



# Ethical Views

April 2010 Vol. 124, No. 8 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

## Sunday Platforms

**Sunday, April 4, 2010**

**Poverty, Racism and Gay Marriage**

**Speaker: Richard L. Kiniry, Leader of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia**

In our enthusiasm for certain social justice issues we can overlook other greater problems. Yet we must support efforts while the iron is hot.

**Sunday, April 11, 2010**

**Soft Borders**

**Speaker: Julie Mostov, Associate Vice Provost for International Programs and Professor of Political Science, Drexel University**

Current challenges to peace and security require rejection of hard border approaches to conflict resolution that privilege states as the sites for the promotion and protection of rights. The soft border alternative that I offer envisions multiple, fluid and overlapping spaces of political association

that facilitate cross-border cooperation. One example of this can be seen in efforts of women's groups in reaching across ethno-national divides. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 offers a mechanism for highlighting the soft border initiatives of women's peace groups, while the significant neglect of UNSCR 1325 in official peacemaking, building and reconstructive efforts underscores the inhospitable nature of hard border regimes to both women's leadership in these processes and lasting peace.

**Sunday, April 18, 2010**

**The Ethics of Organic Gardening**

**Speaker: Nic Esposito, Urban Gardening Strategist, Director of Philly Corner Stories and Member of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia**

When I first discovered organic gardening, I was attracted for purely political reasons. I suffered from the malaise that often times affects the recent college graduate whose education was spent studying the problems of the world. Organic gardening seemed

like a solution. Slowly, it began to affect my social life. Many of my friends, most of my spare time and almost my entire diet came from organic gardening and farming. And now, as organic gardening has had a holistic impact on my life, I realize that organic gardening is an ethical act, one that connects humans to the earth and each other.

**Sunday, April 25, 2010**

**One Nation under the Constitution**

**Speaker: Sean Faircloth, Executive Director, Secular Coalition for America**

Sean Faircloth discusses how the values of our nation's founders directly connect to the values of the secular movement. Faircloth, an attorney whose duties include lobbying in Washington on behalf of the Secular Coalition's ten secular member organizations, will discuss how theocratically-based injustices in American law are a stark current reality. Faircloth argues that all Americans have a moral obligation to address these injustices through rejuvenation of our government's secular heritage and secular legal system.



Get to Know Us Social  
Friday, April 2, 7:00 PM

Every other month we hold a casual informational event for those who are curious about the Society and its philosophy. The Society offers an alternative to theistic revealed religion and at this event we offer a friendly presentation of our point of view. Interested visitors, newcomers and members are invited to examine the basic approach of Ethical Humanism. Members will be there to talk about their involvement with the Society and what membership has added to their lives. Leaders of the Society will be present to answer your questions. Refreshments will be served.

## In This Issue

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## A NIGHT IN INDIA

Dr. Carol Love, Impresario

India is popping up everywhere in the USA since "Slumdog Millionaire"—with Bollywood techniques and commercials—apart from the call centers we reach. The Indian diaspora is immense. Those of you who have visited India will have lots of memories and experiences. Now's the time to express yourself as we celebrate Earth Day. A curry, samosas and pakoras, great hot breads, some exotic tropical fruits and some incense in front of your favorite Hindu God. Ganesh? Saraswati? Make sure to set **Friday, April 30, 7 PM** aside for this sensuous experience. Your sari or shalwar kameez will be appreciated—but come any way—\$10 if you bring a dish and \$15 if you don't. Not sure what to make? Look for Indian recipes, which will be made available at Sunday Platforms.





## President's Message

### AEU 95th Assembly

— Temma Fishman

The AEU's 95th Assembly will be held from June 17 to June 20 at the University of Scranton in beautiful, downtown Scranton, PA. And who doesn't want to go there? So, if you're interested in learning about the Ethical Culture movement on a national scale, and seeing Scranton, here's your opportunity. Scranton is only 126 miles from Philadelphia, an easy drive. Rates will be very reasonable because you will be able to stay at the University. Next year's Assembly will be held in Cleveland, so here's your chance to attend one that's nice and close.

A lovely National Service Conference luncheon is planned every year, where an enlightening speaker addresses human rights issues of great concern to Ethical Humanists. The National Service Conference is the non-governmental organization that represents the American Ethical Union to the UN.

You can attend the splendid Elliott-Black Award dinner and ceremony where the 2010 awardee (not yet chosen) will accept the award and address the Assembly. This award was established to honor two leaders of the New York Society for Ethical Culture, John Lovejoy Elliot and Algernon Black. It is given by the American Ethical Union to someone who has made a significant ethical contribution to society at great personal risk and hardship. James J. Yee, who served as the Muslim Chaplain for the prison camp on Guantanamo Bay was the 2009 awardee. He was accused of spying and aiding the Taliban and Al Qaeda prisoners when he objected to the abusing of detainees at the hands of U.S. Military. He was subjected to the same sensory deprivation techniques

that he protested against. Finally, after months of investigation, he was cleared of all charges and awarded the Army Commendation Medal for "exceptional, meritorious service."

At the AEU's business meeting, you'll learn about the mission and work of the AEU Board. If you are a delegate, you will meet the candidates and vote in the election of new trustees for the Board. Delegates also vote on resolutions of ethical concern. Even if you're not a delegate, there's quite a bit to learn at this meeting.

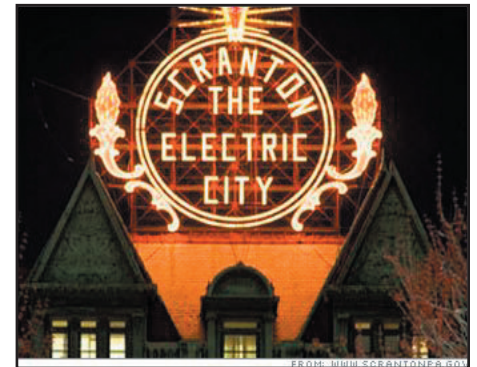
Members of some of our affiliate groups, like the Secular Coalition for America, will be there distributing material and speaking about their work promoting free thought policies. It's heartening to know that other groups are working with us.

You can find workshops at the Assembly on congregational development, the history and philosophy of Ethical Culture, environmental issues, Ethical Culture ceremonies, non-violent communication, women's issues and many others. This year's lineup has not yet been posted but it's guaranteed to capture your interest when it is. Look for the 95th AEU Assembly brochure at AEU.org and in our lobby at the Society. You'll get a discount for signing up early.

Every year, the new Ethical Culture leaders are recognized at an inspirational platform held at the Assembly. It is not to be missed. Hugh Taft-Morales, who has been serving an internship at our Society will be the newly-certified leader honored at this platform ceremony.

The best part of this annual event, in my opinion, is meeting and reconnecting with people from Societies across the movement. Each Society has its own unique take on platforms, celebrations, fundraising, ethical action and other programs. You will gain a refreshing

infusion of new ideas to share at our Society. You will come home with a much broader, enriched perspective on the Ethical Humanist movement. ◇



## SAVE THE DATE

June 17-20, 2010

AMERICAN ETHICAL UNION  
95<sup>th</sup> Annual Assembly

To be held at

The University of Scranton  
Scranton, Pennsylvania



**Platforms at  
11:00 a.m., Sundays**

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

Coffee Hour & Discussion follow Platforms

Childcare provided at no charge

All are welcome!

## Worldly Wisdom: Great Books and the Meaning of Life



James Sloan Allen has created a humanist approach to the Great Books. "Worldly wisdom is made up of good ideas and useful humanism that help us understand our lives and give meaning to them in this world." The book, *Worldly Wisdom*, is a series of commentaries that follow human wisdom from Homer's *Iliad* to the works of Sartre and Martin Luther King.

This class is a chance for members and friends of the Society to read and discuss those books we meant to read earlier in life while following the course of humanist thinking through the ages. Another advantage will be the opportunity to examine our own lives in the presence of ideas from around the world and through the ages.

This will be a monthly series with participants taking turns in leading the discussion. We will have copies of James Sloan Allen's book to be lent to those leading the discussion and participants will be expected to have read at least part of the selection for that month.

In April we will be discussing Goethe's *Faust*.

**Tuesday, April 13, 7:30 PM**

### Exploring Felix Adler, the Founder of Ethical Culture



Two Monday evenings, April 19 and May 3, 7:00-9:00PM  
Led by **Hugh Taft-Morales**, Leader, American Ethical Union

*I do not invite you to accept my religion. I ask you to consider the practical directions for the conduct of life which follow from it, and if having tested them, you find them valid in your experience, then they will be of service to you. - Felix Adler*

In *Exploring Felix Adler* we will discuss the influences on Adler's philosophy, his vision for Ethical Culture, as well as his perspective on religion, society, relationships, and human nature. Readings will be available electronically or in hard copy at the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia.

#### April 19

An overview of the background, influences and philosophy of Felix Adler, followed by a discussion Adler's address of May 15, 1876 marking the founding of the New York Society for Ethical Culture.

#### May 3

A more detailed discussion of Adler's idealism, including "the ethical manifold," and his ethical commitment to both "bringing out the best in others and thus in yourself" and "deed before creed." We will conclude with a discussion of his essay, "Some Characteristics of the American Ethical Movement," delivered in London, June 7, 1925.



Hugh Taft-Morales



THURSDAY NIGHT TALKIES

THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2010 - 7:15 P.M.

**FOOD, INC.**

**Movie, Discussion, Popcorn and Pop**

In *Food, Inc.*, filmmaker Robert Kenner lifts the veil on our nation's food industry, exposing the highly mechanized underbelly that has been hidden from the American consumer with the consent of our government's regulatory agencies, USDA and FDA. We have bigger-breasted chickens, the perfect pork chop, herbicide-resistant soybean seeds, even tomatoes that won't go bad, but we also have new strains of *E. coli*—the harmful bacteria that causes illness for an estimated 73,000 Americans annually.

**Food, Inc. reveals surprising—and often shocking truths—about what we eat, how it's produced, who we have become as a nation and where we are going from here.**



### Thank You for Your Service

Many thanks to those who rushed to ush from January 17 - March 7, namely **Marta Guttenberg, David Ralston, Howard Peer, Doris Leicher, Harry Thorn, Tom Carroll, Henry Pashkow, Terry Martin-Murley, Lyle Murley, Bob and Janice Moore, Nick Sanders and Jim Cummings, Ken Greiff and Temma Fishman.**



Although others have signed up for future weeks, we can use additional assistance in setting the stage for our Sunday morning platforms. If you would like to serve our community by ushering either regularly or occasionally, please contact Betsy Lightbourn.



# April 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<i>Class -7:15 pm</i>			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> GET TO KNOW US SOCIAL 7:00 P.M.	<b>3</b>
*Child care provided during Platforms	<b>Ethical Exploration:</b> Morality Beyond The Self					
<b>4</b> *11:00 a.m. Platform: <b>Poverty, Racism and Gay Marriage</b>  Richard L. Kiniry	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>  <b>Doobies Night</b> 6:30 p.m.	<b>7</b> <b>Meeting</b> 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee	<b>8</b> <i>Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty Meeting</i> 6:00pm	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>CAMP LINDEN VOLUNTEER DAY</b> 12 Noon
<b>11</b> *11:00 a.m. Platform: <b>Soft Borders</b>  Julie Mostov	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <i>Class -7:30 pm</i> <b>Worldly Wisdom</b>	<b>14</b> <b>Meetings</b> 6:30 p.m. Education Committee 7:30 p.m. Ethical Action Cmte.	<b>15</b> <b>Thursday Night Talkie</b>  7:15 p.m. (Weston Rm)	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> *11:00 a.m. Platform: <b>The Ethics of Organic Gardening</b>  Nic Esposito	<b>19</b> <b>Exploring Felix Adler</b> Hugh Taft- Morales 7-9:00 p.m.	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>Meetings</b> 6:30 p.m. Executive Committee 7:30 p.m. Board of Trustees Henry Pashkow	<b>22</b>  <b>Amnesty International</b> 7:00 p.m.	<b>23</b>  Kate Esposito	<b>24</b> <b>CAMP LINDEN VOLUNTEER DAY</b> 12 Noon
<b>25</b> *11:00 a.m. Platform: <b>One Nation under the Constitution</b>  Sean Faircloth Chuck Hinson	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Meeting</b> 7:00 p.m. Camp Linden Board	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  A Night in India 7:00 p.m.	 Birthdays



**Doo Bie, or not Doo Bie . . .**

We will answer that age old question  
on  
**Tuesday, April 6th**  
**6:30 p.m.**

from inside the inspiring environ of  
**DOOBIES**  
2201 Loombard Street



**Coming in May**

Monday, May 3rd

**Exploring Felix Adler**

PART 2

Hugh Taft-Morales

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**Ethical Humanist Society  
of Philadelphia**

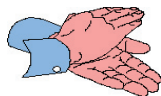
Richard Kiniry, Leader

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## SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS

**Flower Dedications** - Ramona Ward,  
Coordinator

April 4 - Ron Coburn: "In gratitude for:  
**Bill Moyer Now.**"

April 11 - Carol Love, M.D.: "In honor of  
my father and grandmother, during their  
birthday month."

April 18 - Nick Sanders: "In memory  
of his brother, whose birthday is April  
21st."

April 25 - Mary Lou Da Silva: "In loving  
memory of my mother, Mary S. Welch,  
September 1902 - April 2006."

**Ushers** - Betsy Lightborn, Coordinator

April 4-  
April 11 -  
April 18 - T.B.A.  
April 25 -

**Greeters** - Ken Greiff, Coordinator

April 4-  
April 11 -  
April 18 - T.B.A.  
April 25 -

**Coffee Hour Lunch**

April 4 - Group A-D  
April 11 - Group E-K  
April 18 - Group L-O  
April 25 - Group P-Z

**Photo credits**

*All photographs, unless noted,  
are by Janice R. Moore*

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of Philadelphia**  
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