



# Ethical Views



April 2009 Vol. 123, No. 8 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

## Platforms

**Sunday, April 5, 2009**

***The Truth and Personal Responsibility***  
**Speaker: Richard L. Kiniry, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia**

Too often the individual views government policy as beyond the limits of personal morality. This talk relates to that theme, and it could be entitled Personal Responsibility and International Policy. From Israel to the United States and beyond, it seems that the values of the people do not have equivalence in national policy. I want to bring this back to our relational understanding of ethics.

**Sunday, April 12, 2009**

***Sustainability in the City: Hopes and Reflections of Members of Green Village Philadelphia.***

**Speakers: Terrie Lewine, Lindsay Gilmour and Max Zahniser, Founders and Co-Chairs of Green Village Philadelphia, a coalition of social entrepreneurs working to develop Philadelphia's first urban eco-village.**

What does it mean to live sustainably? What is the relationship between sustainability and ethical living?

**Sunday, April 19, 2009**

***The American Ethical Union: An Invitation to Become an Integral Part of Our Ethical Communities***

**Speaker: Katharine Archibald, Executive Director, American Ethical Union**

The American Ethical Union, a Federation of Ethical Societies across the United States, shares a proud and historic tradition going back to 1876 when the Ethical Culture Movement was founded by Felix Adler. Katharine

Archibald will give highlights of the AEU Strategic Plan and invite participation in a host of AEU programs and activities that have grown out of these religious and organizational traditions to form the Ethical Culture Movement locally, nationally and globally.

**Sunday, April 26, 2009**

***What Makes Us Human?***

**Speaker: Amanda Poppei, Acting Senior Leader of the Washington Ethical Society**

Amanda Poppei will consider what philosophers have understood as "necessary" to be considered human—and pose some Ethical Culture possibilities, as well. ◇



## President's Message

### What Can I Do To Help?

Temma Fishman

If you were lucky enough to know our member Pat Leopold as I did, you may recall that among her many admirable qualities was her willingness to help. I can still hear her ask, "How can I help?" when learning I was planning a family dinner, stumped by a problem or just overwhelmed. Her offer was unconditional and not dependent on being invited to the event.

She never failed to offer when she came upon us busily dashing around while setting up at the Society before platform. She would pitch right in with the tasks at hand. Pat officially joined our Society a few years ago, but was imbued with the spirit of Ethical Culture long before that. Her parents instilled in her the value of community service, a great gift to their daughter. As a young

Platforms at 11:00AM, Sundays  
Coffee Hour and Discussion follow the Platforms.

Musical interludes performed by Pianist **Katarzyna Marzec-Salwinski**

Childcare provided at no charge.

All are welcome!



woman, she attended the Encampment for Citizenship and there met Eleanor Roosevelt and Algernon Black. This spurred her to many years of activism in the service of progressive causes. As a social worker she developed great listening skills and the ability to direct people in need of community services.

When her beloved husband George died just short of their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, Pat was seriously bereft for at least two years. But her long-established habit of helping others was her salvation. She escaped the grip of extreme grief by founding a community group whose purpose was to help neighbors get acquainted and be of service to each other. She chaired the Medford Lakes Juvenile Conference Committee, a group that provides juvenile offenders an alternative to

*(Continued next page)*

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punishment by channeling them into community service. Pat was a volunteer for Contact, an organization that takes phone calls from lonely people who need a listening ear or are desperate or suicidal. Pat often took the unpopular and exhausting overnight shift.

I miss hearing her "How can I help?" but try to remember to ask it myself. To me, these words capture



Pat Leopold

the spirit of Ethical Culture, expressed in doing small favors for a friend or in actions that have the power to change the world – like joining the fight to preserve reproductive rights, end the war or abolish the death penalty. **Joe Chuman**, leader of the Ethical Society of Bergen County, in his talk, *If There is No God, from Where Do We Get Our Hope?* advised, "When feeling despair and needy, give of oneself." Since there is no "divine custodian," as Joe put it, I guess it's up to us to take care of each other. I am impressed with the restorative power that comes from serving someone else. It takes me out of myself and into relationships with others. Our leader, **Richard Kiniry**, has reminded us many times that this community is our production. In one of his talks, he said, "The great human adventure is the humanizing of life, the conscious attempt to make it better." It isn't always easy to find the answer to "How can I help?" and sometimes there's no one to ask but ourselves. It seems we often need each other to discover how best to answer this question. ◇

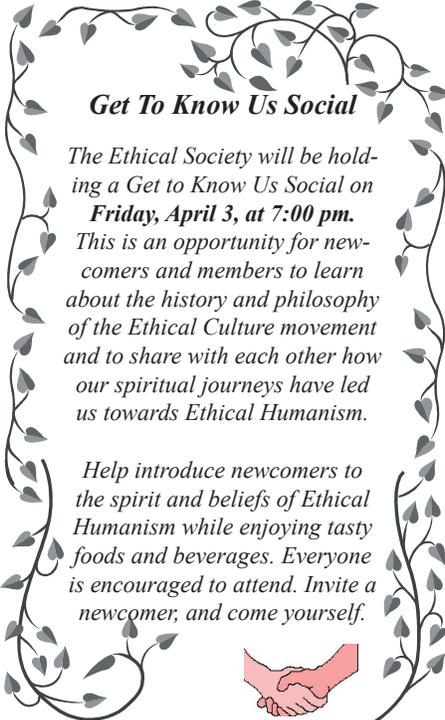


**SCHOOL FOR ETHICS**

**A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES** - As we mature we learn that the history of the United States that we learned in high school civics class was patriotic but not objective. This discussion group offers an opportunity to learn the rest of the story. Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* offers the counter history of America from Columbus's arrival in "China" (actually, the Bahamas) to the "War on Terrorism". Members, friends and the curious are invited. The book is available in paperback. We will be discussing chapters 16, 17 and 18.

— Led by Richard L. Kiniry

*First Thursdays, April 2 – 7:30 p.m., Weston Room*



**Get To Know Us Social**

*The Ethical Society will be holding a Get to Know Us Social on Friday, April 3, at 7:00 pm. This is an opportunity for newcomers and members to learn about the history and philosophy of the Ethical Culture movement and to share with each other how our spiritual journeys have led us towards Ethical Humanism.*

*Help introduce newcomers to the spirit and beliefs of Ethical Humanism while enjoying tasty foods and beverages. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Invite a newcomer, and come yourself.*



## The Voices of Experience

*Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia*

*Thursday, April 30, 2009, 7:30 p.m.*

Opposition to the Death Penalty is growing. In fact, the majority of Pennsylvanians believe that there are legitimate alternatives to capital punishment. The voices that are most often heard around the issue are those of proponents of capital punishment that focus on the perpetrators of crimes. Little, if any, attention and air time are given to the victims of crimes and, in the case of murder, the family members of victims. This event presents two family members of murder victims who oppose the Death Penalty.

**Reverend Walter Everett's** son, Scott Everett, was murdered in 1987. Since that time he has been active in several restorative justice organizations, including the Restorative Justice Task Force of the Christian Conference of Connecticut (for which he has served as Chair) and the Hartford-based Board of Community Partners in Action. He currently serves on the boards of both Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty and Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights.

**Bess Klassen-Landis**, a Windsor, VT resident, is a teacher, singer-songwriter and member of Hanover Friends Meeting in Hanover, NH. She was 13 years old when her mother was murdered in their home in Northern Indiana. The perpetrator was never identified. This year marks the 40th anniversary of her mother's death. Bess has taken this year to travel the country to share her story of healing and forgiveness in an effort to work towards abolition of the Death Penalty. ◇



### Thursday Night Talkies - April 16, 7:00 PM

**Jared Diamond:**  
**Why Societies Collapse**

Author of the 1998 Pulitzer Prize winning *Guns, Germs and Steel* discusses why societies collapse in a lecture recorded at UC Berkeley. With lessons from the Norse of Iron Age Greenland, deforested Easter Island and present-day Montana, Jared Diamond talks about the signs that collapse is near and how—if we see it in time—we can prevent it.

# April 2009

| Sun  | Mon   | Tue  | Wed  | Thu   | Fri  | Sat  |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|--|
|  Birthdays  |   |  |  |   |  |  |
|  |   |  | <b>1</b><br>6:30 p.m.<br>Finance Committee   | <b>2</b><br><i>Class</i><br><b>A People's History of the U.S</b><br>7:00 p.m.   | <b>3</b><br><br><b>Get to Know Us Social</b><br>7:00 pm | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>*5</b><br><i>The Truth and Personal Responsibility</i><br>Richard L. Kiniry   | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b>   | <b>8</b><br><b>Meetings</b><br>6:30 p.m.<br>Education Committee<br>7:45 p.m.<br>Ethical Action Cmte.   | <b>9</b><br><i>Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty Meeting</i><br>6:00pm   | <b>10</b>  | <b>11</b><br> Jeannette Kohler<br><b>Nonviolent Communications Practice Session</b><br>11:00 a.m. |
| <b>*12</b><br><i>Sustainability in the City: Hopes and Reflections of Members of Green Village Philadelphia</i><br>Terrie Lewine, Lindsay Gilmour & Max Zahniser | <b>13</b>   | <b>14</b>  | <b>15</b><br><b>Meetings</b><br>6:30 p.m.<br>Executive Committee<br>7:30 p.m.<br>Board of Trustees   | <b>16</b><br><b>Thursday Night Talkies</b> <br>7:00 p.m.    | <b>17</b>  | <b>18</b>  |
| <b>*19</b><br><i>*The American Ethical Union: An Invitation to Become an Integral Part of Our Ethical Communities</i><br>Katharine Archibald                     | <b>20</b><br><b>Committee Reconciliation Night</b><br>at Doobies<br>6:30 p.m. | <b>21</b><br> Henry Pashkow | <b>22</b><br>7:00 p.m.<br>Camp Linden Board of Trustees<br> Kate Esposito | <b>23</b><br><br><b>Amnesty International</b><br>7:00 p.m. | <b>24</b>  | <b>25</b><br> Chuck Hinson<br><b>Nonviolent Communications Practice Session</b><br>11:00 a.m.   |
| <b>*26</b><br><i>What Makes Us Human?</i><br>Amanda Poppei   | <b>27</b>   | <b>28</b>  | <b>29</b>  | <b>30</b><br><i>The Voices of Experience</i><br><i>Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty</i><br>7:30pm                           |  |  |

\*Child care provided during all platforms

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I would like to express my upset with people walking in and out of the auditorium during platforms. Although I have noticed this activity before, I was sitting on the side March 8 when we had a guest speaker, and it was especially distracting to me. Other people seated in the audience would also turn around to look at what was happening.

I think it shows considerable disrespect for our pianist and speakers for people to be walking about while they are presenting, especially when someone walks out on them. While I know there may be good reasons for coming in and going out during platform, I ask that people wait for transitions between parts of the program. Perhaps also ushers / greeters could help regulate when people walk in.

Good wishes,  
Nick Sanders

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**SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS**

**Flower Dedications** - Ramona Ward,  
Coordinator

April 5 - Carol Love, MD: "In Honor of  
My Father and Grandmother, During  
Their Birthday Month."

April 12 - Chuck Ward: "To Marshall  
B. Rosenberg for His Dedication to  
Compassionate Communication, The  
Methodology Embracing 'Mutual Giving  
from the Heart'."

April 19 - Ron Coburn: "In Memory  
of My Parents, Herman and Frances  
Coburn."

April 26 - Mary Lou Da Silva: "In Loving  
Memory of My Mother, Mary S. Welch,  
September 1902 - April 2006."

**Ushers** - Betsy Lightborn, Coordinator

April 5  
April 12 T.B.A.  
April 19  
April 26

**Greeters** - Ken Greiff, Coordinator

April 5  
April 12  
April 19 T.B.A.  
April 26

**Coffee Hour Lunch**

April 5 - Group A-E  
April 12 - Group F-L  
April 19 - Group M-P  
April 26 - Group Q-Z

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