



# ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

VOLUME 38 NUMBER 5

## SUNDAY PROGRAMS

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

### May 6 Meredith Sue Willis: "A Writer in the Digital Age: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly"

Meredith Sue Willis begins with her personal journey from a little girl making stapled, hand-illustrated horse stories through publishing novels with commercial presses and small presses to creating websites and online newsletters and literary journals. She will speak more generally about how computers and the Internet have changed writing as well as publishing, with references to issues like Net Neutrality, the Creative Commons versus Copyright; electronic books; types of publishing now, and how Facebook and other social media take the place of reading and creative writing for some people. There will be ample time for dialogue.

Meredith Sue Willis has published more than twenty books. Her new novel, *Their Houses*, is coming out in August 2018, from WVU Press.

### May 13 Danielle Samake, "From the Local to the Global: A Teen's Passion for Human Rights"

In March, Danielle represented the nonprofit organization *Girls Learn International (GLI)* as a student delegate to the 62nd annual *Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations*. She is passionate about human rights work, and has co-lead the club *People On Women's Equity and Rights (POWER)* at her school since September 2016. She will discuss how this commitment was sparked and the experiences and the learning it has generated.

Visit our website: [www.essexethical.org](http://www.essexethical.org)

MAY 2018

Danielle Samake is a junior at Columbia High School in Maplewood. She has been involved with the Ethical Culture Society since curiosity brought her in to hear a platform, and she got enlisted as an assistant in the new Family Education Program.

### May 20 ANNUAL MEETING

Join us May 20th as we hold our annual meeting. Enjoy bagels/bread and coffee and a chance to catch up with friends before the meeting. Meeting starts promptly at **10:00 am**: an overview of the past year and the vision for the year ahead, plus reports from the society's president and committee chairs, and the election of officers for the 2018-19 season.

#### Family Education Program:

As a community the Educational Initiative will review the work we've done this past year and share with you our exciting plans for the upcoming school year. Students will be doing the same work upstairs. They will be examining this year's learnings and explore possibilities for future explorations. Your voice matters. Your voice is important. Please come share your ideas, new and old, so together our Educational Initiative may grow through us all. See you on the 20th!

### May 27 Memorial Day Colloquy: What We Honor and How We Honor It

#### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

#### Family Educ. Fundraiser, May 9

Please join us Wednesday evening, May 9th at 7:00 pm for a fundraiser for the Family Education program featuring Joe Jencks. Joe is a Chicago based award winning singer/songwriter. He is a noted vocalist and has been on the international folk circuit for

over 18 years. Joe's music blends his Irish roots and working-class upbringing with conservatory training. His songs reflect heart and soul and are inspired by a strong social conscious and spiritual exploration. (<http://www.joejencks.com/>). Joe has performed at festivals like the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival, Kerrville, Mariposa and Old Songs to venues like Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall.

Tickets \$15.00 for members, \$20.00 for nonmembers. Reservations are recommended, seating is limited. Call (973) 763-1905 to make your reservation. Please leave your name and number of seats you'd like. — Amy Blake

#### Folk Friday, May 11, 7:30 pm

Sing along and jam. Bring acoustic string and rhythm instruments. Join in playing, singing or listening. Bring refreshments to share. 7:30 pm, second Fridays of the month through June. Everyone invited!

#### SOCIAL ACTION COMM.

by Meredith Sue Willis, chair; Also attending: Diane Beeny, Barbara Cotler, Irene Dunsavage, Zia Durrani, Jackie Hershops and Betty Levin

Activities have included support for the *March for Our Lives* March 24, 2018; conference calls on various issues with the AEU; work for the Society; and singing at demonstrations and vigils.

The chair reminded the group of the growing Families for Ethical Education initiative, which now has 8-10 regular kids with others also coming. The platforms on those days often have between 30 and 40 people in attendance. Betty reported that this has led to several new members and the

# Ethical Culture Society of Essex County

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Jim White, *Leader Emeritus*  
Zia Durrani, *President*  
Jacqueline Herships, *Vice President*  
Jeanine Rosh, *Treasurer*  
E. Betty Levin, *Secretary*  
*Trustees*  
Esther Barcun  
Diane Beeny  
Elaine Durbach-Norstein  
William Graves  
Lisa Novemsky  
Morris Silver  
*EC Monthly Programs Editor*  
Elaine Durbach  
*Editor/Graphics:* Howard Gilman  
*Office Manager:* Liz Cunningham  
*Office hours*  
Monday–Friday 8:15 to 9:45 am  
Sunday 9:30 am to 12 pm



## The Ethical Culture Society

is a religious and educational fellowship that seeks to achieve the ethical life without dogma; to develop the highest values in human relationships in ourselves, our families, and our community; and to elicit the best in others, thereby eliciting the best in ourselves.

Ethical Culture is a humanist religion — come and visit! Did you know that we perform weddings, baby namings and other humanist ceremonies? Call 973-763-1905

## Newsletter

Opinions offered in this publication are those of the authors. Newsletter items must be received by the eighth of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition. Editor reserves right to edit for length, clarity and content. *If you put something for the newsletter in the EC office's mail slot or in the mail, please also email or call me, especially if time-sensitive.* — Howard Gilman, newsletter email: gilman.howard@gmail.com.

possibility of more. The chair also reminded everyone that our Local Hero Award for 2018 is going to Bennett Zurofsky, labor and immigration lawyer and leader of Solidarity Singers. The presentation (and a visit from the Solidarity Singers) will take place June 10, 2018.

Next meeting: Sunday, May 13.

## Take the First Step to Becoming More Environmentally Sustainable

by Esther Barcun

As our Ethical Culture Society becomes increasingly aware of sustainable practices to help our environment, we are all called upon to incorporate sustainable practices in our own personal lives. This can be a process of learning more about the issues and making commitments to do what we can to help. As a guideline, the mantra is: **Refuse** (if you don't need it, don't buy it), **Reduce** (buy less, use less, waste less), **Re-use/Repurpose** (re-use your own stuff or take advantage of second hand marketplaces like Craig's List, thrift or consignment shops, or clothing and equipment exchanges), and **Recycle** (learn what your community recycles and be diligent about complying). What is important is that **we take the first step**. Making even one small change can start the journey to living a more sustainable life. Below are only some suggestions.

**Conserve energy:** install a programmable thermostat; adjust the thermostat (as little as 1 degree) higher in the summer or lower in the winter; program the thermostat to a more energy efficient setting if no one will be at home during the day or evening; keep doors and windows closed when the A/C is on; gradually replace incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs; use mostly cold water for washing clothes. (in most cases hot water is not necessary); caulk drafty windy and doors.

**Conserve water:** capture the ice cold water from the hot water faucet and use for flushing or watering plants; turn water off while brushing teeth until it is time to rinse and do the same when washing dishes; run the dishwasher only with a full load; use a rain barrel to collect water that can be used for lawns and gardens; create landscaping that does not require excessive watering.

**Conserve gas:** walk and bike more; efficiently organize shopping trips and errands; carpool; dedicate some time during the day/

week/month without driving; maintain driving speed no higher than 55 mph on the highway; avoid quick accelerations and braking; drive a fuel efficient car if possible.

**Protect the environment:** eliminate or reduce meat from your diet, especially beef and lamb since ruminants create a lot of methane gas, which is an environmental pollutant; use glass containers to store leftover food, avoiding unnecessary plastic wrap; use reef-safe sunblocks; avoid micro bead facial cleansers; stop buying plastic water bottles, instead install a permanent water filter on the kitchen cold water line, or use a Brita filter; compost organic material to reduce the waste stream; avoid disposable plastic ware; eliminate or reduce the use of single use, disposable plastic bags and packaging, and remember to bring reusable bags to the market; read and understand labels to avoid buying products that contain chemicals that are toxic to human and environmental health and sustainability (e.g. products that contain neonicotinoids that are killing our bees and butterflies); buy organic (healthier); buy locally produced items (saves the cost of long distance transportation); buy clothing that is produced according to fair labor standards and sustainable practices; buy items of good value rather than cheap (cheap usually comes at a huge cost to the health and safety of the workers who made them and often endangers our environment).

**Be an advocate:** ask for the changes you want to see; lobby supermarkets to use paper/cardboard packaging instead of plastic (Whole Foods does) and to provide bins to take back plastic bags; ask your local government to provide curbside pick-up of organic waste or provide community composting sites; write to legislators supporting regulations that keep our food, water, soil, clothing, and personal products safe for all living things; discuss these issues in your social groups to spread the word; support organizations that are working to help our environment.

What else can *you* think of?

## “Vacationing” at the Ethical Culture Estates — a Note of Thanks

by E. Betty Levin

My “travel agent,” the Millburn Police Department, escorted me to my comfortable retreat as power failed at my Sagamore

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 11 am - E. Betty Levin: Becoming 92: I Reach, I Learn, I Grow-- A Work in Progress	30	MAY 2018 1 11 am - Chair Yoga	2	3	4	5
6 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 11 am - Meredith Sue Willis: "A Writer in the Digital Age: The Good, Bad, and the Ugly"	7	8 11 am - Chair Yoga	9 1 pm - ECSEC Board	10	11 7:30 pm - Folk Friday	12
13 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 11 am - Danielle Samake: "From the Local to the Global: A Teen's Passion for Human Rights" 12 pm - Social Action	14	15 11 am - Chair Yoga	16	17	18	19
20 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 10 am - Annual Meeting: overview of past year, vision for year ahead, election of officers; Family Education Program	21	22 11 am - Chair Yoga	23	24	25	26
27 9 am - Tai Chi Chuan 11 am - Memorial Day Colloquy - What We Honor and How We Honor It	28	29 11 am - Chair Yoga	30	31	1	2

Road home during a March destructive snowstorm. We stopped first at the newsletter editor's home to drop off an already tardy article. His astonished response to the official auto in his driveway: "I've never before received this impressive company."

Elaine and Marshall set me up in comfortable quarters, private bath, with a view overlooking my Final Resting Place, (my ashes shall be interred in the rear yard Peace Garden, hopefully with an evergreen tree). I experienced the privilege of getting to know them in a totally different setting. Their son Gabe also as he left early each morning for classes. Meals catered by Master Chef Marshall, luscious, a banquet of multi-courses fit for a humanist! Between chores, he conscientiously monitored the computer to discover power restoration, also driving up to Sagamore to check the energy dial.

Elaine and I shared many cozy moments as I discovered the very creative articles knitted by her mother and ceramics sculpted by her deceased sister. Note the colorful sweaters Elaine adorns — often a product knitted by Mom. In free time, Elaine struggled with a crotchety radio to tune in my coveted WQXR to hear classical music and periodic news. She set up a comfy seat for watching some TV together, viewing PBS previews of "Little Women" to be offered this spring. Five days of this loveliness, even as I bemoaned the loss of time at home for my many chores.

Another family also sought refuge from the storm. Marshall and Elaine set them up comfortably for that one night as well.

I experienced many unexpected bonuses including a visit to the Family Education Library where I discovered the C.S. Lewis "Narnia" volumes. My

eldest granddaughter, Stephanie, often spoke of them warmly, a pleasure I had heretofore missed. [Incidentally, she's a fourth generation Ethical Culturist, living life as a conscientious humanist, employed as a public-interest attorney in New York City.]

I also visited the offices of the South Orange-Maplewood Coalition on Race housed on our second floor. Ethical Culture member Meredith Sue Willis was one of the founders of this notable organization.

My five-day "vacation" offered me a refreshing experience, unexpectedly rich. Can anyone ask for more when rescued from an uncomfortable situation ripe with hazards? Now back to my Psychotherapy practice and Ethical Culture Membership duties, arranging a Saturday afternoon "Tea" gathering for new members. Would you enjoy being invited to the next one?

# ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

516 Prospect Street  
Maplewood, New Jersey 07040

For information, call 973-763-1905; visit our web  
site: [www.essexethical.org](http://www.essexethical.org); email: [ecsec.nj@gmail.com](mailto:ecsec.nj@gmail.com)

**Collections:** Please remember to bring canned or boxed food items for the  
**Food Pantry** box in our front hall. Donations go to the NJ Food Bank.

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