



Ethical Views

May 2011

Vol. 125, No. 9 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

Sunday Platforms

Sunday, May 1, 2011

Putting the Movement into the Ethical Culture Movement

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

You might be unconscious of the fact, but belonging to the Society means that you are part of the Ethical Culture Movement. That fact is carried lightly by most of us, but I will challenge you to start taking it seriously.

Sunday, May 8, 2011

Behind the Lines of the Tea Party Movement

Speaker: Will Bunch, Pulitzer Prize-winning Columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News

In the days following the election of Barack Obama as the nation's 44th president—and the first African-American in the Oval Office—a powerful backlash exploded from the nation's far right. Fueled by angry talk on the radio and internet allegations that Obama was anti-American and possibly not even a citizen, the so-called Tea Party Movement, despite representing the views of a minority of citizens, was remarkably successful in blocking the progressive agenda Obama had promised. Will Bunch spent a year traveling the country in an effort to understand the source of this raw political anger. What he learned is the subject of his book *The Backlash: Right-Wing Radicals, High-Def Hucksters and Paranoid Politics in the Age of Obama* and his talk to Ethical Society.

Sunday, May 15, 2011

Founders' Day

One Hundred and Twenty-Five Years of Living Ethical Humanism and Why Our History Matters

Speaker: Betsy Lightbourn, Member of the Leader Search Committee, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

Founded in 1885, Philadelphia was the third Society formed in the new ethical religion, based on deed before creed, created by Felix Adler. Today the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia is in the final months of a 21-year leadership under its seventh leader, Richard Kiniry. As the Society moves forward, what role can an understanding of its history play in creating a vision and a reality for the future?

Sunday, May 22, 2011

The Politics of Genocide

Speaker: Edward S. Herman, Professor Emeritus of Finance, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

Genocide is an invidious word, and as with "terrorism" its usage is highly politicized. That is, the word is applied almost exclusively to acts and policies of hostile and targeted states. Comparable acts and policies of one's own government and allies and client states are treated differently. This helps policy makers implement policies that may or may not help curb mass killings. Many contrasting cases illustrate the point—for example, the treatment of killings by the Khmer Rouge and Pol Pot in Cambodia versus those by Suharto in East Timor in the 1970s; or the killings in Darfur versus those in Iraq or the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the 1990s and 2000-2010. These cases present challenges both to understanding genocide and to establishing proper ethical responses to it.

Sunday, May 29, 2011

Idleness

Speaker: Howard Peer, Past President, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

In the 1930s Bertrand Russell noted a disconnect between our general productivity and our need to work. He criticized the factory that would use doubling of efficiency to lay off half the workers as opposed to keeping all the workers on at half time, but with full wages. Russell, as have others before and since, blamed this on the greed of the owners. In the 80 years since Russell's essay was published, productivity

has increased several times. We live in a culture where some are worked very hard, while others exist on the public dole and/or through "alternative" means. It would seem logical to have more a more even distribution of labor with a wider work force and more social stability. Yet such is not the case. The history of humanity leaves some clues that perhaps the answer lies not entirely in corporate greed but somewhere in our selves. Is this so? And if so, what can we do with that knowledge? ◇



The Camp Linden Annual Picnic
Sunday, June 5, 2011

Lots of Friends—Lots of Food—
Lots of Fun!

\$10 for anyone contributing a dish; \$15 for anyone who doesn't.

We will leave the Society building at 10:30 a.m. Call the office to reserve a ride or to offer one.

In This Issue

1 Sunday Platforms, Camp Linden Annual Picnic

2 Leader's Message, Thank You For Your Service, Classes -- Ethics for children; Worldly Wisdom: Great Books and the Meaning of Life

3 Fresh Voices from Israel and Palestine, The Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia's One-Act Play Contest

4 Annual Meeting Agenda

5 Calendar

6 Flower Dedications, Sunday Morning Volunteers



President's Message

Richard L. Kiniry

Oh my, I'm retiring! Now what? Since through the years I have given my life a certain degree of direction, the wide-open freedom of retirement is a bit frightening. Necessity and youthful dreams have always combined to set a direction for employment but also for the rest of my time—recreation, hobbies, politics, etc. But with retirement the future has now a too obvious endpoint and there is also a sense that I've escaped out the back door of responsible living. As a teenager I slowly entered the front door of adulthood that included at least appearing to share the responsibility of holding this sad world together. Now, I will be one of those senior citizens in the backyard whose role in life seems to be restricted to worrying about their benefits and eating early.

Of course like other seniors I will still be playing a part in building our community life, and actually many seniors in retirement take up some of the work the economic/social system leaves undone. Much of the volunteer work that holds our human world together is performed by retirees.

But the temptation is to step aside from all responsibility. Recently Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced his retirement and when asked what he was going to do, he said, "tend my garden." Gardening will also occupy some of my newfound free time but the question retirement creates is a more existential one. Who am I without this job and what do I do with freedom? We are never free from responsibility but increased freedom from others' expectations allows us to be more honestly personal in our choices.

Since I have to some extent been doing my dream job for the last twenty years, I'm not about to walk away from my involvement with Ethical Humanism. I will continue writing and speaking,

but without as much restraint on my imagination or voice. Since I believe that Ethical Humanism continues to be unappreciated as a life changing philosophy, I will be taking up the cause of spreading the word about this relational understanding of life.

I can't help but offer a final pastoral recommendation: don't wait until retirement to free yourself from supposed necessity. A salary might be the most oppressive creation of humankind. The freedom that retirement offers is actually always there. Many retirees don't use that freedom as they move from wage slavery to accepting their new senior citizen designation. It would be so refreshing and exciting to hear generations of 65+ folks saying "take your senior citizen role and shove it." And while you're at it, tax the rich, cancel the military budget and put the money into education. <>



**Thank you
for your
service!**

Many thanks to those who rushed to ush March 20 through April 10, namely, **Jim Cummings, Ken Greiff, Marta Guttenberg, Betsy Lightbourn, Linda Richardson, Nick Sanders, Sharon Wallis 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 or 215-575-1128.

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 May 17 at 7:30 p.m. The reading will be Madison's *Federalist Paper #10*, and Richard Kiniry will lead the discussion.





**Levy Ha-Ir—Heart of the City
and the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia
present**

“Fresh Voices from Israel and Palestine”

Sunday, May 1, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Ethical Society Building, 1906 S. Rittenhouse Square



In an effort to obtain some clarity in the Israeli-Palestinian turmoil, Levy Ha-Ir—Heart of the City and the Ethical Society have invited guests from the The Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution (CRDC) at George Mason University to enter into discussion with us regarding the Middle-East situation.

Kobi Skolnick is an Associate at CRDC and is highly involved in the Israeli-Palestinian peace movement. In his work, he draws on his experience of having lived in an ultra-religious Jewish community and his former membership in settler movements. His extensive medical training and experience in combat also influence his understanding of human psychology and physiology.

Najuan Daadleh is a Palestinian woman who grew up in the State of Israel. She is currently a graduate student at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) at George Mason University. Prior to ICAR, Najuan spent seven years working with non-profit organizations in Jerusalem, most recently as a project manager at The Jerusalem Inter-Cultural center where she developed, implemented and evaluated community-based projects with Palestinian and Israeli Jewish organizations to promote dialogue and mutual cooperation.

This program is made possible through a grant from Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia, Kehillah of Center City.



**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. 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.

ETHICAL HUMANIST SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING—SUNDAY, MAY 15, 2011

Agenda

Lunch

President's Message
Temma Fishman, President

Elections

Slate of Candidates, for two-year terms:

Secretary:	(unopposed)	Nick Sanders
Treasurer:	(unopposed)	Linda Richardson

Trustees (unopposed):

Garry O'Rourke	Liaison to Finance Committee
Betsy Lightbourn	Liaison to Education Committee
Marta Guttenberg	Liaison to Camp Linden Committee

Vote on Amendments to the Bylaws

Leader's Report
Richard Kiniry, Leader

Treasurer's Report
Nick Sanders, Treasurer

Vote on 2011-2012 Budget as approved by the Board of Trustees

Committee Reports

Community Committee	Ken Greiff, Chair
Education Committee	Ellen Rose, Chair
Ethical Action Committee	Kate Esposito, Chair

Camp Linden Report
Jeffrey Dubb, Chair, Camp Linden Committee

May 2011

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
*1 11:00 a.m. <i>Putting the Movement into the Ethical Culture Movement</i> Richard L. Kiniry 3:00-5:00 p.m. <i>Fresh Voices from Israel and Palestine</i>	2	3	4 Meeting 7:30 p.m. Ethical Action Committee	5	6	7
*8 11:00 a.m. <i>Behind the Lines of the Tea Party Movement</i> Will Bunch	9	10 <i>Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty Meeting</i> 7:00pm	11 Meeting 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee	12	13	14
*15 11:00 a.m. <i>Founders' Day - One Hundred and Twenty-Five Years of Living Ethical Humanism and Why Our History Matters</i> Betsy Lightbourn 12:15 p.m. <i>Annual Meeting</i>	16	17 Class WORLDLY WISDOM 7:30 P.M.	18 Meeting 7:30 p.m. EHSoP Board	19	20	21
*22 11:00 a.m. <i>The Politics of Genocide</i> Edward S. Herman	23	24	25 Meeting 7:00 p.m. Camp Linden Meeting	26  Amnesty International 7:00 p.m.	27	28
*29 11:00 a.m. <i>Idleness</i> Howard Peer	30	31				

*Child care provided during all platforms

May Birthdays	
21	Henry Pashkow
22	Kate Esposito
25	Chuck Hinson

Ethical Views is published monthly
except July and August.

Editor, Ellen Rose
Layout, Janice Moore
Production, Dotti Wesley
Web Master, Nick Sanders

**Ethical Humanist Society
of Philadelphia**

Richard Kiniry, Leader

Board of Trustees

Temma Fishman, President
Jeffrey Dubb, M.D., Vice President
Nick Sanders, Treasurer
Doris Leicher, Secretary
Kate Esposito
Arnold Fishman
Ken Greiff
Garry O'Rourke
Irene Putzer

(215) 735 - 3456
office@phillyethics.org
www.phillyethics.org

SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS

Flower Dedications - David Ralston, Coordinator

May 1 — Bertha Waters: Dedicated
to my granddaughter
Maya Angelo Bonner, who
graced the world with her
presence for a short time.



May 8 — Nick Sanders:
In celebration of the 125
year anniversary of the
Philadelphia Ethical Society.

May 15 — Sally Redlener: A tribute to
Spring!

May 22 — James Cummings: In honor of
my wife Adlyn.

May 29 — Aissia Richardson: Happy
14th birthday to my daughter Yasmina.

Ushers - Betsy Lightbourn, Coordinator

May 1 T.B.A.

May 8

May 15

May 22

May 29



Greeters - Ken Greiff, Coordinator

May 1 T.B.A.

May 8

May 15

May 22

May 29



Coffee Hour Lunch

May 1 - Groups A-D

May 8 - Groups E-K

May 15 - Groups L-O

May 22 - Groups P-Z

May 29 - Volunteers from all groups



Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

1906 South Rittenhouse Square
Philadelphia, PA 19103