



ETHICAL CULTURE

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VOLUME 30 NUMBER 5

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JANUARY 2011

JANUARY PLATFORMS

Jan. 2: Elaine Bloom, "Finding Serenity in Today's Turbulent Times"

Elaine Bloom's talk will focus on finding contentment in a world that for decades has focused on materialism and acquisition. The economic downturn is forcing people to reconsider what really brings them joy. This might be more challenging than ever because of the uncertainties we face on a continual basis, but (as so many teachers have insisted) what we really need is within us, if we can learn how to access it. Bloom will talk about the different paths to fulfillment: through community, ritual, intuition, being in the moment, attitude and right language.

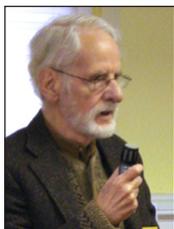


Elaine Bloom has a B.A. in history from N.Y.U. She worked in book publishing and advertising with a break to take a *kibbutz-ulpan* in Israel. She was president of Bloom & Co., Inc., publisher of special interest newspapers. She says that while working as a professional organizer for some very rich people, she saw first-hand just how little wealth had to do with happiness.

Jan. 9: Arthur Strock with Ed Bokert, "Applied Dreaming"

Dreams come from your heart in spite of their strange, scary and just plain weird content. Because life issues involve health, career, relationships and the spiritual, our dreams are addressing such issues right now. Arthur Strock will discuss how we can make sense out of the mishmash of our dreams. He will provide ideas about

how to change your dreams into valuable guides for living.



Ed Bokert

Arthur Strock is a founding charter member of the International Association for the Study of Dreams and writes the "Dreaming the Light of Insight" column for the "Dream Network" journal. He has introduced college and graduate students to dream work through his teaching as an assistant professor of psychology at Bloomfield College and the County College of Morris and as a presenter for the National Association of Social Workers in New Jersey.

Arthur lives in Warren County, overlooking Mountain Lake, an area, he says, that has also been a source of wonderful dreams. Some of his work can be accessed through the web site, livebyyourdreams.com.



Arthur Strock

Jan. 16: Paul and Gladys Konye, "African Americans Today: Advances and Setbacks"

As we honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Paul Konye and his wife, Gladys (formerly Smith and an ECS member), will be discussing the circumstances confronting African Americans in the current era, both positive and negative. They are planning to invite a panel of young people to join the discussion, to provide a perspective from those who have grown up in the wake of the civil rights movement, and are now dealing

with the education system and entering the work force.

Paul Konye is a musicologist, conductor, composer and violinist. Born in



Lagos, Nigeria, he collaborated and studied with many of Nigeria's foremost composers of African art music. His association with these composers, and with

many musical organizations and institutions, granted him a first-hand insight and interest in modern African art music.

Gladys Konye is a social worker, community activist and mother who visited Egypt last year in search of family roots and new insights into her African connections.



Jan. 23: Martha Gallahue, "Freedom the Ethical Culture Way"

Martha will discuss what freedom requires from us in today's times. Her remarks will begin with a brief commentary on Jonathan Franzen's novel *Freedom*. Her talk also alludes to the special contribution of Martin Luther King in his long walk to freedom in America.



About Franzen's book, Kwame Anthony Appiah wrote, "*Homo sapiens* is the only species that can regret its multiplication, and it often has cause to. Our

numbers include scapegraces, scoundrels, and unhinged hostage takers. But also the odd novelist who can tell you something about what it's like to be alive at a particular place and time, how it feels to be riven between closely

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



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Editor's note

The newsletter invites you to submit articles, announcements, commentary, etc. for publication. ITEMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE EIGHTH OF THE MONTH FOR INCLUSION IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH'S EDITION. Items should be no more than 150 words, preferably submitted via email to the editor (gilman.howard@gmail.com). Items can also be delivered to: Editor, Ethical Society Newsletter, 516 Prospect St., Maplewood, NJ 07040. Please call the office, 973-763-1905, and leave word especially if your item is time-sensitive.

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

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

Attention members! Please submit your email addresses to NEW! — info@essexethical.org to receive newsletter and other special event notices.

argued despair and unreasonable happiness. It almost gives you hope for the 'future fate of mankind'."

Jan. 30: Michele Hollow, "Blogging for the Greater Good of Animals"

Journalist Michele Hollow has covered all kinds of subjects but these days is most involved with writing an increasingly popular online blog called *Pet News and Views* (www.petnewsandviews.com). She has written about rescue animals, therapy dogs and wild horse roundups, pet care, animal welfare and the people who work with animals. She will share stories of blogging about animal welfare and the network of people of which she now finds herself a part.



Michele, who studied zoology at the Bronx Zoo, is listed as an expert at dogtime.com. She has written for *Cat Fancy*, *Dog Fancy*, *Pet Product News*, *Newsday*, *NY Times*, *NY Daily News*, as well as many other publications.

Her latest book is *The Everything Guide to Working with Animals* (Adams Media, 2009), which details first person accounts of what it is like to work with animals. She interviewed animal trainers, zoologists, veterinarians, vet techs, entomologists, animal rights activists, rescue workers and many more — even a makeup artist for animal movie actors.

Michele is the author of four children's books: two crafts books, a biography of the Grateful Dead and a book of animal jokes, riddles, and facts (coming out in 2011). She is a member of ASJA and co-founder of Professionals In Media.

Michele lives in South Orange with husband Steven, son Jordon and cat Earl Gray.

JANUARY EVENTS

The artwork — and its creation — of Jeffrey Hankanson, local dentist and sculptor, will be the focus January 15 of our **3rd Saturday Arts Night**, presenting a conversation with the artist of the evening and serving light refreshments in a salon-style setting in the anterooms of the foyer of the Society. All are

welcome. The event is free with donations accepted. — *Hilding "Gus" Lindquist*

Social Action Committee's next meeting will be Sunday, January 23, after platform.

Inspired by Martha Gallahue's speech, the Committee did carding to Senators Lautenberg and Menendez in support of the UN. If you haven't sent one, please consider doing it. Here is the language we used:

"We have just marked on Oct. 22, 2010 the 65th anniversary of the United Nations. We ask you to work in the United States Senate to support the UN and its commitment to promoting peace, development and human rights. The UN needs to do more, but its global mission to protect those caught up in armed conflict, to fight climate change and avert nuclear catastrophe, to increase opportunities for women and girls, and to combat injustice, should be enhanced and expanded." — *Meredith Sue Willis*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

January has always been a month of resolutions for new beginnings. Most of us try to get something right in the New Year. What we choose to do might not last long, but if we are choosing a healthier and better way to live, any length of time we do it is good.

If you have ever signed up for a health and fitness club in January, you know what I am talking about. One time while living in Alaska, I signed up for a club. In my first week I made an acquaintance at the club. We were both excited about our new resolve. We never met again until the first week of January in the next year.

In a more serious vein, we lost three life-long members in a short amount of time last year: Doris Rados, Jack Tiner, and Ted Seagull. The three of them contributed greatly to the Ethical Culture Society. To have the privilege of meeting their families and friends was an extraordinary experience — learning about the positive impact that our Society made in all of their lives — that can motivate us as we carry our own resolutions of renewal into the New Year.

For me this renewal follows an exciting fall



serving as your president while getting to know more members and seeing new faces returning on a regular basis. Let us enjoy ourselves while expanding our activities and welcoming the newcomers into our Society ... throughout ALL of 2011.

Happy New Year! & peace on earth for all. — *Anja Moen*

Memories of Ted Seagull

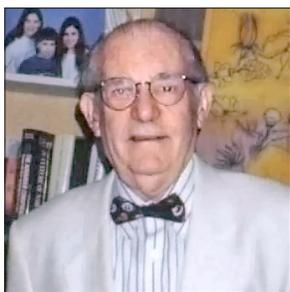
Ted was a humorous, kind, loving and very intelligent person, an accomplished wordsmith, known for his love of books and extraordinary ability to do crossword puzzles, even the Sunday NY Times!

We met right here at our own Ethical Culture Society at a party commemorating the time Joe Lebrecht es-

tablished our Essex Society. It was suggested we dress up in the fashions of the period (c. 1915), which appealed to my daughter, Wendy. She encouraged me to attend, and what a beneficent happenstance! Ted was recovering from hip surgery necessitated by a serious fall from a circus bicycle. He was pale, wan and clearly in pain when I encountered him leaning on both our podium and his cane. But his depth and articulateness showed through and I was smitten, interested in getting to know him better. I obtained his phone number from Suzanne Gluck who I knew had influenced him in attending that evening ("he was depressed and needed to get out of his apartment"). He seemed delighted by my call and said he planned to do the same. We started dating regularly, spent Thanksgiving weekend in the Poconos and progressed from there, having a "weekend marriage", getting together at my house every Wednesday and weekends, celebrating October 1 as our anniversary, the date we met at Ethical.

Ted attended Platforms and other ac-

tivities at Ethical with me quite regularly. Suddenly, he announced to me one day that he wanted to join as a member. I had never inquired or discussed his relationship to the Society; certainly never pressured him. But what a member he became, thoroughly committed. Soon, he became the newsletter editor and eventually an adjunct leader for marital services, conducting numerous weddings through the years, bringing substantial funds to our treasury. One particular couple became members after their marriage, Mahasin and Jim Pomarico who attended Ted's memorial service. Mahasin became a Sunday school teacher and Jim a board member.



Ted was a devoted participant in Dr. Calvin Chatlos's Human Faith Group and through that learning was able to forge a warm and enduring relationship with his loving daughter, Judy. Most poignant was Ted's officiating at Judy's marriage to her beloved Pete.

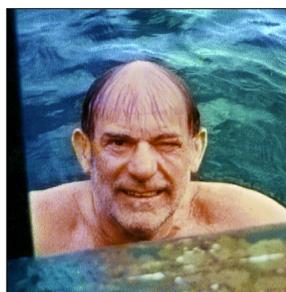
Ted's passion for his three daughters, Sara, Debby and Judy, was formidable. Rarely was Ted more joyful than when he had one of his delightful telephone calls with Sara, the pleasure vibrating against the walls. Sara became the most deeply devoted and involved in his care during his final illness, often calling me to report his condition after Ted and I had parted. Another of his highly joyful experiences was driving up to New Paltz to visit Debby. His frequent visits to Judy and Pete's home sustained his loving relationship. He loved to regale me with stories of how much his daughters loved the Sunday morning pancakes he made for them, with their exuberant cries of appreciation, "Daddy, we love you so much!"

Another deep love of Ted's was for his younger brother, Arthur, of Okemos, Michigan, who drove here with

his wife Betty to conduct the traditional grave side burial service. Not only is Arthur well versed in Jewish religion but is also a practicing psychologist, a gourmet cook and an accomplished ballroom dancer. He and Betty have written and published a book on the art of ballroom dancing. I remember Ted and I traveling to Okemos for their son Jonathan's Bar Mitzvah. Arthur made 20 elegant desserts for the occasion. Arthur is the last surviving brother in the family.

Ted's three grandsons (Judy's children) traveled from various parts of the country to attend the services. A warm reception was held at the Ethical Society after the grave side service, with 50 people in attendance.

Ted cherished his Jewish roots. He was one of the founders of Temple Beth Ahn, a conservative synagogue in Springfield. When they first struggled to organize and met in the basement of a local church, it was Ted who conducted the services. When the synagogue was firmly established with Rabbi Reuben Levine at the helm, we became friends with him and his wife Shirley, sharing interests in art and gardening. Reuben attended Sunday platforms at Ethical on several occasions, perhaps connecting to humanist ideas enriching his own sermons.



Ted and I enjoyed much culture, music, ballet, theater and took fine vacations together — Hawaii, the Smokies, Elderhostel trips and the pinnacle, our multitudinous trips to the Berkshires, especially Chanterwood in S. Lee, an enchanting cabin colony on a pristine lake deep in the woods where we swam in the bracing sparkling water, even before breakfast. (The photo is Ted emerging from one of those rapturous swims.) Sadly, Chanterwood no longer exists but memories linger.

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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the needy and books for children.

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY NEWSLETTER · JANUARY 2011

Ted Seagull, *continued from page 3*

Ted had some unfortunate life experiences which sometimes marred the quality of his life. One dramatic experience occurred in kindergarten. Ted loved books and his devoted mother often read to him, sitting on the floor with Ted facing her. His astuteness enabled him to follow the words, reading them upside down. When the kindergarten teacher asked if anyone could read, Ted proudly raised his hand. He turned the book around to read as he had learned with his mother. The teacher insisted Ted was wrong, not realizing she had an extraordinary child in her class: an early reader, if a bit idiosyncratic. Ted was humiliated in a situation where he had every right to feel proud. In later life, a deeply discouraging experience impacted his professional life. Ted had served in WWII as an interpreter, fluent in French. Later, at a counsel-

ing session, Ted expressed his wish to become a doctor and it was quashed with an anti-Semitic remark. An older brother suggested Ted could become a pharmacist, also a healing profession, as he was himself. And so his chosen profession appeared. In those days, pharmacists mixed their own prescriptions rather than picking them off the shelf. I remember his sharing memories with Tony Mastrolia (husband of Hannah), also trained in that "old school." Another memory, this one endearing: in later years, Tony developed severe dementia and Ted often took Tony to a favorite Italian restaurant for dinner and to relieve Hannah of the stress of being a caregiver and allowing her some free time to do her accomplished painting.

In a poignant moment in the early part of his illness, when he was lucid, Ted declared to me, "I have had 2 marriages." When I telephoned Ted at

his nursing home on his 87th birthday, he didn't seem to know who I was. At my final visit to him, he was having a bad day, again not knowing me. It was very sad to see him in this condition, totally void of any quality of life, a man formerly so vital and intelligent. Only modern medicine kept him alive. I felt if I received a call that he had passed on, I would experience more relief than grief.

A warming moment was when I removed an incidental book from his well-supplied bookshelf which I could read to him. It was a journal I had given him some 30 years ago in which he had recorded details of our numerous trips together, his daughter Sara to be the eventual beneficiary of this memento.

We wish peace to Ted, in a place where all crossword puzzles are successfully completed — a place with humor and kindness abounding.

— E. Betty Levin