



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

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Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org

OCTOBER 2006

LEADER/PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Building Community

Leader Boe Meyerson and President Betty Levin will be introducing new community building groups for our Society starting this October.



Boe Meyerson

Boe's program, "Ethical Problem Solving in Community", will start Sunday, October 8, open to members, friends and newcomers. Participants will bring ethical problems to the group who will try to sort them out. Boe will provide guidance and philosophical support, but the participants will do the basic problem solving. We shall meet in the front parlor at 9:30 a.m., just prior to Platform. Bring your issues and your wisdom to share.

Betty's program, called "Colloquy", is based on the work inaugurated and promulgated by Leader Arthur Dobrin,

recently retired from the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island. Betty experienced three Colloquies at the recent American Ethical Union Conference in Chicago and was impressed with the sense of connection and experiences shared by the group. The first Colloquy will start on October 15 at 9:30 a.m. Both programs are designed to bring Community, understanding and a greater sense of connection to our Ethical Culture community.



Betty Levin

Each program will convene in October at 9:30 a.m. just prior to our platform, Boe's program on the 2nd Sunday of the month and Betty's on the 3rd Sunday. Any questions? Please call each of us at home. Come join us as we build community together; we'll be looking for you!

— Boe Meyerson, Leader, and Betty Levin, President

Harvest of Gratitude *by Percival Chubb*

Once more the fields have ripened to harvest, and the fruitful earth has fulfilled the promise of spring.

The work of those who labor has been rewarded:
They have sown and reaped, planted and gathered.

How rich and beautiful is the bounty gathered:
The golden grain and clustered corn, the grapes of purple and green,

The crimson apples and yellow pears, and all the colors of orchard and garden, vineyard and field.

Season follows after season, after winter the spring,
after summer the harvest-laden autumn.

From bud to blossom, from flower to fruit,
from seed to bud again, the beauty of earth unfolds.

From the harvest of the soil we are given occasion
to garner a harvest of the heart and mind:

A harvest of resolve to be careful stewards
of all life's gifts and opportunities.

A harvest of reverence for the wondrous power and life
at work in things that grow, and in the soul.

A harvest of gratitude for every good which we enjoy, and
of fellowship for all who are sustained by earth's beauty.

(Percival Chubb was an Ethical Culture Leader in England, in New York, and in St. Louis.) © American Ethical Union All Rights Reserved

Humanism Course October 10 and 17

The South Orange Maplewood Adult School will offer a course on "Humanism: Philosophy and Ethics" on October 10 and 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ethical Culture Society of Essex County. The course will be taught by Boe Meyerson and Joe Chuman. (Registration for the course is through the Adult School.)

The course will cover both the theoretical and the practical aspects of Humanism.

— Boe Meyerson

Fundraising Update

The fund raising committee is planning exciting events for the year. In addition to bringing you our traditional concerts, White Elephant sale and theater, we are reaching out to our members and friends for innovative new ways to have fun and raise money for the society. Perhaps you have an interesting skill or specialty you can share with us — like "How to make fishing flies" or "The Fundamentals of Lion Taming", or having some people over to taste your specialty meal. We will handle the details — you provide the skill or craft or idea, and we will work it into a profitable evening. If you have already committed to do a dinner or event, please contact Alice Robinson-Gilman or Jeanine Rosh to set up a date for the event.

— Jeanine M. Rosh

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.,
Maplewood, NJ 07040.

Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org

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

OCTOBER IS COMMUNITY COALITION MONTH — CELEBRATING TEN YEARS

Ten years ago, the communities of South Orange and Maplewood were beginning to resegregate residentially. An organization was formed to combat that and to work towards integration in all phases of life in the two towns. This organization, the South Orange Maplewood Community Coalition on Race, has for ten years done everything from organizing important community forums on racial issues to sponsoring Martin Luther King Day events to giving tours to prospective home buyers — and doing real estate testing to make sure all neighborhoods of the two towns were being shown to all races.

Earlier this year, the Coalition began renting space in our own Ethical Culture building.

This October is Community Coalition month in South Orange and Maplewood, although there will be events of celebration and discussion throughout the rest of 2006 and the first half of 2007. Among the activities this fall will be a Report to the Community on October 14, a community Sing on October 16, a huge celebratory Gala on October 21 and a fund-raising breakfast on November 17. For locations and a full list of events and more information, see the Coalition website at <http://www.twotowns.org> or call 973-761-6116.

—Meredith Sue Willis



*Two Towns in Harmony
(photo credits: top left
— Melissa Kopecky;
bottom left and right
— Michael Muganga).
Kids photo, top right
(Barbara Heisler-Williams).*



October Platforms (continued from page 4)

to old problems and intimations of new directions may burst forth unbidden. And then we can create a more humane universe and a better future, amidst the fraught world we uneasily inhabit.

Oct. 15 Rev. Charles W. Rawlings *“Negotiation as an Alternative to War”*

“Negotiation as an Alternative to War,” will examine the role of power, identity and ideas — concepts, theologies, ideologies — in shaping how we view others and the problem these pose to an ethic of justice for all. We will think together about both political and economic conflicts.



The Rev. Charles Rawlings is past-president of the New Jersey Division of the United Nations Association. He serves the Presbytery of Newark as convener of its Work Group on the Middle East Crisis and has traveled to Israel and the Palestinian territories several times in recent years. Rev. Rawlings’ work on the Middle East crisis has included organizing educational programs and interfaith dialogues.

He is a life-long ecumenist and is the retired Director of Urban Programs at the National Council of Churches and a former Executive Director of the New Jersey Council of Churches. Living in Cleveland during the 1960’s and 70’s, he worked on issues of race, poverty and economic justice — including a national interfaith effort to create worker and community ownership of steel mills in Youngstown, Ohio. Rev. Rawlings is currently working on a joint project with Rutgers University examining the impact of globalization on human rights and labor rights with a focus on Port Newark. He has designed and administered programs dealing with Civil Rights, health care,

and AIDS education. He has taught courses on social policy at Cleveland State University and coordinated continuing education Programs for inner city communities.

His wife Joan worked for many years in career counseling with a focus during the 1990’s on refugee resettlement programs. They have three grown children: Annie is Interim Associate Presbytery Executive for Social Justice with the Presbytery of New York City. Carol teaches English at St. Ann’s School in Brooklyn and Edward is a technical writer with BEA Systems in San Francisco.

Oct. 22 Social Action Committee *Interactive session — “Resolving conflict the Department of Peace way”*

This will be an interactive platform in which the Social Action Committee leads the group in thinking about a national or international problem using the tools that would be in place if a Department of Peace were established — education tools, diplomatic tools, etc. For more information on the proposed Department of Peace, see <http://www.thepeacealliance.org/>. Leading this will be Social Action Committee members including Boe Meyerson and Sue Willis.

Oct. 29 Robert Greenwell *“The Ethics-Driven Life”*

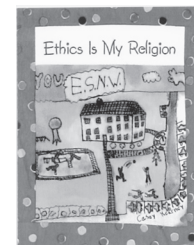
The Ethics-Driven Life knows the value of virtues and virtuous character for human fulfillment. It knows the value of conservative virtues and liberal virtues, and the call to develop toward the other from wherever one starts. It knows the difference between actual lived virtue and stories (dogmas) about virtue. And it knows how all virtues point to one



overriding virtue or attitude or behavioral characteristic, a virtue with two faces: worth and love. Reflections on all of these, with emphasis on the core of Worth and Love, will be presented, along with a few readings from and about Adler.

Robert Greenwell is Leader of Mid Rivers Ethical Society, a new group in St. Charles County, Missouri, bordering St. Louis County on its northwest side. Bob has a B.A. in philosophy from St. Louis University, and an M.Ed. in Counseling from the University of Missouri. He is married to Kathleen. He has two children and four grandchildren. Bob was called in September 2002 by the Ethical Society of St. Louis to start a satellite Society. Mid Rivers began accepting members in October 2003, and currently has 41 members.

Ethical Culture Greeting Cards



There is a price correction on the cost of the greeting cards. The series of 12 cards is priced at \$15. Please call the office, 973-763-1905, to order the series. This is an innovation; the cards were designed by the Sunday School children from the Northern Westchester Ethical Society as a fundraiser. Please leave your name, telephone number and number of series you would like to purchase. Barbara Lipton has graciously agreed to handle the transactions. She will contact you about delivery and payment

Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees of our Ethical Society will meet on October 15, November 19 and December 19. All are scheduled for 1:30 p.m. following the Platform. Your thoughts and ideas are welcome as part of our discussions though not your votes if you are not a member of the Board of Trustees.

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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ETHICAL CULTURE

SUNDAY MORNING PLATFORMS

Oct. 1 Boe Meyerson

"A Humanist Spirituality"

Leader Boe Meyerson will describe the



special contributions that Ethical Humanist religion is able to bring to both the philosophical concept of spirituality as well as the scope of its practices. She will explore how

Ethical Humanist thought and practice regarding spirituality significantly expand the conventional understanding of these subjects. Boe is Leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Essex County and Humanist Chaplain at Columbia University.

Oct. 8 Jeffrey Rubin, Ph.D. *"How to Flourish in a Time of Peril, Part 2"*

Dr. Rubin practices psychoanalysis and psychoanalytically-oriented psychotherapy in NYC and Northern Westchester. He has taught at various psychoanalytic institutes and universities including The Postgraduate Center for Mental Health, the C.G. Jung Foundation, the Object Relations Institute, the Harlem Family Institute, Union Theological Seminary and Yeshiva University.

He is the author of *Psychotherapy and Buddhism*, *A Psychoanalysis for Our Time*, and *The Good Life: Psychoana-*

lytic Reflections on Love, Ethics, Creativity and Spirituality. A long-term practitioner of meditation and yoga, he is interested in how they can enrich the therapeutic process.

Ethics, which might be thought of as accountability to other people and ourselves, or balancing altruism and self-care, is an essential part of the glue that binds families and communities together. As a culture we are morally sprinting toward Gomorrah. Immorality is the order of the day. We ordinarily think of ethics in terms of the other person rather than ourselves. "If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them," writes Alexander Solzhenitsyn in *Gulag Archipelago*. "But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being."

This talk explores the psychology of immorality — and how we might cultivate greater moral imagination and deepen moral accountability. Immorality has several aspects — including objectifying ourselves and other people, treating both as means rather than ends, misrepresenting our own needs, and allowing group pressure to subvert our own empathy, moral imagination and ethical values.

The way morality is often conceived of in our time — being more "spiritual" and "selfless" — can temper the

October, 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.

ruthless narcissism that threatens to drown us. But it also has a hidden cost few consider: it causes many people with problems in self-care to be too self-denying. In this talk I recommend a different path; a morality of mortality that integrates altruism and self-care and is focused on this world rather than the next.

"True friends are a sure refuge," wrote Aristotle. Because no person is an island we cannot thrive alone. We need to, in both senses of the word, dream together. Diverse coalitions of people with different talents and interests with a shared allegiance to life need to band together and share their dreams of a better world.

But most communities and organizations have great difficulty sustaining their initial flourishing. In the second part of my talk we will explore what interferes with and what facilitates thriving communities — places where like-spirited people can dream together about a better world.

When we dream together — when groups of people share their dreams and work together on them in a space of curiosity with an absence of judgment — a remarkable connection and synergy magically arises that has the potential to spark new forms of connectedness and even collective action. When dreamers of the world unite — dreaming together into the future — creative responses *(continued on page 3)*