

E T H I C A L O U T L O O K

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**Summer Sunday Morning
 Platform Meetings
 11:15 AM–(Except as Noted)
 Ceremonial Hall**

**September 2–10:15 AM
 What Can Labor and Occupy
 Learn From Each Other?**

Dr. Penelope Lewis
 Monica Weiss Presides

**September 9
 Are You Reasonable?**

Curt Collier, Leader
 Joseph Marvel Presides

**September 16
 Ethical Culture Is Not Atheism—
 But What Is It?**

Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader
 Muriel Berger Presides

**September 23
 Putting the “Cult” into Ethical
 Culture OR How to Gain
 Members and Influence the World**

Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader
 Tod Whitaker Presides

**September 30
 What We Live For**

Bart Worden, Leader
 Dr. Anne Klaeysen Presides

**Membership Retreat
 at Stony Point**

**Friday, Sept. 14–
 Sunday, Sept. 16**

September Happenings

If you love music and would like to hear some great jazz played by wonderful musicians, be sure to come to NYSEC on **Friday, September 28, at 8:00 pm.** We are presenting renowned jazz pianist **Lenore Raphael** and her trio. Ceremonial Hall. *(See page 7.)*

We are offering a new lecture/discussion series this season, **Moral Philosophy: The Basics**—where we’ll have an opportunity to discuss, analyze, and apply basic moral theories of a wide range of past and current philosophers. The six-week course will be led by member Dr. John Gurney, and will begin on **Wednesday, October 3, at 6:30 pm,** in the Adler Study, Room 514. *(See page 8.)*

President’s Notes

Andra Miller



My last column was written in Albany—from the **American Ethical Union Assembly**, a gathering together of members from Ethical Culture Societies, Fellowships, and Circles. It was great to see fellow alums from Lay Leaders Summer School and the other friends made at prior Assemblies. It was a wonderful event that I wish you all could have attended. I’ll tell more about what happened, but first I need to ask you a favor.

At several recent committee meetings the observation was made that we needed to inform members of some item or another. I would respond, “Let’s do an article for *Ethical Outlook*.” But then someone often said, “Nobody reads the newsletter.” The obvious thought then to me is, if nobody reads it (and certainly there are

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From the Leader’s Desk

Dr. Anne Klaeysen

Living in a Land of Inequality



“Sometimes I work twelve hours a day five or six days a week. I have to do a little of everything, shampoo, vacuum, and car wash. Sometimes we only make \$5 or \$10 a day in tips.”

—Agustin Perez, LMC (Astoria) carwash worker

“We are afraid to ask for raises for fear that we will be fired. That is a problem.”

—Ajkalon Garcia, Farm Country Supermarket employee (Brooklyn)

This summer I marched with Agustin and Ajkalon and hundreds of other workers—union and non-union alike—to Union Square, where we participated in a rally to demand a living

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President's Notes

(Continued from page 1)

some who don't, for sure—more on that later), then why are the Leaders and I writing monthly columns, why are other members putting together articles and taking pictures, why are Deborah Foster and Selma Friedman scrambling each month to get it assembled, edited, produced, and mailed? Is this just a huge waste of energy, effort, time, and money?

Times have changed, people read and communicate in many new ways. Could our newsletter be a thing of the past? I said above, "more on that later," and here's the "more." In my last column I asked that those who hadn't turned in a pledge card for 2012 (and there were several), please call Moe-Swe with their pledge amount. Moe-Swe tells me nobody called. I realize that's not a

good test; people who haven't pledged yet probably are just negative about the whole pledging process. But there have been other signs I've gotten that not a lot of reading of *EO* is going on.

So here's the favor. If you read this issue, would you please either call me or send me an email that you read it? My phone number is 646-363-0025 and my email address is andramariemiller@gmail.com. I think this will serve as a rough readership survey and hope to hear from many of you. While you're at it, if you have any comments, feel free to include them.

And now, back to the AEU Assembly. Many, many people said again and again that it was the best Assembly ever. They attributed that excellence to the wonderful workshops featuring criminal justice activists and political figures—and to a major extent, we have Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross to thank for the

planning and setting up of many of those sessions, as well as Dr. Anne Klaeyens and the other Leaders she worked with to develop many of the workshops.

One that I especially liked was the one on what it is like to be put in prison: “The Experience Inside.” I was impressed with an observation by Kathy Boudin, who spent something like 20 or more years in prison. (She is now Director of the Criminal Justice Initiative Supporting Children, Families, and Communities at the Columbia University School of Social Work.) She said that when you work with your lawyer before sentence, you spend your thoughts and emotions on establishing the extent of your innocence, making your guilt as “small” as possible. And when you meet with the parole board, you continue that way of thinking. But at some point, if you are going to move on, you have to accept your full responsibility, even if you are less involved in a crime than others—so that you can find atonement and forgiveness and forge a new life.

It occurred to me that we all could take a leaf from her book. How often do we defend ourselves instead of recognizing the part we play in any problem situation? Finding and accepting the extent of our share of the triggering, our errant word or deed. Well, there I go again . . .

Another workshop that was enlightening was the one on volunteering in prisons, “What Volunteers Can Do.” Ideas included offering prison visitors breakfast after their long and arduous trips, donating books to prison libraries, teaching literacy, or actually visiting with a prisoner. It occurs to me that as Ethical Culture is the one religion with the central tenet that everyone has worth and everyone should be treated with dignity, bringing humanity to those who are often treated in an inhumane manner is perfect for members looking for service opportunities.

Then there was the personal development workshop that I gave, “What is the Best, and How do you Bring it Out?” If I say so myself, it went really well, and lots of people came to it and got seriously involved. I’ll have to do it sometime at the Society.

Thanks to all of you who contributed to the Food for Kids drive. We collected over 50 pounds of lunch fixin’s for the kids who are missing the free school lunch program during the summer.

And, everybody, enjoy what’s left of summer!

Leader’s Desk

(Continued from page 1)

wage for all New Yorkers. I was part of a contingent from Occupy Faith NYC and the newly formed Clergy Campaign for Economic and Social Justice. It was an honor to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with so many people who, even though demeaned by their employers, devalued by society, and demoralized by their struggle, still had not lost hope.

Since 1990, the minimum hourly wage in New York State has been \$7.25. Efforts by the State Assembly in May to raise it to \$8.50 failed when Republicans in the State Senate, under heavy lobbying by business and trade organizations, refused to support it, and Governor Andrew Cuomo backed off, saying, “We hope for the ideal and we live in the real, right? I don’t think this, at this time, is in the realm of the possible because the Senate has a heartfelt position in opposition.”

However, according to a recent Siena Research Poll, 79 percent of voters in the state are in favor of the increase, and, according to a report by the Economic Policy Institute, an

increase would directly affect 609,000 minimum-wage workers, and indirectly affect another 473,000. Not all businesses lobbied in Albany against the increase; several leaders, including the head of the Greater New York Chamber of Commerce and an executive of big-box wholesaler Costco, testified in favor. “Of course retailers and fast food [companies] with big powerful lobbyists want us to think this will chase business out of the state,” said Mark Jaffe, President of the Greater New York Chamber. “But that’s not what we [heard] back from our membership.”

Ethical Culture founder Felix Adler actually supported a “maximum wage.” He observed that the exploitation of workers generated private fortunes that exerted a “corrupting influence” on politics. In his article, “Social Reform: Proposing a System of Grand Taxation” (*The NY Times*, February 9, 1880), he proposed a steeply graduated income tax with a 100% top rate at the point “when a certain high and abundant sum has been reached, amply sufficient for all the comforts and true refinements of life.” Surely it’s time to revisit Dr. Adler’s proposal.

Of course, economic inequality exists throughout the country, as two recent books document. Both authors—Joseph E. Stiglitz, Nobel laureate and a professor of economics at Columbia University, and Peter Edelman, a professor of law at Georgetown University—are adamant that this inequality constitutes a moral issue.

In *The Price of Inequality*, Stiglitz writes: “While there may be underlying economic forces at play, politics have shaped the market, and shaped it in ways that advantage the top at the expense of the rest. . . Those with power use it to insulate themselves from competitive forces by winning favorable tax treatment, government-protected market

share, and other forms of what economists call ‘rent seeking.’” He notes that ours has become a country “in which the rich live in gated communities, send their children to expensive schools, and have access to first-rate medical care. Meanwhile, the rest live in a world marked by insecurity, at best mediocre education, and in effect rationed health care.”

Today in the United States, 46 million Americans—15 percent of the population—are counted as poor. The lowest percentage in poverty since statistics were recorded was 11.1 percent in 1973. In *Why It’s So Hard to End Poverty in America*, Edelman gives four reasons for this development: 1) many people working at low-wage jobs; 2) more households headed by a single parent, making it difficult to earn a living income from available jobs; 3) the near disappearance of cash assistance for low-income mothers and children (food stamps have replaced welfare); and 4) persistent issues of race and gender. The solution, to him, is clear: more jobs that pay decent wages.

Over the last forty years, we have been drowning in a flood of low-wage jobs. Most people in poverty work and struggle to make ends meet. According to the Economic Policy Institute, half the jobs in this country pay less than \$34,000 a year, and a quarter pay below the poverty line for a family of four, less than \$23,000. Families that can send another adult to work have done better, but single parents don’t have that option. Six million people have no income other than food stamps, which provide an income at a third of the poverty line, close to \$6,300 for a family of three.

The wealth and income of the top less than 1 percent of Americans grow at the expense of the rest of us. We

know that we must make the rich pay their fair share, raise the minimum wage, and provide adequate health care. But this will not happen until people in the middle start identifying with their neighbors with lower incomes, instead of those at the top, and vote in their own economic self-interest. We must face this moral issue head-on. It won’t be easy. An obscene amount of money is flooding the election process, and the news media shirks its responsibility to honor the truth, opting instead to report opposing “opinions” as “equivalent.” Nonetheless, it is our moral obligation to raise our voices, take to the streets, and register voters. Together we can make a difference!

Sunday Morning Platform Meetings 11:15 AM

(Except as noted)

Sept. 2—What Can Labor and Occupy Learn From Each Other?

Dr. Penelope Lewis—10:15 AM

The past year has been a time of great hope and great concern for those who claim the mantle of the 99%. Occupy encampments rose and fell, and a popular movement based in class conscious politics raising economic grievances is looking to find its feet. At the same time, unions remain influential in some areas and wield some national electoral clout, but have experienced continued decline and extreme political attacks. The uncertain future of these interconnected movements hinges in good part on their capacities to learn important lessons from each other regarding mobilization, organizational forms, persistence, audacity, and the importance of transformative politics.

Penny Lewis is a sociologist and assistant professor at the Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, CUNY, where she is currently working with colleagues on a research project about Occupy Wall Street.

The shared charity today is Laundry Workers Center.

Sept. 9—Are You Reasonable?

Curt Collier, Leader

NeoNazi gunmen, reactionary politics, civil wars, sexual slavery, conscripted child soldiers, rapacious capitalism at the expense of our shared environment, the spread of fundamentalism, climate change deniers—despite our claims to live in a more enlightened age, we continue to live in a world that is little changed from that of our grandparents. We often struggle to make sense of what is going on around us, to analyze and reanalyze the events of the day to gain some glimmer of understanding. Why can’t we all just be reasonable? This begs the question, what is “reason.” What makes people reasonable? Will being more reasonable solve our problems? This talk will explore the human capacity for reason, and will ask the question, “are you reasonable?”

The shared charity today is The Nature Conservancy’s Youth Program.

Sept. 16—Ethical Culture Is Not Atheism—But What Is It?

Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader

Atheism and secularism are coming into their own in American life. There has been a spate of books defending and promoting atheism, and secular organizations are proliferating. Given the marginalization of nonbelievers in a religion-saturated society, much of this is has been to the good. In the face of Ethical Culture’s isolation and small size, there is no doubt the impulse to jump on board. Perhaps there is even a tendency among some

people to seamlessly identify ourselves with atheism and secularism. And yet, Ethical Culture was not founded as such, and Felix Adler, who envisioned our movement, declared “I never was an atheist.”

Moreover, our essential commitment to ameliorating the oppressions of the human condition tells us that our center of gravity lies elsewhere. In my first address in the new season, I hope to describe where that center of gravity lies and why we need to hold on to a guiding intuition that is unique and precious and takes us beyond atheism.

The shared charity today is The Nature Conservancy’s Youth Program.

Sept. 23—Putting the “Cult.” into Ethical Culture OR How to Gain Members and Influence the World

Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader

For years Leader Dr. Anne Klaeysen has heard that our Society is “the best-kept secret in New York City,” and she’s had enough. “It’s high time that we proselytized,” she says, “and let people know what a great community we are. Join me in a morning dedicated to experiencing ourselves as members who are so passionate about ethics that we simply must shout it from the rooftops of the city. We are committed to addressing the social injustices of the world and making life better for everyone.”

The shared charity today is The Nature Conservancy’s Youth Program.

Sept. 30—What We Live For

Bart Worden, Leader

In 1876 the founder of the first Society for Ethical Culture, Felix Adler, said the following in his inaugural address: “There is a great and crying evil in modern society. It is want of purpose. It is that narrowness of vision which shuts out the wider vistas of the soul. It is the absence of those sublime emo-

tions which, wherever they arise, do not fail to exalt and consecrate existence.” Adler’s hope was that Ethical Societies would inspire people to experience profound purposefulness, coupled with an expansive vision of humanity and a passion realizing each person’s worth and dignity—and that would lead us toward a richly humane and just society. How well does Adler’s concern reflect our concerns today?

Bart Worden, a longtime member of the Ethical Culture Society of Westchester, was recently named Executive Director of the American Ethical Union, and continues to serve the Westchester Society as its Leader. He has been an active participant on a number of AEU committees and task forces, has served on the AEU Board as a National Leaders Council representative, and is a faculty member of the AEU Lay Leadership Summer School.

The shared charity today is The Nature Conservancy’s Youth Program.

**Early Sunday
10 AM**

(Rooms subject to change)

Sept. 16—Poetry Reading—Another year of wonderful poems! Join us for our first reading. Cheryl Gross presides. Room 508.

Sept. 16—Chorus Practice—Led by Pat Debrovner and Jerry Ranck. Ceremonial Hall.

Sept. 30—Coffee ‘n’ Chat. Room 408.

**Sunday Afternoon
1:30 PM**

(Rooms subject to change)

Sept. 9—Ethics in the News. Mary Ellen Goodman presides. Room 508.

Sept. 9—Ethical Hospitality—This new season, let’s discover creative ways to make a great first impression and get others excited about our growing ethical community. “Ethical Hospitality” is a two-part series of free workshops led by Tod Whitaker intended to strengthen your hospitality skills and key communication techniques. Newcomer hosts and ushers are invited to join us for the first session.

The second is open to all members. Contact Yalitzta to register at: ygarcia@nysec.org or 212-874-5210, ext. 118. Ceremonial Hall.

Sept. 23—Ethical Hospitality—led by Tod Whitaker. Ceremonial Hall.

Sept. 30—Community Membership Meeting—focusing on the American Ethical Union, the “headquarters” that connects us with all the other Ethical Societies and groups.

First we’ll have a report on the AEU Lay Leaders Summer School by this year’s attendees, Virginia Arnold, Bob Berger, Abe Markman, and Sharon Pope. They are very enthused about their experience.

Then we will discuss the Elliott-Black award. At the AEU Assembly in June, there was a question about the requirements for award nominees that they make “a significant ethical contribution to society at personal risk and hardship.” That requirement has been called into question, as some significant contributions have been made by people who haven’t put their lives at risk or suffered hardship. Another requirement is that the person getting the award be committed to attending the Assembly to receive it, but it has been given posthumously.

Check the American Ethical Union website for details on the Elliott-Black Award. (It was given this year to our nominee, Bob Gangi, of the Police Reform Organizing Project at the Urban Justice Center.)

Finally and most importantly, Bart Worden, the new Executive Director of the American Ethical Union, will be visiting and wants to tell us what the AEU is doing for us, and find out what more we think it should do. Ceremonial Hall.

Lunch Discussions Thursdays, 12:00 Noon

Bring your lunch and join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen and Society members in the Elliott Library, Room 507, from **12:00 noon to 1:30 pm**. This month's topic: **Domestic Affairs**.

Sept. 6—Summer Olympics: articles from *Smithsonian*, July/August 2012.

Sept. 13—Vatican attack on American Nuns: various articles from *The NY Times*.

Sept. 20—"New York: The Besieged Children" by Helen Epstein, *The NY Review of Books*, 7/12/12.

Sept. 27—"Poverty in America: Why Can't We End It?" by Peter Edelman, *The NY Times*, 7/28/12; **"Preying on the Poor"** by Barbara Ehrenreich, *Huffington Post*, 5/17/12; and **"An Interview with Peter Edelman"** by Karen Dolan, *Huffington Post*, 5/30/12.

Folders with relevant articles will be available from Yalitzka Garcia in the Leaders' office. Join the discussion.

Our Ethical Family

Moe-Swe Myint

Summer came and went very quickly, but NYSEC kept a relatively busy schedule despite unremitting heat and humidity! We invited Ethical Culture Leaders from other Societies to speak to us at our Sunday Platform Meetings. **Michael S. Franch** and **Jone Johnson-Lewis** from the Northern Virginia Society, **Fritz Williams** from the Bal-

timore Ethical Society, **Susan Rose** from the Boston Ethical Society Without Walls, **Bob Berson** from the Ethical Society of Northern Westchester, **Jim White** of the Riverdale Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture, **Mary Herman** from the Washington Ethical Society, and **Hugh Taft-Morales** from the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia gave very interesting and inspiring platform addresses on a wide range of subjects that made many in attendance forget about the weather outside for a while. It was a nice change of pace and gave our own Leaders a break they all deserve!

We were fortunate to have **Jon Liechty** take over the musical duties for the summer and perform beautiful piano music for us to contemplate before and during the Platform Meetings. We were also privileged to have incredible guest musicians like Michael Rose and Amir Vahab come and play for us on July 8 and August 5, respectively. And on July 29, Kina Zore, a band led by Helder Tsinine from Mozambique, gave a concert in Ceremonial Hall. This performance was geared to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable and ethical development. They presented a combination of very lively and danceable traditional and contemporary African music that brought social issues to the fore through the lyrics. Thanks to all the members who volunteered in various capacities, without whom the Sunday Platforms would not be possible: everyone on the Sunday Program Committee; Sunday Greeter Coordinator **Amy Schwarz** and her crew; newcomer hosts **Patrick Arenas** and **Tod Whitaker**; and **Bob Berger**, **Chris Bernhardt**, **Henryka Komanska**, **Carole Chamlin**, **Paula Claycomb**, **Heather Grady**, **Sharon Pope**, and **Carol Rost**.

Bonnie Bean and **Pat Berens** have been tirelessly planning and leading Ethical Adventures—their last two trips were very enjoyable visits to the Dia Art Museum and Wave Hill; the next adventure is a Circle Line boat trip. If you have any interesting ideas about a place to visit in the future, please let them know.

NYSEC's Photography Arts Club, led by co-Chairs **Dr. Peter Houts** and **Valerie Leiman**, was also busy: its members planned and presented a showing of photographs by club member **Dave Alpert** in the NYSEC lobby, which ran from July 30 to August 30.

Thanks to **Sheila Kleinwald**, who has put tremendous effort into planning our **Fall Retreat**, scheduled for **September 14-16**, which I know from past experiences will be a great success.

Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen and I have scheduled all the upcoming **Prospective Members Receptions** for Fall 2012 and Spring 2013. They will be held on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 pm, from September 17 through next June, except for January and February, when they'll be on the third Tuesdays due to holidays. If you know a friend, family member, or neighbor who might be interested in attending these receptions, please let me know.

And last but not least, after Labor Day we're going back to our regular time of 11:15 am for our Sunday Platforms.

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Member News:

The following members are celebrating birthdays in September: **Bruce Feld**, 9/4; **Barbara Michaels**, 9/5; **Helene Basist**, 9/6; **Mo Malekshahi**, 9/9; **John Langsdorf**, 9/12; **Barbara Bernstein**, 9/13; **Margaretha Jones**, 9/13; **Dr. Matthew Ies Spetter**, 9/15; **Carol Rost**, 9/17; **Ghazal Khan**, 9/19; **Virginia Arnold**, 9/20; **Paula Claycomb**, 9/29; and member **Douglas Proops**, 9/29.

Ethical Enrichment

Ethics in Film



Chris Everett

Join us on **Friday, September 7, 7:00 pm** (doors open at **6:30 pm**), in Ceremonial Hall, to see *Paths of Glory* (1957), written and directed by Stanley Kubrick.

This powerful anti-war statement stars Kirk Douglas as Col. Dax, commander of a weary regiment of French army soldiers stationed along the western front during World War I. When French generals order the regiment to carry out what amounts to a suicide mission against heavy German fire, some of the men refuse. But when the army tries three of the soldiers on charges of cowardice, Dax acts as their defense attorney.

The suggested donation is \$5, which includes snacks and beverages. Afterward, join me and the audience in our post-film discussion.

Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries

On **Monday, September 17, 1:00 pm–3:00 pm**, join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyesen in the Adler Study, Room 514. We'll be showing the film, *Life In a Day* (2011).

What do you get when you ask the people of the world to chronicle a single day in their lives? You get 80,000 submissions, 4,500 hours of footage, from 192 countries. Kevin Macdonald has taken this raw material, all shot on July 24, 2010, and created a 90-minute paean to what it means to be human in the world today.

The film showing is free to members, and \$5 for guests.

Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On **Friday, September 21, from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm**, **Ethics and the Theater** will present *Defiance* (2005), by John Patrick Shanley. As in his earlier play, *Doubt*, Shanley takes on a hierarchical institution that demands unthinking obedience. The time is 1971 and the place the U.S. Marines' Camp Lejeune, in North Carolina. Tensions are high as combat veterans who have returned from Vietnam mix with recent recruits, and black soldiers with white. The commanding officer is determined to put an end to a spate of ugly racial incidents, seeing this both as his duty and as a path to promotion. When he enlists in the cause a young black officer and the new chaplain, human weakness collides with rigid official protocol and unforgiving codes of conduct.

Come at **6:30 pm** for a wine and cheese reception and, after the reading, participate in a discussion of the ethical issues of the play. The suggested donation is \$5. Ceremonial Hall.

New Fall Daytime Writing Class

Elaine Berman

After eight years of offering two evening **Joy of Personal Writing** workshops, we are going to try something new this fall. We will have our usual **Thursday** evening class, and we will also offer a daytime class, on **Tuesday** afternoons. This new **Tuesday** class

will meet from **12:30 pm to 2:30 pm**, beginning on **October 2**, in Room 507; the **Thursday** class will meet from **6:30 pm to 8:30 pm** starting on **October 4**, in Room 508. Both workshops will run for ten weeks.

As always, we welcome new members at our workshops—people who want to get started writing, as well as those with more experience who value belonging to a group of writers. If you'd like to read work by current and past workshop writers, please visit our website, www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space.

Course fees are \$160 for members and \$260 for nonmembers. For more information, call Yalitza Garcia at 212-874-5210, ext. 118.

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Jazz at NYSEC

Come to the NY Society on **Friday, September 28, 8:00 pm**, for an evening of great jazz in Ceremonial Hall. We'll hear renowned jazz pianist **Lenore Raphael** with **Kelly Friesen** on bass and **Howard Alden**, guitarist along with special guest **Jerry Mandel** on tenor sax.

General admission tickets are \$20; for members, seniors, and students tickets are \$15. For more information and to order tickets, contact: <http://nysecjazz.eventbrite.com>.



Lenore Raphael



Howard Alden



Kelly Friesen



Jerry Mandel

Moral Philosophy: The Basics

Dr. John Gurney

If you enjoy wrestling with ideas, join us for NYSEC’s new lecture/discussion series, **Moral Philosophy: The Basics**. We will discuss, critically analyze, and apply basic moral theories including Ethical Relativism, Ethical Egoism, Consequentialism, Kant’s Categorical Imperative, and others. We will study arguments and reasons offered by Ayn Rand, Peter Singer, Onora O’Neill, Gilbert Harman, and other contemporary philosophers.

I will lead the lectures, which will be held on **Wednesdays at 6:30 pm, on Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and Nov. 7**, in the Adler Study, Room 514. There is no charge, and no previous knowledge of philosophy is required. Written handouts will be provided. Come and participate in a most stimulating exchange of ideas.

To register for this course email ygarcia@nysec.org, or call her at 212-874-5210, ext. 118.

Close-up on Committees

Elinore Kaplan

The Environmental Stewardship Committee

“This land is your land...”

Core to NYSEC’s principles is “working together to make the world a better place.” One opportunity presented itself when Abe Markman and Paula Claycomb suggested NYSEC involvement in the first-ever **Moving Planet Day**, September 24, 2011.

Planting the Idea—On the website for 350.org, the organization that initiated Moving Planet Day, is an explanation for their name:

“...after leading climatologists observed rapid ice melt in the Arctic and other frightening signs of climate change, they issued a series of studies showing that the planet faced both human and natural disaster if atmospheric concentrations of CO2 remained above 350 parts per million (ppm)... Scientists have determined that to preserve our planet, we must reduce the amount of carbon dioxide (CO2) in the atmosphere from its current level of 392 ppm to below 350 ppm.”

Moving Planet Day would showcase the commitment to put demands for climate action into motion, “calling for the world to go beyond fossil fuels.” The result: over 2,000 events in 170 countries publicized the awareness and efforts to “move the planet forward to a clean-energy future.”

Thanks to the enthusiasm and efforts of Abe and Paula, NYSEC took part. They, Curt Collier, and about a dozen other members also fired-up about climate change met up at the Merchant’s Gate entrance to Central Park and gathered 700 signatures on petitions that were sent to the Associated Press, *USA Today*, and “60 Minutes.” They then joined with others, carrying placards to draw attention to the event, in front of the “Today” show studios of NBC to protest the media’s general lack of coverage of climate change, the science and the consequences. Later, they came together with participants in other actions of the day at a massive gathering in front of the UN.

It was an inspiring day, joining with tens of thousands of equally con-

cerned people worldwide to have their voices heard.

Taking Seed—Committees aren’t always born full force. There are seedlings that take root. Abe and Vince Brancato had long been involved with environmental issues, and Moving Planet Day was another seedling. From it came the **Environmental Stewardship Committee**. Members came together in March 2012, with Paula as Chair, to discuss their purpose and plan future activities involving our membership. Their focus regarding the environment, they decided, would be on education, advocacy and action, and personal ethics.

Members Patrick Arenas, Virginia Arnold, Bonnie Bean, Vince Brancato, Danny Choriki, Pat Cohen, Curt Collier, Ken Gans, Renee Goodstein, Mary Houts, Henryka Komanska, Andra Miller, Jamie Scott, and Monica Weiss, along with Paula and Abe, meet on the third Sunday of the month, after lunch, in Room 508.

Growing—The next international day of action was **Earth Day, April 22**. According to that website, “More than one billion people in 192 countries took part.” For its part, the Environmental Stewardship Committee organized three events.

The preceding Saturday, NYSEC hosted an Earth Day concert, featuring Red Molly and the Clearwater Walkabout Chorus—a rousing success. Contributions were made to Clearwater and LEAF, a youth-training program of The Nature Conservancy. On Earth Day, the committee brought in Paul Reale of the Climate Reality Project for an excellent presentation. And, later that week, along with a number of environmental organizations, NYSEC cosponsored a “Fracko-

nomics” forum to highlight the economic myths and environmental dangers of hydrofracking.

Concern about hydrofracking and its dangers has grown among the public, especially here in New York, where it is an imminent threat. The Environmental Stewardship Committee has decided to focus its efforts for the time being on preventing hydrofracking in the state. Monica Weiss says, “We’ve written letters to local newspapers, circulated online petitions, and called for the Governor to act responsibly.”

In June, Vince Brancato spoke on NYSEC’s “Ethics on the Air” radio show about the environmental and health dangers of hydrofracking. He says, “This is the most critical and immediate environmental issue facing New Yorkers at the moment,” and suggests that we all view the Josh Fox video online: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/blog/2012/06/josh-foxs-the-sky-is-pink-and-answers-that-should-lead-you-to-ask-more-questions>. (He made the film *Gasland*.)

The job of all organizations concerned with the environment is to raise everyone’s awareness of the problem and what they can do about it—namely, to reduce our “carbon footprint.” Paula says the committee is “discussing ways to minimize our daily impact on the environment, and we’ve begun placing a Green Tip in each week’s Sunday program.”

The 350 website tells us we’ve just experienced “the warmest May on record for the Northern Hemisphere—the 327th consecutive month in which the temperature of the entire globe exceeded the 20th-century average.” That’s all the more reason for us to be paying heed to the activities and

actions planned by the Environmental Stewardship Committee.

Your suggestions are always welcome; please speak with one of the committee members if you have a particular idea or comment.

Social Service Board News: Ethics in Action

The **Supervised Televisiting Program**, a collaboration between the **Social Service Board** and the Osborne Association of NY, has been set up in the SSB office. This new program allows children whose parents are incarcerated upstate to see and talk to their parent. Dr. Frank Corigliano is coordinating the program.

NYSEC’s **Women’s Shelter** has received a \$1,000 restricted donation from the Platters Group. In addition, an Annual Dinner was held on Tuesday, June 5, for the volunteers who have so tirelessly supported the women guests of our shelter throughout the current season.

Representatives of the **SSB** attended the annual **AEU Assembly** in Albany, June 14-17. SSB Chair **Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross** hosted a dinner for Commissioner **Dora Schriro** of NYC’s Department of Corrections. Comm. Schriro also spoke at the AEU Assembly. Also attending the Assembly was NYS Commissioner of Corrections **Brian Fischer**, who will be facilitating our Supervised Televisiting Program in the state prisons as it progresses. Dr. Harrison-Ross presented an award to former **Governor David Paterson**. Leader **Dr. Anne Klaeyen** presided at the June 16 morning program. SSB member **Bob**

Gangi received the AEU’s Elliott-Black Award at the dinner that evening, presented by NYSEC member and Friend of SSB Abe Markman.

Empowering Ethical Elders (EEE) continues to do well with its Thursday workshops. Negotiations are in progress with the Greater NY Links Program for the Elderly, AARP, and Fordham School of Social Work to collaborate on developing social justice projects for the elderly who are incarcerated and to expand attendance. **Dr. Tina Maschi**, professor of social work, specializing in senior services, who has joined NYSEC, will work with the EEE program.

The C.A.S.A. Project: SSB members have met with **Dr. Judy Wallach** and NYS Senator Daniel L. Squadron’s staff and visited the Ethical Culture Fieldston School and Dr. Wallach’s two new EC schools.

Regarding the SSB’s **Soccer Team Project**, SSB Vice-Chair **Dr. Ivan Quervalu** and **Henry Bunch**, Soccer Coach, have met with NY City Councilwoman **Julissa Ferreras**, who heads the NYC Council Parks Committee, to discuss City Council funding for practice space for the team.

Black Psychiatrists of Greater New York: **Dr. Sidney Hankerson**, who has been elected President of BPGNY, an organization collaborating with the SSB that has almost 50 young black psychiatrists in NYC as members, has also been approved by NYSEC’s Board of Trustees to become a member of the SSB.

Dr. Harrison-Ross received the Legacy Award from the Black Psychiatrists of America on April 21. SSB member **Rev. Willard Ashley** has received tenure at the New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

The Butterfly Project

Dr. Ruth Cohen

We are pleased to report that the Society has received a gift for our **Butterfly Project**, a framed poster signed by the artist LeRoy Neimann (1991).

This project raises funds to purchase artwork to be presented to institutions such as NYC Veterans Hospital to help veterans in the healing process.

Although it is an attractive poster, the committee is not certain that it is suitable for our use, and we would consider selling it.

Green Kitchen

Dr. Ruth Cohen

Regarding the **Green Kitchen Initiative Cookbook**, we have been conducting research and have found

some outlines used by independent publishers for self-publishing that will enable us to prepare the manuscript and recipes in an acceptable way. We are going forward, but slowly.

Thank you for your patience. Stay in touch. We are always interested in volunteers for manuscript typing and preparation. If you can volunteer, write to Yalitzta in the Leaders' Office, or to me.

Advocacy Forum

★ ★ Leadership in America 2012: ★ ★

★ A Conversation with Mayor Cory Booker, Newark, NJ
and Mayor Julián Castro, San Antonio, TX



**The New York Society for Ethical Culture and
Stanford New York Alumni Board**

Invite you to an extraordinary evening of
conversation with

**Mayor Cory Booker, Newark, NJ
and
Mayor Julián Castro, San Antonio, TX**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2012
 REGISTRATION: 6:00 – 7:00 P.M.
 RECEPTION: 6:30 – 7:30 P.M.
 PROGRAM: 7:30 – 9:00 P.M.
 At the New York Society for Ethical Culture
 2 West 64th Street, Central Park West
 New York, NY 10023
AUDITORIUM

Tickets:

Stanford Alumni
<http://alumni.stanford.edu/goto/bookercastro>

NYSEC Members
<https://alumni.stanford.edu/get/page/register>
 (Select GUEST and follow instructions for registration.)

★ ★

General Admission \$30
Stanford Young Alumni & NYSEC members \$20

For more information contact:
Jim Friend '75, jim@frienddevelopment.com
Matthew Schwieger '07, mlschwieger@gmail.com

Mayors Booker and Castro, Stanford University alumni from the classes of 1991 and 1996 respectively, lead two of America's largest and most challenging cities and are considered rising stars in the American political arena. This marks the second time that each has appeared at an event with the Stanford alumni in New York City.

Join us for this special event.

AEU Lay Leadership Summer School: A Brief Report

Abe Markman

Virginia Arnold, Bob Berger, Abe Markman, and Sharon Pope, members of the New York Society, joined 23 other EC members from around the country in a brilliantly designed week of learning, July 14 to July 21. Surrounded by the magnificent hills of North Carolina, we studied Ethical Humanism’s history, philosophy, and methods of face-to-face communication, mixed with breaks for singing, dancing, meditating, and exercising.

The photos below were contributed by Trish Taylor, of the EC Society of Austin, Texas.



Abe Markman (center), of NYSEC, brings merriment to Kate Lovelady, St. Louis Leader, and Jorge Pina of the Riverdale Ethical Culture Society, while reporting on a ceremony.

Bart Worden, AEU Executive Director, and Karina Rieke (seated), of the Riverdale EC Society, listen to Virginia Arnold, NYSEC member, report on a Day’s End Ceremony.



(L-R) Abe Markman and Bob Berger give it their all before calling it a night.



September 2012

Office hours for the month are: Monday-Friday, 9:00 am–6:00 pm
Shelter: Monday-Thursday, 7:30 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><u>Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries</u> Sept. 17 – <i>Life In a Day</i> (2011)</p> <p><u>Ethics and the Theater</u> Sept. 21 – <i>Defiance</i> (2005) by John Patrick Shanley</p>						1
2 10:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:15 pm – Coffee and bagels	3 Society Offices Closed Labor Day	4 October 2012 Newsletter Deadline 6:00 pm – Wisdom and World Affairs	5 1:00 pm – Strength Exercise Class	6 12:00 pm – Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 pm – Empowering Ethical Elders	7 7:00 pm – Ethics in Film: <i>Paths of Glory</i> (1957)	8 2:30 pm – Ethical Ad- ventures Boat Trip
9 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Brunch/Social Hour 1:30 pm – Ethics in the News 1:30 pm – Ethical Hospitality	10 6:30 pm – Board of Trustees	11	12 1:00 pm – Strength Exercise Class	13 12:00 pm – Leader Lunch Discussion	14 Membership Retreat Begins →	15 Membership Retreat → →
16 Membership Retreat Ends 10:00 am – Poetry Reading 10:00 am – Chorus Practice 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Brunch/Social Hour	17 1:00 pm – Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries 7:00 pm – Prospective Members' Reception	18 6:00 pm – Wisdom and World Affairs	19 1:00 pm – Strength Exercise Class	20 12:00 pm – Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 pm – Empowering Ethical Elders	21 7:00 pm – Ethics and the Theater: <i>Defiance</i>	22
23 10:00 am – Caring Committee 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Brunch/Social Hour 1:30 pm – Ethical Hospitality	24 7:30 pm – Advocacy Forum	25	26 1:00 pm – Strength Exercise Class	27 12:00 pm – Leader Lunch Discussion	28 8:00 pm – Jazz at NYSEC	29
30 10:00 am – Coffee 'n Chat 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Brunch/Social Hour 1:30 pm – Community Mem- bership Meeting						



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