



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

VOLUME 29 NUMBER 4

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DECEMBER 2009

SUNDAY MORNING PLATFORMS

Dec 4 Boe Meyerson, *"The Wit and Wisdom of Abe Lincoln."*

Boe will explore and describe some of the wittiest and most heart warming stories of America's great emancipator. Boe Meyerson is the Leader Emeritus of the Ethical Culture Society of Essex County. She holds Masters Degrees from University of California, Berkeley,



in Literature and from Columbia University in Philosophy where she also taught Humanities.

Dec 13 Louisa "Dweezil" Lubiak and Julius "Clown Chips" Carallo, *"A Sassy Solstice Saturnalia!"*

In ancient Rome the Winter Solstice was celebrated with a feast of Saturn, called the Saturnalia, when the Roman world engaged in merrymaking and the exchanging of gifts. Saturnalia celebrated the sun overcoming the darkness of winter, the bounty of the year's harvest now stocking the larder, and the new wine ready to be served. The festival also allowed a temporary reversal of social status (slave over master, child over adult), revealing the virtues of law and order over the evils of disobedience and chaos. Join Clown Chips and Dweezil in a cheeky feast of mirth and myth as we celebrate the solstice season with a Sassy Solstice Saturnalia!



Louisa Lubiak is an ECS Friend, a naturalist and a performance artiste. She works for the NJ Department of Environmental Protection

in Trenton. Having a background in classical voice and opera, and needing a creative outlet to balance her technical work, she attended Mooseburger Clown Arts Camp in Buffalo, MN, and took workshops on physical comedy in NYC. Louisa now performs as "Dweezil the Clown" in various venues ranging from children's birthday parties to parades and stage shows. She also plays in a Cajun band just for the fun of it!

Julius Carallo moved from Brooklyn, NY, to Roselle, NJ in 1988 and soon after started studying the art of clowning, magic, juggling and acting from notable instructors. As "Clown Chips", Carallo began entertaining with the Alain Zerbini Family Circus in 2004 and with the Cole Brothers Circus in 2008. Carallo is also President of the Humpty Dumpty Association, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that promotes brain injury prevention, and is the C.E.O. of A Mobile Clown Theatre. He produced several stage shows that include *A Clown Wedding Show*, *Kings to Center Rings*, and *Fool Circle*. His new production, *I'm An Original On Broadway*, directed by "Jingle Jaynie" Jayne Bierman, will feature new upstarts along with professional entertainers.



Dec 20 Anne Creter, *"Working at The United Nations for A Culture of Peace"*

The Peace Alliance campaign for a U.S. Department of Peace is part of a worldwide movement to promote the Culture of Peace. The "Culture of

Peace" Working Group of the United Nations NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns is leading an international civil society "peoples" effort to pass a UN Resolution in the General Assembly encouraging ministries or departments of peace in all member states. Anne will show a power point presentation of the UN Resolution and how you can help plant seeds for its passage.

Anne Creter, MSW, is a licensed social worker, retired from a 30-year public service career in welfare protective services. As NGO representative to the United Nations for Operation Peace Through Unity, she is co-chair of the "Culture of Peace" Working Group of the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Con-



cerns NY. She serves as UN Liaison to the Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace, from having been District Team Leader

in her congressional district, as well as New Jersey state co-coordinator of the U.S. Department of Peace campaign.

Adds Betty Levin: "We have an opportunity to shift into HIGH, to help create a Culture of Peace. ... Young people, the next generation, are part of this thinking. Senior citizens have a fine opportunity to support and promulgate ideas that can leave a truly better world for our children and grandchildren. Join us (continued on next page)

Platforms begin at 11 a.m. All are welcome. Platforms are subject to change without notice. For information, contact the Society office, 973-763-1905.

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



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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 EIGHTH 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 (gilman.howard@gmail.com). 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.

Ethical Culture Society
of Essex County,
516 Prospect St.,
Maplewood, NJ 07040
973-763-1905
ethicalessex@netscape.com

Our web site: www.essexethical.org

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

Attention members! Please submit your email addresses to ethicalessex@netscape.com to receive newsletter and other special event notices.

on Dec 20 to discover how you can make a difference and to lead to a rededication of our Peace Site with real vitality."

Dec 27 Open discussion: "A year of re-definition."

Dec 1, 15 and 29 Writers' Group

A very enjoyable Writers' Group has been meeting at the Society every other Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. Please join us if you have a desire to pick up pen and paper. For further details, please call Mira Stillman, 973-762-5152.

Dec 11 Folk Friday at Ethical

Singalong with friends Lucky, Dusty, Rusty & Tio Pete, every second Friday of the month at the Society. No admission fee. Bring acoustic string and rhythm instruments, join in playing with us; bring some refreshments to share. Ethical Culture Society, 516 Prospect St., Maplewood; 7:30 p.m. (973) 763-1905 or 763-8293; lnovemsky@comcast.net

Message from Boe Meyerson

I would like to raise the question of what exactly is an Ethical Culture Leader. I have chosen to address this in response to an article in our November newsletter titled "Leader of the Month." In it a suggestion is made that since the current Leader is now designated to an Emeritus status that until such time as a Leader replacement is found, each Board member should volunteer to be a Leader of the Month.

This struck me as a very odd proposal which I had difficulty understanding. Let me explain my confusion with a hypothetical situation. A Leader is by definition a clergy person. If a Catholic Priest was not available to a congregation, do you think that the members would propose that selected members function as a Priest of the Month? Do you think that a Jewish congregation would designate a Rabbi of the month to be selected among the lay members of the Congregation? If a couple in the society wished to marry, how could they go to the lay Leader of the month to be married? If a congregation lost its Law-

yer, would they search for a non-lawyer to be the Lawyer of the month?

I would be very interested in any member's views on this question. Feel free to email me. — Boe Meyerson

Honoring Boe's Leadership

Speech given at the October 3 gathering to honor Boe Meyerson by Katharine Archibald, CEO / Executive Director of the AEU

If you think of a person's life as a great work of art, I would like to celebrate the authenticity and great character of Boe Meyerson and the way in which she has lived a meaningful life. Like any magnificent painting where the prism of light shifts throughout the day to reveal new perspectives, I see in Boe a life of service and leadership which was uniquely her own.

And it is from my vantage point that I hear from representatives of the Ethical Culture Movement across the United States that I pay her tribute.

She has valued, understood and educated us all about what was unique, distinctive and incredibly rare about Ethical Culture.

When decisions came before the AEU Board of Directors about our religious identity and where and with whom we joined in coalition with outside groups she firmly



stated the place of Ethical Culture between Secular and Interfaith.

She has been passionate about consistently and steadfastly representing the Ethical Society of Essex and the National Leaders Council at every AEU Board Meeting. Even when she had broken her ankle she endeavored to make AEU Board Meetings a priority in her life.

She has been equally passionate that this Society should be (continued on next page)

represented at every National AEU Assembly.

When the officers of this Society changed every year and the AEU Office struggled to find out who your new officers were, it was Boe and Betty Levin who made sure this Ethical Society stayed connected to the National Movement. And for at least the last four Assemblies, Boe single-handedly walked delegate votes from the Ethical Society of Essex into the AEU Assembly. She simply knew how important it was that your voices be heard. AEU now has new points of contact in Terri Seuss, Lisa Novemsky and Marty Cotter. But it is through both Boe and Betty Levin that we have been able to make a successful transition.

In my closing tribute to Boe, I would like to honor her deep intellect, her passion, her spunk, her bright, upbeat and can-do attitude.

It is difficult for many women to have the opportunity to have risen to leadership positions within the National Leaders Council. Boe has modeled a kind of authenticity and uniqueness which will long remain in my memory. And so, I am indebted to her and to all that she has given to connect all of us locally and nationally.

Most importantly, she seems to have built in this Ethical Community a sense of what it takes for an entire Ethical Society to ACT ETHICALLY. I close with my tribute to the Ethical Society of Essex for all you have done for both Boe Meyerson and to advance our national Ethical Culture Movement.

Caring Committee Partners II

We are all a Caring Committee, in a manner of speaking, as we try to stay connected and supportive at our Society. The “Buddy System,” as suggested by Susan Kennedy, connects us to another member of our choice with whom we feel an affinity (or someone we would like to know better). Simply approach this member of our commu-

nity and connect. Nothing complicated or over involved but only an awareness that your buddy hasn't been appearing at our Society for a significant period of time. A simple phone call to your buddy will establish if there is illness or other serious reason for absence. If serious, pass the information along to the Caring Committee Chair for follow-up calls or perhaps visit, as helpful. *Of course, all this is strictly in confidence.*

Thanks for your help.

— Betty Levin, Caring Committee

FROM THE UN Climate Change, Poverty and The UN

Dr. Sylvain Ehrenfeld, IHEU representative to the UN and Temma Ehrenfeld

All economic development is based on using more energy. China, for example, is building a new coal fired power station every four days. It recently surpassed the US as the largest contributor of carbon dioxide emissions. Within 20 years the global total of cars is predicted to double to over two billion.

At the same time, scientists have agreed that the world needs to reduce carbon dioxide emissions more than 25 percent by 2020 and more than 80 per cent by 2050. It is a huge and expensive task.

Climate change is a global problem that no nation can solve by itself. The UN has been central in raising public consciousness. It initiated the inter-governmental panel report on climate change (IPCC) with 2500 scientists from over 130 countries, which concluded that there has been a marked increase in atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases, mainly as a result of human activity. The UN Kyoto Treaty went into effect in 2005 when 55 countries agreed to cut their carbon dioxide emissions by 5 per cent of their 1990 levels by 2015. Disastrously, the United States, China, India and Brazil all failed to sign. In December 2009,

the United Nations will sponsor a conference in Copenhagen to win their cooperation. The cost of adapting to a low carbon world now is estimated to be one per cent a year of the worlds GDP (global domestic product) — around 500 billion dollars for the next 10 years. If delayed, the cost could rise to 20 per cent. Humanity as a whole must look ahead 50 years, overcoming short-term political concerns.

Any agreement in Copenhagen must include the United States and permit continued economic growth in the developing countries. It also must help the countries whose people are most vulnerable to climate change. Global warming will hurt all of us, but especially poor people living in parts of the world vulnerable to drought and monsoons such as in India and low lying islands in the Caribbean and the Pacific. They have limited resources to mitigate the effects.

The 2009 American Ethical Union Assembly adopted a strong resolution urging a reduction in our carbon footprint and sustainable and equitable use of carbon releasing energy sources. The UN is also committed to ending poverty: We still live in a world where 800 million people go to bed hungry, 15 million children starve to death each year and many die from preventable diseases.

The challenge in Copenhagen can be summed up by SUSTAINABILITY, EQUITY AND MITIGATION. We need all three to succeed. How we adapt will change the way we live, use energy and relate to the earth.

The world's hope for ending poverty without polluting the planet lies in cheap, clean energy, the business opportunities of the future. Venture capitalists are already investing billions in new technologies, which can be used around the world. Here again, China is racing ahead of the United States in its drive to go solar. As a Chinese proverb states “One generation *(continued)*

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516 Prospect Street
Maplewood, New Jersey 07040

Phone: 973-763-1905
Email: ethicalessex@netscape.com
Web site: www.essexethical.org

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ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY NEWSLETTER · DECEMBER 2009

U.N. (continued)

plants a tree, the next generation gets the shade.”

New Jersey Coalition of Reason

As the most densely populated state, New Jersey is awash in diverse ethnic and religious communities. Less celebrated is the fact that over 1 million Jerseyites out of 9 million identify themselves as either non-believers, agnostics, or atheists (based on the recent Pew U.S. Religious Landscape Survey and U.S. Census data). Now organizations across the state have come together to raise the visibility and sense of unity among local groups in the community of reason, to create a dialogue on the role of nontheists in New Jersey, and to improve the way that humanists are perceived by their New Jersey neighbors. Say Hello to NJCoR!

“Are you good without God? Millions are.” These words are part of a coordinated multi-organizational advertising campaign designed to raise awareness about people who don’t believe in a god. The four-city campaign includes a billboard on the New Jersey Turnpike just north of Newark, subway ads in New York City and Boston and a billboard in Chicago.

“The point of the billboard is to reach out to the millions of humanists, atheists and agnostics living in the United States,” explained Fred Edwords, head of the United Coalition of Reason. “Nontheists sometimes don’t realize there’s a community out there for them because they’re inundated with religious messages at every turn. So we hope this will serve as a beacon

and let them know they aren’t alone.”

Reaching out to nontheists isn’t the only goal of the campaign. “We want people to know they can be good without belief in a god,” said Ken Karp, coordinator of the New Jersey Coalition of Reason. “There is a lot of misinformation out there about us. But we humanists, agnostics and atheists are just like everyone else. We’re your friends, neighbors and family members. We care about our communities and are true to our values.

The New Jersey billboard officially launches New Jersey CoR. The billboard is one of many that have appeared around the country this year.

For additional details on the New Jersey Coalition of Reason, go to www.njcor.org.

