

Ethical Views

March 2016

Vol. 130, No. 7 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

MARCH 13TH



SPRING AHEAD

Sunday Platforms

Ethical education classes for 5 to 12 year olds during Platform on first and last Sundays of the month.

Sunday, March 6, 11:00 AM

Democracy Spring in a Corporate World

Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia



This spring a coalition of groups is organizing a mass protest against money in politics stretching from Philadelphia to Washington, D.C. Beginning with an

April 2 rally at the Liberty Bell, a group of citizens will walk to the U.S. Capitol to demand change and engage in a week of education, press events, and civil disobedience. Does this have any chance at all to challenge the vested moneyed interests? What does history tell us? Is this really springtime for democracy, or are we just fooling ourselves?

Sunday, March 13, 11:00 AM
(Rescheduled from Jan. 24)

Moving from Intention to Action
Ami Dar, Executive Director of Idealist.org

Every day many of us would like to respond in some way to what's happening around us, but for a variety of reasons we don't. Think how many times you've felt this way. Now multiply that by every person who can recognize this feeling, and we are talking about millions of missed opportunities for action and collaboration every day. In his address, Ami will talk about how we can close this gap between intention and action, locally and globally.



Ami Dar is the founder and executive director of Idealist.org. Launched in 1996, Idealist has become one of the most popular nonprofit resources on the Web, connecting 100,000 organizations around the world with two million people every month. Ami was born in Jerusalem, grew up in Peru and Mexico, and lives in New York.

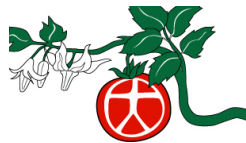
connecting 100,000 organizations around the world with two million people every month. Ami was born in Jerusalem, grew up in Peru and Mexico, and lives in New York.

Sunday, March 20, 11:00 AM

Spring Festival: Planting Seeds

Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

What might we grow? Come to our annual festival celebrating the spring equinox by helping plant some seeds for the future! What skills and talents lie dormant in our membership that you think need an opportunity to blossom? What ideas for programs at the Ethical Society would you like to see grow? How could you contribute to our programs? Together, let's cultivate Ethical Culture!



Sunday, March 27, 11:00 AM

Refugees of the Syrian Civil War – Who They Are and How to Help
Renata Alkurdi

The U.N. predicts that there will be 4.7 million registered refugees by the end of this year. The plight of the Syrian refugees is undeniably the worst humanitarian crisis of our time, with no end in sight. Renata Alkurdi will discuss the ongoing struggles of the Syrian refugees, what has motivated her to help, the history of the Narenj Tree Foundation, and ways others can

help those who have witnessed and experienced horror and tragedy beyond the imagination.



Renata Alkurdi is a Polish-born convert to Islam. She and her Syrian husband, Nizar, came to the United States 30

years ago. In November 2013, when they realized that the conflict in Syria would not be resolved quickly, they knew they had to act. They began to collect warm clothing and blankets from friends and neighbors to send to Syrian refugees. Little did they know that so many would be moved to help that after two years (and 30 containers shipped) they would be running a full-fledged 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.



Quote-Unquote

No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

— Nelson Mandela,
The Long Walk to Freedom

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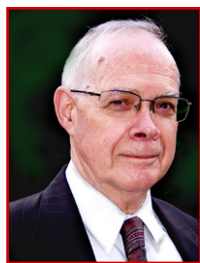
4 - 6 Announcements

7 - Calendar; March Birthdays

8 - Sunday Services



President's Message



Who's Minding the Store?

Nick Sanders

When I began graduate school in psychology ('way back) in 1962, I had the good fortune to be able to take a history of psychology course with Karl Dallenbach, a professor who knew firsthand much of that history. Professor Dallenbach was full of pithy sayings, and one that has stuck with me was, "Old theories never die. Their supporters do."

Professor Dallenbach's saying about psychological theories dying only when their supporters die stuck with me because I think it applies more generally in human endeavors – not only in science. That is very much the notion of those who have applied Darwinian evolutionary theory to the life and death of ideas. So long as there are people propounding an idea, it has a life. Those ideas with many proponents provide a stronger base for the spread of the idea. So I think we might agree that Ethical Humanism would become more viable as others come to voice and act on an Ethical Humanist orientation to life.

However, I am not proposing that we become evangelical about our Ethical Humanism. Instead I would like to add an element to the life-sustaining bases of ideas: the value of recording our ideas for continued reference. These recordings then become an important part of our "store" of ideas.

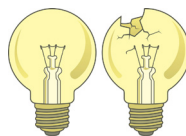
When I began to become familiar with our Ethical Society's store of ideas, I was surprised. In the basement in card-

board boxes, some with broken sides, there were copies of formal-looking publications of Society addresses and essays from the late 1800s and early 1900s. Then, from those early 1900s until the 1990s, I was not able to locate any Society newsletters or other publications. In addition, when I was the organization's treasurer, I was able to find only a few important organizational documents and financial records that were more than ten years in the past. I still have not been able to locate the deed to our property at 1906!

I don't believe that this is unusual when an organization operates with few staff members and some dedicated volunteers, and turnover is every five to ten years or so. However, it does imply a depleted "store" of ideas and a more ephemeral organizational history.

Now I am not saying that there has been no attention to "minding our store" at our Society. Indeed, there are impressive examples that I have seen of efforts to develop our store. Jill Leeds Rivera, a member when I joined in 2003, took it on herself to document and otherwise organize about 30 archive-like containers for papers of, and communications between, our early Leaders, prominent members, and others in (what was called then) the Ethical Culture Movement. Also, drawing on some of these materials and other sources, current Education Committee Chairperson Betsy Lightbourn has produced accounts of aspects of our Society's history, most recently as a guest columnist in the September 2015 issue of this newsletter. (<http://www.phillyethics.org/newsletters/ev15-09.pdf>).

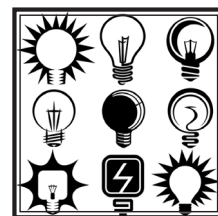
Another example is relatively new member Eric Clausen who has provided the financial and other motivational impetus to our engaging the Historical Society of Philadelphia to provide a more professional archiving of



the materials that Rivera formerly organized, plus others that Richard Kiniry and Betsy Lightbourn have identified.

Further, as our Society continues to produce ideas, there are two members who are taking advantage of technological developments to build our store. Betsy Lightbourn (again) adds by making Leader Hugh's and others' platform presentations available to all via YouTube, with links from our website. And member Vince McKenna has guided us to use a Google service to nonprofits that gives Society members the capability to record for the foreseeable future what has been going on in committees and among members.

These and other members who step up to keep our Ethical Humanist messages and organizational records alive and available deserve the gratitude of all of us. A good way to show your gratitude is by joining in. We all are encouraged as members to suggest, with a willingness to implement, other ways of building our Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia store. Ethical Humanism grows when we grow. We can each be minding the store in our own way.



By way of wrapping up, I want to point out that one very important way to maintain our store is by providing the organizational

support. This time I am not talking about financial support. I am talking now about your time and talents. Like almost all ongoing human endeavors, Ethical Humanism here in Philadelphia has an organizational structure that provides a base of operations for our additions to our Society's store. That structure is our staff, our committees, and – most important from the perspective of our existence as a legal entity – a board of

(Continued next page)



trustees. People's time and talent are needed to maintain that structure. As time for our annual members' meeting approaches, I hope that members will consider what of their time and talents might help maintain this structure. We welcome engagement by non-members as well. Talk with me, Hugh, or others who are currently active, about your interests in minding our store.



Happenings

**EHSOP Member Sylvia Metzler
Receives the 2016 Mandela Award
from the Bernadette Marie Cronin
and Lawrence Geller Social Justice
Fund**

**Ronald Coburn interviews Sylvia
Metzler**

Last year this social justice fund bestowed its first annual Mandela Award upon the "Cuban Five." This year it decided to honor a local individual who is "marching for justice," and chose our own Sylvia Metzler, who accepted the award at the Society's platform on February 7.



EHSOP member Sylvia Metzler (second right) was presented with the 2016 Mandela Award for her lifelong career of "marching for justice" by Lawrence Geller (far left) and Bernadette Marie Cronin Geller (far right) at the Society on Feb 7. Leader Hugh Taft-Morales (2nd left). Photo by Betsy Lightbourn

Born in Lancaster, Pa., Sylvia moved to Upper Darby, Pa., during elementary school and attended public schools there. She received her Registered Nurse Diploma at Lankenau Hospital School of Nursing,

married, had three children, and divorced. Later in life she earned her Master of Science in Nursing degree at Yale University School of Nursing and worked as a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) for the next 25 years. She lived and worked as a volunteer FNP in Managua, Nicaragua, from 1989 to 1991. In 1992 she moved to her present home in the Kensington section of North Philadelphia.

In interviewing Sylvia, I asked her how her activism and world view had developed. Who had influenced her the most?

First, she listed her mother who was involved in politics and community organizing. Sylvia's values were also influenced by her father, a union organizer and activist. During the Vietnam War her Presbyterian pastor and his wife led her to anti-war activism. She describes the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. as a turning point in her life. Attending a Quaker biracial study group led to lifelong anti-racism work. A five year job at Eagleville Hospital, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center, was another life changing experience, working with people of different races, religions and sexual preferences. Living and working in Nicaragua for two years led to Sylvia's lifelong interest in and commitment to the people of Central America. Lastly, living and working in Norris Square, North Philadelphia, for the past 20 years has been an incredible insight into poverty, racism and classism.

Sylvia has worked with many activist organizations and for many causes:

- An early Plowshares anti-militarization and nuclear weapons protest in Norristown, alongside the Berrigan brothers.
- Numerous anti-war demonstrations where she was involved with civil disobedience.

- Racial justice work in Norristown aimed at integrating schools and protesting police violence.
- Fair Housing Council of Delaware Valley, working to stop housing discrimination and redlining.
- Montgomery County Citizens Concerned About Central America and Pledge of Resistance, to stop U.S. aid to the Contras in Nicaragua.
- Co-chair of Philadelphia Medicines for Nicaragua, (MedNica), which provides medications, salaries and supplies to the clinic in Managua where she had volunteered. Sylvia visits Nicaragua almost yearly.
- Board member of Norris Square Neighborhood Project, which provides an after school program and develops and maintains gardens and other green spaces.
- Catholic Worker Free Clinic: Volunteers one night per week as a Nurse Practitioner.
- Food & Water Watch, an environmental group working to stop "fracking."
- Health Care for All Philadelphia, working for a single payer, Medicare for All health care plan.
- Brandywine Peace Community, working to stop drone warfare, nuclear weapons and war.
- Planned Parenthood: Volunteer patient escort.
- Anti-Racism Committee member of POWER, (Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild, of which EHSOP is a member congregation).

(Continued next page)

- Member of the Ethical Action Committee of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia.

"A good head and a good heart," Nelson Mandela observed, "are always a formidable combination." We're delighted to see the award that bears his name honoring that



Sylvia is arrested for obstructing the entrance to the Philadelphia District Attorney's office while protesting the high rate of calls for the death penalty by DA Lynne Abraham and her staff.

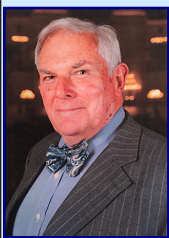


Sylvia protests the Iraq War outside the White House during George W. Bush's presidency.

Announcements

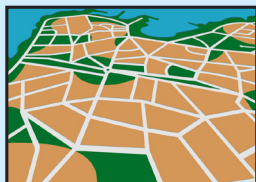
Monday, March 7, 7:00 PM

Capitalism in Crisis: Sustainable Urban Planning in the Face of Shrinking Government Spending



Explore economics and urban planning with Alex Garvin, President and CEO of AGA Public Realm Strategists, Inc., a planning and design firm in New York City. Garvin created the master plan of Atlanta's proposed greenbelt park system, the Atlanta BeltLine, devised New York City's 2012 Olympic Games bid, and oversaw redevelopment efforts with the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation after the September 11th attacks. What can Philadelphians learn from these experiences?

Over the last 45 years Mr. Garvin has held prominent positions in five New York City administrations, including Deputy Commissioner of Housing and City Planning Commissioner. Mr. Garvin is Adjunct Professor of



Urban Planning and Management at Yale University. He is author of numerous books, including *The American City: What Works, What Doesn't*, winner of the 1996 American Institute of Architects book award in urbanism; *The Planning Game: Lessons from Great Cities*; and *What Makes A Great City*, which will be released this fall.

Event co-sponsored by the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia, the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia, the Haub School of Business at St. Joseph's University, and the Fox School of Business at Temple University.



Introduction to Ethical Humanism

March 6, 7:00 PM

Leader Hugh Taft-Morales discusses the history and philosophy of Ethical Humanism. Open to the public, but please RSVP to:

leaderhugh@phillyethics.org.



Thursday, March 10
6:30 PM

Hearing Loss Assn. of America meeting

Details to be announced.
For up-to-date information
please contact Steve
Bremner:

stevebremner@fastmail.fm



Summer Sundays

We Need Your Help

Deadline: Tuesday, March 15

Betsy Lightbourn, Education Committee Chair

Here at the Society, summer Sundays, June through August, offer a change of pace. While most of our platforms during the year offer stimulating talks followed by dialogue, summers offer an opportunity to try different formats and to showcase members' interests and skills. Most Sundays, we offer variants on either informal discussions or meditative sessions, but once or twice we offer special programs such as musical productions and plays. With the exception of Hugh's Sundays, these are all member led or produced, and without a budget. All programs take place at 1906 S. Rittenhouse Square during our usual platform time, between 11:00 AM and noon, followed by coffee and cookies. (Please note, we have decided to maintain an 11:00 AM start time all year rather than moving an hour earlier during the summer).

*If you would like to lead a program – discussion or colloquy, (meditative, with a format ready to go for beginners), or other format please email Betsy Lightbourn, Education Committee Chair, by **Tuesday, March 15** at elisalight726@gmail.com*



Rollin Wilber writes:

We had a great turnout for MUSIC AT ETHICAL's Russian Music Salon given on February 7: nearly 100 people attended! Thanks to you all who were a part of that.

Editor's note: And thanks to music critic Tom Purdom for a positive review! See <http://www.broadstreetreview.com/music/philadelphia-chamber-ensemble-and-fine-art-music-company>

OUR NEXT CONCERT WILL BE AS FASCINATING TO SEE AS IT IS TO HEAR! *Sunday, March 13 at 3:00 PM, MUSIC AT ETHICAL (fostered jointly by Fine Art Music Company and the Ethical Society) will present:*

A MUSICAL ODE TO EARTH - A Special Tribute in Classical Music

This stimulating concert will have a theatrical nature, creating an evocative mood to expand the listening experience. Its theme was sparked by the remarkable new composition, *Pale Blue Dot*, a stirring work for string quartet by Philadelphia composer David Ludwig, who was inspired by a famous photograph of earth of the same title, taken by the *Voyager I* space probe at 6 billion miles away, 25 years ago.

A second and highly dynamic work will be *Vox Balaenae (Voice of the Whale)*, by world-renowned composer, George Crumb. It is utterly haunting, and an experience to watch!

The concert will also be performed the night before, **Saturday, March 12, 8:00 PM, at Ivy Hall, 6331 Lancaster Ave, 19151, (2½ blocks east of City Ave).** *There is free, easy street parking right near the location, with drop-off capability at the front door.*

New lowered admission: \$25/general; \$20/seniors; \$15 students and EHSOP members.

Tickets and all details at: www.FineArtMusicCompany.com



Pale Blue Dot is a photograph that Carl Sagan persuaded NASA to have Voyager 1 take. It shows looking back toward the "pale blue dot" Earth.

NASA/JPL



Sunday, March 20, 7:00-9:00 PM

Ethical Folk Night

Come for EHSOP's first Ethical Folk Night! Hugh Taft-Morales is contributing his best musical talents for this concert fundraiser for our Camp Linden Children's Camp program. He is seeking people to contribute beverages and light refreshments and show up from 7:00-9:00 PM on Sunday, March 20. Hugh will be singing his favorite songs (most you will never have heard before) as well as his own compositions. March 20 is Hugh's birthday, and playing for you the music he loves is his present to himself. Your gift will be your showing up for the price of admission, a suggested donation of \$10. Come for the joy of music, the fun of community, and the love of Camp Linden!

***** A note about our Music At Ethical April 16 & 17 concerts, ARMENIA'S ARK OF MUSIC. Please consider acquiring tickets early, as this very specialized event may sell out.***

***What's Your Experience
with the
Philadelphia Justice System?***



*As part of
our work
with our
interfaith
coalition
POWER,
we are
seeking*

*individuals for confidential conversations about your experience with the justice system, whether it involves being detained, arrested, prosecuted, or sentenced. Have you or close friends or family members had significant experiences with the police? Are you willing to speak with **Kate, Sylvia, or Hugh** about your experience? The goal is to gather ideas for how to improve police-community relations in Philadelphia.*



Create, Nurture, and Inspire Ethical Communities!
Attend the AEU Lay Leadership Summer School
August 13-20, 2016 in North Carolina

Summer School provides a special opportunity for committed Ethical Humanists to strengthen skills, share ideas and ideals, and broaden inter-Society connections. The intensive weeklong program offers many learning opportunities. Ethical Culture talks focus on our religious, philosophical and organizational history. Congregational development presentations and practice sessions help you strengthen your interpersonal and leadership skills. All activities let you get to know one another, learn about other Societies, and have fun!

Our program helps participants:

- understand organizational dynamics and community development
- gain the tools to be more creative and effective agents for positive change
- practice leadership skills in small-group settings
- deepen their understanding of the history, ideas and development of Ethical Culture
- build Ethical Societies faithful to our tradition yet flexible enough to meet present and future challenges
- experiment with creating authentic and inspiring ceremonies



Our wonderful staff includes: Jan Broughton, AEU Board President and member Ethical Humanist Society of the Triangle (NC); Mary Herman, Ethical Culture Leader; Diane Kirschner, Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture; Paulo Ribeiro, Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County; Ken Novak, Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago; and your own Hugh Taft-Morales! If you are interested in this opportunity, speak to Hugh or any EHSOP board member.

DEMOCRACY SPRING – Sit In with Thousands!

– Save Democracy for Millions!

*Endorsed by the American Ethical Union
and over 80 other organizations*



This April in Washington, D.C., we will demand that Congress take immediate action to end the corruption of big money in our politics, and ensure free and fair elections in which every American has an equal voice. It will be **one of the largest civil disobedience actions in a generation.**

The campaign will begin on Saturday, April 2, with a rally at the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, followed by a march to Washington, D.C., where thousands will gather to reclaim the U.S. Capitol in a powerful, peaceful, and massive week of sit-ins that no one can ignore. Almost 2,000 people, including celebrities and respected public figures, have already pledged to risk arrest between April 11-16. Together we will open the door to reforms previously considered impossible, and reclaim our democracy. Join us! www.DemocracySpring.org

March 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Meetings 5:30p.m. Finance Committee 6:30 p.m. Education Committee	3	4	5
6 11:00a.m. <i>Democracy Spring in a Corporate World</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 7:00 p.m. <i>Intro to Ethical Humanism</i> Hugh Taft-Morales	7 7:00 p.m. Capitalism in Crisis: Sustainable Urban Planning	8	9 Meeting 6:30p.m. Ethical Action Committee	10 6:30p.m. HLAA Center City S Bremner	11	12
13 11:00 a.m. <i>Moving from Intention to Action</i> Ami Dar 3:00 p.m. Musical at Ethical: A Musical Ode to Earth	14	15 Deadline for Summer Sundays	16 Meeting 7:00 p.m. EHSoP Board of Trustees	17	18	19
20 11:00 a.m. <i>Spring Festival: Planting Seeds</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 7:00 p.m. <i>Ethical Folk Night</i> Fundraiser for Camp Linden	21	22	23 Meeting 7:00 p.m. Camp Linden Committee	24  7:00PM Amnesty Intl. Ron Coburn	25	26
27 11:00 a.m. <i>Refugees of the Syrian Civil War</i> Renata Alkurdi	28	29	30	31		



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

4 James Cooke
 4 Terry Martin-Murley
 9 Garry O'Rourke
 20 Vince McKenna
 20 Hugh Taft-Morales
 23 Susan D'Alessio
 26 Ruth Ann Dubb
 28 John Marshall



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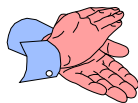
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(215) 735 - 3456
office@phillyethics.org
www.phillyethics.org



SUNDAY SERVICES

**Hosts Coordinated
by Lelah Marie**



Thanks to our January hosts Ken Greiff, Lelah Marie, Garry O'Rourke, Elisabeth Leonard, John Marshall (twice), Paul Lux, Harry Thorn, and Don Munson.



**Flowers Coordinated
by David Ralston**

March 6 - John McCormick, "In
memory of Bill McCormick"

March 13 - Garry O'Rourke, "The
coming of spring"

March 20 - Sandy and Bill Coffey,
"To winter's passing"

March 27 - Jeffrey Dubb, "Happy
birthday Ruthann"



Coffee Hour Coordinators

March 6- John Marshall
March 13 - Ken Greiff
March 20 - Garry O'Rourke
March 27 - Harry Thorn

***Ethical Humanist Society
of Philadelphia***

1906 South Rittenhouse Square
Philadelphia, PA 19103