



# ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

VOLUME 34 NUMBER 4

Visit our web site: [www.essexethical.org](http://www.essexethical.org)

DECEMBER 2014

## SUNDAY PROGRAMS

Programs begin at 11 a.m. All are welcome. Programs are subject to change without notice. 973-763-1905

### **Dec. 7 Meredith Sue Willis: "Rediscovering Pearl S. Buck"**

Pearl S. Buck, the first American woman to win the Nobel Prize for literature, is little read today. Born in West Virginia to missionaries and raised in China (bilingual in Chinese and English), she not only introduced westerners to the intimate life of the Chinese people, she was also involved in many anti-racist and civil libertarian causes. This talk will tell some of her story and share the speaker's enthusiasms for some of Buck's best books. For a taste of Buck's China writing, take a look at the short story "The Old Demon" online at <http://www.meredithsuewillis.com/olddemon.pdf>.

Meredith Sue Willis is the author of 18 books of fiction and nonfiction. She is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Creative Writing, New York University, School of Professional Studies and a past president of the Ethical Culture Society of Essex County.

### **Dec. 14 Martha Gallahue: "Speed Deed and other Good Ideas from the American Ethical Union's Ethical Education Conference"**

Martha Gallahue will review the National American Ethical Union Ethical Education Conference she attended Nov. 9 in Stony Point, NY, and outline ideas she learned there that could benefit the Essex society in its efforts to build a local program. "Basically, we need to design programs that are active, integral and relevant to where we are today," she said.

### **Dec. 21 Colloquy on Gifts of the Season**

We are planning a family program sharing what we love most about the holidays — past and present. Everyone is invited to tell very briefly — or sing or read — a favorite memory or song or story about this time of the year, whether it be about Christmas or Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, or simply December! What makes one year's celebration more memorable than so many others? What makes us feel good? What do we treasure?

### **Dec. 28 Chase Harrison: "The State of US Secondary Education from a Student's Perspective"**

The US secondary education system is in a daunting period of overhaul, as America continues to fall in international education rankings. To combat this decline, the US federal government has used programs like No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top to bolster failing schools and produce accountability for teachers. Concurrently, the highly controversial Common Core State Standards are being phased into classrooms, bringing new standardized tests in their wake. On top of this all, there are major pushes to increase STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs in schools. Local school districts, teachers, and students are struggling to comply with these programs in the face of shrinking budgets. Millburn Board of Education member Chase Harrison, who is the youngest elected official in New Jersey history and a recent high school graduate, will examine the state of US secondary

education while presenting his experiences trying to help students adjust to these onerous reforms.

Chase Harrison currently serves on the Millburn Board of Education, a position he won last November. When elected, Chase was just 18, making him the youngest public elected official in New Jersey history. Chase has been on FOX Business, Eyewitness News, and in countless newspaper articles to discuss his election and education issues. Chase is also a champion debater and remains one of a handful of students to have appeared in the National Final Round multiple times. He is currently a freshman at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, NY, where he is studying International Relations.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### **In Person with Chef Jesse, Saturday, Dec. 6, 7-9:30 p.m.**



Demo with delicious Southern-style vegetarian and non-veg holiday fare (followed by eating!)

Fund raiser for the Ethical Culture Society. \$20 per person.

Limited capacity; first 15 accepted. Call the office to register: 973-763-1905, or email [ecsecnj@gmail.com](mailto:ecsecnj@gmail.com).

### **Folk Friday Dec. 12**

Sing-along and jam with friends, 7:30 p.m. second Friday of each month October through June, at the Society Building. Bring acoustic string and rhythm instruments, join in playing, singing or listening. Bring some

# Ethical Culture Society of Essex County

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Martha Gallahue, *Interim Leader*  
Boe Meyerson, *Leader Emerita*

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Zia Durani, *Vice President*  
H. "Gus" Lindquist, *Treasurer*  
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Elaine Durbach  
*Editor/Graphics:* Howard Gilman

#### Editor's Note

Newsletter articles, announcements, etc., not to exceed 150 words in length, must be received by the FIRST of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition. Submit items to: Howard Gilman, newsletter editor, preferably via email at: [gilman.howard@gmail.com](mailto:gilman.howard@gmail.com). Items can also be dropped off at 15 So. Pierson Rd., Maplewood; or, if you put something for the newsletter in the EC office's mail slot or in the mail, please give me a call at (973) 763-3914 to be sure I know about it, especially if your item is time-sensitive. — *Editor*

Editor reserves right to edit for length, clarity and content. Opinions offered in this publication are those of the authors.

...act so  
as to elicit  
the best  
in others  
and in  
ourselves

refreshments to share. Open to all, all ages, everyone is invited! [[novemsky@comcast.net](mailto:novemsky@comcast.net), (973) 763-8293]

#### Fall 2014 —

#### Community Supported Agriculture

ECSEC has arranged to be a drop-off point for an organic CSA initiative (community supported agriculture). For parents who are interested in hearing more about the School Lunch program, please call the office at 973-763-1905.

#### Rich Mullen's Tai Chi class

Unless otherwise noted, Rich will teach a class every Sunday at 9 am at The Ethical Culture Society of Essex County. All are welcome.

#### Ongoing Collections:

**Food Bank** — Please remember to bring canned or boxed food items for the food pantry box in our front hall. Donations go to the New Jersey Food Bank.

**Children's Books** — We accept children's books to be donated to the Parenting Center for children of need. Please contact the office at 973-763-1905.

## FROM THE AEU

### Remembering Howard Radest

The American Ethical Union mourns the death of Dr. Howard B. Radest, long-time Ethical Culture Leader and receiver of the 2011 Felix Adler Lifetime Achievement Award. He passed on the evening of Saturday, October 11. A graduate of Columbia University, Howard's doctoral dissertation was about



the educational philosophy of the founder of Ethical Culture, Felix Adler.

Howard lived a life of Humanism and was actively involved with the Ethical Culture Movement for over seven decades. Following graduation, he became the founding Leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County from 1956-1963. He was later the Executive Director of the American Ethical Union, the national federation of Ethical

Societies, and one of the Presidents of the International Humanist and Ethical Union. During his tenure as Executive Director his first book, "Toward Common Ground: The Story of the Ethical Societies in the United States," was published. He continued to write several books and articles on humanism, ethics, and Ethical Culture.

Howard served as Director of the Ethical Culture Schools, founded the Moral Education Center at Columbia University, was a founder and Dean of the Humanist Institute, a lecturer with Highlands Institute in North Carolina, a professor of medical ethics at South Carolina University, a senior fellow with the Institute for Humanist Studies, and Chairman of the Ethical Community Charter School in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Perhaps no other person has made a greater contribution to building and sustaining institutions within Ethical Culture and the Humanist world over the past half-century. All of us who cherish Ethical Culture are incalculably in his debt. Howard is survived by Rita, his wife, sons Rob and Michael, their wives, and numerous grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at the New York Society for Ethical Culture on Saturday, November 15th. Howard requested that in lieu of flowers, donations can be made to The Humanist Institute; write "The Rita Radest Scholarship Fund" in the memo field. Please mail to The Humanist Institute, PMB #220, 8014 Olson Memorial Highway, Golden Valley, MN 55437-4712 or visit [www.humanistinstitute.org](http://www.humanistinstitute.org).

### AEU Ethical Education Conference

#### "You Can't Spell DEED Without EE! — Creating a Dynamic Ethical Education Program"

The American Ethical Union sponsored a conference in collaboration with AEU Ethical Education Director Dale McGowan, Nov. 7 through Nov.9 at Stony Point Conference Center, Stony Point, NY. The weekend conference brought 12 Societies together all at different stages of ethical education development and offered something for everybody. One outstanding program that can be replicated anywhere was a Speed Deed program.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>December 2014</b>	1	2 Chair Yoga 11am–12 noon	3	4	5	6 In Person with Chef Jesse, 7–9:30 p.m. Fundraiser \$20 per person. Limited to 15. Call 973-763-1905, or email ecsecnj@gmail.com.
7 11am Meredith Sue Willis: "Rediscovering Pearl S. Buck"  12n Social Action	8	9 Chair Yoga 11am–12 noon	10 ECSEC Board Meeting 7:30 – 9pm	11	12 Folk Friday Sing-along and jam with friends 7:30 p.m.	13
14 11am Martha Gallahue: "Speed Deed and other Good Ideas from the American Ethical Union's Ethical Education Conference."	15	16 Chair Yoga 11am–12 noon	17	18	19	20
21 11am Colloquy on Gifts of the Season	22	23 Chair Yoga 11am–12 noon	24	25	26	27
28 11am Chase Harrison: "The State of US Secondary Education from a Student's Perspective"	29	30 Chair Yoga 11am–12 noon	31			

This hour long experience serves to highlight the rapidity and simplicity of putting deed before creed in ways that produce systems change in the larger world.

Parents, children, EE teachers, and Leaders made up the numbers of well over 40 participants. Martha Gallahue, Leader Member, represented Ethical Culture Society of Essex Country. She hopes that all those in our Society will join up with the national movement through a web tool called Podio where we can find ethical education resource materials including curricula for our seminal ethical education program.

### Humanists & Atheists Participate in Historic People's Climate March

*Sept. 22, 2014 · by Paul Chiariello*

**A**theists and Humanists care about social and environmental justice! A surprising statement for far too many Americans. There is only one way to change people's stereotypes. We're social animals. We're emotional beings. To show humanists and athe-

ists are more than cranky internet trolls or 'one issue voters' we need to get front and center. We need to organize as Humanists and atheists on social justice and environmental issues.

Most importantly we need to organize right alongside other faiths and religions, as we did today by joining the 'Interfaith' section of marchers. And that goes just as much for those that don't see Humanism or atheism as a 'religion' or aren't interested in dialogue and holding hands. We need to stand alongside interfaith groups in public events like the People's Climate March today – with well over 400,000 people attending and millions watching – because it makes salient the fact that we're on the same exact footing as these other religions and world views in terms of caring about these important issues. Religions don't have a monopoly on ethics and activism. If you want social justice, you don't have to join a church or temple. You can have and do all of this and be part of a Humanist or atheist community – like the one standing right there in front of you

and marching along with just as many voices shouting and signs waving.

A range of Humanist and atheist groups were represented at the People's Climate March. Banners, signs, and representatives came from a variety of groups. With so many Humanists and atheists, at least 300 by my and others' rough estimates, which was as many or more than most other religious groups, we were able to assert ourselves in interesting ways. For instance, before the march began, the entire interfaith section started singing "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Instead of opting out and standing there silent and awkward, dozens of non-theistic voices shouted in unison "We've Got the Whole World in Our Hands."

Throughout the march, I didn't over hear or hear about a single anti-religious shouting match or shocked dismissal of atheists belonging in such an event. Some issues are much bigger than the religions and world views we clump ourselves into. Today we showed we were able to overcome those differences and meet them head on.

# ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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**We continue to collect children's books, canned and boxed foods, and toys for distribution by the Parenting Center in Maplewood.**



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