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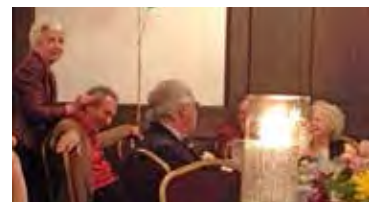


# What A Swell Party It Was!

NYSEC President **ANDRA MILLER** turned 75 on March 10, and a wonderful birthday bash with a packed house was held in her honor the night before. Ceremonial Hall looked beautiful thanks to the decorative efforts of Tod Whitaker, festooned as it was with rainbow-colored clusters of high-flying balloons in Andra's favorite colors. L Miller and Shaun Carson provided exquisite flower arrangements and lovely crystal candles at every table. Many members came to

share in the celebration, as did dear friends of the birthday gal herself, as well as her son, Brady, who escorted his mom onto the dance floor for one dance. But the highlight of the evening was Andra's solo "exotic dance" that wowed the spectators (Rita Hayworth's "take off the gloves" performance has nothing on Andra). Those who attended thoroughly enjoyed the party. The evening was a warm reminder of what Ethical is all about — sharing and caring. "We

know that everyone at Ethical joins in wishing Andra many more," said Elinore Kaplan. We want to thank all those who contributed to our Disabled Access Fund. If you couldn't make it, but would still like to contribute, you may call Yolanta at 212-874-5210, ext. 104, or you can mail your check (payable to NYSEC marked "Disabled Access Fund" on the memo line) to Yolanta Kosmaczewska, c/o NYSEC, 2 West 64th Street, New York, NY 10023.



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# President's Notes

A N D R A M I L L E R

The Board of Trustees has chosen to honor the outstanding contributions of our own Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross, establishing a new volunteer award in her name for those who have developed great programs for those in disadvantaged communities. Look for a full story on this exciting new program in the May issue.

It was fun throwing a 75th birthday party!

And thanks for the generous “birthday present” contributions many of you gave to the Disabled Access Fund.

I look forward to the day that anyone using a wheeled chair or cart can easily get into our building, into our auditorium, into our Social Hall and, of course, into a bathroom! The nearly \$4,000 that you and some of my outside friends contributed has gladdened my heart.

Thanks to Patrick Arenas for his design of the colorful e-mail invitation, and to those listed on page 1 for the decorations, etcetera. Also, there's the building staff under the direction of Leonardo Gibson who set up the tables and made sure all was well — and another staff member, Beth Zucker, who took reservations — and the food

and service ordered from Catering With Flair's Jean Donnay. Also, thank you Valerie Leiman for the origami peace cranes I was planning to give partygoers — and yet somehow got misplaced but thankfully landed in the hands of the Sunday School (or, rather, Ethics for Children) kids. Thanks to all.

The soul of the party, of course, was the 80-plus of you who came to

celebrate with me.

Makes a girl feel young, even when she's blowing out “75” candles... I'm so glad that you too enjoyed our exciting Saturday night.

The next morning I presided at our Sunday meeting, which really was the day of

my birthday. Having had “Happy Birthday to You,” sung to me the day before, it was now time to sing to Joe Chuman, whose birthday really was the day before!

Joe and I look forward to the continuing evolution of the Ethical movement — as our efforts and those of members now and yet to join us meld the accomplishments of our past to the challenges of the future. In small and in large ways, we will all continue our efforts to make the world a bit more “ethical.” Or even a lot more ethical!

*“I look forward  
to the day that anyone  
using a walker or  
wheelchair or cart can  
easily get into our  
building...”*

# Ethical Enrichment

## Ethics in Film

Chris Everett

Join us on **FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 7:00 PM** (doors open at 6:30 pm), in Ceremonial Hall to see *Round Midnight* (1986) directed by Bertrand Tavernier.

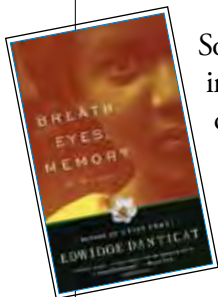
In this moody drama, Gallic bebop buff Francis Borler (François Cluzet) befriends self-destructive jazz great Dale Turner (Dexter Gordon), an American expatriate who left seeking a more progressive audience. Addiction has taken its toll on the gifted saxophonist, but Borler's small acts of compassion spark a renewed — if fleeting — zest in the jaded performer, which is echoed in his music. Herbie Hancock's original score bagged an Oscar.

*The suggested donation is \$5, which includes snacks and beverages.*

## Ethics in Literature: A Reading Group

Join us on **MONDAY, APRIL 1, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM**, in the Elliott Library, Room 507. Leader Dr. Anne Klaeysen will host a discussion on *Breath, Eyes, Memory* by Edwidge Danticat.

At the age of twelve, Sophie Caco is sent from her impoverished village of Croix-des-Rosets, in Haiti, to New York, to be reunited with a mother she barely remembers. There she discovers secrets that no child should ever know, and a legacy of shame



that can be healed only when she returns to Haiti – to the women who first reared her.

What ensues is a passionate journey through a landscape charged with the supernatural and scarred by political violence, in a novel that bears witness to the traditions, suffering, and wisdom of an entire people.

*There is no charge for members; the public's suggested donation is \$5.*

## West 64th St. Jazz

The New York Society for Ethical Culture and West 64<sup>th</sup> Street Jazz present Lenore Raphael & Friends in

a concert on **FRIDAY, APRIL 19, AT 8:00 PM**, in Ceremonial Hall. Come at **7:00 PM** for a wine reception. Renowned jazz pianist Lenore Raphael



Lenore Raphael

will perform with her special guest, the wonderful guitarist Jack Wilkins; swinging bassist Hilliard Greene is featured, and there will also be some surprise special guests.

The duo of Lenore Raphael and Jack Wilkins has sold out venues in the New York City Metropolitan area; add Mr. Greene on bass and you have a trio that is one of the best. In fact, critics have said the trio is reminiscent of the Oscar Peterson/Joe Pass/Ray Brown trios of the early '60's. For tickets visit <http://nysecjazz.eventbrite.com/>.



Jack Wilkins



Hilliard Greene

## SUNDAY PLATFORM MEETINGS

11:15 am Ceremonial Hall, Fourth Floor

### APRIL 7

*Holocaust Remembrance*

**Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader**  
*Terry Perlin Presides*

### APRIL 14

*Need Humanism Be Reasonable?*

**Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader**  
*Dr. Anne Klaeysen Presides*

### APRIL 21

*Solutions for a Planet at Risk: A Look at Grassroots Efforts, Forward Thinking Policies and Programs that Work*

**NYSEC's Environment Stewardship Committee**  
*Heather Grady Presides*

### APRIL 28

*How Dr. Oz Got It So Wrong: Not All Food is Created Equal*

**Curt Collier, Leader**  
*Tod Whitaker Presides*

## NOT A MEMBER?

**All the more reason to attend one of our Enrichment Activities. Contributions for nonmembers are usually only \$5.**





# Leader's Desk

D R . A N N E K L A E Y S E N

## Steubenville Ethics

In addition to being a pastor and ethicist, I'm also married and the mother of a son and daughter in their late 20's. Why reveal this? Because of the thousands of words I have read about the tragedy that has unfolded in Steubenville, Ohio, few mentioned the families involved. From August 2012 when a 16-year old girl was raped to last month when two teenage boys were convicted of that crime, we have learned the names of all the individuals involved and have been treated to analyses of their adolescent behavior. The ethos of a community that makes heroes of its athletes, and places them on pedestals above social scrutiny, has also been discussed at length. But what of the families that nurtured these children and, one hopes, gave them their first lessons in morality?

My children remember a colorful sign I posted on the refrigerator when they were very young: "Use Words!" It was a reminder to think before hitting – and then not to hit. (As their vocabulary grew, I inserted the adjective "kind.") At the dinner table, we would review the day and discuss behavior in terms of what was kind and fair, understanding that often one couldn't be both at the same time. What parent hasn't heard a child exclaim, "She hit me for no good reason!" and then talk about what a good reason might be and how conflict might be handled? Children experience injury at a young age and can distinguish right from wrong long before their frontal lobes — the part of the brain that asks "What is the consequence of this action?" — are

fully connected. Society is right to take brain development into consideration when sentencing youthful offenders, but wrong to believe that they don't recognize the harm they have done.

The "poor boys," as some have described the Steubenville rapists, knew they were hurting someone. The other teenagers who witnessed their crime also knew it and were wrong in exploiting it for social media pleasure.

Their collective depravity is a moral outrage that cannot be excused by "They didn't know any better." They knew and they chose. They may be sorry now — or not, but we, as a moral society, must hold them responsible for their behavior.

My family has discussed this moral tragedy since it first appeared in the news. We are

by no means naïve about human behavior, and yet this shocked us. From the abuse of alcohol and drugs to the physical abuse of rape and the emotional abuse of posting on social media, we asked, "Where are their families?" This case has not been resolved with court sentences; it never will be. It calls for restorative justice, a process that focuses on the needs of victims, offenders, and the community. Some abstract legal principle may have been satisfied, but there is much work still to be done. Let us hope that this story does not end here and that ethical leaders come forward to encourage all those involved to take responsibility for their actions and lack of action, to make amends to the victim, and to repair a community that lost its moral compass.

*"Some abstract legal principle may have been satisfied, but there is much work still to be done."*



## Choose Your Food

Come and join us on **MONDAYS, APRIL 8** and **APRIL 22, 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM**, in the Elliott Library, Room 507, to continue this eight-session course, which began



on March 11. Revitalize your health and wellness with Elizabeth Collier (left), Certified Holistic Health Coach. Her holistic approach and philosophy of self-care will give you the tools to make sustainable changes in your life and achieve your goals. Topics to be discussed include: processed foods vs. whole foods, medications and the pharmaceutical industry, cravings and sugar addiction, emotional eating, dieting and cultural norms, exercise, stress reduction, and more.

*The course fee is \$60 for members, and \$90 for guests. To register, contact Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk at [ygarcia@nysec.org](mailto:ygarcia@nysec.org), or 212-874-5210, ext. 118.*

## Introduction to Humanism

This six-session course, which began in March (on alternating Thursdays), will continue on **APRIL 11, APRIL 25, MAY 9, and MAY 23, from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM**, in the Adler Study, Room 514. Join moderator Dr. Anne Klaeyens, Leader, for an in-depth look at Humanism.

Ethical Culture fits under the large tent of Humanism. It

didn't start that way; founder Felix Adler was an Idealist philosopher, not a Humanist. Since 1963, in a statement made by the National Leaders' Council, Ethical Culture has acknowledged its evolving Humanist philosophy, while maintaining a primary emphasis on ethics. Leader Anne Klaeyens, co-Dean of the Humanist Institute for Graduate Studies, explores the history of Humanism in the US, its influences, and the major players and organizations today.

*These sessions are free, but registration is required. To register contact Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk at [ygarcia@nysec.org](mailto:ygarcia@nysec.org), or at 212-874-5210, ext. 118.*

## Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On **FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 7:00 PM**, in Ceremonial Hall, Ethics and the Theater will present *Good People* by David Lindsay-Abaire.

Margie is in trouble. As a middle-aged single mother of a mentally disabled child, she's just lost a job that barely allowed her to scrape by. Her hardscrabble neighborhood of South Boston affords few employment opportunities, and even fewer for which she has the skills or strength. Reluctantly, she reaches out to the one person who might possibly help: an old beau who escaped Southie and is now a

successful fertility doctor. It soon becomes clear that more than a job is at stake. Their meeting is a conflict in which both fight to hold on to their own views of what was, is, and might have been — and Margie wrestles with how far she will go to get what she wants.

Susan Horowitz directs our cast, which includes Alex Bone, Pat Debrovner, John Gurney, Dan Hanson, Barbyly Noel, Frances Scanlon, and Zoe Watkins, with stage directions read by Monica Weiss. Come at 6:30 pm for a reception and after the reading participate in a discussion of the ethical issues of the play, led by Dr. Anne Klaeyens.

*The suggested donation is \$5 for members, \$10 for nonmembers.*

## Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries

On **MONDAY, APRIL 15, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM**, join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyens in the Adler Study, Room 514. We'll be showing *How to Die in Oregon* (2011),



produced and directed by Peter Richardson.

This award-winning documentary takes you into the lives of terminally ill men and

*continued on page 7*

## Looking Back: Moments from Our Past



E L I N O R E K A P L A N

### The Society's Roots: *Diversity in Creed, Unanimity in Deed*

When an organization is as old as ours — remember, the New York Society for Ethical Culture was founded by Felix Adler and a cadre of ardent believers in 1876 — we tend to forget our roots. No doubt that some of our members came into the Society with no knowledge of those roots. And that's not a bad thing. After all, the Society has not only grown (there are 31 Ethical Culture Societies across the country today), but has stuck to the principles of its founders, so what attracted others to the organization continues to draw new members.

Adler, the son of Rabbi Samuel Adler, the second rabbi of Reform Judaism's Temple Emmanuel in New York City, was very much the man of his time — one of the forward-thinking philosophers of his day. He was, for instance, very much influenced by the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who had called for a “purely ethical religion” here in the young democracy of America. In his learned article, *The Ethical Culture Movement* (which appears in the *Encyclopedia of American Social Movements*, Vol. 3), NYSEC

Leader Dr. Joseph Chuman writes that “The Reform Judaism of the late nineteenth century was dedicated to the concept of ‘ethical monotheism,’ and was permeated with ideals of progress, rationalism, and universalism drawn from the European Enlightenment.”

Joe goes on to remind us that there were several social reform movements flourishing at the time, and notes that “Like the Social Gospel Movement, Ethical Culture was committed to applying religion to social reform, especially in the cities. Both movements were open to accepting new knowledge gleaned from the social sciences as an adjunct to liberal faith.” He tells us that, “The problems of labor and industrial society consumed the passions of Adler and his followers. Endemic poverty, crowded, substandard housing, child labor, and deficient schools were among the problems these social reformers confronted.”

Joe states that Adler “emphasized that Ethical Culture was founded on total freedom of conscience in matters of ultimate belief. This freedom, and Ethical Culture's dedication

to social justice, were often expressed in the slogan “Diversity in creed, unanimity in deed.”...[referring to] this work as “social reconstruction.”

Basically, Adler and his followers were dedicated to improving the conditions of the disadvantaged. He was a charismatic leader and inspired and led many a movement for beneficial change, and attracted to the Society numerous movers and shakers of the time, such as the enthusiastic member Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor. Joe notes that among those who “were within the orbit of Ethical Culture in its early phase and worked with it toward common goals were such luminaries as Jacob Riis, Jane Addams, Lillian Wald, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, Thomas Davidson, William James, and Walt Whitman.

The Leaders of the Movement, their members and followers, and others whom they inspired and gave a platform for their efforts, are all part of our history, one that includes dozens of accomplishments of which we can be proud.

*continued from page 5*

women as they consider availing themselves of physician-assisted suicide, which is legal in Oregon under the state's 1994 Death with Dignity Act.

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

## Spring Hike

Henryka Komanska

Join us on **SATURDAY, APRIL 20**, for a trip to historic Cold Spring, NY, and a hike to Mt. Taurus.

The five-hour hike will take us to a summit over the Hudson River. We will meet at the information booth in Grand Central Station at **8:35 AM**. If you arrive after that, you'll find us on the train that leaves at **8:47 AM**. Please buy your own tickets; a round-trip ticket is \$22.50. Bring a water bottle, a light lunch and/or snack for the trail, and a few dollars for a coffee stop at a local cafe. Wear hiking or sturdy walking shoes and dress in layers for the hike. Rain cancels.

## Writing Classes

Elaine Berman

The spring semester of our Joy of Personal Writing workshops starts on **TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM**. Our **THURSDAY** evening class returns on **APRIL 25, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM**.

We welcome new members to our workshops – people who want to get started writing, as well as those with experience.

*Course fees are \$160 for members and \$260 for nonmembers. Registration in advance is required. For information and registration, call Yalitzka Garcia-Krawczyk at 212-874-5210, ext. 118. If you'd like to read work by our current and past writers, please visit our website, [www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space](http://www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space).*

## Advocacy Forum

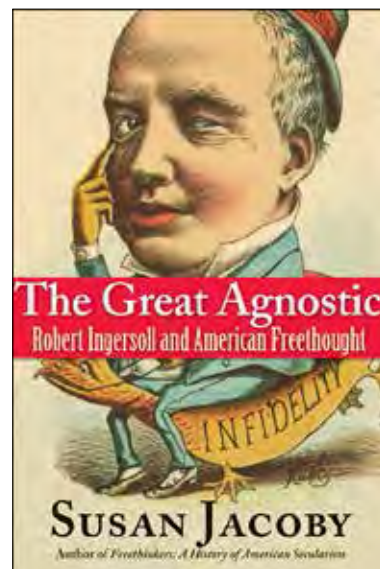
On **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 7:00 PM** (wine reception 6:30pm) in Ceremonial Hall. **MASSIMO PIGLIUCCI** interviews **SUSAN JACOBY** about her new book *The Great Agnostic Robert Ingersoll and American Freethought*.

During the Gilded Age, which saw the dawn of America's enduring culture wars, Robert Green Ingersoll was known as "the Great Agnostic." The nation's most famous orator, he raised his voice on behalf of Enlightenment, reason, secularism, and the separation of church and state with a vigor unmatched since America's revolutionary generation. In this provocative biography Susan Jacoby restores Ingersoll to his rightful place in an American intellectual tradition extending from Thomas Jefferson and

Thomas Paine to the current generation of "new atheists."

Susan Jacoby has written for more than 25 years on topics including law, religion, medicine, aging, women's rights, political dissent in the Soviet Union, and Russian literature. She is also the author of the weekly column, *The Spirited Atheist*, at the On Faith website published by *The Washington Post*.

Massimo Pigliucci is a professor of philosophy at the City University of New York. His research interests are the philosophy of science and the nature of pseudoscience. He publishes the "Rationally Speaking" blog and podcasts and, most recently, has written *Answers for Aristotle: How Science and Philosophy Can Lead Us to a More Meaningful Life*.





# Ethical Action: The My Own Book Program



JERRY AND CAROLE CHAMLIN

## Enhancing child literacy by empowering children to select, purchase, and read their very own books

In our home, August finds us looking forward with anticipation to the beginning of a new school year. We are setting up our schedule to visit third-grade children and bring them news of their participation in a special field trip that they will be taking.

The My Own Book program sparked our interest 12 years ago, when we learned about it from its founder, Burt Freeman. Burt had a vision that we found coincided with our own passionate feelings about book ownership. There is a luxurious comfort in owning special books and building a library of one's own. We had been reading to our own grandchildren for years, and were so gratified by the enjoyment, the sheer pleasure they took in hearing a familiar story over and over again.

The mission of the program is simple and urgent: to foster the love of reading and the joy of book ownership among New York City's inner-city children, many of whom have never had a book they could call their own. Since its inception in 1999, the My Own Book program has reached more than 30,000 children throughout the five boroughs, and brought over 175,000 books into their homes to be read and re-read.

The centerpiece of our volunteer work is to meet with third-grade classes at a Barnes & Noble book store, from which each child will take home \$50 worth of books of his/her own choosing. This is just one facet of the program for us and the children.

In preparation, we visit a school and meet with the principal, third-grade teachers, and each third-grade class. We talk with them about the program, our love of books, and how, if we all work together, we can make this a meaningful experience. We listen to the children when they tell us which books they find to be the most interesting. As they share, we encourage them to add some of the appealing titles to the individual shopping lists they'll be bringing with them to the book store.

There is always an air of excitement when the children file into Barnes & Noble, lists in hand, ready to explore and to find their "treasures." We are there to help as needed, along with the extraordinary store staff. When they make their purchase, a bookplate with the child's name is placed on the inside cover of each book. But the experience is far from over when we all leave the store. We arrange follow-up visits to each participating class, and those visits are a significant component of the program – and lots of fun. In each classroom the children will share their reading experiences with the books they've chosen. There are written and oral reports, related artwork, and thank-you letters for us and the Barnes & Noble staff. The children's enthusiasm is irresistible and so rewarding.

There are times when, walking through the school hallways, children in the upper grades recognize us and stop to tell how well they remember their trip with us. Most often, they can

recall the names of some of the books they chose, for many the first books they ever chose and owned. We share our experiences with other volunteers at an Annual Volunteer Meeting, when we're reminded that each one of us has our own special moments that we treasured.

We strongly feel that it was our good fortune to have met Burt Freeman. His enthusiasm was infectious, and inspired us to reach out to others who might be interested in making the commitment to volunteer. Fellow Society members Mary Ellen Goodman, Susan Horowitz, Peter and Mary Houts, and Beverly Newman have since become participants in the program. In 2002 Burt Freeman received the Ethical Culture Community Service Award for his dedication and desire to impart his love of literacy to inner-city children and to foster the growth of this very special program.

Today the My Own Book program has more than 70 volunteers, and is always interested in new volunteers to help expand the program. Please speak with us if you are interested or have any questions.

*The Ethical Culture Society has always put Deed above Creed. We invite you to share your volunteer or activism experience in this column as part of our Ethical tradition. We hope to announce soon that the Ethics in Action Committee is, indeed, back in action, to help coordinate some of these activities, and recommend others.*



## Committee Close-Up: Building



R I C H A R D V A N D E U S E N , C H A I R

The Building Committee has oversight responsibility for the safety, integrity, functionality, and appearance of our building for the benefit of all members and guests. But, it's not just any "old building." It's the landmarked Meeting House of the New York Society for Ethical Culture built in 1910, 103 years ago (designed by the noted architect of that time, Robert D. Kohn, who was a Trustee and later a Leader). That's an honor...and a burden. Those of you who have seen our video, *The Meeting House* (it's on our website and copies are available at Platform Meetings), are aware that more than a thousand prominent politicians, theologians, educators, financiers, and businessmen came to the dedication on October 23, 1910. And you know that this very building came to, as the video says, "provide a safe space for people in need, a community resource for the discussion and sharing of ideas, and an incubator for social justice. Here programs were created that not only benefit the people of this city, but had far-reaching effects around the country and world."

The Building Committee currently has six members, including Bob Berger, Meg Chapman, Jim Farer, Sheila Kleinwald, and

our newest member, Joe Weber. I chair the committee, and Board President Andra Miller is ex-officio. Bob Liebeskind, Executive Director, and Leonardo Gibson, Facilities Manager, are staff to the committee. Committee members have professional expertise in architecture, engineering, and interior design. And when our members face decisions, we need to consider this legacy, which has been entrusted to us, and the importance of preserving that which houses and represents this organization. While dealing with the creaks and cracks of a century-old edifice, we also have to comply with the extra requirements applied to landmarked buildings.

That takes money; a lot of money. This is the only committee of the Board, in fact, to have a self-sustaining budget, with 10% of building rental receipts deposited into a special account specifically dedicated to improvements and repairs. It is never enough to enable us to do everything necessary to keep a 103 year-old building up-to-date and in tip-top condition. So the committee establishes funding priorities.

In addition to essential elevator, electrical, and air-conditioning work, we have facilitated projects

ranging from the major renovation of the Auditorium, to the handicapped access ramp now in design, and the purchase of the new Assisted Listening system. Projects in the planning stage for the Auditorium include repairing and refinishing the pews and preserving the stained-glass windows.

We are also considering necessary improvements to the heating system, taking the steps required to meet fire-code regulations, re-activating the kitchen, upgrading restroom facilities, and providing more modern audio/visual technology to improve the meeting experience for our members and renters.

We are proud of our beautiful historic building and all it stands for, and we want to keep it as our home for many years to come. All members are encouraged to participate in that process through a new suggestion system. You will be able to report any maintenance, repair, or improvement you feel will enhance the appearance or functionality of our home. Suggestion forms will be available in the Security office and in other locations around the building. You are invited to complete a form or simply register your concern with any member of the committee.

# Sunday Morning Platform Meetings 11:15 am

APRIL 7

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

*Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader*

*Terry Perlin Presides*



Yom Hashoah, a day that commemorates the lives and heroism of Jewish people who died in the Holocaust between 1933 and 1945, falls on April 8 this year. Words have power, and it was the hope of Raphael Lemkin that by giving a name to what was “a crime without a name” he would engage the world community in putting an end to “the denial of the right of existence of entire human groups.” Thus was his word “genocide,” a hybrid derived from the Greek derivative “geno” meaning “race” or “tribe” and Latin derivative “cide,” meaning “killing,” unanimously adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 11, 1946. I will lead a program that calls attention to this and other moral outrages against humanity.

We will conclude with a presentation by our children of their video *Animating Peace*.

*The shared charity is Encampment for Citizenship — Scholarships for Summer Program.*

APRIL 14

NEED HUMANISM BE REASONABLE?

*Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader*

*Dr. Anne Klaeysen Presides*



The recent era has seen the emergence of a number of secular and rationalist groups all claiming to be humanist in some sense. This raises the question of what place reason has in a humanistic world view.

Is reason sufficient? Or, does humanism require more? Where in Ethical Culture do we stand?

*The shared charity is the Ethical Teen Leadership Shelter Project.*

## THIS MONTH'S SHARED CHARITIES...

**ENCAMPMENT FOR CITIZENSHIP (EFC)** For 50 years the Encampment, founded by Leader Algernon Black, empowered young people to become history makers. Between 1946 and 1996, over 7,000 campers participated in the program—many of whom count their Encampment experience as the pivotal experience in their lives. In keeping with the EFC's legacy, a residential program will meet from July 1 to 15, at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA, bringing together 16 and 17 year-olds of diverse ethnic, economic, social, religious, and geographic backgrounds to explore a variety of social and political issues.

**NEW YORKERS AGAINST FRACKING** was created when the need arose for a broad-based coalition of New York State residents to call for a ban on the dangerous and polluting practice of fracking. The coalition includes members from every part of the state and a diverse collection of consumer advocacy, health, religious, food, and environmental organizations and dozens of grassroots groups.

**ETHICAL TEEN LEADERSHIP SHELTER PROJECT** The teens have been painting a mural to beautify the women's shelter. Now they want to expand that project to include renovating the kitchenette, provide new storage spaces, and furniture for our guests. Contributions will help the teens with their efforts to make our shelter a brighter, more pleasing environment for the women who stay there.

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APRIL 21

SOLUTIONS FOR A PLANET AT RISK: A LOOK AT GRASSROOTS EFFORTS, FORWARD-THINKING POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT WORK

***Environmental Stewardship Committee*** Heather Grady Presides

We hear daily about the damage that our modern lifestyle is causing to planet earth and its atmosphere. We hear much less about successful actions, programs, and policies that have been and are being taken to make the world a place where humans and nature can survive together. Today's Platform highlights a few of these successes, reminding us that where there is good will and ingenuity much can be accomplished.

NYSEC's Environmental Stewardship Committee grew out of the involvement of a small group of our members in the Moving Planet Day rally in September, 2011, when New Yorkers and other committed people all over the world got together to rally support for moving the planet beyond dependence on fossil fuels. It was agreed among this NYSEC group that they should form an informal task force so they could continue to organize efforts for action and public education about environmental issues.

*The shared charity is New Yorkers Against Fracking.*

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APRIL 28

HOW DR. OZ GOT IT SO WRONG: NOT ALL FOOD IS CREATED EQUAL

***Curt Collier, Leader***

*Tod Whitaker Presides*



In the December *Time Magazine* issue, respected physician and television personality Dr. Mehmet Oz argued that “food snobs” were hurting vegetable eating in American households by raising their noses at canned spinach and frozen carrots. Dr. Oz, to a certain extent, rightly argues that the nutritional difference between fresh and fresh-frozen vegetables is negligible, and thus one didn't need to go to a farmers' market to eat well. This may be usually true if one only considers the nutritional content of food. However, nutritional bang-for-the-buck is far from the only reason why you should be eating locally and sustainably grown food. By perpetuating the myth that all food is created equal, Dr. Oz is actually championing practices that may result in poorer, not better, health. Leader Collier discusses why you should be eating food purchased from farmers' markets and what foods never to buy in your local grocery store.

*The shared charity is the Ethical Teen Leadership Shelter Project.*



## Early Sunday Mornings 10:00 am *(Rooms are subject to change)*

APRIL 7

### CHORUS PRACTICE

Led by Pat Debrovner and Jon Liechty. All voices, big and small, are welcome. We'll practice the songs we sing on Sunday mornings. Ceremonial Hall.

APRIL 14

### COLLOQUY: CREATIVITY

Abe Markman presides. Room 408.

APRIL 21

### POETRY READING

What's on your poetry shelf? Pull out some of your favorite poems and come read with us. Cheryl Gross presides. Room 508.

APRIL 21

### CHORUS PRACTICE

Led by Pat Debrovner and Jon Liechty. Ceremonial Hall.

## Sunday Afternoons 1:30 pm *(Rooms are subject to change)*

APRIL 14

### ETHICS IN THE NEWS

Mary Ellen Goodman presides. Room 508.

APRIL 21



### LIFE WITH HEALTH: BE SUPPLEMENT SAVVY

Get the straight scoop on supplements. If you're confused by all the information about whether or not supplements can improve your health, then this workshop is for you. Join Peg Malloy, Board Certified Holistic Health Coach and graduate of the Institute of Integrative Nutrition, as she discusses various forms of supplements and which ones to take for different health concerns. Peg has been in the supplement industry for over 25 years and is highly respected for her knowledge and ability to help others find just the right supplements for their needs.

There will be an optional vitamin and supplement consultation with Peg after her presentation. Sign up for a 15-minute consultation for \$10. Bring your vitamins and supplements, and Peg will teach you about which ones to keep and which to replace. Sign up with Liz Collier at [liz@chooseyourfood.net](mailto:liz@chooseyourfood.net) or 914-263-8865. Ceremonial Hall.

# Sunday Afternoons *(Continued)*

APRIL 28

## SUSTAINABLE LIVING SUPPORT CIRCLE

We'll discuss lifestyle choices, our impact on the planet, and ways we can make a meaningful difference. Participate in serious, pragmatic, and practical discussions about culinary choices, commuting alternatives, and how our purchases aid or hamper the natural world, among other topics. Participants will be asked to keep a log of their choices and to share openly with others in a supportive atmosphere. This course is open for those wanting to make a real commitment to eco-living. Admission is free. Curt Collier, Leader, presides. Ceremonial Hall.

*more Ethical Enrichment...*

## Thursday Lunch Discussions Noon — *Elliott Library, Rm 507*

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: **HUMAN NATURE**. Folders with relevant articles will be available from Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk in the Leaders' office. Join the discussion.

APRIL 4

"THE WATERWORKS" by Thomas Dixon, *Aeon Magazine*, 2/22/13, and "HAPPINESS POLICY" by Claude S. Fischer, *Boston Review*, Nov/Dec 2012.

APRIL 11

"ATONEMENT" by Dexter Filkins, *The New Yorker*, 10/29 and 11/5/12.

APRIL 18

"WHY ARE WE SO OBSESSED WITH THE PURSUIT OF AUTHENTICITY?" by Steven Poole, *New Statesman*, 3/7/13, and "THE DELIGHTS OF DISGUST" by Justin E.H. Smith, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 1/14/13.

APRIL 25

"ON FRIENDSHIP" by Edward Hoagland, *The American Scholar*, winter 2013 and "THE ART OF FRIENDSHIP" by Jessica Vivian Chiu, *The Paris Review*, 11/20/12.

# Our Ethical Family



**MOE-SWE MYINT, MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATE**

Welcome **LUCY GREENBERG**, our newest member! Lucy is a student at Fordham University. She likes films, lectures, theater, and yoga. She heard about NYSEC through a friend, and she's also attended films and Ethics and the Theater, and plans to participate in many of the activities we offer at the Society. She is also interested in volunteering at our events when she can. Lucy has worked with Children's International, and she has a foster son in the Philippines, in addition to her two sons.

tirelessly worked to compile many recipes and the back-stories that accompany them, with many Members, Friends, and family from the Ethical Community contributing. The cookbook was produced as a fundraiser for our Green Kitchen Initiative – going “green” with new energy-efficient equipment for our kitchen downstairs. Come, and enjoy a festive evening of camaraderie, conversation, and great fun, and please bring a dish that is featured in the cookbook or one that may be in a future edition. You must RSVP to Tod Whitaker at *tod.whitaker@citi.com* by April 20, Those who didn't order the book before publication will now have to pay a bit more, but it's well worth it, and a really fun and delicious time at the dinner will be had by all. That's a promise!

We would also like to let everyone know of all the good work that the **MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE** is doing. You might have noticed the new look of our monthly **ETHICAL OUTLOOK**, improved signage at the building's entrance, beautiful new name badges, the hospitality table at events, member volunteering surveys, etc. And, there are a whole lot more in the works! Special thanks go to Tod and Patrick for their great design sense and generosity. Kudos to the whole committee, they've all done a great job!

On March 21, **VINCENT BRANCATO** and NYSEC's Environmental Stewardship Committee hosted a special screening of the films *Dear Governor Cuomo* and *The Sky Is Pink*, followed by a call for all to participate in a letter-writing campaign to ban fracking in New York. We are grateful to the committee for working so hard to let everyone know how destructive to the environment fracking is and for keeping up the pressure on Governor Cuomo not to give in to the gas industry's considerable pressure. Good job, everyone!

**Save the Date!** The Membership Development Committee, co-chaired by **ELINORE KAPLAN** and **TOD WHITAKER**, is sponsoring the Spring Pot Luck, featuring the community cookbook, *A Garden of Eating*, on **SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 6:00 PM**, in Ceremonial Hall. **DR. RUTH COHEN**



The following members are celebrating birthdays in April:

- VALERIE LEIMAN**.....4/1
- MARY HOUTS**.....4/2
- LAW'NENCE MILLER**.....4/2
- PEARL KATZ**.....4/4
- MICHAEL BOGDANFFY-KRIEGH**....4/5
- CHRISTOPHER BERNHARDT**.4/6
- DIANE DEBROVNER**.....4/6
- MARILYN BAKER**.....4/11
- DWAIN DEPAUL**.....4/13
- PATRICIA BRUDER DEBROVNER**.....4/14
- PATRICIA MALKIN**.....4/14
- NANCY McGEORGE LOVELADY**.....4/17
- ABE MARKMAN**.....4/24
- RICHARD SANDER**.....4/24
- MEG CHAPMAN**.....4/25
- PHYLLIS ROSENFELD**....4/27
- SY AMKRAUT**.....4/29



# Member Profile



K E N G A N S , M E M B E R S I N C E 2 0 0 3

Ken Gans, a child of wonder, was born on February 8, 1941, in Flushing Hospital, Queens. (Being born is amazing!) I was raised in Elmhurst at P.S. 89 and St. Bartholomew's. I was very reverential and religious. The Baltimore Catechism answered all my questions as a child, but when adolescence arrived with sexuality, much guilt, doubt, and conflict ensued. The sense of mortality and vanity bothered me. I was caught in a quandary; doubt, reading, and exploration propelled me to find out what life was all about. I read Schrodinger's *What Is Life?* and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man*. Both had a big influence on me; but I was still lost about what path I should pursue in life, except for the pursuit of truth, wisdom, knowledge, and happiness.

I was good in math at Brooklyn Tech and Stevens Institute, but existential questions, guilt, and vanity obsessed me. I questioned the existence of God, free will, heaven and hell, and most of church doctrine. At Stevens, I majored in science – hoping that physics, chemistry, and biology might provide some answers for me. I also read Albert Schweitzer's *Philosophy of Civilization*, which had a big impact on me. I was pulled back and forth – toward

God and away from God.

Existentialism and the theater of the absurd opened another door. I was attracted to Humanism and the idea of helping humanity. I read George Santayana, Alfred Jules Ayer, and Bertrand Russell in an attempt to find some answers. Gradually I drifted away from the Catholic Church, joined Unitarian Universalism (U.U.) and occasionally dropped in on Ethical Culture. I enjoyed listening to WQXR programs from Ethical over the years.

U.U. started talking about witches' covens and Interfaith talked about God and miracles. I was a character in Friedrich Nietzsche's work or Fyodor Dostoevsky's novels. *The Death of God* disturbed me. Zen Buddhism helped me a great deal. Spinoza and Einstein influenced my thinking. I decided to become a member of Ethical about 10 years ago. 9/11 upset me greatly. God talk upset me. Witch talk upset me. Raised in a supernatural faith, a naturalistic faith was like taking long baths in cool water – a sobering process, somewhat disillusioning. But works by Weinberg and Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time* helped me. Life just seemed more intelligible from an evolutionary point of view. B.F.

Skinner, E. Fromm, S. Freud, and Karl Marx helped me evolve.

Over the years I developed a deepening relationship with Pearl Katz here at the Ethical Culture Society. I became involved with the Public Affairs Committee, the Caring Committee, and discussion and poetry groups. I have led a Wisdom and World Affairs group for many years.

What hooked me on Ethical Culture was its nontheistic approach to understanding the world and its aim of making the world more humane and a better place. Ethical Culture means an involvement with good people dedicated to improving human and environmental conditions.

Over the last ten years, climate change and global warming have distressed me greatly. It has saddened me that humans seem incapable of coping with these adequately. This, coupled with the population explosion, makes it appear that some kind of catastrophic collapse seems almost certain. I'm basically optimistic, so that vision of darkness is demoralizing. I'm trying to adapt with hopefulness. My great expectations have come down considerably; but every day I encounter many beautiful people and environments that pick me up.

## ETHICAL CARES

We are here to help if you fall ill or are incapacitated, whether you're home, in the hospital, in rehab, or in a nursing home. We can shop, pick up a prescription or a meal – or help prepare it, bring you to the doctor, or just visit by phone or in person. All you need do is call the Committee Chair, Stephanie Rosenblatt at 212-586-0017, and she'll make the arrangements.

The Caring Committee will meet on Sunday, April 28, 10:00 am in Room 508. Thereafter we are scheduled to meet every two months, on the 4th Sunday of the month.

## In Memoriam



D O N N A F E T O N T E

Donna Fetonte was born on December 20, 1921, in Pittsburg, PA. She was the 13th child of Sara and Dan Darby. Dan Darby was a leader of the American Railway Union and a close friend of Eugene Debs. Donna went to work at the New York Society for Ethical Culture as the secretary to Algernon Black. She soon joined the Society and was an active member for over 50 years, eventually becoming membership coordinator for the New York Society. Donna loved the Society for standing up for justice and the wonderful friends she made.

Donna was an activist campaigning for Henry Wallace in 1948 and Barack Obama in 2008. She was active in civil rights from the 1950's, marching in Washington, DC, in the 1950's and participating in the March on Washington with Martin Luther King in 1963. She was the Liberal Party Committeewoman from Queens in the 1970's, and in the 1990's she consistently voted for the Working Family Party of New York.

She was unafraid. In 1956 she held a civil rights meeting in her home. When a mob gathered and threw rocks through the windows she stepped outside and chewed out the thugs. Donna was the neighborhood PTA Vice President and knew many of their mothers. She told each one that she was going to talk to their mothers if they did not leave immediately. The mob disbanded. The

folks at the meeting and her family were amazed by her fearlessness. She did work in politics and civil rights – whatever needed to be done, stuffing envelopes, making calls, attending rallies. She worked on enforcing the fair housing law by being in teams of couples that applied to rent apartments, first a white couple who were offered the apartment, then a black couple who were told that there was no apartment, and then a white couple who were offered the apartment that the black couple had been told did not exist. Donna worked for justice her whole life.

Donna loved her family deeply. She is survived by her daughter Denise Fetonte and granddaughter, Shira Fetonte, of Boston; her son Danny Fetonte and her daughter-in-law Barbara Fetonte; and her grandsons Mickey, of Austin, and Tony, of Houston. An avid traveler, she took her grandchildren to Alaska, Iceland, England, and Italy.

Donna had a large number of good friends who are mostly gone, but her warmth and commitment to justice are alive in her children and grandchildren.

*Please join Donna's family and friends in celebrating her life on SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1:00 PM, at the New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 West 64th St., in the Elliott Library, Room 507.*



NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

# ETHICAL EVENTS

2 W 64 ST • NEW YORK, NY 10023 • 212.874.5210 • WWW.NYSEC.ORG

## SPRING 2013 POTLUCK DINNER



Please join us for a Pot Luck dinner featuring recipes from  
*Garden of Eating*, the New York Society for Ethical Culture  
Community Cookbook.

Friends, families and members - everyone is invited to share in our  
Ethical community.

Bring a dish featured in the cookbook OR one you would like to see  
featured in a future edition.

Saturday, April 27, 2013, 6:00PM  
2 West 64th Street, NYC 10023  
4th floor - Ceremonial Hall

RSVP by April 20, 2013

Tod Whitaker at [tod.whitaker@citi.com](mailto:tod.whitaker@citi.com)



NYSEC is a member of the American Ethical Union and the International Humanist & Ethical Union  
2 West 64th Street - New York, NY 10023 - 212.874.5210 - [www.nysec.org](http://www.nysec.org)

Entry to our 100-year-old building and meeting rooms is available for most wheelchair users with prior arrangements.  
Please call ahead (212-874-5210 x 107) for setup of our portable system and plan to arrive one hour before start time.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1</b> May 2013 Newsletter Deadline 1:00 Ethics in Literature: A Reading Group 6:30 Board of Trustees	<b>2</b> 6:00 Wisdom and World Affairs	<b>3</b> 1:00 Strength Exercise Class	<b>4</b> 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 Empowering Ethical Elders	<b>5</b> 7:00 Ethics in Film	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 10:00 Chorus Practice 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:15 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:00 Teen Leadership	<b>8</b> 6:30 Choose Your Food	<b>9</b> 7:00 Felix Adler Seminar	<b>10</b> 1:00 Strength Exercise Class	<b>11</b> 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Introduction to Humanism	<b>12</b> 7:00 Ethics and the Theater	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 10:00 Colloquy 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:15 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:00 Teen Leadership 1:30 Ethics in the News	<b>15</b> 1:00 Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries 7:00 Prospective Members' Reception	<b>16</b> 6:00 Wisdom and World Affairs	<b>17</b> 1:00 Strength Exercise Class	<b>18</b> 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 Empowering Ethical Elders	<b>19</b> 7:00 Wine Reception before Jazz Concert 8:00 West 64 <sup>th</sup> Street Jazz Concert	<b>20</b> 8:35 Spring Hike
<b>21</b> 10:00 Chorus Practice 10:00 Poetry Reading 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:15 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:00 Teen Leadership 1:30 Life with Health	<b>22</b> 6:30 Choose Your Food	<b>23</b> 12:30 Tuesday Writing Class	<b>24</b> 1:00 Strength Exercise Class 7:00 Advocacy Forum	<b>25</b> 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Introduction to Humanism 6:30 Thursday Writing Class	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 1:00 Donna Fetonte Memorial 6:00 Potluck Dinner/Book Release Party
<b>28</b> 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:15 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:00 Teen Leadership 1:30 Sustainable Living Support Circle	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 12:30 Tuesday Writing Class	<b>Notes:</b> Ethics in Literature: A Reading Group: <i>Breath, Eyes, Memory</i> , by Edwidge Danticat — April 1 Ethics in Film: <i>Round Midnight</i> (1985) — April 5 Ethics and the Theater: <i>Good People</i> , by David Lindsay-Abaire — April 12 Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries: <i>How to Die in Oregon</i> , (2011) — April 15			

## CORRECTION

The SSB article in the March, 2013, issue of **ETHICAL OUTLOOK** was published with a mistake.

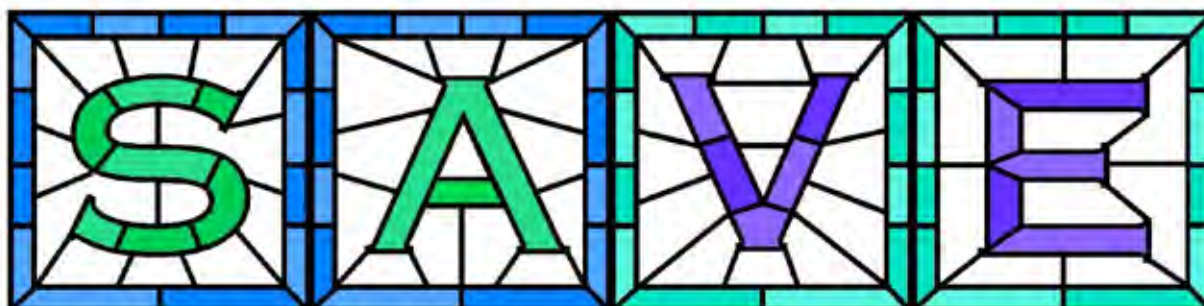
The United Social Service Society was created in 1936, under the leadership of John Lovejoy Elliott and Algernon Black, three years after the death of Felix Adler. As stated in the Centennial documentary: "In 1971 the United Social Service Society was reconstituted as the Social Service Board." The Board immediately set out on an active program of community service projects for senior citizens and immigrants, fulfilling a primary charitable mission.

— Based on archival research by Member Richard Van Deusen.

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

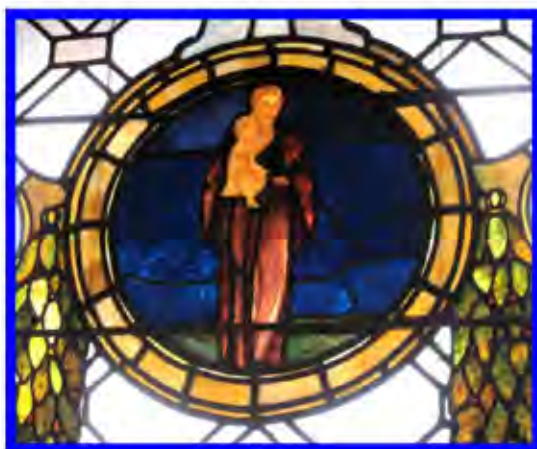
# ETHICAL EVENTS

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## THE DATE!

*Join us for the 15th Annual Benefit Concert  
for the Stained Glass Windows*



**Sunday, May 19, 2013**

**2:30 pm – 4:30 pm  
Ceremonial Hall**

**\$15.00 General Admission  
\$10.00 Seniors and Students**

Light refreshments will be provided.

To purchase tickets contact:  
**Moe-Swe Myint at [mmyint@nysec.org](mailto:mmyint@nysec.org) or 212.874.5210 ext. 113.**

A member of the American Ethical Union and the International Humanist & Ethical Union  
2 West 64<sup>th</sup> Street · New York, NY 10023 · 212.874.5210 · [www.nysec.org](http://www.nysec.org)

If you need assistance entering our building with a wheelchair, please call ahead (212-874-5210 x107)  
for setup of our portable system and plan to arrive one hour before start time.

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

# ETHICAL

WE ARE ETHICAL CULTURE, a community that believes all individuals have inherent worth and dignity, and a responsibility to strive for ethical growth.

Ours is a nontheistic religion in which deeds and their results matter more than ideology.

We believe that leaving the world better than we found it is the highest good.

Learn more about us at our website — or, better still, visit with us.

*You're always welcome.*

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

## ETHICAL OUTLOOK

APRIL 2013

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