

Fellowship News

Spring/Summer 2017

2016-17 Season Connects the Community

As we wrap up another successful season, we take a look back at the people, programs, and events. We invite you to visit **www.PalmBeachFellowship.net** for additional photos and information.

A special **thank you** to all our members, donors, and sponsors listed throughout this newsletter. With your support this past season, the Palm Beach Fellowship of Christians & Jews...

...kicked off the season with a **Welcome Back Reception** to see old friends and make new ones in the beautiful gardens of the Society of the Four Arts

...sent more than 120 volunteers to five project sites around Palm Beach County to lend a helping hand on **Fellowship Friday**, the day after Thanksgiving

...provided the opportunity for people of all faiths and backgrounds to interact socially, share common interests, and be enlightened through the **Sunday Conversations** and **Interfaith Dialogues** series

...brought Pulitzer prize-winning journalist **Bret Stephens** to Palm Beach as the keynote speaker at the **Annual Fellowship Dinner**

...honored community activist and philanthropist **Frances Fisher** with the 2017 **John C. Randolph Award** for exemplifying the Fellowship mission

...partnered with Palm Beach Unites' annual **Feeding Children Everywhere** hunger project and participated in Empty Bowls

...inspired middle and high school students throughout Palm Beach County who participated in the 2017 **Essay & Creative Arts Competition** (and saluted the winning students and the teachers who encouraged them at a special awards ceremony)

...is sending six outstanding Palm Beach County educators to the **Facing History and Ourselves** program, "The Holocaust and Human Behavior," this summer in Boston

Our Board of Directors and committees are already hard at work making plans for our milestone 25th Anniversary which we will be commemorating during the 2017-2018 season. It is shaping up to be better than ever with new programs and old favorites. We look forward to your participation!





















John C. Randolph

Chairman's Message: Rising Above the Rhetoric

As I write this message on Memorial Day, 2017, I am reminded of the sacrifices made by the men and women of our armed forces, throughout the history of our great country, to keep us free and to maintain our integrity as a nation. I can't help but think, as I reflect, of the degradation we are experiencing of late in the manner in which we treat one another and the hateful rhetoric we foist upon one another almost daily. This attitude is certainly not worthy of the men and women we remember and honor this Memorial Day.

A good friend of mine, Ken Mahanes, a minister and educator, spoke these words recently in an invocation he delivered at a recent event: "Whether we are Christian, Jew, Muslim, or non-religious, we agree on Jesus'

seminal teaching that we should treat others as we would want others to treat us. This moral precept transcends ethnicity, race, and religion, and stands in stark contrast to the public incivility, personal insult, and partisan intransigence that characterizes so much of our political discourse, and is unworthy of the sacrifice of those whom we honor on this Memorial Day. May we leave here today rededicated to form a more perfect union deserving of the countless men and women who have given their lives for the country that both they and we love."

"Our country deserves our best."

Ken's words are not aimed at a particular political party, ideology, or philosophy. They are rather aimed at all of us who, for whatever purpose, believe that we must stoop to such low levels to attack those with whom we disagree. Whatever happened to vigorous, but friendly, debate? Whatever happened to the days we could disagree in one forum and then join one another, as friends or acquaintances, over a cup of coffee or a meal?

I believe it is time for all of us to rise above the rhetoric. We are a better people. We are a better nation than to engage in such hostile conduct. One need only keep in mind the Fellowship's mission, "to promote fellowship, understanding and respect among all religious and cultures," and, may I add, among all people no matter our beliefs.

Our country deserves our best. Let us give our best. Let us respect one another.

Annual Meeting Wraps Up the 2016-2017 Season

Fellowship members gathered on April 24 to affirm the slate of officers and board members, view a recap of the season, meet the student contest winners, and mingle over snacks and beverages at the season-ending event.

(I-r) Robert Versteeg, Rose Carpenter, Rev. Dwight Stevens, Rhoda Kleid, Mimi Flamm, John Dotterer, Susan Stoll, Matt Ferguson









Yohn C. la



Annual Meeting photographs by Davidoff Studios

Save the Date!

Plans are underway for another outstanding season! Here is a sneak peek at some of the dates on the schedule so far; be sure to mark your calendar so you won't miss out! Watch your mailbox, check out **www.PalmBeachFellowship.net**, and follow us on Facebook for updates and details for the special 25th anniversary season!

Based on member feedback, we've added a fourth *Sunday Conversations* program to the line-up and revamped the *Interfaith Dialogues* series. Join or renew your membership for free admission to these programs and reduced price for the Annual Dinner.

Call (561) 833-6150 for membership information!

November 2, 2017 Welcome Back Reception

November 24, 2017 *Fellowship Friday*

December 3, 2017Sunday Conversations #1

January 21, 2018 Sunday Conversations #2

February 5, 2018 *Annual Fellowship Dinner*

February 18, 2018 Sunday Conversations #3

February 28, 2018 Interfaith Dialogues #1

March 14, 2018 Interfaith Dialogues #2

March 18, 2018 Sunday Conversations #4

April 11, 2018 *Interfaith Dialogues #3*

Dates for the Annual Meeting and the Essay & Creative Arts Competition deadline and awards ceremony TBA.

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Call (561) 833-6150 or write info@palmbeachfellowship.net for membership and event information!

New Board Members Elected for 2017-2018

Four new Board members were elected at the Annual Meeting on April 24:

Eric Christu is a partner at Shutts & Bowen, LLP, where he is chair of the Intellectual Property Practice Group. A resident of Palm Beach, he was appointed to the alternate seat on the Town's Planning and Zoning Commission last fall.

Zelda Mason is well known for her many years of volunteerism and philanthropy in the community, serving in many top-level leadership roles. A longtime board member of the Armory Arts Center, she is on the board of Palm Beach Island Cats.

J. Grier Pressly III, an attorney at Pressly, Pressly, Randolph, & Pressly, PA, recently ended his tenure as president of the Palm Beach County Bar Association. He serves on the boards of the Historical Society of Palm Beach County and Gator Boosters.

Heath Randolph is a trust officer at Wells Fargo Private Bank in Palm Beach. Heath serves on the board of the South Florida Science Center and the Community Advisory Council for the Children's Hospital at St. Mary's Medical Center.



Officers and 20 other current members were reelected to another one-year term, and nine were elevated to the newly created Honorary Board in recognition of their longtime service to the Fellowship. (See all the names in the list at left.)

Six Teachers Selected to Attend Facing History



The following Palm Beach County educators have been selected to receive full scholarships from the Fellowship to attend this summer's Facing History and Ourselves' seminar, "Holocaust and Human Behavior," in July in Brookline, Massachusetts:

- Chrissie Ferguson | Rosarian Academy
- Steve Gordon | Western Pines Middle School
- Charles Hagy, Jr. | The Benjamin School
- Barbara Johnson | West Boca High School
- Melanie Lee | Park Vista High School
- Mark Risisky | Glades Central High School

Facing History is an international organization dedicated to giving teachers the tools to teach about social injustice using an interdisciplinary approach. The Fellowship has been sending local teachers to this outstanding program for 17 years. Our alumni have reached an estimated 80,000 students with the lessons incorporated into school curricula.

The teachers will report on the workshop and how they plan to utilize the lessons in their classrooms, as well as a follow-up at the end of the school year.

Thank you to the Palm Beach Country Club Foundation, whose support has enabled us to send two additional teachers to Facing History and Ourselves this summer.

Fellowship Vice Chair Maggie Zeidman presents the Randolph Award to 2017 honoree Frances Fisher.



Annual Fellowship Dinner features Bret Stephens and Presentation of the 2017 John C. Randolph Award to Frances Fisher

Guest Speaker Bret Stephens



Leslie and Ron Schram, Dinner Chair Vivienne Ivry, Bret Stephens



Excerpts from Frances Fisher's acceptance speech:

Tonight marks an extremely humbling yet exciting moment in my life. It celebrates a bond I am honored to share with each of you - one that champions human dignity, kindness and respect for our fellow man. It's with tremendous gratitude...for the many outstanding leaders who have embraced the mission of the Fellowship that we are offered empowering opportunities to grow gracefully together and lead by example.

I've been fortunate to have those in my life who have shown me the way by example. My loving parents... taught me so many important life lessons and from a very early age I knew that the fulfillment we receive in life is in direct proportion to what we give. Those memories have a lasting place in my heart and have proven to be the foundation for my community involvement.

Another powerful example arose from an early career opportunity that shaped many of my values. I was privileged to serve President George H.W. Bush in the West Wing of the White House. He declared early on that he wanted his presidency to be known as the "Age of the Offered Hand." He believed meaningful results were best achieved through compromise and a respectful difference of opinion.

I developed a profound appreciation for the fact that we as Americans are part of something far larger than ourselves. This country has always been an inspiring example of freedom and democracy, but it also defines moral principle and a high standard of decency and humanity for the rest of the world.

Though I've always been a person of quiet but deep faith, I never imagined I would embark on such an enriching spiritual journey through an interfaith marriage. It has been an enlightening, sometimes challenging, and an extremely rewarding experience. [My husband] Jeff and I recognize that faith is a continuing walk. As we share our beliefs with

our son Harrison, we've found a powerful walking stick in prayer.

The life Jeff and I share has given me a unique perspective on the world. The beauty and greatness of our nation comes from the hearts of our people and the dreams of our forefathers being realized in us – the opportunity to live with humility, integrity and excellence with our neighbors. Though Jeff and I have very different backgrounds, they speak to a mainstay of American consciousness. The fabric of our country since its inception has been woven from a myriad of national, ethnic and religious identities. In fact, we are a melting pot of all nations descended from immigrants...my ancestors arrived shortly after the pilgrims crossed on the Mayflower. Jeff's grandparents arrived at an equally powerful time in our history. One foot was firmly planted in a generation that persevered and sought refuge, even sacrificing their given name, while the other was spent raising children and building a business in a generation that dared to dream -The American Dream.

The fabric of our country since its inception has been woven from a myriad of national. ethnic and religious identities.

Palm Beach has been the backdrop to adventure for my soul. As a volunteer I've had the opportunity to become involved with individuals from every walk of life and share these experiences with my family. Jeff and I often reflect on how fortunate we are to raise our son in this community, and we've taught Harrison that we are not defined by the sum of our possessions or the size of our bank account but by our character. We talk a lot about the small gestures that often times bring the grandest results. And, by example, we hope to show Harrison what it means to be a loving parent, a loyal friend or a willing volunteer who leaves his community a better place than he found it.

I feel extremely privileged to share this special honor with so many of you who freely and generously open your hearts to others. May the Fellowship of Christians & Jews continue to be an inspiration and shining example for those to come.

Frances & Jeff Fisher







Annual Dinner Sponsors

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Photos

Top row:

Palm Beach Mayor Gail Coniglio, Joyce McLendon; Stan & Leslie Godoff; Ellen & Irwin Levy (2016 Randolph Award recipient)

Second Row:

Edwin Gordon, Lyanne Azqueta; Mark & Mary Freitas with Msgr. Thomas Klinzing

Third Row:

Skip & Leslie Randolph; Donna Plasket & David Breneman; Susan Keenan & Bob Wright

Fourth Row:

Alan Shulman, Richard Kleid; Dani Moore, David Mack; Rabbi Michael Resnick, Mother Kimberly Still; Linda & Al Adelson

Fifth Row:

Patricia Lebow, Lew & Kathleen Crampton; Anthony & Eleanor LaGamba

Sixth Row:

Dan & Karen Swanson; Carol McCracken, Mark & Maggie Zeidman

Bottom Row:

Marcia & Bill Cini; Ira Rubenstein & Terry Vaughn; Connie & David Thomas; Michael & Debbie Pucillo

Interfaith Dialogues

The Interfaith Dialogues series is designed to bring people of all backgrounds together in an interactive, open setting to discuss and explore topics of mutual interest. The goal is to help us learn to appreciate our commonalities, respect our differences, and gain a greater understanding of each other.

Longtime facilitators Tom O'Brien and Rabbi Howard Shapiro added a new dimension this past season with the inclusion of Dr. Nasir Ahmad on the panel to provide the Muslim perspective.

photo, left to right: Ahmad, O'Brien, Shapiro

Special thanks to our host venue for the Dialogues, The Episcopal Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea.



January 24, 2017

Do Christians, Muslims, and Jews Worship the Same God?

February 7, 2017

Different Ways Jews, Muslims, and Christians Read Their Sacred Scriptures

March 14, 2017

The Meaning of Israel to Muslims, Jews, and Christians

Sunday Conversations With...

This new series featured lectures by knowledgeable local experts to bring people together to learn and share their common interest in a variety of topics.





December 4, 2016

Saints and Scoundrels:

An Historic Perspective of Palm Beach County presented by Harvey Oyer III, attorney, Florida historian

January 29, 2017

The Life and Work of Addison Mizner presented by René Silvin, author, historian

February 26, 2017

Lessons of the Holocaust: Have We Learned Anything? presented by Arthur Berger, former Senior Adviser to the United States Holocaust Museum

Fellowship Friday

The goal of the annual *Fellowship Friday* project is to connect the community by doing good, together, getting to know our neighbors by working side-by-side while helping local nonprofits and giving back on the day after Thanksgiving. Thank you to the 120 volunteers who participated with us at Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens, Big Dog Ranch Rescue, Caps of Love, Levine Jewish Residential & Family Service, and Reef Road beach clean-up.



Special thanks to our host venue for breakfast, St. Edward Catholic Church, and to Ron Schram and Sandra Thompson for coordinating the beach clean-up and the art project at Levine Residential, respectively.

Essay & Creative Arts Competition Winners Inspire

A dozen students from Palm Beach County private and public middle and high schools were honored at an awards ceremony on April 24 for their winning efforts in the Fellowship's annual contest, expanded this season to include creative arts categories. The topic was *Voting*. Students received cash prizes, and teachers received office supply store gift cards for school supplies.

Essay - High School Harrison Schram

Oxbridge Academy – Grade 9

Teacher: Amy Jurskis

 ${\it Essay-Middle\ School\ 1^{st}\ Place}$

Maggie Acosta

Rosarian Academy – Grade 7 Teacher: Chrissie Ferguson

Essay - Middle School 2nd Place

Jack Vo

Western Pines Middle School – Grade 8

Teacher: Steve Gordon

Essay - Middle School 3^{rd} Place

Lizzie Barnum

St. Ann's Catholic School – Grade 7

Teacher: Mary Cooney

Essay - Middle School Honorable Mention

Jacob Perez

Western Pines Middle School - Grade 7

Teacher: Steve Gordon

Music

Peter Rothberg

Western Pines Middle School - Grade 8

Teacher: Steve Gordon

3-D Art

Aliyah Lumia

Western Pines Middle School – Grade 8

Teacher: Steve Gordon

2-D Art 1st Place Flora Beleznay

Pine Crest School – Grade 8

Teacher: Barbara Milanese

2-D Art 2nd Place

Anna Stengel and Mariana Beaujardin

St. Ann Catholic School – Grade 8

Teacher: Mary Cooney

2-D Art 3rd Place

Elizabeth Tischuk

Western Pines Middle School - Grade 8

Teacher: Steve Gordon

Special Award - Photography

Shelby Bakkedahl

Western Pines Middle School - Grade 8

Teacher: Steve Gordon

More photos and the winning essays at www.PalmBeachFellowship.net.

(left) Fellowship Education Chair Rosalie Franks congratulates high school essay contest winner Harrison Schram of Oxbridge Academy.

(below) Contest winners and their teachers (I-r): Steve Gordon, Jack Vo, Chrissie Ferguson, Barbara Milanese, Flora Beleznay, Mary Cooney, Mariana Beaujardin, Lizzie Barnum, Harrison Schram, Maggie Acosta, Elizabeth Tischuk, Shelby Bakkedahl, and Aliyah Lumia



Special thanks to Fellowship Board Member Brian Burns (left) for underwriting the

the Annual Meeting, the Paramount Church.

and to our host venue for the awards ceremony at

U.S. Constitution booklets distributed

to all students who submitted entries,

PAID

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INDIVIDUAL (continued)



PALM BEACH FELLOWSHIP **OF CHRISTIANS & JEWS**

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The Palm Beach Fellowship of Christians & Jews is dedicated to promoting fellowship, understanding, and respect among all religions and cultures; bringing the community together through education, dialogue, and interaction; and addressing issues rooted in intolerance, anti-Semitism, and unjust discrimination.

Thank You to the Friends of the Fellowship 2016-2017

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