



Ethical Views



May 2015 Vol. 129, No. 9 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

Sunday Platforms May 2015



If you wish childcare during Sunday Platforms, please notify Nick Sanders at nick@phillyethics.org or 215-662-5636 by the previous Thursday at 5:00 P.M. He will notify you by noon Saturday whether arrangements are in place.

May 3, 11:00 A.M. *Teaching Good: Praxis, praxis, praxis* Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia



Today crumbling neighborhoods, budget cuts, overwhelmed teachers, and “teaching to the test” hamper our educational system and put our nation at risk. In the 19th Century

many reformers saw public education as the best way to create a just society. In founding Ethical Culture, Felix Adler put education at its heart. Embracing aspects of Rousseau, Froebel, and Dewey, Ethical Culture supported innovation and created free public kindergartens and the Workingman’s School. To help students and society flourish today, Hugh Taft-Morales suggests we emphasize some important elements of Ethical Humanism’s approach to education: faith in the natural goodness of children, and “praxis,” an educational theory emphasizing the continuous cycle of reflection and action-testing theories by applying them to the social and civic world.

May 10, 11:00 A.M. *Creating Community as We Grow Older* Beth Baker, Writer on Aging Issues and member, Washington Ethical Society

In her new book, *With a Little Help from Our Friends—Creating Community as We Grow Older*, WES member Beth Baker found Felix Adler’s “ethical manifold” alive and well in some unusual places: trailer park cooperatives, artist colonies, co-housing communities, households of friends and many others. In her platform Beth will show how Adler’s “organic ideal” of interdependence is demonstrated by people creating alternative ways to live their next chapter.

Beth Baker is a long-time freelance writer with a special interest in aging issues. Her work has appeared in dozens of publications, among them the *Washington Post*, *AARP Bulletin*, and *Ms. Magazine*. She is also the Features Editor for *BioScience*, the journal of the American Institute of Biological Sciences. She has been a hospital worker, a hospice volunteer and a family caregiver.



May 17, 11:00 A.M. *Poems and Songs of Witness and Provocation* Bernardine Watson, Poet, and Beth Palubinsky, Singer, Song Stylist

“Tryin’ times is what the world is talking about. We got confusion all over the land.”

These lines are from the song *Tryin’ Times*, sung by Roberta Flack in 1969. Bernardine Watson and Beth

Palubinsky remember the 1960’s, and their involvement in the movements to secure freedom, peace and equality for all people. Today when they pick up the paper, turn on the television or radio news, or just walk around their neighborhoods, they see that these battles still have to be fought. 2014 was not a good year for freedom, peace or equality. But the year’s many discouraging events inspired them to raise their voices once again.

They believe they have a responsibility as artists to bear witness to and testify about the trying times we all live in today. They hope that the words and music they share will move the audience and provoke at least some of them to open their eyes a bit wider, see the needs in the world more clearly, and consider Flack’s question: “Whatcha gonna do?”

Bernardine (Dine) Watson is a writer who lives in Washington DC. She is a member of Writing the Body, a poetry workshop in Takoma, Md. and teaches poetry writing at Arts for Our Children in Washington. Dine is a member of the DC African American Women’s Giving Circle and serves on the board of the DC Rape Crisis Center.

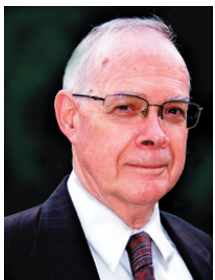


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President's Message

Should we compensate our board members?

Nick Sanders

Later this month at our annual Members' Meeting, we will engage in the democratic process of electing our lay leadership and voting on organizational changes. This is the one time in the year when we gather to hear reports on the various activities of the Society, choose members for the Society's Board of Trustees, and decide on any proposed changes in the Society's rules for conducting its financial and other responsibilities. I encourage attendance by every member.

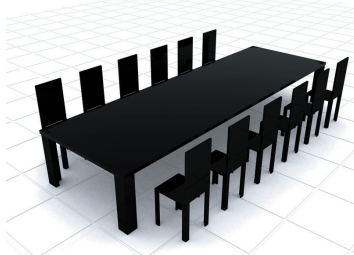
I will focus on the Members' Meeting business of electing Board members, because I think that Society members can consider this meeting an opportunity to understand more about the structure underlying the Society's activities, as well as a way of expressing their respect and appreciation for what responsibilities the Board members take on.

You should know that when the Nominating Committee members approach people they believe have characteristics that would be valuable for the Board of Trustees, they have had difficulty in getting these EHSOP members to be willing to serve. But I have wondered: What if the Ethical Society paid the people who take responsibility for governing the Society and setting its agenda? Would members be more willing to take on the positions? Would it provide a more age-diverse and economically varied lay leadership? And would it maybe even attract qualified people to Society membership in anticipation of taking on such jobs?

Don't get me wrong... People who have stepped forward are certainly coping with the issues at hand. But maybe there are those who could be motivated by being paid to take more time and use skills to make us thrive!

However, I am not being serious about paying Board members. We really could not find the money in our already cash-strapped organization. But by bringing up the issue of pay, I mean to raise the question of what motivation there is for a member to serve on our Board of Trustees—especially since some qualified members are unwilling to do so.

My solution: a Society membership that 1) tries to better understand what Board members do; 2) expresses knowledgeable appreciation for what they do; and 3) pitches in to help them do their jobs by providing extra hands in committee work and other calls for support. These alternatives may not be as useful as money, but they are better than nothing, and may even motivate more members to serve when asked.



Here are the current volunteer, lay-leader, Board members who keep me thinking that my volunteering as an officer / board member and in some Society activities is worthwhile:

- Bob Bueding, a first-term Board member who is also the coordinator of the Collier Room Art Gallery, a frequent Sunday morning host, and can be seen welcoming guests and serving refreshments at special events such as the concert series *Music at Ethical*.
- Jeffrey Dubb, 'President Emeritus,' currently is the Society's secretary and representative to the Board for the Community Committee (where he is chairperson). Jeffrey has served in all of the Society's officer positions. He also took on major management tasks in the 2010 and 2014 Administrator transitions, and kept Camp Linden functioning during the leadership crisis in 2010. His wisdom and

willingness to voice reasonable but sometimes unpopular positions in Board discussions will surely be missed when he retires from the Board in June.

- Marta Guttenberg, finishing a two-year term on the Board, is the representative to the Board for the Ethical Action Committee, member of the Education Committee and the Society's generally acknowledged 'recycling/composting advisor.'
- Betsy Lightbourn is also completing a two-year term as a Board member. She is the representative to the Board for the Education Committee (where she is the chairperson). Betsy is the person most responsible for the planning and communications that provide our Sunday morning platforms on the Sundays when Hugh is not present. She is also the person who videotapes the platforms of Hugh and some of our guest presenters, so that they can be added to our web-based library for later viewing.
- John McCormick is a first-term Board member who is co-chairperson of the important Fund Raising Task Force, which conducted the pledge drive and will be working on other projects during the year.
- Garry O'Rourke is currently Society Vice-President and Chairperson of the Building Committee, which is responsible for identifying and prioritizing ongoing repair needs and building improvement projects. Garry is a dedicated advocate for our building's soundness and appearance, and has personally financed projects that he believed were especially important.
- Sally Redlener is a first-term Board member who has for several years been the coordinator and producer of the Service Auction, which

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provides opportunities for us to build stronger relationships among Society members and friends, as well as raising money for the Society.

- Linda Richardson has served several terms on the Society's Board over the years, one of which recently was as the Society's treasurer. Linda draws on her extensive experience in fund raising and in the African-American community to advise the Board on related matters.
- Leonard Weeks is currently the Society's treasurer and the representative to the Board for the Camp Linden Committee (which he chairs). As treasurer, Leonard has provided the Board with insightful analyses and easily-

understood presentations of our financial status. His role in Camp Linden activities goes far beyond holding committee meetings, providing much of the management of the summer camp for children from economically-disadvantaged neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Leonard will be retiring from the Treasurer's job and from the Board in June. He will definitely be missed.

I am omitting from this list our Leader, Hugh Taft-Morales—who is an ex-officio member of the Board—because he is not an unpaid volunteer. But I do want to acknowledge his calm and insightful participation in our discussions and decisions. He adds contextual information on the history

and philosophy of the Ethical Culture movement to our discussions of Society business, as well as relating how matters are being addressed currently in other Ethical Societies.

Although some may think of the annual members' meetings as ho-hum affairs, those of us in leadership positions see members' attendance and participation as supportive of our efforts. So, come and 'compensate' your Society's Board members by attending our membership meeting and supporting the work of the Society.

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Platforms (Continued from page 1)

Beth Palubinsky is a life-cycle celebrant, composing and officiating at personalized ceremonies for couples, individuals and organizations. Formerly a practicing attorney and development professional, she serves on the board of Senior LAW Center in Philadelphia. Her late parents, Joe and Jessie Zelnick, were long-time PES members.



May 24, 11:00 A.M. ***Why College Education Should be Education in Virtue*** **Barry Schwartz, Professor of Psychology, Swarthmore College**

Liberal arts education is under attack, as it grows ever more expensive and its graduates face ever more precarious employment prospects. Its proponents defend it as a way to "teach people how to think," though it is not clear exactly what that means. Schwartz offers a different defense. Liberal education, if done well, nurtures in people a set of intellectual virtues that make them

good employees, good people, and good citizens. In this talk, he will describe some of these intellectual virtues, and explain why they are essential, especially now.

Barry Schwartz is a Professor of Psychology at Swarthmore College, where he has taught since 1971. He has written *The Battle for Human Nature* (1986), *The Costs of Living* (1994), *The Paradox of Choice* (2004), and *Practical Wisdom* (2010, with Kenneth Sharpe), and has given talks at TED that have been viewed by about 10 million people.

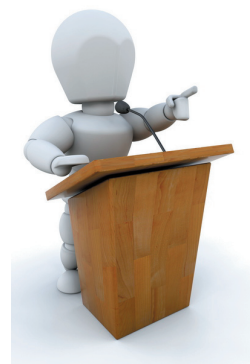


May 31, 2015, 11:00 A.M. ***Ethical Ministry: Some Autobiographical Lessons*** **Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia**

As we bring our program year to a close at the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia, Leader Hugh Taft-Morales reflects on his path into

"ethical ministry." Drawing on his life story, Hugh explores the unique joys and challenges of this exciting and humbling work. Why does any Ethical Humanist try to live up to practically unreachable ethical ideals? How can an Ethical Humanist Leader best work with an Ethical Society to nurture goodness in a wounded, cynical world? What personal transformation does it require of us all?

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Happenings

POWER March for \$15 Minimum Wage

April 4, 2015



Photographs by Betsy Lightbourn



Quote-Unquote

"Quiet as it's kept, there were no marigolds in the fall of 1941. We thought, at the time, that it was because Pecola was having her father's baby that the marigolds did not grow."

-Opening lines of Toni Morrison's first novel,
The Bluest Eye, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970

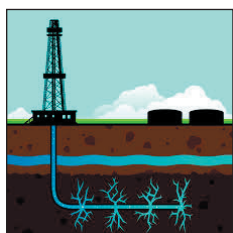


Announcements



SATURDAY, MAY 2, 11:59 PM:
SUBMISSIONS CLOSE TO
EHSOP PLAY CONTEST

Last day to submit your play script for consideration in our fifth annual one-act play writing contest. If you'd rather help with the reading and judging of the plays, please contact Pat McGeever at patethical@gmail.com.



Sunday, May 3,
1:30 PM

Fracking **Discussion Group**

HTM moderating

If you have opinions, come and discuss them. Our Ethical Action Committee has been involved with groups wanting to abolish "fracking" in the Marcellus Shale and members are concerned about transport of oil and gas via a proposed pipe line or via trains in our city directed to the refinery in Marcus Hook.



Sunday, May 3, 7:00 PM

Introduction to Ethical Humanism

Hugh Taft-Morales

Come enjoy the last **Introduction to Ethical Humanism** of the program season, with wine and cheese! Visitors new to the Ethical Society are encouraged to attend. Please RSVP to leaderhugh@phillyethics.org.

Monday, May 4, 7:30 PM

Bioethics without God

Obamacare, Health Care Mandates
and Rationing

with

Dr. Nicholas G. Evans



Dr. Evans is a Postdoctoral Fellow in Advanced Biomedical Ethics, University of Pennsylvania, and the evening will be hosted by Hugh Taft-Morales.

Is the Affordable Care Act good in principle? How do we balance health care mandates and personal autonomy? Should individuals be required to have health care and receive inoculations? Do people have an ethical or legal responsibility to stay healthy? How much government rationing and regulation should there be of medicines and organs for transplant? Should the government defend "ownership" of life forms or genetic codes?



Thursday, May 21, 7:00 PM
**WORLDLY WISDOM
BOOK GROUP**

Book TBA

Sunday, May 31, 12:15 PM

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

ANNUAL
MEMBERSHIP
MEETING

We will close out our program season at our Annual membership meeting, right after Platform on May 31. Real members attend the annual meeting! Show up as a sign of support for your hard-working Board members.

Sunday, May 31, 4:00 PM

Ethics on the Square

and

Paul Halpern

present:

Einstein's Dice and Schrödinger's Cat: How Two Great Minds Battled Quantum Randomness to Create a Unified Theory of Physics

Co-sponsored by the Freethought Society, the Humanist Association of Greater Philadelphia, and the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia.

Albert Einstein dedicated the final decades of his life to a fruitless search for unification. Even on his deathbed, he asked for pencil and paper in a vain attempt to complete his calculations. Less familiar, but similarly intriguing, are the efforts of Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger to solve the same riddle and beat Einstein, with whom he had collaborated, to the answer. The relationship between the two extraordinary physicists offers a riveting tale about a deep friendship challenged by the temptations of scientific glory.



Paul Halpern is Professor of Physics at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. A prolific author, he has written more than a dozen science

books and numerous articles. His interests range from space, time and higher dimensions to cultural aspects of science. The recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, Fulbright Scholarship, and an Athenaeum Literary Award, he has appeared on the History Channel and the Discovery Channel. Free and open to the public!



The annual Service Auction continues!

Sally Redlener, co-ordinator and producer of our annual fund-raising auction, reports that a number of opportunities are still available. To sign up, you may conveniently call her at: [215.964.9861](tel:215.964.9861) or email her at: sredlener@comcast.net.

- Ice cream social and parlor games
- Mutter Museum guided tour
- Motorcycle ride and picnic
- Swimming lessons
- Aquarium, Academy of Natural Sciences and Philadelphia Museum of Art tours
- Phillies tickets
- Animal care and dog walking
- Uptown theatre tour and lunch
- Tacos galore
- Canoe Carnival
- Boat ride on Schuylkill followed by Mexican dinner
- Sing-along with Hugh
- Limericks and other poems
- Therapeutic conversation
- Brandywine Museum and picnic
- Movie at Roxy, ice cream at Capogiro
- Four Fridays Film Festival and light dinner
- Christmas caroling & cocktails
- Rental cottage in Ludlow, VT.

*what is a mother?
by anonymous*

*a mother is someone who loves you,
who cares for you in every way
she sits down and listens
to what you have to say*

*she always thinks you're beautiful
never puts you down
she always has a smile
to wipe away your frown*


*a mother is someone who believes in you
always pushes you to go far
tells you to believe in yourself
no matter who you are*

*a mother is like an angel
although without the wings
she tells you to enjoy
life's very smallest things*

*i really love my mother
she means so much to me
mommy i really love you
and that's how it always will be.*



May 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 MIDNIGHT Submissions end for Play- writing Contest Pat McGeever
3 11:00 AM <i>Teaching Good: Praxis</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 1:30 PM -Fracking Discussion Group - H. Taft-Morales	4 7:30 PM Godless Bioethics: Obamacare, etc. HTM, Nicholas Evans	5	6 Meetings 6:30 p.m. Education Committee 7:45 p.m. Ethical Action Committee	7	8	9
10 11:00 AM <i>Creating Community as We Grow Older</i> Beth Baker	11	12	13 Meetings 5:30 p.m. Finance Committee 7:00 p.m. Communications Cmte.	14 6:30 PM Hearing Loss Assn. Center City Philly Pat McGeever	15	16
17 11:00 AM <i>Poems/Songs of Witness/ Provocation</i> Watson, Palubinsky	18 7:00 p.m.	19	20 Meeting 7:00 p.m. Board of Trustees	21 7:00 PM Worldly Wisdom Terry Martin Murley	22	23
24 11:00 AM <i>College Education Should Be in Virtue</i> Barry Schwartz	25	26	27 Meeting 6:45p.m. Camp Linden Committee	28 7:00 PM  Amnesty International Ron Coburn.	29	30
31 11:00 a.m.- <i>Ethical Ministry: Autobiographical Lessons</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 12:30 PM Annual Membership Meeting - EHSOP 4:00 PM Einstein's Dice and Schrodinger's Cat Paul Halpern						

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Jim Cummings
- 7 Pat McGeever
- 7 Nick Sanders
- 14 Marta Guttenberg
- 20 Doris Dabrowski
- 21 Ethel Boyer
- 28 Bob Kay



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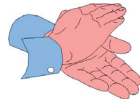
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Sally Redlener
Linda Richardson

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SUNDAY SERVICES



**Hosts - Coordinated by
Leslie Williams**

May 3- Sylvia Metzler and Vince
Russo

May 10 - Garry O'Rourke and Linda
Richardson

May 17- Henry Pashkow and John
McCormick

May 24 - Janet Cooke and Mike
Black-Smith

May 31 - Arnold and Temma Fishman



**Flowers Coordinated
by David Ralston**

May 3 - Nick Sanders, "Happy
Birthday to my dear wife, Molly!"

May 10 - Sally Redlener (see poem
on page 7.

May 17- Betsy Lightbourn, "To
EHSoP, may we continue to flourish!"

May 24 - Janet Cooke, "To my
grandson Karsten Bessonette and my
granddaughter Lena Rae Mathews."

May 31 - Pat McGeever, "Relishing
the dark quiet before dawn."



Coffee Hour Coordinators

May 3 - John McCormick

May 10 - Ken Greiff

May 17 - Garry O'Rourke

May 24 - Harry Thorn

May 31 - TBA

***Ethical Humanist Society
of Philadelphia***

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