



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

VOLUME 34 NUMBER 1

Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org

SEPTEMBER 2014

SUNDAY PLATFORMS

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

Sept. 7 Martha Gallahue, "2014-15 Essex Ethical Season: Creativity in Practice"

Martha will review and update the community on the progress of our upcoming initiative on Ethical Education. Borrowing from Jane Goodall, the platform will use "from roots to shoots" approach to the topic. She will open the second half of her talk to questions and recommendations. This represents a part II to the June 8th platform delivered by Dale McGowan, American Ethical Union's National Director of Ethical Education.

Martha is member of the AEU's National Leader's Council, where she is kept apprised of the progress of ethical education throughout the country. She recently participated in a family sleepover at New York Society for Ethical Culture.

Sept. 14 Ed Barocas, "Privacy and Technology in the Digital Age"

Ed Barocas will "breathe life into the Bill of Rights." Coming from the perspective of his long involvement as Legal Director for the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey, he will explore the issues raised by the Edward Snowden's exposure of NSA spying and its impact on personal privacy, domestic policy, and international relations.

As ACLU-NJ Legal Director, Ed Barocas manages more than 30 cases, which touch every corner of civil liberties including free speech, religious freedom, equal protection, privacy, reproductive freedom and due process of law.

Sept. 21 Jeannie Ginsberg, "My Life's Work"

A conversation with legendary early childhood educator Jeannie Ginsberg (recipient of an Essex County Legends award last year). Ginsberg, founder and long-time leader of the Playhouse Cooperative Nursery School, originally in South Orange, made peace and compassion the central principles of her work. She will outline her vision for education based on individual learning and learning through play and how that vision evolved over the course of her life. "Jeannie and the parent volunteers worked together to create an environment that focused on individual learning, learning through play and peace and compassion for children." [Source: *baristanet.com*]

Ginsberg (who is turning 95 in Sept.) was the school's education director for almost 50 years and retired in the late 1990s. [If Jeannie Ginsberg is indisposed that day, we will have a colloquy on education, with a focus on peace in recognition of UN International Day of Peace.]

Sept. 28 E. Betty Levin, "One Ebullient Camper: Lay Leadership Training in the Smoky Mountains"

Our Ethical Societies are being reinvigorated with fresh ideas! Training with 14 other lay leaders from Ethical Culture Societies across the United States, I was inspired by their fertile minds, energy and friendship in our learning experiences. They are indeed Humanist visionaries, as we all are. The professional staff of six possessed the ideal qualities we all desire from our teachers throughout our lives. Frivolity was intermixed

throughout the program and even the food was delicious!

I'll share the rich ideas I learned that I believe will move us toward an increasingly vibrant Society. This potential can increase our numbers and bring greater effectiveness in creating a more humane world. Your input and responses will be welcomed and invaluable during Q&A for contributing to the richness of discussion.

LEADER'S MESSAGE

Let our Imaginations Run Wild

Let this message begin with an open invitation:

Dear Ethical Culturalists and friends,

You are invited to participate in a speak out after the opening Platform of the season that will take place Sept. 7 at the Ethical Culture Society, 12:45pm to discuss our views on the face(s) of our future leadership in the Society. This comes at the opening of a season during which we are coordinating a Leader transition, reviving Ethical Education beyond Platform and opening ourselves to new members. So, it is a good time to give us your thoughts and ideas as we proceed. — *Best wishes, Martha*

So, if that is the invitation, here is the point. Our Society has enjoyed an unbroken presence in the community for nearly 75 years. We are and have always been dedicated to engendering ever unfolding pragmatic humanist ethical behavior, to making an ethical contribution in our beautiful community of Maplewood, and to advancing contemporary relevant learning especially as lived by people who make art of their lives. So building upon these wide shoulders, we are at a time when

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County

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

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EC Monthly Platforms Editor
Elaine Durbach
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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. 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

we are going to choose to change how we operate...not because we are in crisis but because we can.

In doing so, we are not revisioning our purpose, rather we are revitalizing our practice. So, we want to come together (and please do come at 11 a.m. where the seeds of the discussion will begin), having reflected upon three things: What direction do we want to take? What is working in this Society continues to inspire us? What kind of leadership best suits our ethical direction based upon what works so well right now. Rather than lead this conversation, I am committed to asking the questions, holding a safe space for all ideas to find space, and supporting courageous out of the box thinking. It is the leadership style that suits me...now let us look at the great member leadership and make ourselves the freshest organic stew during this 2014-5 season, only we in ethical culture can cook up.

I'm so excited to be part of this exercise.

Congratulations to Simon Dwyer and Adria de Wett who were married August 15 at the Society. Martha officiated the service. The couple appreciated the simplicity and beauty of the space provided for them to take make their commitment to one another.

Social Action Summer Brainstorming

The Social Action committee met on July 22 at the Society Building for general discussion about plans for the coming year and a report on our ongoing work with immigrant detainees and First Friends, the New Jersey organization that tries to help undocumented people who have been detained in our jails.

The committee began by agreeing to continue this work with First Friends, particularly our pen pal project and a new project of writing brief notes in English and Spanish to be included in packets First Friends distributes to new detainees. These packets have stationery, stamps, etc, and, according to the director of First Friends, these simple expressions of support and hope are very meaningful to the new detainees, even though they never meet or hear again from the person who wrote the note.

Next, the Committee voted to support the Interim Leader's adult education series called

Ethical Eating, making use of our relationship with Margaret Noon, the organic farmer, and our relationship with the regional branch of the organization Slow Foods.

We spent the bulk of the meeting discussing other possibilities for next year. In general, our committee works both on large public issues and on concrete, local ones. For example, for our service component, we have a relationship with Valley Settlement House in Orange — we do a fall/winter coat collection for them and a spring arts supplies collection — but we are now thinking of some other possible service they might need. Should we schedule a meeting with their staff? We also have done work with the Parenting Center in the SOMA school district. Might we put ourselves on a list of groups to call when there are emergencies and families have concrete needs?

Next, we discussed global and national social action issues that we might take action on during the coming year. The idea would be to focus on one issue for letter writing, possible platform speakers, etc. for one season. Ideas included international child labor, voting rights in the U.S., and various international women's issues. Ideas pending from our June meeting include more work on the cost of phone calls for all prisoners in New Jersey (not only immigrant detainees), and passing legislation about capping carbon emissions.

We encourage the whole Ethical Culture Community as well as committee members to give us their ideas.

Our meetings this year will continue to be after platform on the first Sunday of the month starting in October. — *Meredith Sue Willis*

Chair Yoga Starting Tues., Sept. 9

Want to feel more comfortable in your body? More energetic and alive? Join our Chair Yoga class! You will find a group of people who are warm and welcoming and dedicated to their weekly yoga practice.

10-week session starts Sept. 9, Tuesdays, 11 a.m. to 12 noon; course fee is \$80. Karen Bokert and Kathleen Good are certified chair yoga teachers, who draw on their life experience when creating classes. The lessons are tailored to the needs of the group and individual members. We begin with a period of centered breathing, warm up, seated or stand-

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September 2014	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<i>Labor Day</i>					
7 11am Martha Gallahue "2014-15 Essex Ethical Season: Creativity in Practice"	8	9 Chair Yoga 11am-12 noon	10	11	12	13
14 11am Ed Barocas, "Privacy and Technology in the Digital Age"	15	16 Chair Yoga 11am-12 noon	17	18	19 7:30pm, Screening of "GMO OMG" Presented by ECSEC and Slow Food	20
21 11am Jeannie Ginsberg, "My Life's Work" <i>UN International Day of Peace</i>	22	23 Chair Yoga 11am-12 noon	24	25	26	27 7pm Saturday Arts, "E. Betty Levin, Peace Advocate Extraordinaire"
28 11am E. Betty Levin, "Lay Leadership Training in the Smoky Mountains"	29	30 Chair Yoga 11am-12 noon	<i>School Lunch Organic Farm</i> ESEC 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 ESEC office at 973-763-1905.			

ing yoga postures, deep relaxation and a short meditation. This class is appropriate for beginners as well as those with prior yoga experience. Call Karen at 973-762-6036 or email Kathleen at kgood8174@yahoo.com. We look forward to seeing you!

GMO OMG, Fri., Sept. 19

Join us for a screening of a documentary about the health and environmental effects of genetically modified foods at the Society Building, Fri., Sept. 19, 7:30 p.m., sponsored by Slow Food Northern NJ and the Ethical Culture Society. Suggested donation: \$5.

How do GMOs affect children, the health of our planet and our freedom of choice? And perhaps the ultimate question: is it even possible to reject the food system currently in place, or have we lost something we can't gain back? These and other questions take us to Haiti, Paris, Norway, and the lobby of agra-giant Monsanto. Along the way we gain insight into a question that is of growing concern to citizens the world over: what's on your plate?

Following the film, Barbara Thomas of GMOfree NJ will give a talk on the dangers of GMOs and update us on the effort to enact a GMO labeling law in NJ.

Sept. 27, 7 p.m. , Saturday Arts, "E. Betty Levin, Peace Advocate Extraordinaire"

E. Betty Levin will read from her memoirs and discuss her new found role of Peace Advocate from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday, September 27 at the Society Building for a special Saturday Arts program.

Having passed the 85-year milestone and actively pursuing the role of Peace Advocate (giving presentations as far away as California and North Carolina) while writing her memoirs and continuing her professional career as psychotherapist, Betty is indeed an extraordinary human being.

Coming out of retirement, Saturday Arts coordinator, Hilding "Gus" Lindquist, remarked, "It's an honor and privilege to host this special Saturday Arts program for Betty."

Folk Friday Resumes Oct. 10

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 refreshments to share. Folk Fridays have expanded to include crafts people to come and listen to music while doing crafts. Open to all, all ages, everyone is invited! [novemsky@comcast.net, (973) 763-8293]

Bringing the Wild Inside

August to January, the Ethical Culture Society is exhibiting photographs of the wild (landscapes, seascapes, flora and fauna) taken by South Orange residents Richard and Jane Halperin, lawyers by work day and photographers when on holiday. Come see and enjoy some vicarious travel. The location of the shots and the prices are on a list in the meeting room.



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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Sept. 7 Martha Gallahue, Opening Day, "2014-15 Essex Ethical Season: Creativity in Practice"

ECS leader Martha Gallahue will open our new season of programs with a welcome-back discussion about the Society, our hopes and expectations for the year ahead, and the events that have fueled our thinking over the summer. *(see page 1)*



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Photo by JERRY McCREA



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