

The Existentialist

Newsletter of the First Existentialist Congregation of Atlanta

470 Candler Park Drive, N.E., Atlanta, GA 30307 • Founded in 1976 •

A Philosophically Based Spiritual Community

Dedicated to Human Liberation

and Founded on Existentialist and Feminist Principles •

First E Welcomes New Board Members



Linda A. Bell

Linda A. Bell grew up in Florida, has an undergraduate degree in mathematics and a Ph.D. in philosophy, and is retired from Georgia State University as Emerita Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Women's Studies Institute. She has published essays and books on ethics, existentialism, and feminist philosophy and is proudest of *Rethinking Ethics in the Midst of Violence* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1993), *Beyond the Margins: Reflections of a Feminist Philosopher* (SUNY Press, 2003), and "Do You, or Does Someone

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First E welcomes three new members to our Board of Directors

for 2014-2015. They are Linda A. Bell, D. Patton White, and Hank Pfadenhour. The new members will replace three members who are going off the Board: Libby Ware, Ted Pettus, and Charlene Ball. ~



Hank Pfadenhauer

Hank Pfadenhauer has been a member of econg since 1981. Is a Christian. Has three cats. Also loves geese, goats, and giraffes. Believes that love and children are the meaning of life. ~



D. Patton White

D. Patton White is the Artistic/Administrative Director of Beacon Dance, based in Decatur, GA. He has danced with numerous companies in the metro Atlanta area, and has been with CORE since 1992. He has worked as a performing artist since 1987. He has taught on the faculty of Agnes Scott College in Decatur, GA, and is currently on the faculty of Emory University. He has toured nationally and internationally as a performer, and his choreography has been

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**First Existentialist
Congregation of
Atlanta**

470 Candler Park Drive,
NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30307
404-378-5570
www.firstexistentialist.org

All Are Welcome
Join us in our
Celebrations of Life on
Sundays at 11:00 a.m.
Children's Program
during Sunday services

Fellowship Minister:
Marsha Mitchiner,
revm@bellsouth.net
Office Administrator:
Rick Westbrook,
office@
firstexistentialist.org

Board of Directors:
Libby Ware, Chair
Bill Read, Treasurer
Charlene Ball,
Recorder
Elaine Gale
Bill Laney
Ted Pettus
Stell Simonton
Andy Weiskoff
Cindy Lou Who
Newsletter Editor:
Charlene Ball,
mcharleneball@yahoo.com

*We are a philosophically based
spiritual community
dedicated to
human liberation
and founded on existentialist
and feminist principles.*



Notes From the Board

By Libby Ware, Board Chair

The Board met on Monday, April 7. Don Bender attended and gave a report after meeting with the Rental Oversight Committee—Marsha, Bill Read, Rick, and Edi—about how we could better use our space. He gave 4 recommendations. 1) Move some of the Sisters' items offsite, which would free up space in minister's and admin offices. 2) Combine the 2 office spaces into one and divide the time that Rick and Marsha use it. Then Marsha's present office could be rented out. 3) Let a pre-school or after-school program use the basement space. 4) Increase rentals in the Sanctuary. It is now hard to get callbacks because our equipment is not the best. The computer, phone system, and computer program need to be updated. We need to have prompt callbacks to prospective renters. We should prioritize equipment updates, and Rick is looking into phone systems.

Lorraine has volunteered to maintain the literature rack. She will make copies of the newsletter and brochures and keep them updated. Libby said she should check with Ashlea, who created the brochures. Lorraine asked to be reimbursed for ink for copies. We agreed that she can be reimbursed by submitting reimbursement forms.

Bill Laney handed out pictures of different lights and asked for feedback. Bill L. said that Atlanta Light Bulb's lights are \$29/each, and the same lights are available from Costco at \$20/each. Hank said he is concerned about the color temperature of the lights. There is a later model that has better natural light. Hank said that the price would not be very different from Atlanta Light Bulb's, about \$4.00 difference.

Elaine announced that she has gotten new playground equipment, and that Marie has installed it. We need wood chips for the ground. We AGREED to ask the Scharkos to bring wood chips. Elaine is arranging for a new carpet with a pad under it. It is brown-flecked and won't show dirt. Primavera has said they will prepay to help pay for the carpet. Bill R. asked if we needed to allocate money for the carpet. Elaine said it will be paid for by donations.

The next Board meeting will be Monday, May 5, at 7:00 p.m. downstairs. Both off-going and in-coming Board members will be present. All members and friends are welcome to attend. ~

*Real hope is grounded in a particularly
messy struggle and it can be betrayed by na-
ive projections of a better future that ignore
the necessity of doing the real work. So what
we are talking about is hope on a tightrope.
~ Cornell West*

Guild Reports

Program Guild *by Charlene Ball*

The Program Guild has lined up a special treat for May 4--Dr. Jean Heinrich will speak and will be joined by Rose Shields and Sara Gregory, acrobats from Imperial OPA Circus and CORE Dance Company. Jean's topic will be "Existentialism, Creativity, and the Human Spirit." On May 11, Mothers' Day, our guest speaker will be Loretta Ross, formerly with the Center for Human Rights Education and SisterSong, who will speak on "Appropriate Whiteness." We will hear from Rev. Janna Nelson on May 18 and Rev. Kate Hauk on May 25. Facilitators for May will include Rev. Marsha Mitchiner, D. Patton White, Lorraine Fontana, and Charlene Ball. If you would like to be a facilitator, contact a member of the Program Guild.

The Program Guild is Patton White (patton@beacondance.org), Charlene Ball (mcharleneball@yahoo.com), Linda Bell (lbell@gsu.edu), Jean Heinrich (doctorjean06@yahoo.com), and Bill Laney (bill339la@yahoo.com). Contact us if you would like to be a facilitator, give feedback, tell us about a speaker or musician you'd like to hear, or join the Program Guild. ~

Community News & Activities

--**Lisa Cottrell, LPC, is accepting new clients**, including individuals and couples. She has been trained this year in a type of therapy called Emotion Focused Therapy for Couples. She also offers groups for DBT Skills, Trauma and Addiction Recovery. Visit Lisa's updated website at www.wellbeingpsychotherapy.net or call 404-931-3066.

--**Thomas Dodd's photographic art show will open at First E on May 11.** Thomas has had numerous solo exhibitions of his works in the Atlanta area and around the US and has been a part of many group exhibitions around the world. He has work on permanent exhibition in Paris at the Galerie L'oeil du Prince and at Art Gallery Constantin in Senlis France. His photographs have been featured in many magazines and on book and album covers, and he is the subject of an upcoming documentary film.

--**Edith Covington is helping adults** of all skills levels, beginners and up, to **develop their computer skills** on a 1:1 basis. Call Edith or email her at edithcovington@gmail.com

--**Glen Lopez has calendars for sale**, \$5, featuring his photography in our neighborhood including members of First E and Little 5 Points. See Glen for a calendar.

--**Congratulations to Gabriel Nahmias**, who has been awarded a Fellowship to Capetown, South Africa, for July and August, where he will be involved in studies of elections.

--**Congratulations to Stell Simonton**, who has raised virtually all the money needed for her India trip via a kickstarter campaign: *Women of Darjeeling: Stories from the Ground Up*.

--**It's time for fresh veggies!** The Scharko's CSA had their 1st delivery on April 13 to First E. Your 1/2 share options will be delivered twice monthly on Sundays to 1st E, similar to last year, and a cut-flower option is available for \$20/month more. Please ask Robert if you need the application. Down payment of \$200 should accompany your application with the balance due by July.

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Social Justice Corner

By **Linda A. Bell**

Foreverfamily, founded by Sandra Barnhill, who spoke at First E on March 9, has been working for 27 years with the children of incarcerated parents to provide needed support and services. To ensure a caring and nurturing environment for the children, the group offers programs for enrichment and fun, along with homework help, for the children and assistance for their caregivers. Foreverfamily regularly takes children to visit their imprisoned parents, keeping families connected during difficult times. That connection, as studies have shown, is important both to children and parents, maintaining relationships and hope during incarcerations and establishing the necessary foundation for a successful reuniting of the families and reentry of the parents.

Foreverfamily has grown into a national organization headquartered in Atlanta, with Sandra as its national president. For her work, she has been recognized by the Ford Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and, locally, by the Atlanta Business League, the Gate City Bar Association, the Atlanta Tribune, and the College of Arts and Sciences, Georgia State University.



Sandra Barnhill, photo from Foreverfamily website.

As I listened to Sandra speak, I concluded that what she has done for families is a source of satisfaction for her far beyond what other possible uses her law degree might have had to offer. She has listened to those with whom she has worked, even changing the name of the organization in response to the children's embarrassment by the original name, Aid to Imprisoned Mothers (AIM). When she talks about her work, she seems prouder of what she has learned from those the organization serves than of her well-deserved honors. For those inspired by the work of Sandra Barnhill and Foreverfamily and who might wish to contribute to their work, here is a list of items they need:



Foreverfamily group photo. From Foreverfamily website.

FOREVER FAMILY'S WISH LIST

We are often asked if we have a wish list and yes, we do! Below is a list of our organization's needs and wants..

On-Going Items We Need:

- Gas gift cards (increments of \$25 or \$50 preferred)
- Visa, Kroger, Walmart (or other similar store) gift cards-- these help us with the day-to-day expenses at program, such as healthy snacks, materials for activities, as well as unforeseen needs. For example, when we did tennis lessons, some kids couldn't participate because they didn't have tennis shoes. For swimming lessons, we had to purchase a few suits for those who did not have them.
- Kitchen mats-- we are looking for the long, foam type mats that don't slip, catch water, and are easy to clean. Target and Costco (among other places) sell them. To see an example, visit Target's website.
- Kid's cutting knives-- they sell sets on Amazon. Our kids help us prepare our vegetarian

snacks and meals. Safety is our number one priority. These knives will allow the younger kids to be involved without risk of injury.

- Gift cards for oil changes-- these are used to keep up with the maintenance of the two 15 passenger vans we use.
- Tablets (iPad or other) and Laptops-- while new devices are preferred, we will gratefully accept your old devices, but please, only donate devices that are in good working order. If you wouldn't give it to your child as a gift, please do not gift it to ours either.

Items We Dream About and Really Want:

- LCD projector and screen
- Flat Screen TV
- Portable Dishwasher
- Steam Vacuum
- 2 Computer Tables-- They can be purchased at Office Depot. Call us at 404/223-1200 to get the SKU number.
- Car or van

If you have any questions, contact **Beth Wettlin, Program Director**, at bwettlin@foreverfam.org or **404-658-9606**. To make a donation, visit our online center or contact our Director of Development at **(404) 223-1200**. ~



Remembering Lanier a Year Later

Thanks to Franklin Abbott for sending this photo in memory of Rev. R. Lanier Clance, who passed on April 15, 2013. The photo is from the Atlanta StoryCorps wall. Franklin interviewed Lanier for StoryCorps several years ago. The interview is archived both at the Smithsonian and in the special collections archive at Georgia State University. ~

Franklin Abbott (left) and Lanier Clance

Community News & Activities ~ continued from page 3

--**Bennett's Market**, owned by Victoria Bennett-Trestrail, offers sandwiches, meals, and produce from local farmers and growers.

--**Lost-N-Found Thrift Store** is located at 2585 Chantilly Drive, Atlanta, and is open Thursday-Sunday from 12:00 to 6:00. Shop and help homeless LGBTQ youth.

--**Geek Chorus** meets on First Wednesdays--bring your favorite beverage to share, love offering to First E for allowing us to use the space, and musical instruments to pluck, bang or strum.

--**Ukuleles group** meets on second, third, and fourth Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.. Participating is free. Teacher once a month: cost: \$15.00. All levels welcome.

The First Existential Congregation and Visions of Possibilities presents *Conversations 'Bout the Girls*, a play which examines a woman's relationship with her breasts and how it is changed by the world around her. Mother's Day weekend, Saturday & Sunday May 9 - 11. For info or tickets, <http://tinyurl.com/BouttheGirls-Atl> or [Facebook.com/BouttheGirls](https://www.facebook.com/BouttheGirls). \$500 plus attendee gifts collected will be donated to our charitable partner: The Greater Atlanta Affiliate of Susan G. Komen.

--**RAP, a discussion group about race**, meets at the Little 5 Points Community Center on Sunday, April 20, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

--**Submissions and news for the June Newsletter** are due to Charlene by **May 18**. Board and Guild reports and member news items, opinion pieces, poems, meditations. The newsletter welcomes your submissions.

--**Contact Robert Stewart** with your news and activities for his weekly e-newsletter: rstewart@toyodausa.com .

--**NOTE: Apologies to Phil Coventry, the photographer who took the pictures of performers** at the Existential Moment Coffeehouse in March, whose name was inadvertently omitted. ~

Early Edgewood-Candler Park BiRacial History Project Receives Grants to Help Restore Legacy Markers

By Edi/th Kelman, Project Manager

The Early Edgewood-Candler Park BiRacial History Project has been awarded two grants to help with replacement of two legacy markers that were impacted in separate hit and run property damage incidents in the past year. The grants are a Park Pride "Small Change" grant for \$1,800, and a \$1,000 "Love Your Block" grant out of the Mayor's office. These funds should cover the anticipated expenses to replace both damaged Legacy Markers in the park. If additional expenses arise, they should be minor. The "Love Your



Damaged Legacy Marker

Block" grant committee offered, "You were selected because you proposed a clear work plan, with strong support from community members and groups, a good source of volunteer recruitment and a desire to beautify your neighborhood."

A neighborhood volunteering component is required by the grants. CPNO, Friends of CP, Mary Lin School Principal, Antioch East Baptist Church Pastor, First Existentialist Congregation Social Justice Guild, Pimsler Hoss Architects, & Small Carpenters at Large have all agreed to participate. We are hopeful that community engagement will open up even more neighbors and the City to a sense of shared ownership of the markers and the legacy. We are acquiring property damage insurance with the minimum deductible on all of the History Project's Candler Park legacy markers. Our timeline is set for completion of the installation of the two markers by the end of this summer.

Volunteer involvement is an important aspect of this grant. First E is one of the History Project's essential community groups, and is cited as a reliable source of volunteers. Volunteers will receive task-related training and provide hands-on assistance as we clean up, recycle, and prepare the park areas around the markers; prep and install the replacement legacy markers; and develop a squadron of friends to participate in monthly tidying tasks and quarterly "Marker Maintenance Work Days." Timing and details for volunteering will be forthcoming.

Please let us know if you'd like to lend a hand in the Return of the Legacy Markers. Contact the History Project at info@biracial-historyproject.org or 404.222.0801. We look forward to working with the neighborhood and friends to accomplish this goal together. Thanks for your ongoing support and willingness to help. ~

Linda A. Bell ~ continued from page 1

You Know, Have Vaginal Fortitude?" *Trivia*, No. 22 (1995), pp. 90-93 (reprinted in *Beyond the Margins*). Part of First E since 1980, she serves on the Program and Social Justice Guilds and has been on the Board. ~

D. Patton White ~ continued from page 1

performed by numerous companies throughout the US. He has been a member of Alternate ROOTS since 1997, and has trained extensively in the realm of community-engagement and social change through art making. ~

As individuals, we value freedom and justice for everyone, commitment to the well-being of all human beings, accepting responsibility for our choices and actions, diversity and fellowship, intellectual curiosity and challenges. ~ From the Existentialist Commitment Statement ~

Acrobats at First E on May 4

Acrobats Rose Shields and Sara Gregory of Imperial OPA Circus, makeShift Circus Collective, and CORE Dance Company will perform at the Celebration of Life Sunday morning service at First Existentialist on May 4 at 11:00. They will be participating with Dr. Jean Heinrich as she speaks on "Existentialism, Creativity, and the Human Spirit."

Sara Gregory is a Candler Park native and social circus artist who recently returned to the states after a two-year project working with circus troupes to promote art for social transformation in 11 countries of Latin America. Nourished and inspired by her trip, she hopes to share a process of discovery and transformation of self and community through her art. In Atlanta, she has teamed up with fellow social circus artists to form makeShift Circus Collective. They are currently working on a public show called the Race Circus Project to be shared in Spring 2015. This performance will explore the current state of race relations here in Atlanta fifty years after the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. She feels grateful and fulfilled working with such inspirational, unique women as Rose and Jean.

Rose Shields was born and raised in Duluth, GA. She grew up with a passion to move and dance and received her BFA in Dance from UNCSA in 2007. She currently is a dancer with CORE Performance Company and an acrobat with The Imperial OPA Circus and ELEMENT Acrobats. She loves being a part of the growth here in Atlanta, and is excited to be working with Sara and Jean in a way that is meaningful to the art of living.

"[Rose and Sara] are marvelous and transform their audiences," says Jean Heinrich. "Watching them lifts the human spirit." ~

Loretta Ross Speaks on "Appropriate Whiteness" on May 11

Loretta J. Ross will speak at First E on May 11 on the topic "Appropriate Whiteness." A longtime activist and expert on women's issues, hate groups, racism and intolerance, human rights, and violence against women, Loretta's work focuses on the intersectionality of social justice issues and how it affects social change. She is one of the creators of the term "reproductive justice" and is a nationally-recognized trainer on using the transformative power of reproductive justice to build a human rights movement that includes everyone.

She was co-founder and National Coordinator of the SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective from 2005-2012; National Co-Director of the April 25, 2004 March for Women's Lives in Washington D.C; Founder and Executive Director of the National Center for Human Rights Education (NCHRE) in Atlanta; and Program Research Director at the Center for Democratic Renewal/National Anti-Klan Network, where she led projects researching hate groups and working against all forms of bigotry with universities, schools, and community groups. In the 1970s, she was one of the first African American women to direct a rape crisis center. In the 1980s, she launched the Women of Color Program for the National Organization for Women (NOW) and led delegations of women of color to international conferences on women's issues and human rights.

Loretta is a co-author of *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice* (South End Press, 2004), awarded the Myers Outstanding Book Award by the Gustavus Myers Center, and author of the chapter "The Color of Choice" in *Incite! Women of Color Against Violence* (2006). She has written on the history of African American women and reproductive justice activism. She is a consultant for Smith College, collecting oral histories of feminists of color for the Sophia Smith Collection which also contains her personal archives. She has appeared on CNN, "Good Morning America," and "Democracy Now," among others. She is a member of the Women's Media Center's Progressive Women's Voices. She is a graduate of Agnes Scott College and holds an honorary Doctorate of Civil Law degree awarded in 2003

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May 2014 Sunday Celebrations of Life

- May 4** ***Existentialism, Creativity, and the Human Spirit***
Speaker: Dr. Jean Heinrich
Facilitator: D. Patton White
Accompanist: Alan Dynin
Special Dance Acrobats: Rose Shields and Sara Gregory
- May 11** ***Appropriate Whiteness***
Speaker: Loretta Ross
Facilitator: Lorraine Fontana
Accompanist: Aviva and the Flying Penguins
- May 18** ***Moving to La Frontera***
Speaker: Rev. Janna Nelson
Facilitator: Charlene Ball
Accompanist: Scott Hooker
- May 25** ***Readings, Stories, and Reflections of the Season***
--from Kate Hauk
Speaker: Rev. Kate Hauk
Facilitator: Rev. Marsha Mitchiner
Accompanist: William "Bill" Chelton

Loretta Ross ~ continued from page 8

from Arcadia University and a second honorary doctorate degree awarded from Smith College in 2013. She has received numerous awards for her work on human rights and reproductive justice. She is pursuing a PhD in Women's Studies at Emory University in Atlanta and is a mother, a grandmother, and a great-grandmother. ~

The Back Page

Members and Friends Speak Out

*First E Members Wear
Berets to Honor
Rev. Lanier Clance on
One-Year Anniversary
of his Passing*



Photo by Glen Lopez

The First E Newsletter is published monthly. Deadline for the June 2014 newsletter is May 18. Send your articles and announcements to mcharleneball@yahoo.com. The editor reserves the right to edit or refuse any material submitted.