



# Ethical Views

April 2011

Vol. 125, No. 8 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

## Sunday Platforms

Sunday, April 3, 2011

*Trying to Live a Purposeful Life*

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

After you have identified for yourself an understanding of life and the ethical ramifications of that understanding, can you actually live those values? The book *No Impact Man* offers such a story, one person's journey of living his values. Is it an example for all of us?

Sunday, April 10, 2011

*Meaning in Life and Ethical Culture*

**Speaker: Dr. Robert Berson, Psychiatrist and Leader, Ethical Society of Northern Westchester, NY**

People often ask what the meaning of life is or if there is any meaning. Those questions create particular problems for humanists who are living outside any idea of a divine plan.

Sunday, April 17, 2011

*Last Acts: Discovering Possibility and Opportunity Near the End of Life*

**Speaker: Dr. David Casarett, Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania**

What would you do if you had an hour to live? A day? A week? Are there some ways of using that time that are more useful, more important, more meaningful than others? Drawing on my experience as a palliative care physician and researcher, as well as on examples from history and current events, I will describe a variety of ways in which people choose to use their time when that time is limited and offer suggestions for ways in which we can help others to choose the last acts that are right for them.

Sunday, April 24, 2011

*Practical Wisdom: The Right Way to Do the Right Thing*

**Speakers: Barry Schwartz, Professor of Psychology at Swarthmore College and Kenneth E. Sharpe, William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Political Science at Swarthmore College**

Drawing on our recent book, *Practical Wisdom: The Right Way to Do the Right Thing*, we will discuss what Aristotle saw as the master virtue—prudence or “practical wisdom.” Using real examples, we will explore what practical wisdom is, why it is so important for leading our daily lives, and how it can be nurtured in each of us. ◇

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## Will Bunch Speaking May 8

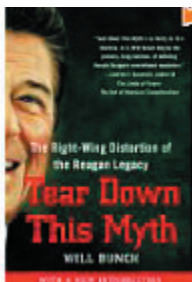
—Harry Thorn, for the Education Committee

Our Platform speaker on Sunday, May 8 will be journalist Will Bunch. Non-members of EHSOP are welcome to attend.

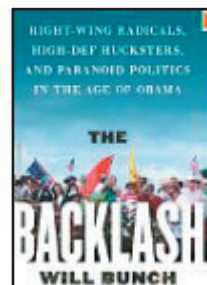
Bunch is a writer and columnist at the Philadelphia *Daily News*. He wrote the March 9 cover story about how Gov. Corbett has long been on the take from big energy companies. Corbett will return the favor by giving the Marcellus Shale gas away untaxed. We will get nothing from our resource. Other states do tax. Corbett's rules protecting the environment and the ground water will be minimal.

Will Bunch has a blog at the *Daily News* (<http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/attytood/>) where he does a great job of covering political issues and getting reader comments. Several of our members heard him speak recently at the Nation Magazine Group.

He has published two popular books attacking conservative politics. On May 8 he will discuss topics from these books and share his view of what is ethical and what is not on the political scene.



**Tear Down This Myth: The Right-Wing Distortion of the Reagan Legacy** by [William Bunch](#) (Feb 2, 2010)



**The Backlash: Right-Wing Radicals, High-Def Hucksters, and Paranoid Politics in the Age of Obama** by [William Bunch](#) (Aug 31, 2010)



## President's Message

Leaders, All

Temma Fishman

The Special Meeting of the Membership on March 6th is over. Continuing his theme, it followed Richard's platform talk on Authentic Leadership.

Those of us on the Board and Search Committee have been urging (haranguing) you for months about the need for all (and I do mean all) of us to step forward to take up the mantle of leadership. By the time you get this message, we may well have chosen a new leader. If not, the Search Committee will be continuing its searching. However, as we have said so many times, this new leader will not be Richard, who although paid for part-time work gave us more than full-time service. So no matter how dedicated our new leader will be, s/he will be working half time and will probably not be living on Bainbridge Street. So who's to fill in the gaps? Well, you know who—you and me, that's who.

Richard's talk on leadership was inspiring. It got me thinking about what it means to lead and the personal satisfaction serving as President of the Board has afforded me, notwithstanding the occasional complaints I've been known to utter. However, I know it's just as important, and probably more so, for leaders to step back to allow others to step forward. To paraphrase Richard, the willingness to lead when needed and to encourage good leadership in others is what drives democracy.

We blossom under inspired leadership. Richard's talk was just such an example because it moved those who attended our meeting to volunteer to work on the many projects that keep our Society going. After we adopted the proposed changes to the bylaws, Richard and the leaders of committees gave their reports, explaining what each has been doing and what we need in the coming months.

Then the rest of the members took over. We talked about ways to reorganize ourselves so we could do better at taking care of our community and attracting others to it. We suggested tools and strategies to integrate new members into the Society. We talked about jobs that must absolutely get done, and those that we might dispense with, streamline or hire others to do. Some of these ideas will take us in new directions.

We did the mundane things that needed to be done right then and there, too. We called upon the commitment and expertise of the membership, and quite a few answered the call. On volunteer forms we checked off tasks we are willing to lead or work on. Board Secretary Doris Leicher noted these ideas on large sheets hung on the walls. She will circulate the results of our group effort in the minutes of this meeting.

We missed those of you who weren't there to offer your much-needed ideas and help. But, if you didn't do it at the meeting, you will still have a chance. There is a volunteer sheet enclosed in this newsletter. Be sure to choose what you'd like to do and turn the sheet in to me, if you haven't already done so. Email it to [temmafish@aol.com](mailto:temmafish@aol.com) or send it to me via regular mail.

We made a good beginning at the special meeting. New leadership was popping up all over the place. Now we need to put our motivation and creativity to work. Using the proposals generated by our meeting, the Board of Trustees will be planning how to get all members involved and, especially, how to inspire the leadership we are all capable of. We will be taking you up on your offers. Together, we will move forward from the start we made. You have the talent, time and treasure to shape our Society and world for the better. Together, we will do new things in new ways and keep the old ways that work. So, roll up your sleeves, stay tuned and at the ready.



## CLASSES



### 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."

### 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 **April 19 at 7:30 p.m.** The reading will be Dickens's *Hard Times*, and Sharon Wallis will lead the discussion.





## THE ETHICAL HUMANIST SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA'S ONE-ACT PLAY CONTEST, 2011

The Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia announces its 2011 One-Act Play Contest. Playwrights residing in the greater Philadelphia area are invited to submit scripts. A panel of readers will select one winner and two runners-up. The winner will receive an honorarium of \$100 and a professional reading of the play during our 2011-12 season, on a date to be agreed between the playwright and the Society. The playwright must be present for the reading and for the talk-back following coffee. The runners-up will each receive \$50 honoraria. Beyond the reading, the playwright retains all rights to the script.

### Rules and guidelines:

- The playwright must be a current resident of the greater Philadelphia area.
- Only one submission per playwright.
- Scripts must be in the standard format.

- The script must read in 20-30 minutes.
- Maximum number of characters: 4.
- Electronic submissions only. The email message must contain the title of the play and the name and contact information of the playwright. The script, in an attached .doc or .pdf file, must include the title of the play, and numbered pages, but nothing to identify the playwright. Send this email, and any inquiries, to coordinator Pat McGeever at <[patethical@gmail.com](mailto:patethical@gmail.com)>. Title your email "One-Act Play Contest Submission."
- Deadline for submissions: May 20, 2011.
- The winning playwright must be present at the reading and the discussion which follows. If this is not feasible, the play of one of the runners-up will be chosen.
- No particular theme or genre is required. But playwrights should keep in mind that the winning play will take the place of one of our Sunday Platforms. Playwrights are advised to browse our website, <http://phillyethics.org> to familiarize themselves with the Society and its Eight Commitments. We seek plays that will both entertain and stimulate lively, meaningful discussion.



### Thank you for your service!

Many thanks to those who rushed to ush 2-13 through 3-13, namely, **Ron Coburn, Doris Dabrowski, Marta Guttenberg, Garry O'Rourke, Henry Pashkow, Harry Thorn, David Ralston, Sally Redlener and Leonard Weeks.**

In the forthcoming weeks we can use additional assistance in setting the stage for our Sunday morning Platforms. If you would like to serve our community by joining the ush rush either regularly or occasionally, please contact **Betsy Lightbourn** at [elightbourn@verizon.net](mailto:elightbourn@verizon.net) or 215-575-1128.

### NOTICE OF ELECTION

During the annual meeting of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia on **May 15**, a Secretary, Treasurer and three Trustees will be elected to the Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee is preparing a slate of people who are willing to run for office. Would you like to run for any of these positions or nominate anyone with their permission? Please submit the name in writing at least three weeks before the election (i.e., by April 24) to any member of the Nominating Committee—**Terry Martin-Murley, Marta Guttenberg or Harry Thorn.** The requirement to serve as a Trustee on the Board or as Secretary or Treasurer is that you have been a member for one year.

### Ethical Humanist Seder



Celebrate freedom the Ethical Culture way. On **Friday, April 15 at 7:00PM**, members and friends of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia will observe our Humanist Seder. Remembering those who struggled for freedom in the past and honoring those who suffer in oppression today, we blend old and new traditions that unite us with the global community and with each other. Join us in sharing delicious food, joyful song and eloquent readings. Bring your own special dish to add to the feast. The cost is \$10 if you bring a dish, \$15 if you don't. RSVP by April 8 either by calling the Society office at 215-735-3456 or, better yet, by talking to our impresarios. **Ruth Ann Dubb** will be focusing on the food and **Harry Thorn** will be handling setup and cleanup.

# April 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
<b>*3</b> <b>11:00 a.m.</b> <i>Trying to Live a Purposeful Life</i> <b>Richard L. Kiniry</b>	4	5	<b>6</b> <b>Meeting</b> 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee	7	8	9
<b>*10</b> <b>11:00 a.m.</b> <i>Meaning in Life and Ethical Culture</i> <b>Dr. Robert Berson</b>	11	<b>12</b> <i>Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty Meeting</i> 7:00pm	<b>13</b> <b>Meetings</b> 6:15 p.m. Education Committee 7:30 p.m. Ethical Action Committee	14	<b>15</b> <b>Ethical Humanist Seder</b> 7:00 p.m.	16
<b>*17</b> <b>11:00 a.m.</b> <i>Last Acts: Discovering Possibility and Opportunity Near the End of Life</i> <b>Dr. David Casarett</b>	18	<b>19</b> <b>Class</b> WORLDLY WISDOM 7:30 P.M.	<b>20</b> <b>Meeting</b> 7:30 p.m. EHSoP Board	21	22	23
<b>*24</b> <b>11:00 a.m.</b> <i>Practical Wisdom: The Right Way to Do the Right Thing</i> <b>Barry Schwartz, Kenneth E. Sharpe</b>	25	26	<b>27</b> <b>Meeting</b> 7:00 p.m. Camp Linden Meeting	<b>28</b>  <b>Amnesty International</b> 7:00 p.m.	29	30
*Child care provided during all platforms						

April Birthdays	
21	Henry Pashkow
22	Kate Esposito
25	Chuck Hinson



# Volunteer Sign-up Sheet



Please check your areas of interest. Add others.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact \_\_\_\_\_

I am willing to work on:

## **Education Committee –**

Planning Festivals \_\_\_\_\_

Getting speakers \_\_\_\_\_

Getting ushers \_\_\_\_\_

Developing ideas for classes \_\_\_\_\_

Developing a Sunday School \_\_\_\_\_

Other (Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Community Committee –**

Work on Membership Growth \_\_\_\_\_

Getting greeters \_\_\_\_\_

Planning parties \_\_\_\_\_

Planning Get to Know Us Socials \_\_\_\_\_

Caring subcommittee \_\_\_\_\_

Produce content for newsletters and website \_\_\_\_\_

Other (Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Ethical Action Committee –**

Getting volunteers for Trinity Shelter meals \_\_\_\_\_

Helping with Dictionary Project \_\_\_\_\_

Organizing a “Talkie” event \_\_\_\_\_

Organizing a 350.org project \_\_\_\_\_

Helping KIVA microloans project \_\_\_\_\_

Helping Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death

Penalty \_\_\_\_\_

Helping Amnesty International \_\_\_\_\_

Organizing and implementing other projects (Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Finance Committee -**

Organize Building Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Help fundraising \_\_\_\_\_

Offer accounting skills \_\_\_\_\_

Other (Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Camp Linden Committee -**

Visiting Camp during summer \_\_\_\_\_

Help make minor repairs \_\_\_\_\_

Help with gardening \_\_\_\_\_

Liaison with groups that provide campers \_\_\_\_\_

Help with mailing Summer Views \_\_\_\_\_

Fundraising \_\_\_\_\_

## **Communications Committee -**

Further Development of website \_\_\_\_\_

Develop online social networking \_\_\_\_\_

Develop ads for publication \_\_\_\_\_

Help with newsletter content and/or distribution \_\_\_\_\_

*Ethical Views* is published monthly  
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*Editor*, Ellen Rose  
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*Web Master*, Nick Sanders

**Ethical Humanist Society  
of Philadelphia**

Richard Kiniry, Leader

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## SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS



**Flower Dedications - David  
Ralston, Coordinator**

April 3 — David Collier:  
In loving memory of my  
parents W. Edwin Collier  
and Laura M. Collier

April 10 — Harry Thorn

April 17 — Susan D'Alessio: In honor of  
Gerry's and my 2nd wedding anniversary

April 24— Carol Erb: In honor of what  
would have been my mother Harriet  
Lantheume's 100th birthday

**Ushers - Betsy Lightbourn, Coordinator**

April 3 T.B.A.

April 10

April 17

April 24



**Greeters - Ken Greiff, Coordinator**

April 3 T.B.A.

April 10

April 17

April 24



**Coffee Hour Lunch**

April 3 - Groups A-D

April 10 - Groups E-K

April 17 - Groups L-O

April 24 - Groups P-Z



***Ethical Humanist Society  
of Philadelphia***

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