



November Platforms

This Season's Platform Theme is *Foundations of Ethical Living: Vision, Action, Practice, and Reflection*. The question of the year is "What is the Good Life?" How do we balance our outward and inward lives, and shape them into a coherent and ethical whole?

Platforms will begin promptly at 11am.

November 4: *Reforming Our Democracy: Some Ethical Considerations*

What do we really mean by Democracy as a social ideal? What forms of social organization do we actually use in our daily lives? What difference do elections make? With Lisel Burns.

November 11: *Witness for Peace*

Guests at this Sunday's Platform will include Witness for Peace volunteers who went to Colombia this year and risked their lives to witness the civil war, plus an exiled indigenous leader and human rights leader.

November 18: *Wampanoag Festival*

An annual BSEC tradition and ceremony of gratitude. Followed by 2-3-4 Oxfam Lunch.

November 25: *Thanksgiving Colloquy*

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

December 2: *Auditing Our Lives for Ethical Living: Practices and Projects*

How do we measure the extent to which Ethical Ideals permeate our lives and influence the groups we call community? With BSEC Leader Lisel Burns.

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. Please stop by!

11/18: Wampanoag Festival and 2-3-4 Oxfam Luncheon

The Children's Sunday Assembly presents an annual BSEC Thanksgiving Tradition: *The Wampanoag Festival* and the 2-3-4 Oxfam Luncheon.

11am: Wampanoag Festival

The Wampanoag Festival is based on the Native American tradition of reciprocity. Students of the Children's Sunday Assembly and BSEC Platformgoers will join together in a powerful reminder of the abundance of our lives and all the things we have to be grateful for.

12:30pm: 2-3-4 Oxfam Luncheon

Help fight hunger!

The festival will be followed by our annual 2-3-4 Oxfam Luncheon, raising funds for the Oxfam America self-sufficiency program and collecting food for CHIPS, a local Park Slope food bank. Bring **2** cans of food for the food bank, **3** dollars (or more) for Oxfam, and a dish to share for **4**.

Start off Thanksgiving Week with a gesture of sharing and gratitude!

Lois and Hal Kellerman have had a very difficult fall financially, with her ongoing immune system illness and his unemployment with the dot-com meltdown in Silicon Valley. They have moved to a smaller place, near the water, and her writing of her book for Viking Penguin Books continues. Any cheer or financial help should be sent them at their new address: 180 Creekside Drive, Half Moon Bay CA, 94019. Lois' new e-mail address is lois@loiskellerman.com.

Attention Theatregoers:

The *Metro Theater Connection*, conceived, initiated, and organized by BSEC Member Annette Bernstein has now expanded to include NYSEC and Riverdale-Yonkers. They do not meet on a regular formal basis, but usually get together to see a matinee or evening theater performance once a month, usually at a discount. Last month, ten members from BSEC and NYSEC saw a performance of *Kiss Me Kate* on Broadway. The NYSEC membership chair, Barbara Levenson, is brainstorming more joint social activities. Contact Annette at 369-3321 if you'd like more information.

Ethical Action: Fonkoze News

Fonkoze, BSEC's partner in global economic development, is well on its way to becoming the sixth non-profit micro-credit institution in the world to become a full-fledged commercial bank. So far, it has raised almost \$1 million of the \$3 million in equity funding that is needed for the organization to become a commercial bank in Haiti.

BSEC and many Ethical Culture Members have helped Fonkoze through financial or in-kind contributions. BSEC's Charles Horwitz and Gordon McCormick from the Westchester Ethical Culture Society are on Fonkoze's board. McCormick, a financial investment manager, has raised most of the almost \$1 million in equity from socially responsible investors and is committed to raise the balance within 18 months.

In 1995, BSEC led a delegation of 21 individuals from Ethical Culture Societies to Haiti. After interviewing a dozen organizations, the delegation chose Fonkoze as one of its main partners. Since then it has grown from two staffers to 170 and from one office to 19 throughout Haiti. Now it has more branches than any other bank in the country and has lent over \$2.7 million to thousands of women market sellers, peasant associations and small businesses.

Micro-credit loans are generally for less than a year and are under \$1,000. Only solidarity groups of five or more people may get loans. To be eligible individuals must be responsible for each other's loans and borrowers must agree to attend Fonkoze's free literacy and business skills schools. Presently, poor people rarely qualify for loans from commercial banks in Haiti because they lack collateral or credit histories. They are often forced to pay 300 percent interest to loan sharks and moneylenders.

By becoming a commercial bank, Fonkoze can attract private funds that will enable it to make loans to thousands of Haiti's 7 million impoverished citizens. Fonkoze also wants to become a commercial bank because only such banks can lend money from savings accounts. Therefore, under the law, it is barred from lending any of the \$2.7 million in these accounts although it must pay interest on them.

We plan to invite BSEC members to meet Fonkoze staff to hear about its success story soon.

**THE BROOKLYN SOCIETY
FOR ETHICAL CULTURE**

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by Bob Strock, Lisel Burns, Rita Wilson,
Constance Pigozzi, and Charles Horwitz.

Ethically Speaking is written by a number of BSEC
members. Views expressed in this publication are
always open to friendly discussion. Our newsletter
staff, like the membership at large, may vary in their
thinking on many issues, yet we are all committed to
putting deed before creed, and to strive constantly toward
living out, each in our own particular way, the Ethical
Ideal of eliciting the best from ourselves and others.

Donate \$25/Year

to help support the newsletter
(and stay on the mailing list)

NOVEMBER 20001 BSEC CALENDAR

Thursday 11/1

7:30-8:30pm: *Ball Room Dancing Lessons*,
led by Christina, an international competitive
dancer. \$15, discount for BSEC Members. Call
(212) 781-7475 for information.

Friday 11/2

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series
presents *Lisa Gutkin & Friends*, a Celtic and
contemporary violinist and her compadres.

Saturday 11/3

10-11am: *The Art of Belly Dancing* taught by
Salome. Free to BSEC members.

Sunday 11/4

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

11am: Sunday Platform: *Reforming Our
Democracy: Some Ethical Considerations.*

12:30: Lunch with the Bunch.

Monday 11/5

7-9pm: *Stone Soup Storytelling Group*, a workshop
for storytellers of all levels of experience. Led by
professional storyteller Mary Savage. \$5-12.

Tuesday 11/6

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus* directed by
Bev Grant. We believe every woman can sing!
Join us. 768-2972 for info.

Wednesday 11/7

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.

Thursday 11/8

7:30-8:30pm: *Ball Room Dancing.*

Friday 11/9

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series pre-
sents *Texas Leroy*, finger-picking guitar wizard with
an amazing roots repertoire; and *Le Nozze di Carlo*,
an accordion/bass/violin/mandolin ensemble play-
ing original classics and Italian favorites.

Saturday 11/10

10-11am: *The Art of Belly Dancing* .

Sunday 11/11

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

11am: Sunday Platform: *Witness for Peace.*

Tuesday 11/13

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

Wednesday 11/14

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Thursday 11/15

7:30-8:30pm: *Ball Room Dancing.*

Friday 11/16

8pm: Good Coffeehouse concert series presents
Third Fridays with the Park Slope Food Co-op.

Saturday 11/17

10-11am: *The Art of Belly Dancing* .

Sunday 11/18

10am-11am: Children's Assembly.

11am: Sunday Platform: *Wampanoag Festival.*

12:30: 2-3-4 *Oxfam Luncheon.*

Tuesday 11/20

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

Wednesday 11/21

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Saturday 11/24

10-11am: *The Art of Belly Dancing.*

Sunday 11/25

11am: *Thanksgiving Colloquy.*

Tuesday 11/27

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

Wednesday 11/28

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Thursday 11/29

7:30-8:30pm: *Ball Room Dancing.*

Friday 11/30

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series
presents *Bev Grant & Friends*, an American
folk treasure (and director of the Brooklyn
Women's Chorus) brings us her distinctive style
of socially conscious music..

Saturday 12/1

10-11am: *The Art of Belly Dancing.*

Sunday 12/2

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

11am: Sunday Platform: *Auditing Our Lives
for Ethical Living - Practices and Projects.*

12:30: Lunch with the Bunch.

BSEC is holding a Fall Orientation Supper Series,
with potluck suppers and conversations about Ethical
Culture. We will meet at 6:30pm: Second Thursdays
at Lisel's house, Fourth Fridays at the BSEC Library,
before the Good Coffeehouse. Please call 638-4767,
or e-mail *megg1968@aol.com*, if you would like to
attend any (or all!) of these suppers.

A big thank you to the monthly mailing volunteers:
Jean Shaffer, Bea Garber, Edith Calabro, and Valerie
Francis. Your hard work has been a big help!

Also a big thanks to Anne Marie Mogil, who is do-
nating to BSEC and related groups her beloved Paul's
extensive library of Jung, myth, and philosophy.

Children's Sunday Assembly

The CSA held an "Ethical Swim Time" at the Prospect Park YMCA on Sunday October 14th, with proceeds going to the Sunday School. A wet time was had by all.

CSA students will join BSEC platformgoers on Sunday November 18th for the Wampanoag Festival, an annual intergenerational celebration of gratitude and thanksgiving, inspired by Native American rituals.

Our Children's Sunday Assembly program meets every Sunday from 10am to 12:30pm. We offer an ethics-centered curriculum and community for children up to 13 years old, *now including classes for 3-year-olds and toddlers!* Registration is open all year.

Please contact the CSA Director, Tracey Jindyeh, at 748-7084, or e-mail *jindyeh@webtv.net* if you have any questions.