

Ethical Views

February 2002

Vol. 116, No. 6

Newsletter of the Philadelphia Et

Sunday, February 3
Colloquy: Character

<u>Platform</u>: Richard Kiniry, Leader, Philadelphia Ethical Society

Love and the

Morality of Patriotism

Understanding love is complicated. It is naive to imagine that the feeling of love is always positive. Attachment to another person or a nation can be healthy or a sickness. Can patriotism tell us something about love in general?

Sunday, February 10 <u>Colloquy</u>: *Children*

Platform: Craig R. Eisendrath,

Ph.D., Senior Fellow,

Center for International Policy

After September:

Vision of a Humane Foreign Policy

Dr. Eisendrath will present an outline of the kind of foreign policy the United States could follow which would recognize the humanity of people around the world. He will suggest that the United States would be better able to meet crisis in the future if the U.N. had a ready deployment force, if there were a standing international criminal court, if the U.S. actively pursued international arms control, if we contributed our share to world economic development and if we joined other countries in upholding international standards for human rights.

Craig Eisendrath is Senior Fellow at the Center for International Policy, Washington, DC, a former foreign service officer with the Department of State, Co-Author of The Phantom Defense: America's Pursuit of the Star Wars Illusion (Praeger 2001) and

(Temple University Press, 2001).

Sunday, February 17
Colloquy: Community
Platform: Love Festival

Friends and members celebrate love

through music and poetry.

At a Window

Give me hunger,
O you gods that sit and give
The world its orders.
Give me hunger, pain and want,
Shut me out with shame and failure
From your doors of gold and fame,
Give me your shabbiest, weariest hunger!
But leave me a little love,
A voice to speak to me in the day end,
A hand to touch me in the dark room
Breaking the long loneliness.
In the dusk of day-shapes
Blurring the sunset,
One little wandering, western star
Thrust our from the changing shores of

Let me go to the window Watch there the day-shapes of dusk And wait and know the coming Of a little love.

- Carl Sandburg

shadow.

Sunday, February 24
Colloquy: Conduct
Platform: Dr. Arthur Freeman,
Department of Psychology,
College of Osteopathic Medicine
New and Unorthodox Families

Colloquies at 9:45 AM
Platforms at 11:00 AM
Coffee Hour and discussion

Musical Interludes performe Pianist Jeremy Gill Childcare provided at no ch

Leader's Message

Enjoying Life

Richard Kiniry

Recently I called a friend at 11: The phone rang a long time picking it up my friend informed had been in the bathtub. In the 11:00 AM? How indulgent, reminded me again how dive world is. Not everyone is living to five schedule. It also reminded the tyranny of excepted behavior to bed, early to rise makes healthy, wealthy and wise.

Getting out of bed early is noble. The expectation is, we jump out of bed with gusto or drag ourselves out of bed at th of the alarm. So, if your secret is lying in bed and dawdling the good part of the morning, it is pleasure you tend to keep to yo

I come from a family with appreciation of the bed. Besid activities that we are often too perform in bed, staying in bed well passed the standard sevone-half hours is a beloved to My father got out of bed at 6:3 weekday all his life but his clock disappeared on we holidays and vacations. He snooze happily until nine or te morning and then spend at least reading the paper over a least reading the paper over a least fast before doing a few of

accused of being over-achievers.

If for the moment, I avoid making a judgmental choice between layabouts and go-getters, I can wonder why we >

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School for Ethics Introduction to Ethical Humanism

Every Ethical Society has a history, but is also part of a 125-year-old humanist religious tradition. This workshop is an introduction to that history and tradition. Although intended for curious newcomers, visitors and ty members are also invited to partici-pate. The workshop involves participants in a collaborative inquiry into the philosophy, spirituality and social theory of Ethical Humanism. Using Eight Commitments of Ethical Culture, we will clarify the principles of intrinsic worth, naturalism, non-theism and ethics C 1 . C

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Leader's Message

Enjoying Life

make energetic people the model for our best and brightest. Sure, our economy depends on keeping that model of energetic go-getters front and center, but can't we also appreciate the benefits derived from those who move slow enough to notice and enjoy the smaller parts of life. Watching paint dry may not be an especially useful activity but watching the color change as it drys can be interesting. Sitting on a park bench noticing how the shadows move and the cast of characters change can be lovely and great fun.

Who declared that the meaning of life is to grab hold of it with gusto and make the most of it? I know I've said that a few times although it certainly isn't a description of my behavior. It is the tyranny of "one size fits all". It's great we have energetic people running around starting new projects and reinventing the world, but I hope we can also take some time to appreciate those of us who are primarily just trying to enjoy living.

Presidents Report

Philadelphia

Arnold Fishman

I was born and raised in Philadelphia and never much thought about how great it is - it was just the place where I lived. As a child we did not travel far from home, which was the norm only half a century ago. It was not until after college at Temple University, still in Philadelphia, when I joined the Army and was stationed at Fort Knox in Louisville, Kentucky, that I had any reason to think about our city. After the service I returned home for a while but soon married and entered Rutgers Law School in Camden. At that point we moved to Camden County and finally to

suburbs of the city as are of Montgomery, or Bucks Cour Pennsylvania.

Since those early days I har fortunate to have had the oppor increase the size of my world have been as far north as Svalbard, south to Brazil, east t and Japan and west to the Ga Islands and Alaska. (As I wi we are readying for a trip Zealand and Tahiti - my present from Temma. We traveling west, but since we w the International Date Line, I sure whether it is east or wes digress.) While I am no compet Fromer's Travel Guide, I qualified to make some observa

Those who know me know my of to food. I love to eat, and systomach to prove it. We have some of the top eateries aroworld. The restaurants in Phila are second to none. The ambiance, service and good funparalled in my experience Pat's Steaks to Le Bec Feverything in between, our city to beat. We can even out-famed McDonalds. A hot, well Philadelphia soft pretzel smothey yellow mustard is ready to go a

guaranteed to both fill you up a you heartburn.

Having toured, albeit in w fashion, both the Louvre in France and the Prado in Madrid I can state that our museums at class. Center City shopping is e only by Chicago's Miracle Entertainment on the Avenue Arts and elsewhere, while comparable to London and Ne is improving. Major and mino sports franchises abound, a colleges feature some of the rivelring. The Feedles were the

most exciting football game I have ever seen. As of this writing, they are still alive in the playoffs.*

Recently we moved into the city and attended Gay Bingo, held at the YMHA at Broad and Pine. It was a fun-filled and interesting Saturday night. Tickets were inexpensive and hard to come by. The attendants were costumed and on roller skates. The master of ceremonies was witty and very shapely in a tight fitting, skimpy, but fashionable dressnot bad for a guy. All the money raised goes to combating AIDS; in addition to having a good time, you are doing good. There were ten in our group, but no winners. We were assured, however, you didn't have to be gay to win.

The next day after the platform, we toured the new Kimmel Center, which was open for the public to explore. Verizon Assembly Hall, the main auditorium in the facility, is made

entirely of wood and is shaped like a cello. There are no poles and not a bad seat in the house. The roof garden is completely enclosed by a magnificent curved glass ceiling. As imposing as it is from the street, it is even more so from the inside. The view of the city in all directions was spectacular on that bright and sunny Sunday. The following week, I chaperoned a group of high school students to the

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Education Committee Report

Perspectives

Temma Fishman, Chair

Diedré R. Farmbry, Chief Academic Officer of the School District of Philadelphia spoke on the topic *In Search of the Middle Path of Right Perception*. The School District serves two hundred, fourteen thousand children in two hundred, sixty-four schools,

taught by two thousand teacher children speak at least seventy selanguages and dialects and are nonwhite. Seventy percent as low income families.

Dr. Farmbry's philosophy is su up in a line from her poem, L "The potential for change reside me." Dr. Farmbry seeks the of "supermarket prophets and not just politicians and educ balance between common-se pedagogy. We expect school safe havens in unsafe neighbor and to be able to run a Ca system on Hyundai funds. Dr. 1 recalled a time when Mom home and involved in the Ho School Association. Lessons a reinforced those at school and were integrated. Today's k home alone. Homework compe video games, cable TV and p jobs. Neighbors and family are and less likely to protect kids. suffer from diminishing public Traditional methods don't m needs of today's kids who are to weapons, drugs and HIV. T questions and are unwill compromise their right to know of today's students are parents

We need more responsive scho need high expectations. Childs to be prepared for college workplace yet entry level posit closed to many kids. Budge remained flat while enrollm grown. Dr. Farmbry's wish list more special placements, Satur summer programs, an extende fifty-three thousand dollars n classroom, more computers in and one in every home. The v are victimized, while official politics with education. We mu help needy students. Public edu the last hope for society. We m to ask the right questions. V inform and lobby for the ina

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President's Message

Philadelphia

Martin Luther King Concert sponsored by the Camden County Bar Foundation and got an opportunity to attend properly. The soprano accompanied by the Philadelphia Orchestra was thrilling and the acoustics were superb. The room actually gets tuned. After the intermission, we watched from the seats behind the stage. It was novel to see the orchestra from the rear and to look at the conductor's face. I saw members Bertha Waters and Carol Love; the PES was well represented. When they played Finlandia I was tempted to rise and sing.

On New Year's Eve we attended First Night 2002 in Haddonfield. For a small price we purchased a badge which permitted us to attend all of the dozen or so events. They varied from ice sculpture to gospel singers, from a puppet show to the cello society, from Brazilian jazz to percussion, and from a ventriloquist to Celtic singers. All were within walking distance of each other, with complementary parking and a free bus for the faint of heart. There were ten in our party again, and we all met for Chinese food before it started. It ended with watching fireworks over the town clock at midnight. We at the PES are fortunate to have such a setting in which to live, as we work to bring out our best.

*Since we will be traveling, I will miss the remaining games. If the Eagles get to the Super Boyd, please tape the game for me. GO FACLES!!!

exercise our authority to bring it about.

Pine boughs festooned the windows of the auditorium and draped the ceiling. Poinsettias blazed. This was no ordinary platform, this was our Winter Solstice Celebration. Members and friends filed into the brightly lit room. At the appointed moment, the lights went out and a beloved tradition saw yet another year. Senior member Gladys Huber rose to light the first candle. A soft golden glow transformed the room as members and friends quietly lit the hundred more. Magic, once again! Readings by Buddha, Robert Frost, Albert Camus, Dave Barry and Felix Adler inspired and made us laugh. We sang Winter Wonderland with gusto. Pianist Jeremy Gill and visiting French Horn player Meryl Koenig offered hauntingly rich musical fare to satisfy the spirit. Following their last magnificent piece we climbed the stairs to share a delicious lunch where we welcomed newcomers and reveled in community.

We celebrated the lives of departed friends and family at *Memorial Sunday*. Leader Richard Kiniry reminded us of our place in the web of relationships that binds us. The dead have left their mark on our lives; we talk and argue with them still; they are alive within us. We accept that death is a part of life.

We remembered Vince Boyer, his love for his family and for his profession. He so enjoyed engineering that a cross country car trip once took Ethel and their two young daughters from one electrical substation to the next. He served in the Navy and had a very >

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Education Committee Report

Perspectives

Cross volunteer, an avid golfer and loved to build and make repairs. He and Ethel were extraordinary dancers. They would dance at Society socials then roll up their sleeves and wash the dishes. His passions and talents for making the world a better place were lovingly remembered.

We honored dear friend and member Joe Zelnick, who brightened our lives with witty observations and jokes. Once an elementary school teacher and later a professor of education at Rutgers State University, Joe revered learning. He was an activist who loved people and, with wife Jessie, had a long and honorable career picketing marching for justice. He expected us to speak up and act bravely in the service of humanity. Jessie remarked that he would have railed against this present war, opposing capitalism and the shredding of human rights. Quoting their daughter Beth, Jessie read, "The barbarians are still at the gates and now we have to fight them off without you."

Bertha Waters honored generations of women in her family from her great grandmother, who was born into slavery, to her grandchildren. Dr. Carol Love remembered her many departed friends once active at the Society. Zarethra Story and Carol Kaufmann each read poems they had written. As each of us spoke, we placed a rose in a bowl. By the end of the platform, the bowl of roses was full. Jessie chose the closing words, "Something eternal is

Ethical Society members and friends are encouraged to suggest topics and/or speakers for evening forums. Contact any member of the Ethical Action Committee or the Education Committee. Evening forums are a way for the Society to present issues of importance to

revealed in everything. We be the oneness from which we have en

Dr. Roger Allen, Professor of University of Pennsylvania, p *Plurality in the Countr Northwest Africa*. Dr. Allen out that Americans need to lea more about the Arab per understand >

the causes of terrorism. "If hurnot bad, something must have terribly wrong." The first exe European power in Algeria can 1830's when a long period of colonial occupation began. The closed Arabic schools and of that all must use the French lad An underground resistance modern immediately went to work. The the long and bloody civil conflict War of A Million Martyrs," "Battle of Algiers." Islamic were major participants.

Most of the educated popular Berber, French and Arabic. Ac publish in French because the pay 100% of costs. The citizenr about their identity - amidst biases and multiple allegiance are concerned with how to ope world of multi-cultural languages. Dr. Allen thinks the the United States must g international perspective if w survive. As he said, "A der without an educated popu dangerous." He advised aga attitude of provincialism typifie southern senator who decla English was good enough for Je good enough for me." W consider Algeria's radicalized population. We must think ab role in Saudi Arabia and our ve appetite for gas. The countries Africa - Morocco, Tunisia and A serve as models of plurality. Th learned to negotiate with man of different faiths.

Call the Chairs to enlist.

Coffee Hour Hosts

Harry Thorn, Chair

February 3 Jessie Zelnick

February 10 Lew Wilkinson

February 17 Ruth Ann Dubb

February 24 Temma Fishman

Flower Dedications

Selma Toth, Chair

February 3 - Temma Fishman, in honor of the birthday of her husband Arnold.

February 10 - Carol Kaufmann, in memory of her husband Howard Lee Kaufmann.

February 17 - Jill Leeds Rivera, in honor of Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

February 24 - Ethel Boyer, in memory of her parents Morris and Hilda Wolf.

Greeters

Susan Jo Klein, Chair

February 3 Betsy Lightbourn

February 10 Susan Jo Klein

February 17 Jeffrey Dubb

February 24 Cherin Silver

Coffee Hour Edibles

February 3 Howard Peer &

Doris Leicher

February 10 TBA

February 17 Jean Bradley

February 24 Susan Jo Klein

Ushers

Rick Zorger, Head Usher with help from Richard Kiniry & Arnold Fishman

Ethical The



Ethical Action Committee

Opportunities to Serve

The January shelter dinner was a deliciously spicy vegan meal of red, yellow and green chili with rice and salad cooked by Zoray Godwin and C Silver. Zoray and Harry Thorn served.

Part of what brings us together as a humanist organization is the opport to help those less fortunate. Can you spare a few hours? Your cosreimbursed and you will be paired with at least one person who has don before. Can't cook? You can always help with serving. For those da by cooking for 23 men, we have simple recipes that you can prepare it Ethical Society kitchen. Please call Cherin Silver to take part.

Annual Ethical Society Service Auction Friday, February 15 at 7 PM

This is an important fundraising event for us and we urge everyor participate. Last year we raised nearly \$2,000 and, just as important provided a lot of fun and bonding experiences for our members friends. Special thanks to Jean Bradley, Mary Lou da Silva, the Duthe Fishmans, Nancy Freilich, Zoray Godwin, Susan Jo Klein, Elightbourn and Dale Drews, Carol Love, Cherin Silver and A Richardson and Bertha Waters who contributed their special service brought so many of us together.

This year we are hoping for even greater participation with members volunteering services and more purchases being mad would be particularly great if more of our male members would volu their services. Remember, that the out-of-pocket costs of the service provide are tax deductible.

Can't think of a service to provide? It doesn't have to be a party. about leading a hike and providing the coffee and snacks? Car bake? Wash cars? Walk dogs? Feed cats while their humans are a Be someone's kitchen assistant for a party? None of these appears you? Call Jeff Dubb, Carol Love or Cherin Silver and we will help

e of the Sacred

Report by Cherin Silver

Dr. Joseph W. Devlin, Professor of Religion at LaSalle University presented an evening forum at the Ethical Society entitled Must Modernity be Secular? Islam, Terrorism and the Ambivalence of the Sacred. The forum was attended by our members as well as by many people who were coming to an Ethical Society program for the first time. Dr. Devlin's thoughtful speech, which raised many questions, generated significant interest among those who attended, most of whom stayed to continue the discussion.

What is the relationship between Islam and terrorism, or more broadly between religion and terrorism? Dr. Devlin noted that Islam, at least in certain areas of the middle east, has not gone through a period of rational questioning, or enlightenment, as have Judaism and Christianity. suggested that the bombing of the World Trade Center could be seen as less of an attack on the United States than of an attempt to reinforce or protect a set of religious principals that have not been questioned by rational thought. Dr. Devlin believes that by dialogue, particularly between religious groups, rational questioning is fostered, and hence tolerance is initiated. Dr. Devlin described the United States as a nation of religious seekers in which many individuals explore various religions sequentially, seeking one which will meet their spiritual needs. Through a kind of cross-fertilization caused by this seeking behavior we have achieved a high degree of religious tolerance compared to most other areas of the world.

as printed in the Philadelphia Inquirer Sunday, January 20, 2002

To the Editor:

During these frightening and difficult times we remember the "be community" that Martin Luther King strived throughout his life to creat people of all races and all nations. Such a community can best be creat ways consistent with the nonviolence and love of all people he advocate King said, "Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, an nation..." In these days when race is so often divided against race and it is divided against nation we will remember the words of Dr. King.

- Dale Drews, Philadelphia Ethical Society

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Editor and Layout, Jean Bradley

### Philadelphia Ethical Society Richard Kiniry, Leader

Board of Trustees Arnold Fishman, Esq., President Cherin Silver, Esq., Vice President Jeffrey Dubb, MD, Treasurer Howard Peer, Secretary Temma Fishman Susan Jo Klein Betsy Lightbourn Angela Mills, MD Irene Putzer Lew Wilkinson

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Philadelphia Ethical Society Philadelphia, PA 19103

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## Remembering Joe

Camp Linden. The Camp is a longterm project and I couldn't possibly count how many times Joe and Jessie were there to work - nearly every Saturday for weeks on end, year after year. Now the Camp operates five days a week over the Summer, bringing hundreds of inner-city kids to the country. But back then, it was rough and frustrating. We never had enough money and there was way too much to do. Joe would mow our two acres of field with a power push mower. He'd start almost the moment he arrived and wouldn't quit. Thank goodness we finally got a rider mower; Joe loved it. He was good with tools and machines knew how to keep them working. He helped in each and every building project while Jessie, Richard and Saul ran the once-a-week kids program.

That was when I first met their grandson Ben - then ten years old or so. I told him and Joe to not pick the

wildflowers. That got Ben's m and Jessie a bit annoyed w They got over it after a year o

So, speaking for the frier members of the Philadelphia Society - We will remember man who loved us and, as a ma we loved. We will miss him.

### You Can Help

Our Book Drive for the chi parents and teacher of the F Morris Elementary School is successful and worthwhile

The books and magazines w enjoyed and used by readers of all ages.

Contributions can be left in th whenever you visit the Soc

Thank you for your sup

## 1906 South Rittenhouse Square

### **Defining the Good Life**

A monthly discussion about the choices we make. We will discuss big issues like racism, sexism and the environment but also more personal issues like lifestyle choices. will do this within the context of the Ethical

Humanist point of view - an understanding that defining values is an ongoing process. Each month we will have focus on one topic. Participants can offer subjects for upcoming meetings



# Remembering Joe Zelnick

Jean Bradley

I met Jessie and Joe Zelnick 12 years ago at the Society. What I remember most about Joe was his warmth and friendliness. He welcomed all newcomers to the Society; sitting with them, talking, listening, never pushy. Joe was smart and interested in so many things that he was never at a loss for words. So when a new friend walked away from the conversation, he or she always felt liked and entertained, if not educated.

Joe is one of the very few I've met who was able to successfully negotiate Robert's Rules of Order. He taught both me and Saul how to better chair meetings.

Joe endeared himself to us by his willingness to work. Heaven knows he could be stubborn though. When we painted our Assembly Room, Joe thought it was unnecessary to pre-wash the walls, and downright stupid to use oil-based paint as our architects advised. He said he wasn't going to help, but he did anyway.

Joe was quite active with the Ethical Action Committee. His outreach work expressed his abiding love for children. tutored students and teachers' aides at the Robert Morris Elementary School. The book drive for the children, parents and teachers of the school continues to this day. One year Joe, nearly singlehandedly, took two classes to the Myrick Conservation Center. In an article he later wrote for our newsletter, he praised the students and the program. Joe loved to see

### The Ground Beneath Her Feet

by Salman Rushdie

The world is irreconcilable, it doesn't add up, but if we cannot agree with our that it does, we can't make judgements or choices. We can't live.

When Ormus Cama saw his vision, he revealed himself to be a true prophet, say this as a dyed-in-the-wool unbeliever. I mean: he was genuinely ahead time. We've all caught up now. He isn't here to see them, but the contradi in the real have become so glaring, so inescapable, that we're all learning to them in our stride. We go to bed thinking - just a random example - that Mr M— or Mr. G— A— is a notorious terrorist, and wake up hailing him as the of his people. One day the islanders inhabiting a particular cold wet lugodforsaken rock are vile devil worshipers swigging blood and sacrificing babinext day it's as if nothing of the sort ever occurred. The leaders of whole convanish as if they never were, they're miraculously erased from the record, and they pop up again as talk show hosts or pizza pluggers, and lo!, they're back history books again.

Certain illnesses sweep across large communities, and then we learn that no illness ever existed. Men and women recover memories of having been see abused as children. Whoosh, no they don't, their parents are reinstated as the loving and laudable people you could imagine. Genocide occurs; no it do Nuclear waste contaminates large swathes of entire continents, and we all words like "half-life." But in a flash all the contamination has gone, you can heat your lamb chops.

The maps are wrong. Frontiers snake across disputed territory, bendin cracking. A road no longer goes where it went yesterday. A lake van Mountains rise and fall. Well-known books acquire different endings. Color our of black-and- white movies. Art is a hoax. Style is substance. The de embarrassing. There are no dead.

You're a sports fan but the rules are different every time you watch. You' a job! No you don't! That woman powered the President's johnson! In her d - she's a celebrated fantasist! You're a sex god! You're a sex pest! She's for! She's a slut! You don't have cancer! April fool, yes you do! That goo in Nigeria is a murderer! That murderer in Nigeria is a good man! That p killer is an American patriot! That American psycho is a patriot killer! And Pol Pot dying in the Angkoran jungle, or merely, Nol Not?

These things are bad for you: sex, high-rise buildings, chocolate, lack of ex dictatorship, racism! No, au contraire! Celibacy damages the brain, hig buildings bring us closer to god, test show that a bar of chocolate a day significant improves children's academic performance, exercise kills, tyranny is just a pour culture so I'll thank you to keep your cultural-imperialist ideas off my further fieldom, and as for racism, let's not get all preachy about this, it's better out open than under some grubby carpet. That extremist is a moderate! That unright is culturally specific! This circumcised woman is culturally happy! Aboriginal whistlecockery is culturally barbaric! Pictures don't lie! This image been faked! Free the press! Ban nosy journalists! The novel is dead! Ho dead! God is dead! Aargh, they're all alive, and they're coming after us! The is rising! No she's falling! We dined at pine! We dined at pine! You we

I especially remember Joe at > continued page 8