



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 10

Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org

JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 2006

LEADER'S MESSAGE

Dear Members and Friends,

Over the past several years, it has become increasingly apparent that for me the experience of reading the New York Times in the morning (previously simply an informative and sometimes stimulating experience) has become an experience which can be best compared to tooth extraction without anesthesia. Each morning we are immersed in the pain of the world: Darfur, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan (to name but a few) to say nothing about the pain in our nation which has been shredded by an administration characterized by ineptitude, carelessness, lack of compassion, contempt for the Constitutional safeguards for civil liberty, corruption, contempt for international law, and a foreign policy worthy



of Genghis Khan. Reading the news — whether from the tunnels of the Sago mine or the New Orleans levees, or the towering, mind-boggling debt of the national budget, or the oil crisis (product of a consistent anti-conservation policy), or the increasing strength of Islamic militancy — has become for me a burdensome obligation. Yet however burdensome, my discomfort palls in comparison to the suffering of millions who must endure the full force of these injustices and inequities.

The only relief that comes from the morning ritual is when I am able to light on a situation that I or we as a Society can play a role in trying to abate. Then my spirits are lifted and pain, though persisting, is lightened and transmuted into action. Also there is the increasingly rare bit of good news. I would like to share one piece with you who may also be experiencing the same kind of condition.

(continued on page 2)

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS:

Recently we sent letters to those who are on our mailing list to receive our monthly Newsletter. The purpose was to see who is still interested in subscribing yearly at a cost of \$15 a year. Some of you replied by sending a donation of \$15 or more, for which we thank you. Some others asked to be removed from our list.

For those of you who did not reply, this will be your last Newsletter, unless you advise us otherwise, either by sending your donation for another year (September 2006 to June 2007) or declining. The next Newsletter will be in September.

— Nancy Bohn

FUNDRAISER EVENTS

Luncheon at the Lake — June 24 marks the date for Boe's spectacular event at the lake. Ask someone who has attended — the food is super delicious — what a great way to begin the summer! There's plenty of room on the big deck overlooking the lake, complete with awning for sun or shower. Hiking and swimming for the bold and daring, and napping in the breeze for the rest of us! There's always a songfest — shout out your favorites — and lots of witty stories, as well as hugs for friends and new people to meet and enjoy. Can we count on you? \$20 per person, minors free. Call the office or Nancy, Jeanine, Louisa or Jill for reservations and transportation.

Marshall's Ribs dinner is planned for Saturday, July 15 (rain date July 22) at 1:00 p.m. at the Society. We can sit

outside, savor the scents of the smoker, and the season. This is Marshall's secret recipe, sought worldwide by gourmet chefs. Unlike Adam, Marshall will not succumb to pressure from serpents or chefs. Although he does not share his recipe, he sure can share those yummy ribs, as well as cole slaw & baked beans. Plan to be there for the treat. \$10 per adult, children 6 to 12 — \$5. Call the office 973-763-1905, Jeanine, Jill or Louisa for reservations. Bring your friends. Open to the public.

— Nancy Bohn

RENTAL SPACE

Looking for a space to hold a Bar Mitzvah, Wedding, family gathering or any other reason? The Ethical Culture Society has rooms available at various times of the day or evening. If interested, call 973-763-1905 for details.

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



Boe Meyerson, Leader
Jim White, Leader Emeritus

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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 FIRST 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 (howardgilman@netscape.net). 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.

For those interested in receiving their copy of Ethical Culture Monthly by First Class Mail for a charge of \$10/year or \$5/half year (beginning in January), call the office, 973-763-1905, and request our First Class Mail Special.

Ethical Culture Society
of Essex County,
516 Prospect St.,
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**...act so
as to elicit
the best
in others
and in
ourselves**

Leader's Message (continued from page 1)

I speak of the successful revolt of the people of Nepal against their tyrannical (and allegedly regicidal) King Gyanendra. (The royal family massacre was blamed on his cousin who allegedly committed suicide afterwards. Yet the right-handed nephew, Dipendra, was found to have a bullet wound to the head on the left temple). Upon ascending the throne, Gyanendra dissolved parliament and dismissed his Prime Minister and replaced it with his own people. He overturned national laws which sustained a limited monarchy and Parliamentary government and then issued laws making himself a near absolute monarch with a sham crony Parliament. During his reign the country continued as a barely disguised tyranny while a bloody Maoist insurrection continued throughout the land with no end in sight.

What was so wonderful was that the revolt was so broad based. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary citizens gathered around the capital, bringing all commerce to a halt and paralyzing the government. In the end,

Elliott-Black Award

Kathy Kelly is to receive the 2006 Elliott-Black Award from the American Ethical Union on July 2 at its Assembly in Chicago. Ms. Kelly is a founder of Voices in the Wilderness, formed in 1996 to challenge non-violently the U.S. sanctions against Iraq. She presently co-coordinates Voices for Creative Nonviolence, a Chicago-based campaign to challenge U.S. military and economic warfare in Iraq. Between 1996 and the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom (March 2003), Voices in the Wilderness organized 70 delegations to Iraq. Kathy has been to Iraq 22 times since January 1996. For bringing medicine and toys to Iraq in open violation of the UN/US sanctions, she and other campaign members were notified of a proposed \$163,000 penalty for the organization, threatened with 12 years in prison, and eventually fined \$20,000, which they have refused to pay. During the first two

the troops were no match against the sheer numbers of brave and indignant citizens who were later joined by the Maoists insurgents.

Then instead of a protracted bloody revolution, the King agreed to accept a new Parliament formed by a coalition of all parties in revolt. The aging but highly respected Mr. Koirala was unanimously appointed Prime Minister and sworn into office. The people will decide the fate of the monarchy in a referendum later. Meanwhile, as if this was not enough good news, the civil government was able to bring the Maoists out of the hills and into a functional coalition within the new government in formation.

Being an avid hiker and reader of mountaineering literature, Nepal has always held a special place in my heart. I have long been awed by the beauty, courage and amazing endurance of the Sherpa people. And my desire to visit the Himalayas has been frustrated by the unstable situation there. Perhaps the right time may be at hand. Meanwhile let us hope for the best and do what we can to support this new national rebirth. — Boe

**“... my spirits
are lifted and
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weeks of the Gulf War, Kathy was part of a peace encampment on the Iraq-Saudi border called the Gulf Peace Team. Following evacuation to Amman, Jordan, team members stayed in the region for the next six months to help coordinate medical relief convoys and study teams.



“We are mired in a war that could last ten years or more, one that is already intensifying other, perhaps even more dangerous conflicts,” Kathy observes. “Now, whatever security we might establish, as U.S. people or as people of the world, rests in seeking fair trade relations and raising vigorous opposition to the warmongers who run this country. Any other behavior would be madness.”

The AEU gives this award in recognition of and tribute to an individual in the larger community who has made a significant ethical contribution to society at personal risk and hardship.

June Platforms (continued from page 4) Over the years, he has represented many international and local unions and has helped hundreds of unrepresented employees in their efforts to obtain justice from their employers.

He is Contributing Editor of *The Developing Labor Law*, has written several articles for professional publications and has lectured on many labor, employment and attorney ethics topics.

Zurofsky lives in Maplewood with his wife Susan J. Vercheak, who is a Deputy Attorney General and Chief of New Jersey Division of Laws Public Utilities Section.

The June 18 Platform will be the last until September.

MEMORIAL ON JULY 16



11:30 a.m., Sunday, July 16, there will be a Memorial Service for Phil Gluck-Sosis, a longtime member of our Society and a published poet. Phil's wife, Suzanne, who lives in New England now, will be coming and will be placing his ceramic plaque (made by Mahasin) in our Peace Garden.

— Boe

Directory Update — for Meredith Sue Willis, please change email address to: MeredithSueWillis@gmail.com.

QUOTE

EUSTACE HAYDON

(Leader, Chicago, about 1950):

"We shall have to recognize that human beings, all of us, are bound together in one bundle of life. We belong together. In the great task of making the human ideal actual on earth, we have only each other. ... People wedded to old beliefs, old methods, old institutions, may block the path to the future.

The modern task calls for intelligence, knowledge, wisdom, daring, and most of all, devotion to the cause of humanity."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Call Terri or the office about June's first Friday (June 2). Usually held from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Society, **First Friday Pot Luck** participants bring a main

dish, salad or dessert for six. Come and hang out, enjoy a wonderful meal and good music! Everyone welcome.

Second Friday, June 9 **Folk Singing** at 7:30 p.m. with Lisa Novemsky. Please note that the folk music Fridays will cease in June ... There will be no more ... [Thank You, Lisa, for a lot of fun and good cheer!]

Second and Fourth Sundays, June 11 and June 25, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. **"The Humanist Way"**

study group. Started by our leader, Boe Meyerson, and interested society members, the group meets before platform. Interested in studying the history and philosophies of humanism? It is open to all members and newcomers. Be sure to call Boe or the office to check on June study group meetings.

Check with Terri or the office about June **Movie Night**, usually held the third Friday of the month (June 16).

On April 9, Sylvia Kramer (along with Elaine Durbach and Betty Levin) participated in a member platform, "*Beginning a New Decade*". Organized by Sue Willis and Alice Robinson-Gilman, panel members discussed their feelings on approaching the new decades in their lives.



At the platform, Sylvia spoke of entering her seventies. For this newsletter, she submitted her 1989 poem (at right) which reflects her thoughts from another decade in her life.

Sixty is the time of the long breath — the deep inhale of what is. We need to know its shape, consider its hold on us.

It is the season of the large questions — how come, what if, why...?

A measuring time — an hour of assessment. The looking back over a long road and forward to a shorter one.

It is a time for cupping the now, for sipping its nectar. The age of greatest gratitude.

Poised on life's peak, one still responds to the call of the climb but the step is slower as it seeks a broader, surer foothold.

Sixty is the time of the long breath — the deep inhale...

by Sylvia Kramer, 1989

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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ETHICAL CULTURE

SUNDAY MORNING PLATFORMS

June/July/August, 2006

Platforms begin at 11 am. All are welcome. Platforms are subject to change without notice. Sunday School 11 am–12:15 pm. Youth of Ethical Societies (YES): contact Society office.

June 4 Boe Meyerson interviewing Steve Sklar: "U.S. Immigration Policy: Just? Humane? Beneficial to Whom?"

Mr. Steve Sklar is an Immigration Attorney who has been practicing in Maplewood for the past 12 years. Boe Meyerson will interview him regarding his challenging experiences representing immigrants and his views on U.S. policy. Boe is Leader of the Ethical Society of Essex County and Humanist Chaplain at Columbia University.

June 11 Meg Noble Peterson: "Madam, have you ever been happy?"

Ms. Peterson, working from the title of her book, will be discussing her adventures around the world over the past 20 years, with the intention of inspiring others to spread their wings too. "There is so much to explore beyond one's immediate life, especially for people like us who're so privileged," she says.

Meg Noble Peterson, a freelance writer and world traveler, has spent most of her professional life in the field of music education.

In the memoir, *Madam, Have You Ever Really Been Happy? An Intimate Journey through Africa and Asia*, author Meg Noble Peterson, approaching

sixty and newly divorced after 33 years of marriage, sets off alone on an eight-month odyssey that takes her from the crowded streets of Cairo and contentious apartheid South Africa to India's magnificent Taj Mahal and the peaks of the Himalaya.

As a woman traveling alone in 1987, Peterson confronts male chauvinism and harassment, which tests her ingenuity and ability to fend for herself.

Meg has loved travel since her first overseas adventure in college in 1949, as a member of the Quaker International Voluntary Service (QIVS) team sent to Denmark, France, and Germany after World War II to help rebuild bombed-out hospitals and schools.

Life has always been an adventure to Meg, whether running the international organization, Music Education for the Handicapped for seven years, organizing international symposia, or hitchhiking with her children through Europe. She traveled behind the Iron Curtain in the 1980's and, since her divorce after 33 years of marriage, has made two around-the-world backpacking trips. She has also completed shorter trips like the Wainwright walk across England, the Inca Trail in Peru, Mt. Kailash in Tibet, and the Kangchenjunga and Annapurna circuits in Nepal.

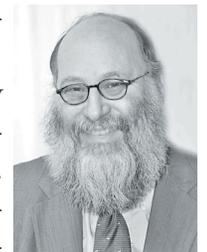
When she's not traveling the world,

Meg Noble Peterson is based in Maplewood, New Jersey.

June 18 Bennet Zurofsky: "High Crimes and Misdemeanors"

Mr. Zurofsky will address the arrogation of powers the Bush-Cheney Administration has made to itself in defiance of Constitutional norms and criminal law. He will also discuss the current Constitutional crisis resulting from the general unwillingness of Congress or the Courts to take action to restore the appropriate balance of powers. He will analyze the available options for the American people with an emphasis on the importance of demanding impeachment.

Bennet D. Zurofsky is a Partner with Reitman Parsonnet, P.C. in Newark, New Jersey, where he concentrates in the representation of unions, employees and benefit funds, as well as the practice of Constitutional law. He is an Adjunct Professor at Rutgers Law School. Bennet's activism extends far beyond the court room: he is frequently on the picket line, either defending free speech rights or raising fighting spirits as the Director of the Solidarity Singers of the New Jersey Industrial Union Council.



(continued on page 3)