward the improvement and upkeep of our building.

Thank you all, Sincerely, *Ruth Pikitch*

Greeter's Desk Volunteers

I would like to thank the following people for helping at the Greeter's desk this year: Ruth Pikitch, Selma Richman, Annette Bernstein, Roger Kaufman, Gary Schechter, Adrianna (Irene) Baker, and Celeste Leibowitz. For your extending warm greetings and assisting visitors to feel welcomed at Ethical Society, thanks and hugs to my wonderful pals!!!!!!

- Dorothy Wood

The Russians are Coming! The Russians are Coming!

In the 1970s there was a film with the above title. I was recently in Brighton Beach taking my ex-super to a Doctor's appointment. I noticed that the Russians here in New York City have established quite an elaborate community. There are stores, nightclubs, delicatessens, doctors' offices, and, of course, Russian newspapers and cable NTV.

I think we can learn from the Russians on how to establish close links. Obviously there may be close to 100,000 Russians here and not even 100 people in Brooklyn Ethical but we should try to establish more community than we currently have. The purpose of the Sharing and Caring Committee of BSEC is to know what is going on in our community and be ready in advance to help those who need help in confidentiality.

- Roger Kaufman

NSC Honors Rose Walker

BSEC Members and Friends are invited to attend the 75th Anniversary Luncheon of the National Service Conference of the American Ethical Union, honoring Mrs. Rose L Walker, President, and other volunteers in appreciation for their many years of devoted service. Guest speakers are Jeffrey Huffines, Co-Chair of The Faith and Ethics Based Caucus for The International Criminal Court and Diane Williams, Non-Governmental Organization Committee Chair on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns.

Saturday, May 29, 2004, 1:00-4:00pm at the New York Society of Ethical Culture, 2 West 64th St. Price: \$30 luncheon + \$20 contribution in appreciation (if possible) RSVP: Martha Gallahue: 212-932-7809.

Items for this page can be forwarded to Martha Hoffman at *mhof@mindspring.com* or to the BSEC Office to my attention. Space considerations may limit our ability to include all items.

The Garden of Peace and Remembrance

This spring, we at BSEC celebrate the opening of our Garden of Peace and Remembrance. Join us at the official opening ceremony at 11am on Sunday, May 16, 2004, as we dedicate the Garden to its dual purpose as a living symbol of our dedication to the cause of Peace, and our commitment to remembering special people in our lives.

A garden combines the four elements of earth, air, water and sunlight into a living and beautiful whole. Any garden lends the visitor a sense of peace and serenity, but the Garden of Peace and Remembrance was mindfully planned to represent the oneness and equality of all human beings, and our coming together in a circle of peace.

The paved part of the Garden is arranged in a circle, with four benches, representing the four major continents on our planet (Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas). The benches are arranged in a circular pattern so that people can sit facing one another on an equal plane and speak without obstruction. Around the perimeter, emphasizing the equality of the circle, we have placed Belgian block bricks.

The plants in the Garden are from all six habitable continents but all belong to the Heath family. They differ in form and color, but are all related, just as we humans enjoy a far-ranging diversity of religions, races, and cultures but all belong to the family of humankind. As we view these plants from all corners of the globe peacefully thriving in our Garden, we are reminded of our commitment to peace in our human family.

Funding for the Garden of Peace and Remembrance comes from the heart. At the start up, BSEC received a generous grant of \$5,000 from an anonymous donor who wished to give her husband a living and lasting birthday present! So our Garden began to take shape, fueled by a beautiful expression of love. Since then, four bench plaques have been purchased along with a plaque to be placed on a brick, and other donations are planned.

Our heartfelt thanks to our benefactors, to Alex Berryman who designed the Garden of Peace and Remembrance, to Anne Wiesen who organized the planting, to Jim Alford for his tireless efforts and helpful advice, to Lisel Burns for her help and advice, to Maureen Egginton who designed the brochure, and to Jason Leibowitz who helped stuff envelopes.

Donations for plaques, plants and general upkeep of the Garden of Peace and Remembrance are welcome. Please call Celeste Leibowitz, 718-336-3683 or email her at Bruceleib@aol.com, if you wish to contribute to the Garden.

Garden of Peace and Remembrance Honor Roll

The BSEC Ethical Action Committee has established the Garden of Peace and Remembrance Honor Roll recognizing individuals whose actions represent ethical standards, values and practices that are positive examples for our lives and the larger community. Debbie Almontaser will be the first person to be thus recognized and will be join us on May 16th to accept her nomination to the Honor Roll. Debbie facilitates teacher and public workshops on Arab culture, Islam, conflict resolution, cultural diversity and Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed at universities, libraries, museums, churches, and synagogues across the city and presents at local and national conferences. She is a cofounder of Brooklyn Bridges, The September 11th Curriculum Project, Justice for Detainees and the We Are All Brooklyn Coalition. She also serves as the consultant and advisor for Nickelodeon's Nick Jr. Muslim American Series, Independent Production Fund on the Islam Project (producers of Muslims and Legacy of a Man: Prophet Muhammad PBS Productions), Educators for Social Responsibility on cultural matters and the Interfaith Center of NYC on religious diversity issues.

A Land Twice Promised

On Saturday, May 22 at 2pm, renowned storyteller Noa Baum will present a compelling story of an Israeli and Palestinian friendship. Hosted by the Dialogue Project, with BSEC Ethical Action Committee and Congregation Kolot Chayeinim. Discussion afterwards assisted by Dialogue Project. Donations gladly accepted.

The Life & Ethics team (Les Lopes, Erica Hawkins and Lisel Burns) wants to thank everyone who has helped, including Diane Kirschner for copy editing, Maureen Egginton for communications feedback and email notices going out at regular intervals, Ruth Nebbia for flyer design, Joel Cohen for printing 7000 copies of the brochure, and Rita Wilson for hosting the first workshop. To help out on upcoming programs, email hawkeri@myway.com.

Life & Ethics Series 2004

STUDENT FILM FOCUS

Wednesday, May 5 - 7:30 PM

Join Irene Sosa, videographer and Brooklyn College professor, on her return to BSEC to present her award-winning documentary "Sexual Exiles," and screen three short works by her film and television students.

COMMUNICATION AND IDENTITY

Wednesday, May 12 - 7:30 PM

In our global village, relationships stumble when we ignore the influence of social identity on the ways we communicate. Learn how to identify and use both the positive and negative differences in our cultural outlooks to resolve conflicts. Facilitated by BSEC member and adult educator Diane Kirschner and leader Lisel Burns. A follow up series using Marshall Rosenberg's Non-Violent Communication methods will be explored.

SPOKEN WORD AND COMMUNITY

Thursday, May 20 - 7:30 PM

Be inspired by Jasper Kelly and TJ Wilson. We'll discuss the place of hip hop and poetry in contemporary society and participants will have an opportunity to share their own poetry. Hosted by BSEC member and poet Les Lopes.

AND ALL THAT JAZZ

Wednesday, May 26 - 7:30 PM

BSEC Board member Rita Wilson and James Wilson, jazz aficionados, illuminate the richness of this unique art form we call American jazz. We'll listen to their selection of jazz pieces and engage in a community reflection on the many ways jazz has influenced our own lives and the world, musically and beyond. Hosted by BSEC member and Coordinator of the Life and Ethics Series, Erica Hawkins.

NON-VIOLENT SOLUTIONS FOR THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Ethical Action Committee Chair, Charles Horwitz, recently travelled to Palestine and Israel with a delegation of human rights activists investigating non-violent efforts to address the current crisis. Workshops also draw on Rabbi Michael Lerner's *Healing Israel/Palestine*. The first workshop took place April 24. Still upcoming:

May 1, 10am-noon: Ethical Dilemmas for the USA in the Israeli and Palestinian Crisis

May 8, 10am-noon: Can Non-Violence Bring Peace to Israel?

For further accounts of peace activism in Israel and Palestine, see Charley's essay series in the spring volumes of *Ethically Speaking*.

See the Life and Ethics brochure, available through the office or at www.bsec.org for details and registration materials.

Letter From Haiti

On April 1st I traveled to Haiti to represent the Fonkoze USA board at Fonkoze's annual employee appreciation day and to interview staff and Ti'Machann (small street vendors) about events since the rebellion. Almost all 250 staffers from all 19 offices attended and some traveled over 12 hours to the event, a few hours north of Port Au Prince. I made a brief statement thanking Fonkoze staff for growing our bank so successfully and helping bring economic democracy to Haiti. I was pleased to answer questions from the staff about the board and why we joined Fonkoze USA.

The all-day event was a morale booster for the young managers, directors, trainers, information specialists, credit agents, tellers, security guards and drivers, who are undergoing rough times since the rebellion began against President Jean Bertrand Aristide and his Lavallas movement last year. Amidst high spirited cheers after lunch, Pere Joe, Anne and Jean Edner-Nelson, Fonkoze's Financial Services Director, presented 21 long-term employees framed certificates of appreciation.

In the following days, we travelled the country to learn how the recent upheaval has affected operations. No Fonkoze clients were killed in the violence, but many reported robberies, injuries and other difficulties and deprivations. My impression is that the vast majority of our borrowers in northern Haiti where the rebellion was centered are back in business and repaying their loans. Our staff expects that the high delinquency rate will slowly decline and that most of our clients will eventually be able to obtain new loans. But many worry about the high rate of interest and inflation, the rising dollar and Dominican peso exchange rate, and the deep-felt hostility among Aristide supporters, the rebel army, and the present government. Many Aristide supporters are hiding in fear of their lives and the present government is arresting some Lavallas leaders. The government, which is strongly supported by the United States, has indicated that it may restore the Haitian army which had a reputation for corruption and disrespect for the rule of law.

Since the last time I met staff I was impressed by their understanding of Grameen bank's micro-credit lending principles. I was inspired by the dedication and courage of the Ti'Machann and by our staff, especially the credit officers, who solicit new customers and collect moneys while riding their motorcycles many hours a day on terrible roads in dangerous areas. Despite the hard times Haiti is undergoing now, I am cautiously optimistic that just as we survived past crises we will survive this one and continue to grow and become a sustainable alternative bank for the poor in Haiti. - Charles Horwitz

"\$5.15 Is Not Enough" is a coalition of labor unions, community organizations and religious leaders urging state senators to raise the state minimum wage. Full-time work at the current minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour comes to \$10,712 a year. Twelve states, including Connecticut at \$7.10 and Massachusetts at \$6.75, have minimum wages higher than the federal standard. For more information and to sign an online petition, go to www.515isnotenough.org.

Just Matrimony

In connection with the May 2 Platform and the ongoing Just Matrimony campaign, check out the website justmatrimony.org. Lisel Burns, Donna Roberts, and Anne Klaeyen are among the Ethical Culture Leaders and Adjunct Services Leaders who are listed as available for same-sex ceremonies. The Just Matrimony brochure is also available for anyone who is interested.

Ethical Culture and Photography

From April 6 to July 18, the New York Historical Society (2 West 77th Street, Manhattan) has an exhibit with an Ethical Culture connection. *From The Classroom To The World: Hine, Ulmann, Strand, Arbus And The Ethical Culture Fieldston School* explores the achievements of four prominent photographers who were shaped by their involvement with the Ethical Culture Fieldston School: Lewis Hine, Doris Ulmann, Paul Strand, and Diane Arbus. For all four, the school's enduring humanist philosophy was a touchstone throughout their careers, leading to significant bodies of work, and showing the social, documentary, and psychological value of the camera-made image in culture and art. Visit www.nyhistory.org for more information.

Come Join the Circus with
Brooklyn Family Theatre's production of
BARNUM
April 30th - May 22nd
Fridays at 8pm, Saturdays at 4pm & 8pm,
Sundays at 5pm
Church of Gethsemane, 1012 8th Ave
Tickets: \$12; Reservations: (718) 670-7205
or www.brooklynfamilytheatre.com

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED
Brooklyn, New York 11215
53 Prospect Park West
Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture

Good Coffeehouse Music Parlor

May 7 *James Reams & The Barnstormers*

The International Bluegrass Music Association nominated James Reams & The Barnstormers as an Emerging Artist of the Year in 2003, and the album the band recorded with banjo-virtuoso Walter Hensley was nominated as a Recorded Event of the Year. Doug Tuchman, first editor of *Pickin'* magazine, DJ on NYC's WKCR, and a bluegrass promoter for 30 years, wrote: "I believe this is the best traditionally oriented bluegrass band in the area. They combine wonderful harmonies and instrumental back-up in a very sensitive but energy-charged show." Catch them before they head off on a summer tour of bluegrass festivals from Maine to North Carolina and back to James' home in Kentucky!

May 14 *Participatory Hungarian Folk Dance*

This is your chance to move your ears and feet to the groove of Hungarian music from Transylvania! New York is a hotbed of the best Hungarian musicians and dancers in North America, and this is the first chance to enjoy one of the hidden pleasures of the city. Come see why Eletfa (www.eletfa.org) is the most popular Hungarian band in the Americas, and learn the real steps from those in the know. Aron and Hedi Szekely will lead dances from Transylvania.

May 21 *Third Friday with the Park Slope Food Coop*

Singer *Jezra Kaye* brings her warm and spirited sound to songs that range from standards to 60s pop, from show tunes to the blues. Featuring guitarist Jerome Harris and friends in a program of eclectic, entertaining song.

Originally from Germany, *Stefan Bauer* (vibraharp and marimba) has traveled extensively as a musician, giving him the opportunity to absorb inspiration from around the world. Bauer is regarded internationally as an excellent instrumentalist and as a dynamic and flexible improviser who moves within a wide spectrum of music. His credentials as a composer include more than 40 pieces documented on CD's.



- The Good Coffeehouse Music Parlor is a fund-raising and community-building venture of the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture. James Reams is music director, Tina Aridas handles publicity with distribution support from Stephen Klips, and Linda Stallard and the Coffeehouse Committee manage the box office and set up.
- The Third Friday of each month is co-sponsored by the Park Slope Food Cooperative.

The Good Coffeehouse is now the Good Coffeehouse Music Parlor. Why the addition to the name? We want to emphasize that we are not a place to get coffee with a little bit of music playing in the background. Yes, we do serve coffee!* But music is, always has been, and always will be our priority!

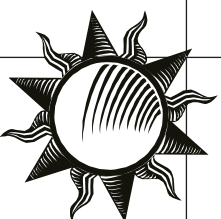
*Speaking of coffee, the Good Coffeehouse Music Parlor serves Fair Trade Coffee, which must meet several criteria: Growers must be organized into democratically run cooperatives. The cooperatives must agree to independent inspections. They also must use sustainable methods of agriculture. In return, the growers are guaranteed a living wage of at least \$1.26 per pound for their coffee (15 cents more if it is grown without pesticides). Fair Trade Coffee can be purchased in many locations: we get ours at the Park Slope Food Coop.



May 2004 at the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>2 10am-12:30pm: Children's Assembly 10-11am: CSA Parents Meeting 11am: Platform: <i>Just Matrimony</i> 12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch</p>	<p>3 7pm: Storytellers workshop</p>	<p>4 7:30-9pm: Brooklyn Women's Chorus</p>	<p>5 7pm: T' ai Chi 7:30pm: Life & Ethics: Student Film Focus</p>	<p>6 7:00pm: Board of Trustees Meeting</p>	<p>7 8pm: Good Coffeehouse \$10 donation</p>	<p>1 8 7:45am-9:45am: T' ai Chi 10am-noon: Nonviolent Solutions to Israel-Palestine</p>
<p>9 10am-12:30pm: Children's Assembly 11am: Platform: <i>Mother's Day Colloquy: Theme: Heart</i> 12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 7:30-9pm: Brooklyn Women's Chorus</p>	<p>12 7pm: T' ai Chi 7:30pm: Life & Ethics: Communication and Identity</p>	<p>13 7:00pm: Platform Committee Meeting</p>	<p>14 8pm: Good Coffeehouse \$10 donation</p>	<p>15 7:45-9:45am: T' ai Chi</p>
<p>16 10am-12:30pm: Children's Assembly 11am: Platform: <i>Peace Site Awards & Garden of Peace and Remembrance Dedication</i> 12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 7:30-9pm: Brooklyn Women's Chorus</p>	<p>19 7pm: T' ai Chi</p>	<p>20 7pm: Personnel Committee Meet'g 7:30pm: Life & Ethics: Spoken Word & Community</p>	<p>21 8pm: Good Coffeehouse \$10 donation</p>	<p>22 7:45-9:45am: T' ai Chi 2pm: Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue Project Storytelling</p>
<p>23 10am-12:30pm: Children's Assembly 10-11am: CSA Parents Meeting 11am: Platform: <i>Translating the Ethical Manifesto</i> 12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 7:30-9pm: Brooklyn Women's Chorus</p>	<p>26 7pm: T' ai Chi 7:30pm: Life & Ethics: And All that Jazz</p>	<p>27 7pm: Finance Committee Meeting</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29 7:45-9:45am: T' ai Chi</p>
<p>30 10am-12:30pm: Children's Assembly 11am: Platform: <i>Memorial Day</i> 12:30pm: Lunch with the Bunch</p>	<p>31</p>					



WITH PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS TO A REFUGEE CAMP

Jan. 3, 2004. My wife Carol and I traveled to Israel/Palestine with seven New York Jewish American civil rights activists including Dorothy Zellner and Constancia Romilly, who worked in the Southern civil rights movement and whom we have known for 40 years. The other members of our independent delegation were Yoram and Felice Gelman, who have family in Israel, and Robert Apter, all activists in the anti-war and civil rights movements.

Our first visit was with Dr. Ruchama Marton, 65, an Israeli psychiatrist who founded Physicians for Human Rights, an Israeli/Palestinian organization 16 years ago. Now it has 700 members, and 27 staffers including physicians, nurses and administrators. Most of its funding comes from Europe, with a small amount from the United States.

Dr. Marton is a short, intense woman with a good sense of humor. She has thinning dyed dark red hair, chain smokes (like many Israelis), and speaks with a charming accent. Besides Hebrew and English, she also speaks some Arabic. She lives in Tel Aviv.

Dr. Marton said while the Israeli press generally has been unsympathetic to PHR the American and European press has been supportive. Their critics call them traitors and self-hating Jews. She said that if PHR members work in a government hospital they are pressured not to work in the Occupied Territories or to sign petitions in support of human rights there.

We asked her why she founded PHR and after explaining the terrible health care crisis for Palestinians since the Occupation, she added: "I hate when people lie to me, the TV, the government. The truth of the oppression was so overwhelming that I had to do something. I thought that if the truth were known people would wake up and they would do something. What motivates me is shame and anger."

Dr. Marton says that the left in Israel and Palestine is tiny and powerless. "In the 1960s we on the left favored a one state democratic, secular country. Things have changed so that this dream is no longer realistic. There is too much hatred, blood and resistance and this makes it impossible to have a one state solution. But Sharon's idea of a Palestinian state is a joke. It is too tiny and cut up like the Bantustans in South Africa to be a real viable state."

She says that since Sharon came to office things have got even more polarized. Now, all Palestinian kids from three feet high belong to a political party such as the CP, Fatah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Al Aqsa Brigades and the Palestine Front for the Liberation of Palestine. They are desperate to do something and they despise the Israeli government.

We drive from Tel Aviv to a gas station to the Israeli border town of Tabiya and then take a Palestinian van to one of the most militant and organized refugee camps in the West Bank.

Dr. Marton says "We don't like to ask permission from the IDF to get into refugee camps because we think that health care should be a human right, but sometimes we are required to." The IDF accompanies us with automatic rifles which causes problems. There is no danger from Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, our danger is from the IDF.

Every Saturday PHR visits a different camp. They visit camps only when camp leaders invite them. The leaders make arrangements and publicity to recruit patients. The PHR brings medical supplies in a small trailer. On our way to Jenin we stop at a gas station in Tabiya where we are joined by six van loads of PHRers plus an Israeli reporter and photographer for the Boston Globe.

At the gas station, a Palestinian surgeon, Dr. Hassan Matani, joins

us. He lives in Tabiya and works in an Israeli government hospital. He has volunteered with PHR about two Saturdays a month for several years. He was trained as a doctor in Czechoslovakia and was helped financially by the Israel Communist Party (now called the United Front; it elected three Arab members to the Knesset. Few Jews are currently active in the party).

Dr. Matani says that there is little social integration among Jews and Arabs; kids go to separate schools until they enter a university. Virtually no Jews attend Palestinian universities and only about ten percent of Israeli Arabs go to Israeli universities. "There is too much pressure from both sides to have social integration," he says.

At our first checkpoint outside Jenin we are allowed through in a few minutes. But at the second check-point, although the PHR had written permission from Tel Aviv to visit the camp, the IDF makes us wait for hours. The PHR decides to find a road around the checkpoint and drives through an olive grove and then up a windy, steep gutted, muddy road to enter the city of Jenin. It was amazing that our van made it. Several times we thought that we would have to get out and push but somehow we made it.

It took five hours from the time we left Tel Aviv until we reached the city of Jenin. Without the check-point delays, the ride should have taken an hour.

The city of Jenin is bustling, dirty and unpainted, and is filled with shops, stores, cars and vans. The Jenin camp seems to be part of the city, as we see no signs designating it as a refugee camp. It is hard to see where the city ends and the camp begins. The camp which began as a tent city 50 years ago is now a permanent town, cramped with concrete block buildings, two or three stories tall.

Dozens of buildings lay in ruins. The streets are muddy and unpaved. It is estimated that over 485 houses were destroyed, 55 people were killed, and thousands were left homeless. The bombed out town reminds me of the vacant land that once was the World Trade Center.

We pull up to a three-story kindergarten that is unheated and full of books, chairs and tables. The doctors set up equipment and begin treating 30 or 40 people, mostly women and children, who have waited for several hours.

In the school yard five young militants join us. Z, a Jenin Resistance leader is 26, lean, smiling, and does not blink when we tell him who we are. Dr. Marton has known him since he was a kid. Now he speaks perfect Hebrew and she says he is the king of the Jenin camp. A week before when she spoke with him about coming to Jenin, Z told her that he did not want Israelis or Americans there. It was his way of showing his rage and his humanity. But we worked it out.

Z welcomes us and we chat for almost an hour. He was a cop before he joined the Resistance. He says he likes us even though we are Jewish because we are helping Palestinians. "I will protect you here. You are my guests. I hate the American government, but not American people," he says. He says that the US government cannot broker peace because it is controlled by the Jewish lobby.

He supports Arafat even though he disagrees with him for supporting the Geneva Accords because they don't allow Palestinians who fled Israel an unlimited right to return there. In addition, like many Palestinians, he says that there will be no peace unless Israel returns to the 1967 borders and leaves the occupied territories.

Four days after we left Jenin, Dr. Marton told us that Z was shot three times by the IDF during a raid there and one of his deputies was killed.

- Charles Horwitz