



# Ethical Views

May 2012 Vol. 126, No. 9 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

## Sunday Platforms

**Sunday, May 6, 2012, 11:00 A.M.**

***End the Death Penalty***

**Hugh Taft Morales, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society**

There are so many reasons to end capital punishment that it is hard to know where to start. It is an expensive, ineffective, racially biased, cruel and unusual punishment. In addition, the death penalty pierces the heart of Ethical Humanism: unconditional respect for the inherent worth of *every* person. The American Ethical Union formally called for an end to this barbaric practice in 1960, 1973, 1979, and 2000. The state-sanctioned killing of imprisoned people violates human dignity and must stop. Come hear more on May 6th!

**Sunday, May 13, 2012, 11:00 A.M.**

***Franklin and Rush: Humane and Progressive Thinking from Philadelphia's Past***

**Ron Avery, "Philadelphia Know-It-All"**

The history of Philadelphia is full of great thinkers and civic leaders. Two in particular, Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush, were ahead of their time regarding many social and ethical issues of importance to Ethical Humanism. Come hear Ron Avery explore how these great Philadelphians approached religion, the mentally ill, smoking, slavery, drinking, capital punishment, and more!

Mr. Avery is a retired newspaper reporter with 32 years in the business, 17 of them with the *Philadelphia Daily News*, where he wrote the column, "Poor Ronald's Almanac." Today he teaches courses in Philadelphia history, lectures and writes about the city and often leads walking tours. He has written three books about Philadelphia.

**Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:00 A.M.**

***The Meaning of Membership***

**Hugh Taft Morales, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society**

What does it mean to join an organization? What does it mean to join an Ethical Society? Membership means different things to different people. Some will join just about anything! Others, like Groucho Marx, say, "I don't care to belong to any club that would have me as a member." Come listen to Hugh Taft-Morales explore what's so great about becoming a member of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia. Learn why it is a membership with meaning.

**Sunday, May 27, 2012, 11:00 A.M.**

***Why We are Members***

**Members' Remarks**

In this special platform members will share what initially brought them to the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia and what being a member means to them and their way of living.



## Leader's Message:

***Ethical Culture in the Humanist Landscape – The Common Ground of Separation of Church and State***

**Hugh Taft-Morales**

In the March 24<sup>th</sup> crowd of 10,000 people at the Reason Rally on the National Mall in Washington D. C., there wandered a handful of Ethical Humanists including myself and EHSOP members Sharon Wallis and Leonard Weeks. More information and photos of the rally can be found on the website *reasonrally.org*. Also, find out more about it by reading my article in the next edition of the *AEU Dialogue*.

For the rest of this column, however, I want to focus on the common ground of the rally. On March 24th it wasn't always easy to find all the other Ethical Humanists in the crowd, whether they came from Philly, DC, Baltimore or

*(Continued on page 2)*



## Introduction to Ethical Humanism

**Sunday, May 6, 7:00 P.M.**

**Hugh Taft-Morales will offer about a presentation followed by reflections from members on what Ethical Humanism means to them. We will then open it up to a lively question and answer period - Wine and cheese will be served. Open to the public - please RSVP to [leaderhugh@phillyethics.org](mailto:leaderhugh@phillyethics.org)**



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further afield. But maybe this is a good metaphor for an important challenge before Ethical Culture. As the voices of skeptics, freethinkers, atheists, agnostics, and humanists are being heard in the national dialogue, it is important to clarify where Ethical Culture fits in "the humanist landscape."

While the Reason Rally was a great success for a lot of reasons, from my point of view there was not enough of Ethical Culture's unique voice. That is to be expected given our very limited role in the event. Maybe next time we can try to get more involved.

So why were we there this year? Well, given Ethical Culture's emphasis on the uniqueness of each individual, each of us who attended had different reasons. Again, given the importance of freethought to most participants, this is not a surprise. I would like to suggest, however, one issue Ethical Culturists, other humanists, atheists, agnostics, and skeptics can agree on: the importance of maintaining the wall of separation between church and state.

The American Ethical Union has passed numerous resolutions over the years in support of Jefferson's wall, including the following:

In 1961 the AEU "vigorously oppose[d] all federal and state aid to church-related schools and at the same time continue[d] the fight for separation of church and state" by opposing "prayers in public schools, religious symbols displayed inside and outside public schools, and the phrase 'under God' included in the Pledge of Allegiance." This was reinforced in 1962 when the AEU said, "The separation of Church and State in every area is of paramount importance for the insuring of the religious freedom of all individuals."

In 1967 the AEU demanded recognition for non-theistic conscientious objectors.

In 1971 the AEU said that ending government aid to private and parochial schools is an important way to "uphold the

principle of free public schools as a cornerstone of our democracy."

In 1983 the AEU condemned President Reagan's cold war theology and his claim that "the United States is compelled by scripture and the Lord Jesus Christ to oppose Russia with all military and political means"!

Given our history, it is no surprise that the Ethical Union is a member of the Secular Coalition for America (SCA) earning the AEU a spot on their board. Our own **Arnold Fishman** has been our voice there. The SCA was a sponsor of the Reason Rally. This helps explain Ethical Culture's place in the humanist landscape. Our movement fully supports the separation of church and state. We agree with a fundamental goal of the SCA: "protecting and strengthening the secular character of our government."



It is for this reason that I am nurturing a relationship with Ed Joyce and the Delaware Valley Chapter of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. I recently joined their Clergy Advisory Board and spoke at their April 17<sup>th</sup> program at the First Unitarian Church on Chestnut Street on the ethics of church/state separation.

I am far from an expert in constitutional law, but I know enough U. S. history and ethics to commit myself to helping clear away the disinformation and historical revisionism thrown out by theocrats trying to take over our government. I want to defend freedom of conscience and religion in the most efficient and ethical way possible: by maintaining Jefferson's wall of separation!

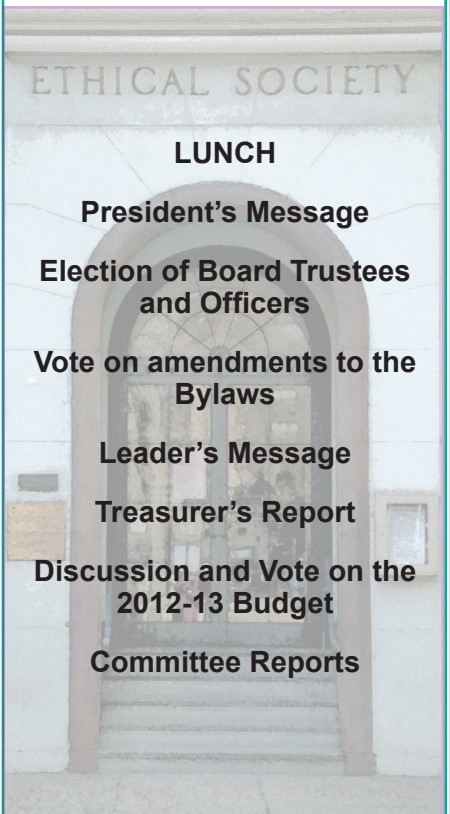
This fall I hope to launch a series of programs here on Rittenhouse Square on the Constitution and democracy with some specific focus on church/state issues. If you are interested in helping plan and organize these events, please contact me at [leaderhugh@phillyethics.org](mailto:leaderhugh@phillyethics.org).

## SAVE THE DATE!

ETHICAL HUMANIST  
SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Sunday May 20<sup>th</sup> following the  
Platform



#### LUNCH

President's Message

Election of Board Trustees  
and Officers

Vote on amendments to the  
Bylaws

Leader's Message

Treasurer's Report

Discussion and Vote on the  
2012-13 Budget

Committee Reports

Join us for a special lunch with wine and informative discussion. Learn about the state of the Society and the work of our committees. Here's your chance to vote and to influence the direction our Society is taking.

#### QUOTE-UNQUOTE

Without science, everything is a miracle. With science, there remains the possibility that nothing is. Religious belief in this case becomes less and less necessary, and also less and less relevant.

-- Lawrence Krauss, *A Universe from Nothing*



"THE DAY THE UNIVERSE  
CHANGED"

**Sunday, May 20,  
7:00 PM**

**A philosophically fun video  
and discussion series**



Come view and discuss a video series by James Burke, "The Day the Universe Changed." Burke entertainingly explores links between knowledge and reality.

Join Ethical Culture Leader Hugh Taft-Morales for this ninth installment called, **"Making Waves: The New Physics - Newton Revised."** Open to the public.



**Monday, May 21, 7:00 PM**

**"The Politics of Sexual  
Oppression"**

Come hear Jill McDevitt speak at the Ethical Humanist Society about American sexual oppression: laws, politics, and the psychology of oppression as it relates to sex. Ms. McDevitt is a young and sassy sexologist, sex columnist, public speaker, entertainer, and founder of Feminique Boutique, a sexuality shop for women, located in West Chester. This event is co-hosted by the Freethought Society and EHSOP. Please note the suggested donation of \$5 at the door.



YES!!



NO!!

**Friday, June 1  
starting at 6:00 PM**

**"Execute Art Not People"**

6:00PM - Gathering and outdoor activity

7:00PM - Viewing of film, "Concrete, Steel and Paint"

8:00PM - Panel Discussion with PADP directors Tony Heriza and Cindy Burstein, and State Senator Daylin Leach.

The Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia supports the PADP's (Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty) annual event, "Execute Art Not People." Artists of all genres bring attention to the tremendous expense of the death penalty. This year will focus on restorative justice. We will see the film, "Concrete, Steel and Paint," and have a panel discussion with directors Tony Heriza and Cindy Burstein. Ethical Culture has consistently condemned capital punishment both on ethical grounds and because this system is also extremely costly. There are currently over 200 persons on death row in Pennsylvania, with only three executions since 1978. Each prisoner on death row is estimated to cost \$10,000 more per year than a prisoner with any other sentence. Come support the shared values of PADP and EHSOP on June 1!

**Phillies Games, Canoe  
Carnival, Cat Sitting, & More**

The Society's annual fun fund-raiser, the "service auction," is well underway.



Almost every Sunday since the beginning of March, the descriptions of this year's 11 items have been available for sign-up. But for those of you who have not yet seen them or not yet decided, this article is for you.

One event has already been held and another has reached its maximum enrollment. Here's what is still available (as of April 10):

\* May 5 outing to Mt. Cuba Center's botanical garden and historical preserve near Wilmington DE, followed by a picnic lunch (limited to 15 people, \$20)

\* August 4, weather (and Felix) permitting: Canoe Carnival dinner, lakeside at Medford Lakes, N.J. (\$25)

\* Date to be announced for a cocktail hour with hymn singing in West Philadelphia (\$20)

\*\*\*\*\* Timing to be determined on basis of mutual convenience for:

- tickets to Phillies games (\$55 for one; \$100 for two)
- housing in Jamaica—yes, the island (minimum \$30 per night)
- cat care, dog walking convenient to Center City (\$5 per occasion)
- play-reading arranged by playwright Pat McGeever at your party (\$25 or \$50)
- custom limerick construction (\$25)

\* And a \$50 Trader Joe's gift card (only one, and next bid must be \$40 or better)

All monies paid directly benefit our Ethical Humanist Society.

Questions and bids to Nick Sanders, [sanders508@earthlink.net](mailto:sanders508@earthlink.net) or (215) 662-5636 or when you see him **by May 20** (earlier for the May 5 event). <>

## Our Splendid Day – April 15, 2012

By Betsy Lightbourn

*"May this splendid day be long remembered, and may it open the door even further to a bright future that will enlighten and empower us all."* – Mary Herman, Leader for Congregational Life, Washington Ethical Society.

Outside, Rittenhouse Square was awakening to the first flowers of spring. Inside, Spring flowed through the Society building festooned with red azaleas, purple salvias, and tiger-eye pansies ready for our splendid day, April 15, the formal installation of our new leader, Hugh Taft-Morales. At the end of the day he reminded us that this ceremony "recommits us to the values and mission of Ethical Humanism and to building our house together."

In his morning platform address, "Existential Faith: Choosing Ethical Culture," Hugh explained how existentialism, often portrayed as dark and depressive, helps him nurture both joy and commitment to Ethical Humanism. "I want to do the work of the world as common as mud yet full of meaning. Appreciating my limited time here helps me do this work. ... Existentialism helps me sort out my values."

The late afternoon Installation Ceremony brought together Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia members and friends, with the vast network of Hugh's past connections. Included were his family, his close friends as far back as college, and members of the Washington Ethical Society who nurtured his growing commitment to Ethical Humanism, first as an active member and President, and then as a Leader in Training and finally as a Leader.

Presided over by Temma Fishman, the ceremony, through music, words, and ceremonial reading and signing of the Act of Installation document, celebrated both the intellect and spirit of our Society's formal acknowledgment of Hugh's leadership, and our willingness to move forward with him in bringing out the best in Ethical Humanism.

From Kasia's Prelude as guests were taking their seats and the rousing Finlandia sung by all, to the music performed throughout by the Washington Ethical Society Chorus under the director of Bailey Whiteman, the auditorium was filled with sound: the Wailin' Jennys' *This Is The Sound of One Voice, You Are the New Day* (John David, arr. By Peter Knight), and finally a rousing singalong of *With a Little Help from My Friends*, (John Lennon and Paul McCartney), that concluded the ceremony.



Lyle Murley and Kate Esposito read Marge Piercy's poem "To Be of Use."

Kate Esposito and Lyle Murley brought passion and meaning to Marge Piercy poem, "To Be of Use," that introduced the central value of Hugh's leadership. WES Leader for Congregational Life Mary Herman recalled her experiences with Hugh over the years as WES member and later Leadership training classmate.

She concluded, "You chose as your Leader one of the most gifted leaders in our movement ... a true gentleman of deep ethical insight, uncompromising values, abundant gifts and vision. A Leader who respects what you have been and done in the charters of your past. A Leader with a deep, abiding and fierce love for Ethical Culture. A leader with wisdom that comes from a lifetime of commitment to the worth and dignity of every person." Susan Rose, Dean, American Ethical Union Leadership Training Program, recalled receiving a paper from Hugh on his experiences teaching in Guatemala and initially deciding she would glance at it and then save it for later. Instead, she read to the very end his haunting description of Guatemalan families that Hugh and his family helped for seven months. Moving from the biographical to historical, Joe Chuman, leader of New York Society of Ethical Culture, traced Ethical Culture's long history of leadership in social reform and social justice, a legacy that Hugh is remarkably well suited to carry on. He praised the Philadelphia Society for recognizing leadership through an installation ceremony.



Leader Mary Herman, Washington Ethical Society



Hugh and Temma receive the Act of Installation document from Bertha Waters.

The solemn part of the ceremony was facilitated by Jeff Dubb. Bertha Waters, as the first generation of a four-generation family of Ethical Culturists, presented the document to Temma who explained it. Members read their commitment

to Hugh in unison, and Hugh made his promise to serve our community as leader. Hugh and Temma then signed the document. Members will add their signatures over the next few weeks.

At the reception, champagne toasts were given by Carol Love, Terry Martin-Murley, Arnold Fishman, Michael French and others. Betsy Lightbourn then presented Hugh with the Society's gifts in his honor to two organizations. The donation to Peace Day Philly, at whose event Hugh performed his first Philly singalong, will enable the Society to become a sustaining member. The donation to the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund includes the adoption of a young mother gorilla and infant pair as well as support for communities surrounding endangered gorilla habitats in the Congo.



With Temma in the foreground, Hugh exhibits the Act of Installation document.

Photos for this article by Bob Bueding



## Camp Linden 2012 Adopt-A-Kid



For the 22nd straight year we will be welcoming children to beautiful Camp Linden - 54 acres of fields and wooded trails. Working with four inner-city Monday to Friday day camp programs, we provide nature lessons and teach the children how to swim. Over 200 campers will participate -- each child for one day a week for seven consecutive weeks.

Camp Linden offers hikes through woods and fields, led by knowledgeable and well-equipped staff, and discussions about insects, animals, trees or habitats. Camp Linden offers swimming lessons at our beautiful outdoor pool, allowing every child to learn. Camp Linden supplements the lunches provided by our city partners with freshly harvested produce from our own organic raised-bed garden.



We offer a challenging and healthy environment. Children can learn self-reliance, integrity and a broader view of their place in the natural world. Over the last 22 years we have opened up the wonders of nature to thousands of children. We are committed to providing a loving, educational, safe and fun program to our deserving young campers.

You can invest in our wonderful and deserving young campers through your tax-deductible gift to Camp Linden. We invite you to offer this opportunity to family, friends and co-workers. Remember, every gift of \$25 will pay for one kid for one day at camp.

Complete the form below and return it with your check to Camp Linden.

If you could see the smiles on their faces, you would adopt them all!

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### Yes, I will Adopt-A-Kid!

Please check one: \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$150 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to Camp Linden.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Camp Linden, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia  
1906 S. Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103  
215 - 735 - 3456; [www.phillyethics.org](http://www.phillyethics.org)



Perhaps you have friends, neighbors or relatives that would like to support our grassroots effort? Unlike many large charities, nearly all the money we raise is spent directly on the summer program or on the construction of new facilities.

Our administrative and maintenance costs are kept low because of the tremendous support we receive from volunteers.

[illegible]

Camp Linden, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia,  
1906 S. Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103



## Learning to Swim!

# MAY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Meetings 6:30 p.m. Education Committee 7:45 p.m. Ethical Action Committee	<b>3</b> Submissions close for 2012 One-Act Playwriting Contest	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>*6</b> 11:00 a.m. <i>End the Death Penalty</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 7:00PM - Intro to Ethical Humanism Hugh Taft-Morales, et al.	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <i>Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty Meeting</i> 7:00pm	<b>9</b> Meetings 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee 7:30 p.m. Community Committee	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>*13</b> 11:00 a.m. <i>Franklin and Rush: Humane and Progressive Thinking from Phila- delphia's Past</i> Ron Avery	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Wordly Wisdom 7:00PM <i>Arabian Nights and Ghanian Folklore</i> David Roberts & Sharon Wallis	<b>16</b> Meeting 6:30 p.m. EHSOP Board	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
11:00 AM <b>*20</b> <i>Meaning of Membership</i> Hugh Taft-Morales Following Platform: Annual Membership Mtg, and Service Auction 7:00 p.m. - <i>The Day the Universe Changed #9</i>	<b>21</b> 7:00 PM Politics of Sexual Oppression Jill McDevitt	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Meeting 7:00 p.m. Camp Linden Meeting	<b>24</b>  Amnesty International 7:00 p.m.	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>*27</b> 11:00 a.m. <i>Members' Remarks - Why We Are Members</i>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>JUNE 1</b> 6:00 PM <i>Execute Art, Not People</i>	

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

1 - Jim Cummings

1 - Felicia Hinson

3 - Judith Katherine Will

7 - Nick Sanders

7 - Pat McGeever

11 - Rick Zorger

12 - George Bunk

14 - Marta Guttenberg

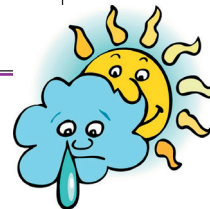
15 - Marion Steininger, Ph.D.

21 - Ethel Boyer

28 - Robert Kay

28 - Gian Polizzi

30 - Carl Bailey



\*Child care provided  
during all platforms

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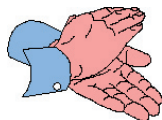
**Ethical Humanist Society  
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**SUNDAY  
MORNING  
VOLUNTEERS**

**Flower Dedications - David Ralston,  
Coordinator**



May 6 - Carol Love:  
"In celebration of  
the 11th anniversary  
of Carol Love and  
Marvin Friedman's  
partnership"

May 13 - Linda  
Richardson: "My  
family birthdays!!"

May 20 - T.B.A.

May 27 - T.B.A.

**Ushers - Betsy Lightbourn, Coordinator**

May 6  
May 13 - T.B.A.  
May 20 -  
May 27 -



**Greeters - Ken Greiff, Coordinator**

May 6  
May 13 - T.B.A.  
May 20 -  
May 27 -



**Coffee Hour Lunch Cleanup**

May 6 - Group F-K  
May 13 - Group L-O  
May 20 - Group P-Z  
May 27 - Group A-E



***Ethical Humanist Society  
of Philadelphia***

1906 South Rittenhouse Square  
Philadelphia, PA 19103