



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

VOLUME 37 NUMBER 10

DECEMBER 2017

SUNDAY PROGRAMS

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

Dec 3 Dylan O’Byrne, “Active Pursuit and the Model Citizen”

WGS is a group that involves young people in community volunteering and anyone who encountered Dylan O’Byrne and his volunteers at the recent Fun Day in South Orange was impressed by how friendly and helpful these young guys were. Dylan will address the questions: what is the WGS, what it intends to accomplish, and how it goes about accomplishing those goals.

Dylan O’Byrne was born and raised in Wood-Ridge, NJ, by his mother and immigrant father. He attended Seton Hall University and liked the town so much, he purchased his first property in South Orange before his third year here. He currently financially advises for several clients, recently closed out an Event Management business, has intentions to purchase another property soon, works for the Teamsters, and helps to organize a large portion of the WGS.

Dec 10 Miriam Eisenstein Ebsworth, “Teaching Language as a Vehicle for Peace”

“**A**ctionthroughwords,” an online course for English learners, explores the work of the UN worldwide to promote peace, health, and understanding. Originally designed for adults, a group of high school English learners act as consultants and reflect on the content and affordances of technology.

Dr. Miriam Eisenstein Ebsworth, consultant in developing the site, is Director of PhD Programs in Multi-

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lingual Multicultural Studies at NYU Steinhardt, New York NY. She resides in South Orange NJ.

Dec 17 Amy Blake, Family Education

Joining us for the December Educational Initiative is Abbie Slatius. Ms. Slatius is a licensed social worker and currently serves as the Director of Counseling Services for Harlem Village Academy Elementary School. Ms. Slatius has worked with children from kindergarten through twelfth grade in public, charter, and private schools. Her work primarily focuses on supporting students, teachers, and families through the use of children’s literature and guiding the social emotional programming offered at her school. Ms. Slatius feels books open a door into authentic and honest communication, even for the most difficult topics, between children and the adults in their lives.

Ms. Slatius’s conversation will be based on her experiences in using children’s books to support the social emotional learning of students, particularly for kindergarten through fifth grade. Topics may include trauma, race and ethnicity, bullying, bereavement, natural disasters, and adoption.

Students will explore topics that are of importance to them through literature, music and crafts.

Dec 24 Colloquy on Faith and its different forms; with Phyllis Hackett and members and friends.

Dec 31 Sharon Goldman, “Music and Musings”

Singer and songwriter Sharon Goldman, who spoke and performed for us in October, returns for a pre-New Year musical meditation on how we

make the choices we make, and our aspirations for the year ahead.

Sharon Goldman is a New York-raised, New Jersey-based singer-songwriter whose “intense, insightful, vivid” storytelling is a “clinic in how to paint an indelible picture with the simplest images and symbols.”

Over several well-received albums, she has combined heartfelt portraits and memorable lyrics with unforgettable melodies and pure, precise, expressive vocals — taking a folk/pop sensibility to new artistic heights. She performs regularly at house concerts, folk coffeehouses, festivals, arts and cultural venues and community centers. Her latest album, “Kol Isha (A Woman’s Voice)”, offers a bold, unique song journey merging Jewish imagery, myth and memories with a modern, feminist perspective. She digs deep into memories of prayers and rituals; of roads not taken; and of voices not heard. She also mines the stories of biblical and mythical women for creative inspiration.

Sharon was recently honored with a Semi-Formal showcase spot at the 2017 Northeast Regional Folk Alliance conference. The songs from KOL ISHA were also honored with a finalist spot at the 2017 South Florida Folk Festival song writing competition and three Honorable Mentions at the 2017 Mid-Atlantic Songwriting Contest.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Folk Friday, Dec. 8, 7:30 pm

Sing along and jam. Bring acoustic string and rhythm instruments. Join in playing, singing or listening. Bring refreshments to share. 7:30 pm, second Fridays of the month through June. Everyone invited!

(continued on page 2)

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County

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www.essexethical.org



Jim White, *Leader Emeritus*
Zia Durrani, *President*
Jacqueline Herships, *Vice President*
Jeanine Rosh, *Treasurer*
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Elaine Durbach-Norstein
William Graves
Birgit Matzerath
Lisa Novemsky
Morris Silver
EC Monthly Programs Editor
Elaine Durbach
Editor/Graphics: Howard Gilman
Office Manager: Liz Cunningham
Office hours
Monday–Friday 8:15 to 9:45 am
Sunday 9:30 am to 12 pm

The Ethical Culture Society is a religious and educational fellowship that seeks to achieve the ethical life without dogma; to develop the highest values in human relationships in ourselves, our families, and our community; and to elicit the best in others, thereby eliciting the best in ourselves.

Ethical Culture is a Humanist Religion — Come and visit! Did you know that we perform weddings, baby namings and other humanist ceremonies? Call 973-763-1905

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

Editor reserves right to edit for length, clarity and content. Opinions offered in this publication are those of the authors. Newsletter items must be received by the eighth of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition. If you put something for the newsletter in the EC office's mail slot or in the mail, please also email or call me, especially if time-sensitive. Howard Gilman, newsletter editor: gilman.howard@gmail.com.
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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Our Ethical Culture Community, “Who We Are,” Sat., Dec. 9, 12 noon

Our Board of Trustees believes we can strengthen our bonds by meeting together to discuss and share “Who We Are.” This understanding could forge an even stronger connection as we grow our community, particularly as we nurture our Family Education Program and your other ideas.

Our first meeting will take place as a discussion and pot-luck lunch at our Society building on Saturday, December 9 at 12:00 noon. We welcome the participation of not only Members and Friends but others who also enjoy our community; please call Liz, our office administrator, 973-763-1905, to say you'll be there. By some “cosmic intervention,” we always seem to gather just the balance of foods we enjoy — no need to specify in advance.

For sharing “Who We Are,” some suggestions: your family, unique interests, Ethical Culture ideals that motivate and bring you here, anything you feel comfortable sharing, the meaningfulness you seek in your Life Journey. Our goal is coming to know one another at a deeper level.

Some members have already volunteered to arrive early to set up. We can always use additional help, especially to clean up afterwards. If you wish to volunteer, please phone me at 973-763-1033.

See you on December 9th. Good appetite and good discussing!

In Fellowship,

E. Betty Levin, Membership Co-chair

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

Nov. 5: Meredith Sue Willis, chair; E. Betty Levin; Diane Beeny, Peggy Toy; and Jackie Herships

This year's **coat collection** has begun: we collect clean coats, sweaters, hats, etc. for adults and children in a bag in the small sun room off the parlor that will go to Valley Settlement House.

We also did our October carding over two weeks (thanks Zia and MSW!) encouraging our congress people to **legislate funding** for the Children's Health Insurance Program

(CHIP) that ran out of funding as of 9-30-17. The update is that CHIP is still unfunded, with some states having money into 2018 and others due to run out by the end of 2017 or by March, 2018. However: at the beginning of November 2017 the House of Representatives passed a bill to fund CHIP — unfortunately by taking funds from other important social programs and from the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare). The Senate is unlikely to agree to this, and it is probable that an eventual deal on extended financing will be included as part of some huge year-end spending bill aimed at preventing a federal shutdown.

Our Card-of-the-Month for November to our Senators asks them to support legislation that funds CHIP — but not by “robbing Peter to pay Paul.” In other words, we need this program to be funded, but we need our other social programs as well.

Betty is looking for venues for her **Peace Workshops** for people from pre-school through adult, and would like suggestions and connections to people in schools or churches and synagogues.

Diane is working on getting a speaker and making a decorative sign for the Society building backyard declaring it a “**pollinator friendly**” space.

Jackie and Jeanine Rosh are getting information from various Green organizations on steps the Society can take now to **make us greener**.

Jackie also reminded us of the **mentoring program** the Minors told us about with older students in the SOMa district helping younger ones learn study skills and prepare for rigorous classes. Betty and Peggy are interested in talking to Mr. Minor about how our committee might support this initiative.

Please join us at our **next meetings**: 12/3/17, 1/7/18 and 2/4/18.

AMERICAN ETHICAL UNION NEWS

Increasing Inclusivity with “Know Your Neighbor”

Earlier this year, the American Ethical Union became part of *Know Your Neighbor* (KYN), a coalition of over 80 religious and humanist groups united in compassionate resistance against increasing polarization

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|---|
| 26 | 27 | 28 11 am - Chair Yoga | 29 | 30 | December 2017 | 1 2 |
| 3 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 11 am - Dylan O'Byrne, "Active Pursuit and the Model Citizen" 12 pm - Social Action Committee Meeting | 4 | 5 11 am - Chair Yoga | 6 | 7 | 8 Folk Friday, 7:30 pm | 9 12 pm - "Who We Are" Potluck and Sharing |
| 10 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 11 am - Miriam Eisenstein Ebsworth, "Teaching Language as a Vehicle for Peace" | 11 | 12 11 am - Chair Yoga | 13 1 pm - ECSEC Board Meeting | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 11 am - Amy Blake, Family Education | 18 | 19 11 am - Chair Yoga | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 11 am - Colloquy on Faith and its different forms | 25 | 26 11 am - Chair Yoga | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
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in America along political, religious, and cultural divisions. These problems exist not only in adult society, but among our children as well. Many children experience bullying and harassment because of their perceived race or religion.

To counter intolerance and bigotry in our schools, KYN members created a Back-To-School campaign for members to share resources for teachers, students and parents to help create more inclusive classrooms and schools. Some organizations shared their resources on social media, including curricula, lesson plans, materials, data points, and success stories. Educators shared videos on how they promote inclusive environments in their classrooms.

The ACLU shared information on the rights of immigrant, disabled, and

LGBT students. They also highlighted students' religious rights in public schools, an issue that is frequently misunderstood by many Americans and misrepresented in the media. While public schools are forbidden from attempts at religious indoctrination of their students, for example through school-sponsored prayer, students have the right to freely express and exercise their religious beliefs.

Individuals also shared videos, posts, tweets and images about how their lives have been affected by efforts toward inclusivity. Students shared what these efforts have meant to them or how they have been affected by non-inclusive environments. Parents shared their advice on how classrooms could be more inclusive for their children. One resource for teachers included a list of novels set in different

American religious communities, as a way for young people to connect with cultures different from their own.

To find even more resources from the campaign, go online and search for #KnowYourNeighbor. If you have resources to share, you can also post on your favorite social media site and use the same hashtag so others can find your post. You can also take part by sharing this campaign with educators in your community, so that they can make the most of these diverse resources. Together, we can build understanding across cultures and help to finally knit together the frayed fabric of our American communities. The kind of society we strive to create cannot exist without this bedrock, and we must all reach across cultural divisions if we are to achieve it.

[10/19/2017]

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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For information, call 973-763-1905; visit our web
site: www.essexethical.org; email: ecsec.nj@gmail.com

Collections: Please remember to bring canned or boxed food items for the
Food Pantry box in our front hall. Donations go to the NJ Food Bank.

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ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY NEWSLETTER · DECEMBER 2017



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