

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 •

Appreciation for Tony and Linda Scharko

On Sunday, February 24, the Board of Directors honored Tony and Linda Scharko, landscapers and farmers, for their generosity to First E.

Approximately 10 years ago, after talking to Ashlea Davis about a proposed woodland sanctuary, Linda Scharko made a rough sketch with a path of the area behind the current garden. At

the time, this bit of land was a tangle of weeds and wild vines. Not long afterward, the Board approved a Woodland Sanctuary Committee under the Buildings and Grounds Guild. Linda was made an honorary member for her continuing consultation and advice. Work crews cleared out the area, and the Scharkos brought in their own workers and machinery, charging our Congregation only for supplies that they bought at wholesale cost.

Tony and Linda also created the pond named in memory of Pat Hewitt, planted trees, also purchased at wholesale prices, and most recently, not only gave up the lowest bid for removing a tree that fell, damaging the fence, but repaired the fence for free.

As farmers, Linda and Tony set up First E as a pick-up location for their CSA (Community Supported Agriculture, where people pay for vegetables for the growing season) subscribers.

The Board awarded the Scharkos with a certificate stating: "In appreciation for Tony and Linda Scharko's dedication and friendship to our Congregation, including their work and vision in creating a memorial pond for the Woodland Sanctuary, planting trees, repairing fences, and providing CSA distribution at our location, the Board of Directors of The First Existentialist Congregation of Atlanta would like to recognize Linda and Tony as lifelong Friends of the Congregation, this the 24th day of February, 2013." A reception was held after the service with numerous finger sandwiches created by Karla Crawford and Mary Turnpaugh and brownies by Andy Weiskoff. ~

Above: Tony and Linda Scharko at First E Reception in their honor on February 24, 2013. More photos on Page 8.



**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
Edith Covington,
Treasurer
Karla Crawford,
Recorder
Charlene Ball
Ted Pettus
Phyllis Thakis
Andy Weiskoff

Newsletter Editor:
Charlene Ball,
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*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, February 4th at 7:00 pm.

Rhonda Wildman visited with concerns about the **Security Policy**, especially the idea of locking the downstairs when the children's program is going on. We assured her that Stephanie or Aurelia has the key to the stairway door and that there are other exits in case of fire. Rhonda also suggested that we contact some organizations involved in spousal abuse prevention for advice on protecting someone who has a protective order. Phyllis Thakis volunteered to contact the organizations. Libby Ware will prepare a script for anyone who has to call the police in case a violator comes into our sanctuary.

Ted Pettus presented Randy Pimsler's update on our application status for a **Special Use Permit** which would permit an after school program to use the downstairs area. The application was approved by the Board and submitted by Randy to the City of Atlanta.

We will have a **food booth at the Sweetwater 420 Fest** on April 19, 20, and 21, selling donuts with chocolate sauce and ice cream. Krispy Kreme will sell us donuts at a substantial discount; Rick Westbrook will get containers, spoons, napkins, etc. from a restaurant supply company in Forest Park.

A prospective member of the Atlanta Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence (The Flaming Sugarbakers) has chosen as her qualifying service project **painting the sanctuary**. Rick's partner, John, who works for a paint company, will help select historically appropriate colors. The Board approved the project.

Amy Stout visited to inform us that the Candler Park Neighborhood Organization has offered to put up **bike racks** at First E. The Board is looking into possible locations on our property.

We reviewed Marsha Mitchiner's report of her activities for the past year and signed her contract as **Fellowship Minister** for the coming year. She suggested that our congregation find a service project that many can be involved in such as the project last year when we purchased toiletry items and packaged them to be handed out to homeless youth through Lost and Found Youth.

As **Finance Guild** Chair, Bill Read informed us that our dues to the Unitarian Universalist Association will be going up.

All members and friends are welcome to visit or bring concerns to Board meetings, held the first Monday of every month at 7:00 downstairs.

Our next Board meeting will be on March 4, 2013, and the next one will be on April 1. ~

*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*

Guild Reports

Program Guild

by Charlene Ball

The Program Guild will hold a Facilitators' Workshop on Saturday, April 6, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the home of Linda Bell (**note new date**). All Program Guild members, facilitators, and members and friends who have considered facilitating are invited. It will be an open discussion and sharing of information, tips, and ideas on how to make our COLs more streamlined and give them more continuity from service to service.

Speakers coming up in March and April are Zoe Haugo, speaking on violence against women in the Congo; Dr. Osizwe Harwell of Georgia State University's Department of African American Studies; returning guest speaker Rev. Kim Palmer; and regular guest speakers Rev. Janna Nelson, Rev. Kate Hauk, and Rev. Duncan Teague.

The Program Guild consists of Patton White (chair), Charlene Ball, Linda Bell, and Bill Laney. If you have considered facilitating, or if you would like to suggest a speaker or musician, contact us: Patton: patton@beacondance.org; Charlene: mcharleneball@yahoo.com; Linda: lbell@gsu.edu; and Bill: bill3391a@yahoo.com. We welcome your suggestions and input. ~

Community News & Activities

--**On Sunday, March 17, Phillip Conover** of Sharon, MA, will speak after the COL about how his small UUA congregation became a "**Breakthrough Congregation.**" All are invited to stay and hear his presentation. ~

--**A Facilitators' Workshop will take place on April 6** from 10:00 to 1:00 at the home of Linda Bell. If you're interested in facilitating at a COL, speak to Linda or a member of the Program Guild. ~

--**The Discussion Group will meet on April 14** after the COL downstairs to discuss chapter 2 of *The New Jim Crow*. ~

--**Wednesday Night Supper** meets each Wednesday around 6:30. Ukelele group meets after supper. ~

--**"The Phoenix Flies,"** a celebration of living landmarks, is more than 200 free events throughout Atlanta, including a stop at "the Old Stone Church," First E's home. Visit atlantapreservationcenter.org/events for information. ~

--**Pledge Forms are in the sanctuary** on the literature rack, and you can drop them into the offering. ~

--**First E's Spring Retreat will take place May 3-7** at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center, the UUA retreat site in the North Georgia mountains (See article on page 5). You can register online at www.mountaincenters.org. Click on the on-line registration link. If you have ideas for activities, see Libby, Phyllis, or Karla. ~

--**Alan Dynin presents a Dave Brubeck Tribute Concert at First E on March 23** at 3:00 p.m. Admission is \$10.00 for adults, children 10 and under free. Young saxophonist Mac Issek, Scott Glazer on bass, and Adrian Ash on drums, combine with pianist Dynin for classics and lesser known pieces. ~

--**UUA Spring Training Session** will be at Tumbling Waters Retreat Center in Clayton, GA, April 4-7. For information, visit uaa.org/Southern Region. ~

Continued on page 5

Finance Report:

January-February 2013

General Operating Account Thru Feb. 28
 Total Income 10,109
 Total Expenses (11,253)
 2013 Cash Flow (1,144)

Fund Types & Names	Account Balances on Feb. 28
	< unaudited >
General Operating Account	1,327
Designated Operating Funds	8,039
Gay Dellinger Estate Gift	1,049
Handicap Access Ramp	1,345
Lanier Clance Lighting	1,044
Leadership Development	295
Community Garden	(443)
Building & Grounds	259
Woodland Sanctuary	919
Minister's Discretionary	682
Original 1st E History	68
Labyrinth & Garden	256
Attic Insulation Fund	1,250
Social Justice	1,087
Children's Program	122
Music Fund	150
Pat Hewatt Revolving Loan Fund	5,063
Special Use Permit Loan Fund (\$4.5K)	3,900
Total First E Funds	18,329
Old Stone Church History Project	3,559

Third Friday Film Series
The Thick Dark Fog
 Friday, March 15 at 7:30pm
 Sliding Scale Donations Requested \$1-\$10.00
 No one turned away
 Popcorn & Refreshments
 Discussion after the film
 Co-sponsored by
 discussion led by Marshall Jeffries (Oninewa Itai)
 of the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation &
 Healing Wounds Prayer Circle

**Wednesday Night Suppers
 and
 Ukeleles!**
 each Week
 6:30 to 8:00/8:30 pm
 in the Sanctuary
 If you would like to provide a meal
 or bring a covered dish,
 please contact Elaine or Wilj
 of the Membership Guild.
 Ukelele Practice After Supper-Bring your ukelele

**If you would like to become a member or
 friend of First E, please fill out a pledge form
 located on the sanctuary literature rack or
 download the form from our website at
<http://www.firstexistentialist.org> .**

*Man is most nearly himself when he
 achieves the seriousness of a child at
 play. ~ Heraclitus, philosopher (500
 BCE)*

Social Justice Corner: *The New Jim Crow* by Libby Ware

The first meeting of the reading group for Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* met on March 3 to discuss the first chapter and introduction. The first chapter, "The Rebirth of Caste," looks at American history from slavery to Reconstruction to Jim Crow to mass incarceration of African Americans. After legal segregation ended, politicians used the slogan of "law and order" to legislate severe prison sentences for drug possession, and the "war on drugs" also was used to incarcerate persons just for possession of small amounts of drugs.

African Americans are disproportionately imprisoned for drug possession and often receive longer sentences for other crimes. The chapter also addresses how the media was used by politicians to demonize crack (used more by African Americans) as opposed to powdered cocaine (used more by white people).

We had a lively discussion of race as a social construct, how the populist movement moved from representation of all races to white-only, whether drugs should be legalized, and the privatization of prisons which turns the penal system to one of profit.

If you are interested in joining the discussion group, come to our next meeting on April 14 after the Celebration of Life downstairs. ~

It is not so much our friends' help that helps us as the confident knowledge that they will help us. ~ Epicurus, philosopher (c. 341-270 BCE)

Community News & Activities continued from page 3

--**Art Party at the 414 House, March 23**, from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m., will take place at 414 Oakdale in the Candler Park neighborhood. Art and crafts, festivities, children's activities, drumming, and hands-on demos. For information, see Lorraine. ~

--**Third Sunday Dancing at the E**, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. March 17. Toni Ralston, dance teacher, will hold a monthly begin/adv dance class from 6:00 to 7:00, then from 7:00 to 8:00, we will have open dancing of all styles. \$5.00 donation goes to First E. For information, visit jo@insider-traveler.com. ~

--**Contact Robert Stewart** with your news and activities: rstewart@toyodausa.com. ~

Congregational Retreat at The Mountain

We will have a congregational retreat on **May 3—5, 2013** at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center, the UUA retreat in the North Carolina Blue Ridge Mountains. This retreat will be all about fun and fellowship with some educational sessions planned by congregational members. You can go online and register at this website: www.mountaincenters.org, and click on the on-line registration link. If you would like to present a workshop or educational session or if you have ideas about activities, please contact Libby Ware, Phyllis Thakis, Karla Crawford or Marsha Mitchener.

The Mountain is a beautiful site with a lodge and cabins, walking trails, a labyrinth, convention center and dining hall with delicious meals. Bring games, craft supplies, writing supplies, puzzles, and ideas for fun and fellowship. ~

Please 'like' us on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/43340332955/>

Zoe Haugo on March 3 on Violence Against Women in the Congo

Zoe Haugo was born and raised in Ontario, Canada, and received a Bachelor of Arts in Humanistic Studies with a Minor in Spanish from McGill University in Montreal. She has traveled extensively and lived in Switzerland, Spain, Australia, and Mexico.

Zoe's interest in theatre arts, yoga, and wellness led her to train as a Certified Laughter Leader. She has led therapeutic laughter sessions with diverse groups from executives at conventions in Phoenix, Arizona, to senior citizens with Alzheimer's in nursing home facilities in rural Georgia, to "at risk" teens in Montana. She performed as a "caring clown," both independently, with Dr. Shulman's "What's in a Doctor's Bag?" live kids shows, and with Patch Adams' Gesundheit! Institute.

Zoe has collaboratively written and edited articles relating to health and humor, screenplays, and books (both fiction and non-fiction for adults and children). She has worked as lead director, cameraperson, and video editor for independent video projects including documentaries, public service announcements for Channel 8 public television providing health tips for kids, and a feature-length romantic comedy titled "Who Nose?" Zoe has also acted as administrative coordinator for various humanitarian-oriented events at Emory University, including Soccer For Peace (to raise funds and ship donated soccer equipment to war-torn South Sudan), a Festival of Faiths, and the annual Global Health & Humanitarian Summit.

Recently, Zoe has started a grassroots campaign to pressure the UN to send peace-keepers to police the mass gang-raping of women and children in the Democratic Republic of Congo, coined the "rape capitol of the world." She has been an organizer for V-Day and the global One Billion Rising movement to demand an end to violence towards women worldwide.

Zoe lives in Decatur, Georgia, with her husband, author and Emory professor Neil Shulman MD. Together they are raising their six-year-old son Myles. ~



Dunia Women Walk: A Million Women and Families to Walk for the Congo in Atlanta

On March 23, a million women will descend upon Atlanta for the Million Women Walk for the Congo. The mile-long walk to the Atlanta Convention Center, sponsored by *Dunia Magazine*, is a call to say no to the rape of Congolese women and to Congolese children being turned into soldiers in the Congo, and to draw attention to "Africa's Forgotten War."

For more information, visit www.duniawomenwalk.org or contact Lema Abeng-Nsah at mydunia@duniamagazine.com or 1-678-632-3118. ~

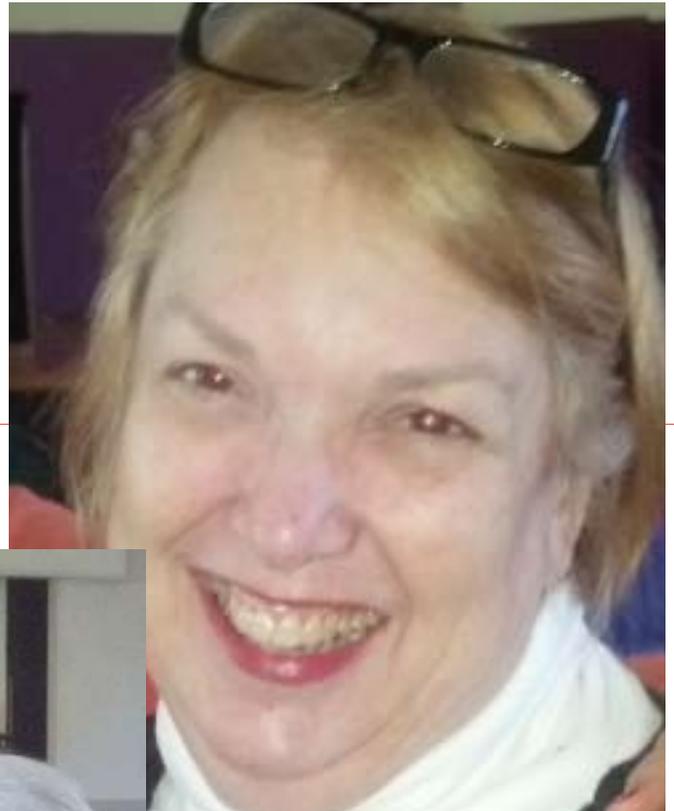
He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who perpetrates it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it. ~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

March 2013 Sunday Celebrations of Life

- March 3** *Forgotten Women of the Bible*
Speaker: Rev. Connie Tuttle
Facilitator: Libby Ware
Accompanist: Richard Rifkin
- March 10** *Women's Liberation: The Next Generation...Ending the Violence*
Speaker: Zoe Haugo
Facilitator: Bill Laney
Accompanist: Charli Vogt
- March 17** *I Owe My Life to the Hotheads Who Write: Audre Lorde, bell hooks, and Kay Leigh Hagan--Thank You*
Speaker: Rev. Janna Nelson
Facilitator: Rev. Marsha Mitchiner
Accompanist: Scott Hooker
- March 24** *Readings, Stories and Reflections of the Season from Kate Hauk*
Speaker: Rev. Kate Hauk
Facilitator: Charlene Ball
Accompanist: Alan Dynin
- March 31**
Speaker: Dr. Osizwe Harwell
Facilitator: Patton White
Accompanist: Richard Rifkin

<p>Please consider a special donation to the Ramp/Lift Fund. We are over halfway to our fundraising goal! Many thank-you's to the Chalice Lighters, CPNO, and First E Members and Friends for your support.</p>

**The Back Page - Photos from
Scharko Reception Feb. 24**



Upper left: Mary Turnpaugh; right: Karla Crawford; lower left: Tony Scharko and Ashlea Davis.

The First E Newsletter is published monthly. Deadline for April 2013 newsletter is March 10. Send your articles and announcements to mcharleneball@yahoo.com. The editor reserves the right to edit or refuse any material submitted.