



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 6

Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org

FEBRUARY 2012

FEBRUARY PLATFORMS

Platforms begin at 11 a.m. All are welcome. Platforms are subject to change without notice. For information, call 973-763-1905. Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org



Feb. 5 Zia Durrani & Anja Moen, *“Women in war, women in crises”*

Zia Durrani and Anja Moen will describe the organization “Women for Women International.” (*Originally scheduled for Dec. 11*).

The Board has decided to sponsor a woman (sister) in a war zone through the organization Women for Women International. This organization helps women survivors of war rebuild their lives. In 1993, the founder, Zainab Salbi, started her work in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since then, the organization has helped more than 316,000 women survivors of wars. The organization helps through education and access to income-generating opportunities, among other things. The organization was awarded the 2006 Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize.

Zia and Anja will describe this organization and the situation of women in war zones, through information from the organization, and also from two books we have studied:

Half the Sky by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn. This book describes women’s crises around the world and also gives inspiration and practical steps for action.

A Thousand Sisters by Lisa J. Shannon, about Lisa’s own struggle to live a meaningful life and thereby commit to helping other women. She organizes runs for women and sets a goal of raising a million dollars for women in Congo — the worst place on earth to

be a woman. She travels to Congo to meet some of the sisters she sponsors and other women in the program. This book will change your perspective on human cruelty as well as human kindness.

Join us to start our Ethical sponsorship of a sister in Congo. This program will give us the opportunity to study other places in the world and help a woman with whom we can become personally involved.

Feb. 12 Martha Gallahue, *“Through the Eyes of Another”*

Martha will describe her experience at the Climate Change Conference in Durban, SA, through the eyes of a Hindu couple whom she stayed with while there. Her purpose is to illustrate the many layers of perspectives that interface at a World Conference and how this mix can shape a more cosmopolitan world.



Martha, our Interim Leader, is a licensed psychoanalyst in private practice, Main Representative at the UN for National Ethical Service and serves on the faculty of National Peace Academy.

Feb. 19 Bennet Zurofsky, *“Occupy Plutocracy”*

Bennet’s talk will focus on how the USA has become a plutocracy, how that manifests itself in the laws of taxation, labor, and free speech (among other places), and the significance of the Occupy movement in trying to end the plutocracy. At least one song will be included.

When he is not in his office or a courtroom, you can frequently find Bennet on a picket line, supporting worker

and community struggles, working for peace and responsible government, defending free speech rights, or raising fighting spirits as the Director of the Solidarity Singers of the New Jersey Industrial Union Council

Over the years, his primary practice has been the representation of many international and local unions. He has also helped hundreds of unrepresented employees in efforts to obtain justice from their employers. He regularly provides *pro bono* representation and advice in support of activists working for progressive change throughout New Jersey.



Bennet lives in Maplewood with his wife Susan J. Vercheak.

<http://zurofskylaw.com/bio.php>

Feb. 26 Bill and Margaret Edwards, *“Household Cats as Pet Therapists”*

Margaret and Bill Edwards will discuss how their cats visit with people in nursing homes, adult day care centers, hospice and humane education programs. They will describe the qualities they bring to this special service work. Two of the cats coming along with them will demonstrate ‘paws on’ for those in attendance who would like a



visit. There will be time in the presentation for observations and questions.

Margaret and Bill have been involved with their cats in pet therapy since 2000. They are affiliated with the Delta Society’s “Pet Partner” program, St. Hubert’s Animal Welfare’s “Paws for People” program and the Love on a Leash Foundation.

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



Martha Gallahue, *Interim Leader*
Boe Meyerson, *Leader Emeritus*
James White, *Leader Emeritus*

Anja Moen, *President*
Lisa Novemsky, *Vice President*
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Betty Levin
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Zia Durrani

EC Monthly newsletter writers/
contributors: Elaine Durbach, Anja Moen.
Editor/graphics: Howard Gilman

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.

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

Attention members! Please submit your email addresses to essex@essexethical.org to receive newsletter and other special event notices.

HUMAN FAITH GROUP

This month, here at the Essex society, we will be starting a human faith group — a dynamic experience, free-of-charge, to be led by Calvin Chatlos.



It was Alice Gilman's response (*see sidebar*) to Susan Teshu's Platform, "One Year of Living Ethically," that stimulated my memory of the Human Faith Workshop.

In the subsequent discussion, Alice invoked the question of how we validate our creed, "bringing out the best in others and thereby in ourselves." My valued memories came to the fore of learning and acting in the best tradition of being ethical.

Based on faith in one another, the workshop was brilliantly conceived by member Calvin Chatlos, a humanist psychiatrist. Eight members gathered periodically to explore and support one another in acting on our faith in our Ethical Culture beliefs. Giant steps took hold. Individuals — and our Society — flourished as rarely before by acting on the precepts of our Movement. We authenticated its true meaning and derived personal satisfaction.

This group is not a therapy group.

Calvin has generously agreed to lead a new Human Faith Group again, providing we have a minimum of five participants, meeting bi-weekly, starting in March. Although six members have already expressed interest, we wanted to present this opportunity for others to join this potent experience. Both Members and Friends of the Society are welcome. We have identified with the Ethical Movement for a reason; here is an opportunity to grant its message more meaning. We shall meet for an organizational gathering and to respond to questions on Sunday, February 12, after the Platform. The more complete schedule follows.

Feel free to telephone if you have any questions: 973-763-1033.

— *E. Betty Levin*

Human Faith Meeting Schedule

Sun., Feb. 12. Organizational meeting (after the platform)

Sat., Mar. 10, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. A jump-start for the workshop, facilitated by Calvin Chatlos.

Ongoing schedule:

Twice monthly with Calvin facilitating only one session monthly; alternative session facilitated with Calvin's guidance.

8 Thursday meetings, 7–9 p.m.:

March 15 & 29	May 10 & 24
April 12 & 26	June 14 & 28

Your only cost is your commitment to "being Ethical Culture." Calvin is contributing his services *pro bono*. (For full details, call *E. Betty Levin* at 973-763-1033)

J. Calvin Chatlos, Jr., MD

is Board Certified in general psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry and addiction psychiatry and is certified by ASAM (American Society of Addiction Medicine). He is also a Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

in re Human Faith Project, see:
<http://www.humanismtoday.org/vol13/chatlos.html>



"...elicit the best..."

In the year I became an Ethical Culture member, c.1992, I went to the AEU (American Ethical Union) Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. Of all the workshops offered, I chose Calvin Chatlos's. At that time, I didn't know who Calvin Chatlos was or what his workshop covered. But what I learned there became the cornerstone of my life as an Ethical Culturist.

"Act to elicit the best in others and therefore in ourselves?" What does this mean? How do we know what their best is and if we've elicited it or not? How does their best interweave with our best?

What I took away from the workshop was the understanding that the dictum "Act to elicit the best in others..." is not what *I* think is the other person's best, but what *they* think is their best. This makes all the difference in using and understanding our central dictum.

— *Alice Robinson-Gilman*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

February might be my favorite month. If you live in the north it is the month that gives you the daylight back. The sun really comes back with strength — making the days much longer.



It is time to get out and do all the things the dark months of winter, December and January, prohibited. I invite you to come out and engage yourself more in ECS this month and throughout the Spring.

We have social events like Folk Friday on the second Friday from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., our personal discussion group on the second Tuesday from 12 to 1:30 p.m., 3rd Saturday Art — this month on the first Friday, Feb. 3rd — from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., as well as other activities. These events and activities make it possible to get to know other members on a new, deeper level.

A way to get even more engaged is to become a Board member or volunteer on any one of our committees, the Social Action Committee or the Membership Committee, as examples.

And it is time to start thinking of attending the National AEU Assembly June 14 to 17, and the Ethical Summer School, July 14 to 21. Please contact me if you are interested in attending either, or even *think* you might be interested. I have attended both. I learned many organizational things at the Assembly. This year it will be in Albany, NY. I got a huge dose of inspiration from the Summer School in the beautiful mountains of North Carolina. I also made new friends at both events, and got a good feeling of being a member of something greater than ourselves. AEU has lots of resources. I invite each of us to take advantage of them.

See you at Platform.

—Anja Moen, President

FROM THE UN

Violence Against Women

The Charter of the United Nations affirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human individual and in the equal rights of men and women. In 1979 The General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDA). Although this convention sets forth the responsibility of all governments, it is yet to be observed with the necessary political commitment and resources.

The current Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon has been proactive on the condition of women and girls, by raising public awareness and initiated a campaign, UNITE, to end violence against women. He has also created a new UN body coordinating the UN's work on women called UNWOMEN.

Despite much public awareness, violence against women and girls is a widespread violation of human rights and is seriously under-reported. Such violence takes many forms. Globally, 6 out of 10 women are likely to be sexually assaulted during their lifetimes. Female genital mutilation affects millions of girls worldwide and every year millions of women and girls suffer some form of violence. These outrages include domestic violence, rape, dowry-related killing, sexual violence during armed conflict, and trafficking — a multibillion-dollar-a-year business. (For more information see book by Kristof and WuDunn: *Half the Sky*).

It must be kept in mind that women make up nearly two-thirds of the world's illiterates; women are two-thirds of the world's poor, they perform two-thirds of the world's work and produce 50 percent of the food, while at the same time earning only 10 percent of the income and owning one percent of the property. Although the condition of women has improved, one of the roots

of violence against women is on-going and persistent discrimination.

In keeping with the persistent violence against women around the world, the UN has instituted the UN Trust Fund to provide funds to support innovative projects world-wide. Since it was initiated in 1997, this fund has delivered over \$78 million to 339 projects in 127 countries and applications are on the increase. In 2011, the fund received over 2,500 applications requesting nearly \$1.2 billion for crucial programs in 123 countries. The increased demand shows a growing interest in ending the devastating violence against women and at the same time presents an important venue for action.

Currently, projects under UN Trust Fund in Cambodia, Nepal and Uganda are helping women rebuild their lives following acid attacks. In India it provides up-to-date information on the Domestic Violence Act. This enables judges, victims and police officers, to actively enforce the new law against domestic violence. In Ethiopia, the UN Trust Fund project is addressing such traditional practices as female genital mutilation and early enforced marriage. Many projects expand so as to include survivor access including legal assistance, psychological counseling and, very importantly, health care.

It must be noted, that some cross-cultural studies of wife abuse show that there are communities that are free of such violence. The existence of these small communities indicate that violence against women is not an inevitable result of male biology or male sexuality. These data indicate that views of masculinity are changing and some projects have now developed programs promoting healthy models of masculinity.

The oppression of women is immoral and totally unacceptable. The underutilization of womens' talents undermines *(continued next page)*

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the needy and books for children.*



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(continued from page 3) societal progress. A poetic image expressing the basic point is: “A bird flies on two wings. A bird cannot fly if one wing is broken.”

(To learn more about the UN Trust Fund and to make a contribution, www.lifefreeofviolence.org)

Dr. Sylvain Ehrenfeld, the IHEU and National Ethical Service representative to the UN and Dr. Reba Goodman, member of the Ethical Culture Society and Professor of Pathology

Piano Recital Friday, Feb. 3 7:30 to 9:30 p.m

On the first Friday in February, *3rd Saturday Arts* presents free of charge, “Students of Birgit Matzerath & Their Teacher” in a recital illustrating the question: “What does it take to play the piano?”

A “glimpse behind the scenes” of the learn-



ing process, presenting different levels, different tasks like technical exercises, improvisation, composition, addition to repertoire, while pointing out the benefits of learning to play a musical instrument.

Birgit Matzerath has maintained a private piano studio in Maplewood NJ since 2009. She holds a degree in Piano, and a teaching degree in Music and English from Hochschule für Musik, Cologne, and the University of Cologne in Germany. She taught

piano and chamber music for more than twenty years at community music schools in the Cologne area, gave solo recitals, and appeared frequently as a collaborative pianist.

Her blog, “Music, Life, and Other Challenges,” can be found at: <http://musiclifeandotherchallenges.blogspot.com>.

— Follow *3rd Saturday Arts* at www.3rdsatarts.org

Folk Friday, Feb. 10



Bring instruments and come to sing. Or — as in “*and/or*” — come and work with us on our community

quilt. Or bring your knitting. Or your crocheting. Or your wood carving. It’s a song and craft night at Ethical Culture. Second Friday of the month, Feb. 10, 7:30–9:30 p.m., coordinated by Anja Moen and Lisa Novemsky.