

ETHICAL OUTLOOK

October 2014

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Fortune Society receives NYSEC 2014 Community Service Award... see page 18.

THE ANNUAL RETREAT AT STONY POINT — OH, WHAT A WEEKEND!



Some of the attendees at this year's retreat.

Elinore Kaplan

Twenty-one years! Do you believe it? NYSEC has actually been holding annual retreats since 1993, when Judy Sandwell, then chairperson of the Membership Committee, proposed and planned the very first one – at a place called Holiday Hills. In fact, that first one was just about the same weekend (September

10-12) as this year's (September 12-14). It's no wonder that we've kept the tradition. For several years, we've been coming to Stony Point Center, which is less than an hour's drive away, just above Haverstraw, NY, off the Hudson River. It's a little bit of country, far enough for us to feel away from the city, and close enough to get there and back in no time.

And what a weekend

it was! At Gilmor Sloane House (home away from home for most of us for the full weekend, and the base for our evening activities) the weather was on our side Friday evening for a relaxing hour of wine, cheese, chips, dips, and other nibbles on the porch. When the showers came on Saturday, we moved to one of the house's charming living rooms.

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Leader's Desk



DR . ANNE KLAEYSEN

A Land of Immigrants

When I was a child, we sang a song about Christopher Columbus and his crew, who in 1492 sailed the ocean blue to open up a new trade route to India and instead "discovered" America, naming its inhabitants "Indians." We celebrated the arrival of the first immigrants with a long holiday weekend. We didn't sing about the people who were already here, who cherished the land of their ancestors, and whose lives were forever changed by the greed and aggression of European immigrants.

Years later I learned that the Haudenosaunee, whom the French called Iroquois, dwelled in the land where I grew up and formed a mighty – and peaceful – confederacy of six nations centuries before Columbus landed. Their constitution is often described as the oldest participatory democracy in the world, blending law and values, society, and nature as

equal partners, and each plays an important role. Although the U.S. Constitution used the confederacy as a model, it included neither nature nor man's other equal partner – woman. The Declaration of Independence referred to the original inhabitants as "the merciless Indian Savages."

Songwriter Nancy Schimmel updated the song we sang as children in these verses excerpted from "1492":

*In fourteen hundred ninety-two
Columbus sailed the ocean blue,
It was a courageous thing to do
But someone was already here. . .*

*It isn't like it was empty space,
Caribs met him face to face. . .
Columbus was lost, the Caribs
were not;*

We are all immigrants, or descended from immigrants. Since humanity originated in Africa, even indigenous people migrated here, and people continue to arrive for myriad reasons. If we are to continue calling this

Continued on page 7

Ethical Enrichment and Events

Strength Exercise Class

Plan to attend this “strength exercise class for everyone.” Come on **WEDNESDAYS** at **1:00 PM** (Elliott Library, Room 507). The instructor, Rob Hoffman, is a certified Exercise Specialist for the Elderly (American College of Sports Medicine). If you have any questions, you can email Rob at rwhofman@aol.com, or phone him at 917-374-5479.

The cost per class is \$5 for members and \$8 for guests.

Body, Brain, and Balance

Join us on **WEDNESDAYS, OCTOBER 1, 15, and 22, 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM**, in the Elliott Library, Room 507, as we continue this popular workshop, led by Rob Hofman. The first two sessions were held September 10 and 17.

“Three big B’s: Body, Brain, and Balance.” These are interconnected, they keep us functioning, and they need to be maintained. There is a lot we can do to keep our bodies, our brains, and our balance systems up to par – and that is

what this workshop is about. It will definitely be enjoyable and practical, and a great learning experience.

We hope to see you there. Wear easy, loose-fitting clothes and flat shoes.

Registration is required, so to register email Yalitzia Garcia-Krawczyk at ygarcia@nysec.org, or phone her at 212-874-5210, ext. 117.

The cost for members is \$30, and for guests \$60.

Great Books Discussion Group

Larry Schiff

We meet the first Wednesday of each month (unless it is a holiday), so join us on **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1**, from **7:30 PM** till **9:00 PM**, in the Elliott Library, Room 507. This month we’ll be reading Aristotle’s *On Happiness* and Plato’s *The Apology* (the complete work). All you have to do is buy the books for the year (\$30 from the Great Books Foundation, Series one), read the play (ideally twice), and think of some questions that come to your mind as you read it.



SUNDAY PLATFORM MEETINGS

11:00 am

Ceremonial Hall, 4th Floor

OCTOBER 5

A Land of Immigrants
Dr. Anne Klaeyen, Leader
Henryka Komanska Presides

OCTOBER 12

How America's Values and Institutions Shape Our Influence Abroad
Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader
Beverly Newman Presides

OCTOBER 19

What Ethical Culture Is, and Why It Matters
Dr. Arthur Dobrin
Professor Emeritus
Dr. Anne Klaeyen Presides

OCTOBER 26

Crime and the Broken Window Theory
Curt Collier, Leader
Patricia Debrovner Presides

NOT A MEMBER?

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

For more information on how we work please go to: <http://www.meetup.com/Manhattan-Great-Books-Discussion-Group/> and click on the “About Us” menu item on the left. Also under “About Us” you’ll find the link to the Great Books Foundation, where you can purchase the books for our sessions. On the left (and on the top) is our “Calendar” of readings for the year. To get a hard copy of our list of readings go to “More” on the top menu (right under the banner) and then “Files.” (You can also see the 2014 and 2015 reading schedule on page 5 of September’s *ETHICAL OUTLOOK*.)

Some new members shared with us what the discussions meant to them. Here are comments from two of them:

“I went to one session and thoroughly enjoyed the discussion. I felt most welcome and particularly enjoyed that the contrasting opinions were accepted and encouraged. It was also so refreshing to have a group of both men and women discussing books together in a group. I am looking forward to meeting again.”

“As a relatively new member myself, I’ve really appreciated the group’s open and welcoming spirit and the members’ passion for close reading of great books. I’d recommend the group to anyone who enjoys doing serious reading with folks who don’t take themselves too seriously.”

We look forward to seeing you October 1. If you have any questions contact me at: 917-749-0695 or larry@larryschiff.com.

Deepening Ethical Circles

Join us on **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM** in the Adler Study, Room 514. Dr. Anne Klaeyssen will moderate.

Meaningful personal development and community growth can flourish when people share in the lives of others, especially through empathetic listening and talking about matters of ultimate concern. Small group experiences provide an opportunity for members to explore their

deepest understanding of life in community.

There is no fee for this program.

Ethics in Film

Chris Everett

Join us on **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 7:00 PM** (doors open at **6:30 PM**), in Ceremonial Hall to see *My Sister’s Keeper* (2009), directed by Nick Cassavetes. I’ll be leading our discussion after the movie.



In Los Angeles, eleven-year-old Anna Fitzgerald seeks medical emancipation from her mother Sara, who wants Anne to donate her kidney to her sister. She tells the lawyer the story of her family after it was discovered that her older sister Kate had leukemia; how Anna was conceived by in vitro fertilization to become a donor for Kate; and the medical procedures she has been submitted to since she was a five-year-old to help her sister.

The suggested donation for the evening is \$5, which includes snacks and beverages.

NYSEC Fall Hike



Henryka Komanska

Join us **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4**, on a hike to Bull Hill in historic Cold Spring, NY.

This five-hour hike will take us to a summit over the Hudson River. You will be rewarded with stunning views of the river and, on a clear day, Manhattan. We will take a scenic train ride to the town of Cold Spring. The town, on the east bank of the Hudson, has many antique stores, nice coffee shops, several restaurants, and a couple of lovely parks (Stony Point and West Point Foundry) for those who may be interested in taking a stroll on their own. This town is worth a day's visit, even if you do not hike!

The ride on Metro North's Hudson line takes an hour and twenty minutes and offers spectacular views of the river. **We will meet at the information booth in Grand Central Station at 8:30 AM. If you arrive after that time, find us on the train that leaves at 8:47 AM.** A round-trip ticket is

\$22.50. Please buy your own tickets. 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 (there are some steep parts on our descent), and dress in layers for the hike. Rain cancels.

Fall Writing Classes

Elaine Berman Gurney

We'll start another year of nonfiction writing classes this month. "The Joy of Personal Writing" workshops are open to all – people who want to get started writing, as well as those with more experience.

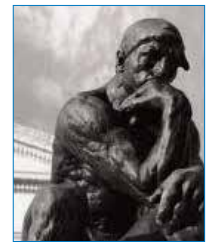
The ten-week fall semester of the **TUESDAY** class will begin on **OCTOBER 7, 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM**, in the Elliott Library, Room 507. The **THURSDAY** class will begin on **OCTOBER 9, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM**, Room 508. Course fees are \$160 for members and \$260 for nonmembers. Registration in advance is a must – to register email Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk at ygarcia@nysec.org, or phone her at

212-874-5210, ext. 117.

If you'd like to read work by current and past workshop writers, please look at www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space.

Wisdom and World Affairs

Join us on the first and fourth **TUESDAYS, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**, in Room 508,



for a philosophical discussion moderated by Ken Gans. We'll cover a wide variety of subjects: the fate of humanity, world affairs, humanism, among many others. Come, and share your opinions.

There is no fee for this program.

Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrowner

On **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10**, at **7:00 PM**, Ethics and the Theater



will present a play reading of *John Gabriel Borkman* by

Henrik Ibsen. It is eight years since John Gabriel Borkman was released from jail, but he remains a prisoner in his house. Never venturing outside, he has been abandoned by old friends and is despised by his wife, who leaves him to pace, alone, upstairs, as she sits downstairs, plotting the restoration of the family's honor. Borkman, a banker, speculated with – and lost – the funds entrusted to his care. For that he was imprisoned. But he is guilty, as well, of a more intimate betrayal, one that has condemned not only Borkman himself but his entire circle to frigid, loveless cells from which each struggles to break free.

Cecelia Riddett directs our cast, which includes Amber Bogdewiecz, Stephen Bradbury, Susanna Frazer, Artem Kreimer, Sylvia Niemenen, Guy Strobel and Donnah Welby.

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 Betsy Ungar. Ceremonial Hall.

The suggested donation is \$5 for members and \$10 for guests.

Ethical Death Café

Join us on **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12**, from **1:30 PM to 4:00 PM**, in the Adler Study, Room 514, and on **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22**, from **2:30 PM to 5:00 PM**, in Ceremonial Hall. Our moderator is Dr. Barbara Simpson. She holds a doctorate in pastoral counseling and is the Bereavement Program Community Outreach Coordinator at Caring Hospice Services.

We'll gather in a relaxed and safe setting to discuss death, drink tea, and eat delicious cake. The objective is to increase awareness of death and help people make the most of their (finite) lives. Topics include health care proxies, ethical wills, and green burial.

The suggested donation is \$5.

Readings in Deep Ecology

Join us this month on **MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 7:15 PM – 8:45 PM**, in the Elliott Library, Room 507. Curt Collier, Leader, will moderate.

We will explore selections from famous environmen-

tal authors. Chapters and selections from the works of Aldo Leopold, John Muir, Wangari Maathai, Michael Pollan, Rachel Carson, Richard Louv, Edward Abbey, and Jane Goodall, among others, will be offered. We will read the selections together and then discuss the important points the writers were striving to uphold. This is a great way to cover classic environmental literature.

There is no fee for this.

Adler Reading Seminar



Join us on **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21**, from **7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**, in Room 502, with Leader Dr. Joseph Chuman as our moderator.

We'll be discussing the works of Felix Adler and of other thinkers whose writings are seminal to Ethical Culture and to humanist philosophy.

To register email Yalitzia Garcia-Krawczyk at ygarcia@nysec.org, or phone her at 212-874-5210, ext. 117.

There is no fee for this, but registration is required.

African Dance At NYSEC

Join us on **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4**, at **5:00 PM**, in the Social Hall, lower level, for a wonderful evening of creative African dance, "Alma Libre" and "Jungledom," performed by two internationally renowned Ethical Culturists, Nina Ndjemba Elemva, a guest teacher at NYSEC's Ethics for Children program, and Simba Yangala, a teacher at the



(L-R) Nina Ndjemba Elemva and Simba Yangala.

Brooklyn Society's Ethics for Children program.

The program isn't just for children; people of every age are invited to enjoy a great evening of music and dance.

Bring friends and pot luck treats to share. We'll have a marvelous time. Please RSVP to: *Ethics-forchildren@nysec.org*, or *Ethicsforteens@nysec.org*.

Admission is free, but donations in support of the artists are welcome.

Leader's Desk (continued from page 2)

"our" land, then we must acknowledge that reality and commit ourselves to welcoming those who wish to make our home their home, too. Embrace people from other lands who want to throw their lot in with ours to make our shared home a better place.

One way members of the NY Society can make a difference is to support the New York State Immigration Coalition (<http://www.thenyic.org/>), whose mission is to achieve "a fairer and more just society that values the contributions of immigrants and extends opportunity to all."

Building Accessibility Fund

Henryka Komanska

We are making progress on making our Landmark building more accessible. The ramp construction has been approved and, once completed, will make it very much easier for many of our members and visitors to enter the building. We are sorry to have to report that because of ongoing work on the YMCA next door, we have had to postpone the access ramp construction project until next Spring.

There is so much more that we could do and, as anything else, it will require money. The Building Accessibility Fund, started a few years ago by Andra Miller, past President of NYSEC, has recently received a generous donation of \$300 from Valerie and David Leiman. Their gift was matched by Chris Bernhardt and me. Please consider making a donation to the Fund.

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

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Sunday Morning Platform Meetings 11:00 am

OCT. 5

A LAND OF IMMIGRANTS

Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader

Henryka Komanska Presides



We're all immigrants, or descended from immigrants. Since humanity originated in Africa, even indigenous people migrated here, discovering America millennia before Christopher Columbus came ashore. They settled here and thrived until Europeans invaded and nearly destroyed all trace of them. This talk pulls on the many threads that form our contemporary American fabric.

The shared charity is That Suits You.

OCT. 12

HOW AMERICA'S VALUES AND INSTITUTIONS SHAPE OUR INFLUENCE

Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader

Beverly Newman Presides



We are at war again. The rationale is our security. But regardless of aims, dropping bombs and wreaking destruction on others with a ferocity hard to imagine inevitably generates backlash, resentment, and hatred of American power. Making war in the service of protecting our interests is an example of America's hard power.

But there is another way to influence foreign peoples, and that is through our values and our example; so-called "soft power." To inspire others to want to emulate who we are is, in the long run, of greater power than to coerce to them to conform to our policies and objectives through brute force. But is America a shining example to the rest of the world? We tout the virtues of democracy and freedom. But others can rightly question what democracy and freedom bring when we look at the state of American education, the vast inequality between classes, festering poverty, brutality meted out to minorities, two million citizens in prisons, and a political system that stagnates and – for the moment – is broken. How we comport ourselves internally influences our foreign policy. I'll take a closer look on October 12.

The shared charity is That Suits You.

OCT. 19

WHAT IS ETHICAL CULTURE AND WHY IT MATTERS

Dr. Arthur Dobrin, Professor Emeritus, Hofstra University

Dr. Anne Klaeysen Presides



What does it mean to say "Deed Before Creed"? Is Ethical Culture an atheist organization? What is the significance of believing in the uniqueness of each individual? Is Ethical Culture a religion? These are some of the questions I'll address in this talk.

The shared charity is Ajiri Tea.

OCT. 26

CRIME AND THE BROKEN WINDOW THEORY

Curt Collier, Leader

Patricia Bruder Debrovner Presides



Thirty-two years ago sociologists James Q. Wilson and George Kelling promoted their "broken-window theory" as a way to explain the behavior of people regarding public disorder and community neglect.

The theory was used to defend policing strategies under then Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and the "quality of life" ordinances inspired by it were used to explain the dramatic decrease in crime in New York City in the early '90s. Recently, the theory has come back into debate with the appointment of Police Commissioner William Bratton, who was the chief advocate of policies inspired by the theory under Giuliani. What does the Broken Window Theory purport, and why has it become so controversial? What evidence supports it, and what evidence supports other underlying causes of the behavior? As an environmentalist and Ethical Culture Leader I will give my take on the theory, and why it may need a fresher, and broader, look.

The shared charity is Dress for Success.

THIS MONTH'S SHARED CHARITIES

THAT SUITS YOU is a nonprofit organization that gives quality suits, other clothing, and accessories to men entering or re-entering the workforce. It also provides training and job preparation to qualified men to better prepare them for new opportunities. The organization welcomes all individuals and businesses that wish to assist in fulfilling its goal of supplying suits and training to men who want to enter, and succeed in, the business world. To assist it in providing these services, the organization encourages any and all support from individuals and companies. It is in the process of acquiring 501(c3) status, and will have it shortly.

AJIRI TEA means "to employ" in Swahili, the national language of Kenya. The organization's goal is to create employment for women in western Kenya, and to educate orphans in their communities. Through the sale of Ajiri Tea, the organization aims to create a sustainable cycle of community employment and education.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS works to promote the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support, and the career development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.

Founded in New York City in 1997, Dress for Success is an international not-for-profit organization offering services designed to help our clients find jobs and remain employed. Each Dress for Success client receives one suit when she has a job interview and can return for a second suit or separates when she finds work.

Early Sunday Mornings 9:45 am (Rooms are subject to change)

OCTOBER 5

CHORUS PRACTICE

Led by David Gracia and Pat Debrovner. Ceremonial Hall.

OCTOBER 12

COLLOQUY

“Who Defines You?” Joe Marvel presides. Room 508.

OCTOBER 19

CHORUS PRACTICE

Led by David Gracia and Pat Debrovner. Ceremonial Hall.

OCTOBER 19

POETRY READING

Come and share some of your favorite poems with us.

Cheryl Gross presides. Room 508.

Sunday Afternoons 1:30 pm (Except as noted) (Rooms are subject to change)

OCTOBER 5

SUNDAY ASSEMBLY

2:00 pm. Ceremonial Hall.

OCTOBER 12

ETHICS IN THE NEWS

Abe Markman presides. A lively discussion of what’s in the news today will help us gain perspective on current events. 12:45 pm, sixth floor school cafeteria.

OCTOBER 12

ETHICAL DEATH CAFÉ

Moderator: Dr. Barbara Simpson. Ceremonial Hall.

A gathering in a relaxed and safe setting to discuss death, drink tea and eat delicious cake.

OCTOBER 19

COMMUNITY MEETING

Meg Chapman, President, presides. Ceremonial Hall.

OCTOBER 26

SUSTAINABLE LIVING SUPPORT CIRCLE

Leader Curt Collier presides. Ceremonial Hall.

We’ll discuss lifestyle choices, our impact on the planet, and ways we can make a meaningful difference. Participants will keep a log of their choices and will share openly with others in a supportive atmosphere. This course is open for those wanting to make a real commitment to eco-living.

more Ethical Enrichment and Events.....

Lunch Discussions Thursdays, 12:00 noon – 1:30 pm

Dinner Discussions Tuesdays, 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Elliott Library, Room 507 (except as noted)

Bring your lunch or dinner and join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen and Society members. This month's topic is: **FOREIGN AFFAIRS**. Folders with relevant articles will be available from Deborah Foster in the Leaders' office. You can now access all of the Leader Lunch and Dinner readings on our website at <http://www.nysec.org/leader-lunch>. Come and join this free discussion.

OCTOBER 7 (Adler Study, Room 514) and **OCTOBER 9**

"ISRAEL'S 'MORAL ARMY'?" by Michael Mitchell, *Forward*, 7/18/14;
"TAKING JUST WAR SERIOUSLY IN GAZA" by F.M. Kamm, *Boston Review*, 7/31/14; and "FAILURE IN GAZA" by Assaf Sharon, *NY Review of Books*, 9/25/14.

OCTOBER 14 and **16**

"IRAQ: THE OUTLAW STATE" by Max Rodenbeck (9/25/14) and "OBAMA'S UNAUTHORIZED WAR" by David Cole (9/11/14), *NY Review of Books*.

OCTOBER 21 and **23**

"BEYOND THE DALAI LAMA: AN INTERVIEW WITH WOESER AND WANG LIXIONG" and "WANG LIXIONG AND WOESER: A WAY OUT OF CHINA'S UNREST?" by Ian Johnson, *NY Review of Books*, 8/7 & 8/14.

OCTOBER 28 (Adler Study, Room 514) and **OCTOBER 30**

"ARE THE AUTHORITARIANS WINNING?" by Michael Ignatieff, *NY Review of Books*, 7/10/14.



The following members are celebrating birthdays in October:

- SUSAN HOROWITZ.....10/3
- SARA DILLON.....10/6
- PATRICE HASSOUN.....10/9
- LUCILE KLEIMAN.....10/9
- FAYE JOYCE.....10/11
- MARCELLA STAPOR.....10/11
- ELAINE BERMAN-GURNEY.....
.....10/12
- LARRY SCHIFF.....10/15
- ERIC NORLANDER.....10/18
- DAVID MASSEY.....10/19
- PATRICIA COHEN.....10/20
- MURIEL BERGER.....10/21
- CHERYL GROSS.....10/24
- LISBETH ENG.....10/27
- WARREN ALLEN SMITH....10/27
- RENEE GOODSTEIN.....10/31

ETHICAL CARES

The Caring Committee will help you should you fall ill or be incapacitated, whether you're home, in the hospital, in rehab, or in a nursing home. All you need do is call the committee chairperson, **STEPHANIE ROSENBLATT**, at 212-586-0017, and she'll make the arrangements.

Our Ethical Family

Farewell to Moe-Swe Myint and Hello to AJ Johnson

Membership Associate Moe-Swe Myint left her employment with the NY Society the first week of September. Her new job is also in the non-profit sector. She served our community with intelligence, commitment, and grace since early 2008 and said that she will miss the many friends she made here over the years. We will certainly miss her! Moe-Swe was often the first staff person that newcomers met, and she shepherded them through the process to become members. In the last two years, she also took on the task of working with the Social Service Board to schedule volunteers for the

Women's Shelter and to act as liaison with Urban Pathways and the Olivieri Center. We wish her all the best in the future.

Fortunately for NYSEC, AJ Johnson, who is familiar to several members through her leadership role with Sunday Assembly, was filling in for retired staff member Gloria Chandler and Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk, who was on maternity leave, during the month of August and was available to take over in the Membership Office. AJ is well known in the Humanist community for her work with the enterprise she founded, Be Secular (<http://besecular.com/>). Be sure to say hello to AJ on Sunday mornings. She's looking forward to getting to know all of you.



AJ JOHNSON, MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATE

In response to the United Nations' meeting on Climate Change, NYSEC cosponsored the People's Climate March on September 21. Numerous groups and individuals from around the country gathered together to urge world lead-

ers and governments to support an agreement to reduce global warming pollution.

* * *

Thank you to everyone who participated in our annual Members' Retreat. For a look at some of the activities, see photos on pages

14-16. Be sure to come to next year's Retreat.

* * *

If you have any stories or announcements you would like to see in the "Our Ethical Family" section of the newsletter, please let me know (email: AJ Johnson at aj@nysec.org, or call the Society at 212-874-5210, ext. 113).

* * *

In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we inform you about the passing of two dear NYSEC members.

John Jeffrey Langsdorf

(September 12, 1928 – August 30, 2014)

Anne Klaeyesen

Longtime member John Langsdorf was a "cradle" Ethical Culturist; his parents and other relatives and friends were members of the NY Society, and he greatly valued our Ethical community, serving in a number of volunteer capacities, most recently on the Pledge Committee.

John attended Horace Mann High School and Oberlin College. He served in the U.S. Army and worked in Philadelphia at WCAU-TV, where he met his late wife Doris Magnus. They lived in Montclair, NJ, for forty years and, when he retired, they moved to his birthplace, Manhattan, and John rejoined NYSEC. John traveled extensively and enjoyed the outdoors, especially bike rides around

Central Park with NYSEC members Henryka Komanska and Chris Bernhardt.

I will remember him most fondly for accompanying me to events at Hudson Guild, the settlement house founded by Leader John Lovejoy Elliott, on whose board John and his parents before him served. He is survived by his wife, Constance Berman; his daughters, Robin and Holly; and his brother Roger, and their families. One word that everyone used to describe him at his memorial service on September 6 was "gentleman." John was a gentle, kind, and thoughtful man who exemplified Ethical Culture principles.

Leah Lieberman

(August 22, 1922 – June 29, 2014)

Heather Grady

Leah Lieberman was a woman I began to visit at the suggestion of the Caring Committee a few years ago. Actually, she was one of three people I visited, but I really took a shine to her, and as she lived in my neighborhood it was no trouble at all. Quite the reverse – I very much enjoyed our visits every couple of weeks. She was a longtime Ethical Culture member, along with her husband, who passed away years earlier. She had gotten married here and had sent her only son, Danny, to NYSEC's Sunday

School. Danny passed away tragically a couple of years ago, and his memorial service was held at Ethical.

Leah was joyful, funny, warm, and extraordinarily kind. I almost thought we'd lose her after a broken hip and long stay in Gouvenour Hospital; when I visited her there she hardly recognized me. But after her return home to her apartment on Montgomery Street, she recovered fully, and we continued to enjoy our weekend afternoon teas together. Through her I met her wonderful caregivers, Annie and Anne-Marie, and heard her stories of life in New York, and the trip to Israel that had meant so much to her. Once, we leafed through an appointment book from the 1980s and I saw what a vibrant life she had led. To her last week, she maintained that she enjoyed living in the best city in the world, even if she was all but confined to one modest apartment.

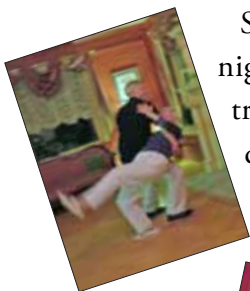
Leah taught me to slow down every now and again, and reminded me how good it feels to create bonds of friendship in unlikely places. I still tear up whenever I pass her street, but I'm grateful for the lasting memory of my thoughtful, generous friend.

Annual Retreat (continued from page 1)



After dinner each evening,

we were back for more socializing, some jigsaw-puzzling (overseen by Sheila Kleinwald with a rotating group of fellow puzzlers), and watching old movies, courtesy of David Leiman – *All the King's Men* (dirty politics in the days of Huey Long) one night, and *Now, Voyager* the next. (That's the one in which Paul Henreid does the French cigarette-lighting for Betty Davis). Popcorn and munchies were included.



Saturday night we were treated to a dance demonstration by Andra

Miller and Rob Hofman, who literally



rolled up the carpet to provide an expanse of dance floor. Oh, they were grand! Waltz, fox trot, tango

– and that deep dip. Andra and Rob, how'd you manage that? Some of us



swayed and sashayed onto the dance floor to join the fun.

There was even a little time for some ethical action, led by Anne Klaeyesen and Henryka Komanska, in the form of making signs for the upcoming People's Climate March. It



may have looked like an arts and crafts session, but there was serious intent.

Despite a forecast of rain on Saturday, the weather held long enough for some of us to go canoeing and one two-some (Henryka Komanska and

Chris Bernhardt) to do the double kayak on nearby Lake Kanawauke in Harriman State Park. So nice!



Others came along just for the pleasure of walking around the scenic lake.

After lunch, with the weather still holding, although rain was



forecast, Curt Collier led an optimistic group on a short walk, and then a longer hike down part of Bear Mountain (actually

more of a stairway). But when the rain hit, umbrellas went up, and no one was the worse for wear.



In fact, some said that was their favorite part of the weekend. Although it squelched our plans for a marshmallow-toasting campfire that evening, that didn't dampen our spirits.

We didn't even have to leave the grounds to stretch our legs. Rob led a meditation-and-stretching



exercise workshop early Sunday morning, which included a mindful walk around the labyrinth on the grounds, which continued for several right through their silent lunch (the better to truly experience aromas and tastes). The food, incidentally, while not



gourmet, was all farm-fresh and tasty, and the homemade breads were just delicious!



Stony Point Center is very much a retreat from the hustle and bustle of the city, and even from a conventional resort. For our membership retreat we can plan our own activities.



For those who want some solitude, a contemplative walk, a late sleep, or early book reading, the space is



perfect and inviting. And for those who want more socializing and physical activity, it's there for the taking. Regarding what we'd planned, Henryka



said, "I liked the mix of activities...the combination of serious and fun, physical and cerebral." (Credit for that winning combination of activities is shared with

my co-Retreat Planners task force, Andra Miller and Cheryl Gross.)

Speaking of cerebral, there were "formal" talks.



Andra led an early-morning colloquy about leading the ethical life and Joe conducted a workshop on the topic, with discussion on how Ethical Culture "informs" our behavior. On the hike, Curt gave a talk about the nature-and-ethics connection, I led a "Looking to the Future" brainstorming session, and Anne held a "Deepening Ethical Circles" Sunday platform.

But the best, always the best, was the informal and spontaneous. Getting to know each other during casual conversations – often with people we don't usually get to mix with – at meals, during cocktail hours, on a hike, while boating, or during walks from one activity to the next. At Ethical we know that bonds are built when we're involved in various projects and ethical actions together, and that matters...a lot. But bonds also are created when two

people are in the same place at the same time with nothing to do but get to know one another a little, or a little better. And that's the delight of so many of us who come to the retreat weekend. Those who came just for Saturday, and there were more than a dozen of them, got to share the day, but not the expanse of wonderful "down" time during which, with no time restrictions, we got to enjoy one another's company.

Sunday, during Anne's talk, a couple who weren't with our



group walked into the lovely glassed-in Meditation Space and unobtrusively joined our



circle. Anne welcomed them, and they stayed through to the end, at which point Henryka stood and said she had an introduction to make. Our "outsider" visitors were, in fact, husband-and-wife

Ethical Culture members of long standing, Ken Lee and Judy Sandwell. What a delightful surprise, both to their old friends – like Carol Rost and Valerie and David Leiman – and to new acquaintances, like Anne and myself. And what a fitting high point to mark our 21st year of retreats!

Then, of course, there



were the unplanned moments like when Susan Horowitz spotted the beautiful fawn in the woods near the Meditation Space, and when, in my car, just starting the trip home, Sy Amkraut, Bernette Rudolph, Andra, and I came upon a doe and her fawn crossing the road. As for



other wildlife, I got a shot of the geese on the lake, and another

beautiful one of them taking off – kind of symbolic of us and our Society continuing to spread our wings, you might say.



Oh, what a lovely weekend it was! Come and share next year's, won't you?

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

ETHICAL EVENTS

2 W 64 ST • NEW YORK, NY 10023 • 212-874-3210 • WWW.NYSEC.ORG

Society & Solitary Confinement: The War Within A Panel Discussion

Wednesday, October 15, 2014

6:00-9:00 pm

The Society for Ethical Culture, Ceremonial Hall
2 West 64th Street - New York, NY 10023

Refreshments will be served

Introductory Remarks: **Daniel Dromm**, New York City Council Member, District 25

Moderator: **Gianni Pirelli**, Ph.D., Clinical and Forensic Psychology

Panelists: **Tina Maschi**, PhD, LCSW, ACSW, Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service, on mental health and aging, Associate Professor; **Johnny Perez**, Safe Reentry Advocate, Urban Justice League, on personal experience of solitary confinement; **Alex Reinert**, Professor of Law, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, on prisoner's rights; **Aviva Stahl**, author, on trans-genders and local and national anti-prison organizing; and possible other distinguished panelists.

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Entry to our 100-year-old building and meeting rooms is available for most wheelchair users with prior arrangements.
Please call ahead (212-874-3210 x 107) for setup of our portable system and plan to arrive one hour before start time.

**New York Society for Ethical Culture
presents the Fortune Society with the 2014**

FRANK B. PRESCOD COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

AWARD CEREMONY

Saturday, October 25 at 4:00 pm

FREE and open to the public. Doors open at 3:30 pm.

Reception after ceremony (\$10/person) will be catered by the
Fortune Society Culinary Arts Program.

*The Frank B. Prescod Community Service Award,
renamed this year in recognition of Mr. Prescod's life-
time commitment to community service, was created
in 2001 and is periodically presented to individuals
and institutions that have improved the lives
and community of all New Yorkers.*



RSVP by October 12
fortune-award.eventbrite.com
For more info:
ygarcia@nysec.org
212.874.5210 x117

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OCTOBER 2014

Office hours for the month are Monday-Friday, 9:00am - 6:00pm

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Ethics in Film: <i>My Sister's Keeper</i> (2009), directed by Nick Cassavetes — October 3 Ethics and the Theater: <i>John Gabriel Borkman</i> by Henrik Ibsen — October 10</p>						
			<p>1</p> <p>November 2014 Newsletter Deadline</p> <p>1:00 Strength Exercise Class 5:00 Body, Brain and Balance 7:30 Great Books Discussion Group</p>	<p>2</p> <p>12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 Empowering Ethical Elders 6:30 Deepening Ethical Circles</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7:00 Ethics in Film</p>	<p>4</p> <p>8:30 Fall Hike 5:00 African Dance Performance</p>
<p>5</p> <p>9:45 Chorus Practice 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:00 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 2:00 Sunday Assembly 2:00 Ethics for Teens - Coming of Age</p>	<p>6</p> <p>6:30 Board of Trustees</p>	<p>7</p> <p>12:30 Writing Class 6:00 Wisdom and World Affairs 6:30 Leader Dinner Discussion</p>	<p>8</p> <p>1:00 Strength Exercise Class</p>	<p>9</p> <p>12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Writing Class</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7:00 Ethics and the Theater</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p> <p>9:45 Colloquy 11:00 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 12:45 Ethics in the News 1:30 Ethical Death Café 2:00 Ethics for Teens - Teen Deed Club</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Society Offices Closed Columbus Day</p>	<p>14</p> <p>12:30 Writing Class 6:30 Leader Dinner Discussion</p>	<p>15</p> <p>1:00 Strength Exercise Class 5:00 Body, Brain and Balance 6:00 Society and Solitary Confinement: The War Within</p>	<p>16</p> <p>12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 Empowering Ethical Elders 6:30 Writing Class</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> <p>9:45 Poetry Reading 9:45 Chorus Practice 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:00 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:30 Community Meeting 2:00 Ethics for Teens</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:00 Newcomers' Reception 7:15 Readings in Deep Ecology</p>	<p>21</p> <p>12:30 Writing Class 6:30 Leader Dinner Discussion 7:00 Felix Adler Seminar</p>	<p>22</p> <p>1:00 Strength Exercise Class 2:30 Ethical Death Café 5:00 Body, Brain and Balance</p>	<p>23</p> <p>12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Writing Class</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>4:00 Frank B. Prescod Community Service Award</p>
<p>26</p> <p>10:00 Ethics for Teens 11:00 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:30 Sustainable Living Support Circle</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>12:30 Writing Class 6:00 Wisdom and World Affairs 6:30 Leader Dinner Discussion</p>	<p>29</p> <p>1:00 Strength Exercise Class</p>	<p>30</p> <p>12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Writing Class</p>	<p>31</p>	

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

June 2013

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