



Ethical Views

December 2010 Vol. 125, No. 4 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia



Sunday Platforms

Sunday, December 5, 2010

The Plot against Good Men

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

There is little doubt that males are generally more aggressive than are females—that seems to be genetically based—but what role does culture play in legitimating and encouraging aggression and anti-social behavior in men? Who will support strong, gentle, caring men?

ecological, social and economic value—that is, products and processes that contribute to life rather than deplete it. Ethical Culture's maxim "elicit the best in others and thereby elicit the best in oneself" echoes a similar sentiment. We are urged to engage with others and work to unlock hidden potential for the good and so contribute to a more ethical culture. But how would one go about exerting energies in ways that would result in positive benefits for others and for oneself?

Sunday, December 12, 2010

Contributing to Life

Speaker: Bart Worden, Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Westchester in White Plains, NY

In *Cradle to Cradle*, William McDonough and Michael Braungart propose that rather than continue to design products in a "cradle to grave" paradigm of production, usage and disposal designers should seek instead to create goods and services that generate

Sunday, December 19, 2010

Winter Solstice Celebration



Join us as we use candlelight, poetry and music to celebrate the Winter Solstice. Members and friends will come together to honor the essential core of the holiday season—community, love for life together with family, friends and all humankind. All are welcome.

Sunday, December 26, 2010

There will be no Platform. <>



Ethics for Children

Each Sunday the Society offers a children's program at the same time as the Platform. Although this is a "one-room school house," we will have age-appropriate activities for all age groups. The underlying theme of the classroom will be the children's growing awareness of the world around them and developing an appreciation of all forms of life. Relationships with parents, siblings, animal and human friends and plant life are stressed. We have a certified teacher and will use the text "Love Your Neighbor."

Introduction to Ethical Humanism

Sunday, December 5, 1:30 p.m.

The Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia is part of a 134-year-old humanist religious tradition. This is a chance to delve into that history and tradition. Interested visitors, newcomers and members are invited to examine the basic ideas of Ethical Culture. Do they make sense and can they make your life better? Using the Eight Commitments of Ethical Culture we will look at our core ideas—the intrinsic worth of every human being, naturalism, nontheism and ethics as a way of life.

Led by Richard Kiniry.

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President's Message

Thank the Unsung Heroes

—Temma Fishman

As I write this, Thanksgiving is about three weeks away, and I am reflecting on being thankful. As most of you know, we are facing significant changes in our Society and will be facing more as we move on in our search for a new leader.

One major transition took place in our office. **Peg Shaw**, who started working for us at the end of June, resigned in October. We were very lucky to have found our new office manager, **Dorothy McBride Wesley**, who prefers to be called Dottie. I should say that luck had little to do with it. Our Vice President **Jeffrey Dubb** led an extensive search, read many résumés and whittled down the overwhelming number of replies to only the most promising candidates. Our Leader **Richard Kiniry**, our Treasurer **Nick Sanders** and I conducted interviews. The choice was difficult, but Dottie stood out as the one who has many years of administrative experience working in non-profit organizations.

However, there was a period of time when we had to go on with no office manager. Jeff, Richard and Nick volunteered many hours taking phone calls, responding to email messages, scheduling rentals, paying bills, showing our space to prospective renters, managing the custodians and handling the correspondence along with the many other details necessary to keeping our Society office running smoothly. Nick took charge of newsletter layout and prepared the Sunday programs.

Richard concentrated on organizing rentals, calming us and keeping us focused. They kept things running so well that most of us had no idea that this upheaval was taking place. They learned the ins and outs of the office manager's job so thoroughly, in the process streamlining many of its functions, that they are now in a good position to explain the many aspects of the position to a new employee. Soon Dottie will be working independently as our part-time office manager. Be sure to stop in to say hello to her.

Our Search Committee, led by **Lyle Murley**, held sessions to hear members' ideas and concerns regarding this transition and the qualities they think are important in a new leader. Their work, so important to our future, has barely begun. But Lyle, **Betsy Lightbourn**, **Ron Coburn**, **Linda Richardson** and **Kate Esposito** are bravely pushing forward. They have made a huge commitment to this task, which involves holding meetings, communicating with the Board and other members, and doing the significant amount of research necessary to finding a leader. They

will soon be travelling to hear candidates for the job speak. Their efforts will do much to determine the future of our Society. The importance of their volunteerism cannot be overestimated.

Our committee chairs and committee members continue their work largely unnoticed and unsung. **Ellen Rose**, chair of our Education Committee, continues to work with her committee at planning the excellent Platforms that have increased our Sunday morning attendance. This committee is responsible for classes and all aspects of the Sunday morning program, including the unsurpassed music provided by **Kasia Marzec-Salwinski**, all under the guidance

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!

(Continued on Page 3)



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, April 30th
7:00 PM

*at the Ethical Humanist Society
of Philadelphia*

PARTY TO HONOR RETIRING LEADER

RICHARD L. KINIRY

Details to follow

of our Leader **Richard Kiniry**. **Betsy Lightbourn** struggles to get ushers, whose job it is to set up the auditorium for Sunday Platform and clean up afterwards. **Ken Grieff**, chair of our Community Committee, leads the planning of parties, is responsible for getting greeters (often a struggle, too) to welcome members and visitors, for the excellent Get to Know Us Socials, and for Membership Growth activities. This committee also heads the lunch program effort. **David Ralston** stepped forward to take charge of the flower tributes donated by members and friends and offered at the weekly platforms. **Doris Leicher** heads our Ethical Action Committee. She sends out internet alerts on social justice issues for us to respond to. This committee, with the help of **Kate Esposito**, is in charge of our KIVA microlending donations. EAC, on behalf of the Society, donates dictionaries to local underserved school children, heads the homeless shelter feeding program, led a 350.org initiative that included a banner, has movie events on current social and environmental problems and suggests collections for those in need.

Education, Community and EAC need more members. If these committees are to remain viable and reflect the will of the membership, members need to join and to stay involved. Volunteer your time. Say "Yes!" when asked to help. We are working for each other and the greater good.

My appreciation goes to **Nick Sanders** for heading the Finance Committee. Nick runs our pledge campaign and prepares monthly budget reports. He creates the annual

budget which is brought before the membership for a vote at the Annual Membership Meeting in May. He and **Jeffrey Dubb** handle our investments in the Rose Rappoport Long Fund and our Endowment. This committee decides whether or not significant expenditures should be made and handles all expense-related activities of the Society. We look to input from the Finance Committee to advise us in all important money matters. We could not exist without them.

And finally, my gratitude goes out to **Jeffrey Dubb** for chairing the Camp Linden Committee. With Richard's devotion and involvement, we continued our summer day camp program for inner city children. This committee, with its energetic members, is now envisioning the future of the Camp. They are engaged in a search, led by Jeff, for an Executive Director who will help us create and implement this vision. They are looking ahead to the possibility of creating an overnight camp and perhaps even a conference center. At this point, interviews of candidates for Executive Director are being conducted. You will be informed of the result.

So, why are we doing all this and more that I neglected to mention? I like to stop and reflect on our larger purpose. We are a movement that stands for creating a more humane society. In this troubling and even frightening political atmosphere, we are a shelter against the winds of hatred and ignorance.

We take positions that promote the quality of life. We accept that human beings are responsible for the world we have created. We stand against the death penalty, for the reproductive rights of women, for LGBT rights and for helping the poor.

We embrace multiculturalism and diversity. We oppose war as a means of solving political problems. We define patriotism as tolerance, the protection of church and state separation, education of our citizenry, enlightened activism and protecting the environment. We are informed by science, not myth or wishful thinking. I could go on. I am thankful to be part of this movement and grateful to those who labor behind the scenes to ensure its journey into the future. Let their praises be sung! ◇





WORLDLY WISDOM

GREAT BOOKS AND THE MEANING OF LIFE

James Sloan Allen has created a humanist approach to the Great Books. His 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. His focus is the humanist ideas that appear in all these historic writings. This 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 of this reading group is we will have 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 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.

Since the meetings are planned for the **third Tuesday of the month**, our next meeting will be **December 21 at 7:30 p.m.** We will be discussing Confucius's *The Analects* and readings of Taoism.

Solstice Celebration and Lunch

This is one of the most festive platforms the EHSOP puts on, with hundreds of candles, garlands everywhere, reading selections for everyone, and then a nice lunch. So that we can have a more substantial meal, we are asking two groups to bring food for this event—people from weeks 3 and 4. Food more substantial and ambitious than finger food is appropriate here. Irene Putzer will coordinate the culinary proceedings for the day.



December 2010

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
			1 Meetings 6:30 p.m. Education Committee 7:45 p.m. Ethical Action Committee	2	3	4
*5 11:00 a.m. <i>The Plot against Good Men</i> Richard L. Kiniry 1:30 p.m. Intro to Ethical Humanism	6	7	8 Meeting 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee	9	10	11
*12 11:00 a.m. <i>Contributing to Life</i> Bart Worden	13	14 <i>Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty Meeting</i> 7:00pm	15 Meetings 6:30 p.m. Executive Committee 7:30 p.m. EHSOP Board	16  Amnesty International 7:00 p.m.	17	18 Set-up for Winter Solstice 5:00p.m.- 9:00p.m.
*19 11:00 a.m. <i>Winter Solstice Celebration</i>	20	21 Class Worldly Wisdom 7:30 p.m.	22 Meeting 7:00 p.m. Camp Linden Meeting	23	24	25
*26 <i>No service</i>	27	28	29	30	31	
*Child care provided during all platforms	<div>  DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS  <div> 8 Jesse Zelnick 10 Ron Coburn 14 Ann Gay Freed 14 Richard L. Kiniry </div> <div> 16 Roberta Wood 21 Bertha Waters 23 Bob Moore </div> </div>					

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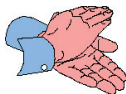
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SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS

**Flower Dedications - David Ralston,
Coordinator**

December 5 - Carol Love: Thanks for
over 40 years of great programs and
wonderful friends at our Society.

December 12 - T.B.A.

December 20 - Linda Richardson: In
honor of Bertha Waters's birthday on
December 21.



**Ushers - Betsy Lightbourn,
Coordinator**

December 5 T.B.A.

December 12

December 19

Greeters - Ken Greiff, Coordinator

December 5 - Nick Sanders

December 12 - Doris Dabrowski

December 19 - Victoria Kent

Coffee Hour Lunch

December 5 - Groups A-D

December 12- Groups E-K

December 19 - Groups L-O and P-Z

***Ethical Humanist Society
of Philadelphia***

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