



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

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Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org

NOVEMBER 2002

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF ESSEX,
As I write this letter to you, it is the beginning of October. By the time you read these words, they may no longer be relevant to the rapidly unfolding political events regarding Iraq, the subject of my address on November 3, 2002. Yet the urgency and seriousness of the subject forces me to take that risk.



The House of Representatives has already offered bi-lateral support for President Bush's request for Congressional approval to use force against Iraq if it should fail to comply satisfactorily with UN authorized inspections for weapons of mass destruction. The debate now continues in the US Senate as the administration presses for a quick decision before elections in November. Much will depend upon the outcome of those deliberations. Senator Robert Byrd addressed his colleagues and recalled the Gulf of Tonkin decision when Congress voted to give the President authority to decide when to commence hostilities in Vietnam. Congress surrendered its war making authority then. The Senator pleaded with his peers to not make the same mistake again.

The situation is different now. Unlike then we are not engaged in containment of a powerful enemy. Neither Russia nor China pose the threat of alliance with Iraq. We, like ancient Rome, are the preeminent and unrivaled supreme military force on the face of the earth, taking aim at a severely weakened nation, with a failing economy, a substandard health system, and an inadequate infrastructure whose military capability is a subject of dispute. It is ours for the taking. The costs, however, could be far more significant than anticipated: destabilization of the entire middle east, great loss of Iraqi civilian life, American combatant casualties, and the fueling of radical Islamic militancy throughout the region which is already unstable due to authoritarian rule and limited economic opportunities for young adults. There are other costs as well which touch us more deeply here at home. They are the moral costs of engaging in an unsanctioned war which I will explore in my next address on Sunday, Nov. 3 at 11:00 am.

Bring your thoughts (pro and con) to share and debate at our Post Platform Discussion to be held following the meeting.
Till then, Boe

President's Message Building a Community

I think it is important that we make an extra effort to develop new connections and friendships with other members, and spend time together outside of organized Society events.

This could mean having a buddy or two we telephone once a week or sometimes meet for a meal just to schmooze and in the process keep up with the events in each other's lives and lend and receive moral support on a one to one basis.

These new personal connections could also take the form of organizing

four or five people or more, who meet as a group socially once a month, maybe in each other homes: to get take out food and enjoy sharing the events and concerns in their lives.

So I say, look around the membership. Make a new friend. Find a person you don't really know and wish you knew better. Go out for lunch. Or better yet, invite three or four companionable people to your home and consider meeting on a regular basis for food and conversation.

At the Lay Leadership Summer School program in North Carolina, during the summer of 2000, we had

something we called "Journeys Groups" and every night after dinner groups of four or five people met and shared and bonded, discussing the things which were important to them. I would have to say that as much as the staff had us running around, interacting with dozens of people from morning to night, it was the pals from the Journeys Group, who were my closest friends, and the ones with whom I am still in regular contact.

Make a new friend. All it takes is effort. Most of us can find the time.

— Susan Kennedy

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



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Ted Seagull, *Assistant Leader*

Jim White, *Leader Emeritus*

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EDITOR'S NOTE

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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 e-mail to the editor but can also be delivered to the office, att: 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:
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Bulletin Board

Creating Peace in Violent Times

Most of us feel helpless about world affairs — what can one person do? Come join our November 2 workshop and get some answers. Not too late to enroll — \$25 for folks whose organization is a peace site, some partial scholarships available. Just call coordinator Betty Levin, 973-763-1033. If line is busy, call the office and leave a message with Gigi.

Nov. 2, 1:30–4:30 p.m., facilitated by Naomi Drew at our building.

See you there!

Environmental help needed

Flashlite batteries must be disposed of by special means. Please do not dispose of them in your regular kitchen refuse. Members — if you will bring them to our Society, Ted Seagull will arrange to have them disposed of in the proper manner. *[Batteries collected are disposed of in a special landfill in an appropriate manner.]*

—Ted Seagull

To Mahasin —

A Peace Site Thank You

Have you noticed the workshop flyer, “Creating Peace in Violent Times”? A warm thank you to Mahasin Nor-Pomarico who designed the layout of the flyer on her computer. She also created the stunning garden tiles for our Peace Garden, to be dedicated Nov. 10. Thanks

Entertainment Books for Sale

Fund Raiser for ECS

Christmas is coming, and Chanukah, too. Have we got a gift-giving gimmick for you! A book full of two-fers for diners and snackers, A year full of pleasures for just 20 smacklers.

So dig out your checkbook and give us a call. If you've got the money we're right on the ball. We're mighty convenient, so buy quite a few; Give some out for gifts, keep another for you.

to how community works — as encouraged by our president, Susan Kennedy (see her President's letter in our September newsletter) — and thanks, Mahasin, for helping to build our community.

—Betty Levin

Fortune Society

If anyone wants to donate household goods, clothing, furniture, etc., I will pick them up at the Society building on Sunday (in front of fireplace or back room). I will also pick them up at your house and deliver them to the Fortune Society's new home. *Thanks,*

Gloria Torrice, 973-483-3461

Fundraising Events

Keep your calendar cleared for a **THEATRE PARTY NIGHT** for the Strollers' production of “The Pajama Game” Saturday Nov. 16. 6:30 p.m. meet at the Society for dessert and beverages, 8:00 p.m. showtime at the Burgdorff Cultural center, Maplewood. Cost is \$22.00 per person. Reserve early — limited number of tickets.

Another **WHITE ELEPHANT SALE** is being planned — date to be announced. In the meantime, start collecting all those items you have wanted to get rid of but could not throw away. We will take them. If you have items other than clothing, you can bring them to the Society building anytime, but be sure to mark them “*White Elephant Sale.*”

No last minute rushing to get to the mall; The color is great and just one size fits all. No crowds and no waiting, no wasting your gas While other folks shop you can sit on your couch.

So won't you support us,
we're well within reason
And oh, by the way,
Happy Holiday season!

— Gigi Goldstein

Several people have asked about the **DINNERS** we used to have at individuals' homes. We will try that again this year, but we need people to offer to do this. If you would like to host a dinner, barbecue, etc., please contact one of the committee members:

Nancy Bohn — 762-0513

Jill Fox — 762-1670

Jeanine Rosh — 258-9395

Social Action Comm.

September 22, 2002 Meeting

The committee met after the platform in the main meeting room. After approving the agenda, the chair passed around various letters sent and published after the June meeting: letter to the editor of the News-Record about physician aided dying and our Society's stance on it; letters in opposition to development of the "Robust Nuclear Earth Penetration" device to legislators and also published in the N-R. The group then discussed the Nov. 10 ceremony planned to remind us of our rededication as a peace site.

Sue mentioned our work vis-a-vis the Federal Innocence Protection Act (HR 912/S486) and the New Jersey bills for a Moratorium on the death penalty (NJ A-1912 and S112). She encouraged members to get in touch with their representatives and legislators as individuals and support these bills.

The group then turned to the pending war on Iraq and talked at length about various actions, deciding on the following:

- Anita will lead a tabling/carding

that same day on the Iraq War issue.

- Mira will draft a letter presenting our position on the Iraq War based on notes Sue took. The group trusts Mira and Sue will present our position cogently and accurately.

- Mira will obtain a one hour tape of a discussion about Iraq and weapons of mass destruction from Peace Action which we will show at the Society on Friday evening, Oct. 11, and again after the platform on Oct. 12. This will be open to the public.

- Boe and Sue will ask Gigi to call the Society members and ask them to call their representatives and senators as soon as possible expressing their views on the war. Gigi will have the phone numbers of the lawmakers available for people who need them.

Other business included a report from Freda on her efforts to get a social work intern to work with us on the PAD issue.

The next meeting will be Nov. 17.

—*Meredith Sue Willis*

Talk & Discussion

"More Choices at Life's End" at Society Sun., Oct. 27, 2 p.m.

We're all going to die. The only real questions are where, when and how.

In a talk jointly sponsored by our Social Action Committee and the Hemlock Society of New Jersey, Inc., Lois Schafer will speak at our meeting house on "More Choices at Life's End". There will be ample time for questions and discussion. Ms Schafer is director of com-



INTRODUCTION TO ETHICAL CULTURE FOR NEWCOMERS

Nov. 11 and 18, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

This is a two session course for those interested in learning who we are, what we have done and how we got there. We will learn about the philosophy and history of Ethical Culture. Leader Boe Meyerson will facilitate.

munity services for the Hemlock Foundation, Denver. She oversees Hemlock's Caring Friends Program. This brings "community supported dying" to hopelessly ill Hemlock members who have exhausted their options and wish to shorten the dying process. The program in no sense violates statutes forbidding "aiding in a suicide", but does inform the intractably suffering person and loved ones about lawful options, including self-deliverance. And it promises that no member need die alone. A trained Caring Friends volunteer works with each participant in the Program.

In the nearly four years that the Caring Friends Program has been in operation it has been present at the death of some 89 participants. About an equal number have received information and support but elected not to have a representative present at their deaths.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Ms Schafer worked at its Mental Health Research Institute for ten years, then earned an MA from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology. [For more information, contact W. Thies at 973-763-3819.]

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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Sunday Morning Platforms

Platforms begin at 11 a.m.
All are welcome. Platforms are
subject to change without notice.
Sunday School 11 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

November 3 · Boe Meyerson: *Of War and Peace: The Challenges We Face.* Our Society's Leader will explore the moral issues involved in engaging in armed conflict in Iraq. (*Boe is not only the leader of our Essex Ethical Culture Society, but also the Humanist Chaplain at Columbia University in New York City.*)



November 10 · **SPECIAL PROGRAM:** Peace Site Day. Commemorating the first anniversary of our rededication as a Peace Site, Essex Ethical Society members Mahasin Nor Pomarico and Gigi Goldstein will dedicate our Peace Garden, and member Patty Bender will share experiences of her annual hostessing of *Hibakusha*, the survivors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. The Sunday School children will be participating and Betty Levin is coordinating.



November 17 · Joe Gluck interviews Christine Ebersole! Christine Ebersole has enchanted audiences throughout her performing career, from the Broadway stage to numerous films, television series and specials, concert appearances and recordings. One of her recordings, her first solo CD, tells of her personal journey as a performer, wife and mother.

Christine grew up in Winnetka, Illinois, where she discovered her passion for acting in high school. She attended college in Jacksonville, Illinois, moving to New York to study acting for another two years. In 1976, she appeared in her first Broadway play.

She currently resides locally in New Jersey with her husband, William, and their three children, two dogs and two cats.

November 24 · Boe Meyerson and Doris Rados: *Joyful Gratitude — A Celebrative Gathering.* We will combine ceremony, song and celebration.

Dec. 1 · Boe Meyerson: *Growing Up Gay*

December 8 · Win Thies: *Winston Churchill as Hero*

December 15 · Solstice Celebration with the Sunday School

PHILOSOPHY AT ESSEX

On every 2nd and 4th Sunday from 9:30 am to 10:30 am, the Philosophy Group meets to engage in philosophical discussion. We sometimes explore the ideas of historically important ethical philosophical theories, sometimes analyze current events and personal issues from a philosophical perspective, and sometimes simply enjoy the play art of philosophical dialogue. Whatever the subject, we have a good time arguing, exploring, probing, and having adventures in the world of philosophical ideas. Boe Meyerson (trained in philosophy at Columbia Univ.) facilitates the discussions. Join us. Admission is free and there are no pre-requisite courses required.