

SUNDAYS AT THE SOCIETY

**APR
25**



**MOVING BEYOND COVID
TOWARDS A JUST FOOD
SYSTEM**

KAREN WASHINGTON
Dr. Richard Koral presides

As a Grower and Activist, I know how important it is to be healthy and to eat healthy. This virus has affected the most vulnerable population, the poor and infirm. While we all wait for the vaccine, having access to healthy food is more important now than ever before. Statistics show a huge correlation between eating good food and health, yet there are folks

...Continued on page 7

THE *voice* of ETHICAL CULTURE

ETHICS IN ACTION

“Ethics in action since 1876”
 Look for upcoming “Call to Action” email blasts with actions you can take to make our planet a better place.

We at the New York Society for Ethical Culture have engaged in Ethical Action since our founding 145 years ago, whether it is actions that we initiate, those which we partner with others to act on, or those to which we lend our support.

Civic engagement is vital for the times in which we find ourselves. There will be categories of actions in which you can participate: sponsored by the Ethical Action Committee, the Environmental Stewardship Committee, Young Ethical Explorers, and as an outgrowth of Platforms.

You’re heartily invited to join in any or all.

Recent actions:

- From the Environmental Stewardship committee: Signing on to a letter opposing the Governor’s effort to weaken the plastic bag law by proposing to amend it in the state budget to permitting the use of “thicker” plastic bags.
- From the Ethical Action committee: Calls were made to Gov. Cuomo’s office in an 8-hour relay asking for his support of the Invest in Our New York legislation to raise taxes on the wealthy to support the programs that help maintain vital services in the city. Go to Investinournewyork.org to learn what you can do.

...Continued on page 11

**ONE PLANET
ONE CHANCE**



NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE WWW.ETHICAL.NYC

**THEME
OF THE
MONTH**



**LOOK FOR THE THEME-RELATED
PROGRAMS IN THESE PAGES.**

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FROM THE LEADER'S DESK

DR. RICHARD KORÁL

GARBAGE IN, GARBAGE OUT

This morning I undertook one of my regular household chores, taking out the trash. You may think it's simply a matter of wheeling a bin out to the curb. But no, not me. I chose to save the \$600 a year it costs for curbside pick-up and take it myself to the transfer station. In my old house upstate, I could take it to the actual dump, and that was fun. Here, though, dumps are outsourced, and everything is collected for transport to an out-of-state location.

Preparing the trash and the recycling is a whole morning's occupation. Because I'll have to go to two separate locations, I place the trash on one side of the station wagon, and the recycling on the other. You can tell which is the recycling because it's so clean. The recycled items are treated like resources, and Bill, the recycling supervisor, won't stand for anything soiled. He's sent me to the trash more than once with items he deemed beyond redemption.

The service uses what they call "single stream" recycling, which means they don't trust the public to do the sorting, and almost everything goes into one big compactor for mechanical sorting downstream. From time to time, they change the arrangement and today only glass and corrugated cardboard are pre-sorted. It depends on the equipment they have. But wait, there's more to it. Electronics go into a bin of their own, light bulbs are also in that trailer, and there's a special truck for mattresses. It's not as simple as one might think. Organic waste is collected, too, for compost, and some is returned as mulch, available for free. At the start of the season, there's a huge mountain of mulch to be reduced through the year by folks who back up to it with their cars and pick-ups. But I do my own composting.

The trash is handled next door. Considering that I compost and recycle, there's relatively little actual trash from my household. Trash disposal is in a building constructed around a pit

into which an open-top trailer truck backs up. You drive up to the edge and toss in your trash or tip your garbage truck, and into the trailer it goes. Huge items that fill up my entire car become tiny matchsticks within the enormous, open-topped trailer. Once the trailer is filled up, it is driven out, a fabric top is stretched over it, and off it goes to the landfill.

The recyclables are sorted by huge mechanical systems that separate out endless quantities of aluminum, paper, and plastics.

Unfortunately, there is little use made of the recycled materials these days.

“ We need to spark the effort to save us from our waste. ”

China used to be the big purchaser of recycled paper and metals, but no longer. Plastics are energy-expensive to recycle, and the mix of materials found in most products make them a pain to disentangle. Many of them cannot be effectively recycled. Just because an item has the arrow symbol does not mean it is actually being recycled.

Currently, we are in a glut of materials backed up and waiting in line to be reused. All those plastic clam-shell containers, old magazines, and packing materials don't have a ready market today. Metric tons of plastic collect in



Sargasso Seas of plastic bottles. It is said that only one in six plastic bottles is even returned. Amazon boxes are smiling at us by the millions. Mountains of Styrofoam popcorn will never be eaten.

To keep us from being overwhelmed by the tons and tidal waves of used materials, much of the recyclables are going to the landfills after all.

We need to invent new ways to make use of the refuse that we produce. At the same time, the serious generators of trash and waste are found in industry, not households.

Even with all the concerted action of millions of households assiduously doing their recycling, it is industrial practices that cause the greatest environmental impact. Legislation is needed to re-enforce the regulation of industrial polluters in our economy.

On April 22, the 51st anniversary of the first Earth Day, let us call for a "moon shot" to break the table-to-landfill pipeline that is continuing to swamp our land and seas. Just as we were motivated to speed up the development of a vaccine for the coronavirus, we need to spark the effort to save us from our waste.



LEADER JOE CHUMAN TO RECEIVE THE AEU'S FELIX ADLER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dr. Joe Chuman will receive the Felix Adler Lifetime Achievement Award at this year's AEU Annual Assembly. The award officially recognizes AEU members who have stimulated the growth of the Ethical Culture Movement during their many years of active participation in the AEU and its member Societies. In addition to being a Leader at the New York and Bergen Societies for Ethical Culture, Joe has worked on behalf of human rights, civil liberties, and in opposition to the death penalty. He teaches at Columbia University and Hunter College. Dr. Chuman also taught at the United Nations University for Peace in San Jose, Costa Rica.



AUDREY KINDRED

Youth & Family Programs Coordinator

To RSVP, please contact Audrey at youngethicalexplorers@gmail.com. For more information about all of our youth programming, please visit ethical.nyc/youth.

APRIL: EARTH MONTH ★



TREE & ME FESTIVAL

FIRST SUNDAY INTERGENERATIONAL EVENT

Today we honor environmental-peace grower and 2004 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Wangari Maathai. Participants are invited to prepare for today's celebration by adopting or planting a tree to care for, giving it a name, and—in the "voice of tree" — speak up for Peace on Earth.

You are welcome to invite friends to the festival.

Apr. 4 | 1:30 – 3pm

As we celebrate Earth Month, springtime with pandemic safety is our priority. We will make outdoor field trips. Bring a notebook, blankets to sit on, and picnic lunches (with minimal trash). Wear Covid-19 masks.

FIELD TRIP 1 — DANCING AND BRANCHING!

On this family-friendly outing in Central Park, we will embody nature's inspiration through co-breathing, observation, movement, sensory exploration, and drawing as we partner with magnificent trees to experience spring's awakening.

Apr. 11 | 11am - 2pm

FIELD TRIP 2 — EARTH DAY JOURNEY!

Celebrate Earth Month with a family-friendly hike in Van Cortland Park, known for its vast forested area, freshwater lake, and many playgrounds. The hike will be followed by a Writefully Ours workshop on Earth Day reflections: "What's your promise to Earth today?"

Apr. 18 | 11am - 2pm

VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP 1 — ROOTS TALK!

Via the worldwide web, we'll explore how roots create community and how roots nurture. Destination to be announced.

Apr. 25 | 11am - 2pm



ETHICAL ESSENTIALS QUIZ

Can a nontheist be a conscientious objector? Of course. But, for a long time the American military only recognized a religious basis for a genuine conscientious objection to serving, defining religion as a belief in God. The Ethical Culture Society got that changed to acknowledge non-theistic grounds as well. When was that, and who lobbied for the change?

Answer on p.8



ETHICAL ENRICHMENT

WEEKDAY PROGRAMS

All these ongoing programs are open to the public. Newcomers are always welcome. For an updated listing of all programs, visit our Zoom programs at Ethical Online Live! website, <https://ethical.nyc/live>. We also email a Weekly Program Schedule, where, for applicable programs, you will find the topic and suggested reading of the week and other additional information.



THE CARING COMMITTEE LIVING ROOM

Drop in for a chat and a friendly face.

Mon. – Fri | 10am-1pm

MONDAY
TUESDAY

MANAGING IN THE TIME OF COVID

COVID-19 has created challenges for all of us. Frank and Carol will address your concerns about managing day to day during this trying time.

Dr. Carol Portlock, oncologist, moderates 1st & 3rd Mondays. Dr. Frank Corigliano, clinical psychologist, moderates 2nd & 4th Mondays

Mon. | 2 - 3pm

ETHICS IN THE NEWS

Join in the lively give-and-take on compelling issues and current events. Weekly topics and suggested readings.

Joe Fashing moderates

Tues. | 2 - 3pm

MEDITATION

Midweek meditation for relaxing body and mind.

Larry Hurst moderates

Tues. | 5 - 5:45pm

CAMARADERIE & GOOD CONVERSATION ON ISSUES PHILOSOPHICAL & NEWSWORTHY

We aim to illuminate the philosophical concepts and values that underlie the contemporary issues on which we focus in our discussions.

Joe Chuman, Leader, moderates

3rd Tues. | Apr. 20 | 7 - 8pm

CONNECT WITH
ETHICAL CULTURE
AND SPREAD
THE WORD



Find us on Facebook
[@NYEthicalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/NYEthicalSociety).
Tell your friends you're here -
[#EthicsInAction](https://twitter.com/EthicsInAction).

WEDNESDAY

DEBATING THE ISSUES OF THE DAY

Discuss significant events of the week.

Sy Amkraut moderates

Wed. | 11am-12pm

PATHWAYS TO ETHICAL CULTURE

Part 2: Felix Adler's Philosophical Challenge

Adler was a philosopher with a moral mission facing an urgent problem that we continue to confront in the modern world: How do we ensure that the human being has inherent worth? How do we philosophically guarantee that human beings are not merely expendable when doing away with them will serve a compelling purpose? Adler believed that traditional religion did not effectively do this, nor could science. Where did he turn to find the answer?

This presentation will delve into his creative solution which inspires Ethical Culture to this day.

This series is an orientation to Ethical Culture directed at our newer members as well as veterans of our Society who want to deepen their knowledge of Ethical Culture. The interested public is warmly invited as well. Each session will be a combination of a presentation and a discussion.

Leaders Joe Chuman and Richard Koral, alternating moderators

5-part Series Mar. – July | 3rd Wed. | Apr. 21 | 2 - 3pm

GREAT LITERATURE DISCUSSION

Read the selected novels and novellas and share your thoughts and observations. We'll enrich each other's understanding and interpretation.

Gunther Tielemans moderates

1st & 3rd Wed. | Apr. 7 & 17 | 7 - 9pm

April 7: *The Savage Detectives*, Roberto Bolaño

In this dazzling novel, the book that established his

international reputation, Roberto Bolaño tells the story of two modern-day Quixotes—the last survivors of an underground literary movement, perhaps of literature itself—on a tragicomic quest through a darkening, entropic universe: our own. *The Savage Detectives* is an exuberant, raunchy, wildly inventive, and ambitious novel from one of the greatest Latin American authors of our age.

April 21: *Disappearing Moon Café*, Sky Lee

Disappearing Moon Café was a stunning debut novel that has become a Canadian literary classic. An unflinchingly honest portrait of a Chinese Canadian family that pulses with life and moral tensions, this family saga takes the reader from the wilderness in 19th century British Columbia to late 20th century Hong Kong, to modern-day Vancouver's Chinatown.

Coming up: *The History of Tom Jones, Foundling*, Henry Fielding; and *A Persian Requiem*, Simin Daneshvar.

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POETRY CIRCLE

Share poems of your choice. We'll discuss a line, a word, an image. Send your poems in advance, so they can be shared on screen: ethicaloutlook@gmail.com.

Elinore Kaplan moderates

1st Thurs. | Apr. 1 | 2 – 3:30pm

STORYTELLING CIRCLE

One of the oldest traditions around the world is storytelling — folk tales, fairy tales, historic tales, family tales, etc. Bring a story and we'll gather 'round the virtual campfire. Your topic suggestions are welcomed.

Doris Hart moderates

1st & 3rd Thurs. | Apr. 1 & 15 | 5 - 6pm

DEATH CAFÉ

Founded in London, England and now in 73 countries across the world, Death Café seeks “to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives.”

Rev. Dr. Barbara Simpson moderates

2nd Thurs. | Apr. 8 | 11am - Noon

POTPOURRI

This mixed bag will feature games (like Trivial Pursuit!), hobbies (paintings, photos, etc.), favorite anecdotes (such as your favorite trips, viewings, discussions, and more.)

Elinore Kaplan moderates

2nd Thurs. | Apr. 8 | 2 - 3pm

ETHICS AND THE THEATER

WHAT the CONSTITUTION MEANS to ME,
by Heidi Schreck

What the U.S. Constitution means, or doesn't, whom it protects, or doesn't, where it succeeds, where it fails — these questions are ever relevant. Heidi Schreck manages to make them dramatic, poignant, and funny, as well, illuminating our founding document through her very personal experiences, and those of generations of women in her family. Following the play-reading Betsy Ungar will lead an audience discussion of the ethical issues in the play.

Patricia Bruder Debrovner, producer, stars

2nd Thurs. | Apr. 8 | 7 – 8:30pm

COLLOQUY: Abe Markman: AGING

Share your reflections on the topic based on quotes, parables, poems, etc. presented by the moderator. There are no right or wrong answers, just your individual response shared in a contemplative atmosphere.

Bob Berger facilitates

3rd Thurs. | Apr. 15 | 2 - 3pm

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Doris Hart & Elaine Berman-Gurney

In this session, a pair of “dialogue partners” respond to questions about growing up, career, interests, adventures—including one about their experience at Ethical NYC, followed by a Q&A. For members, the programs are recorded each month, constituting an archive in the Members Section of the website.

If you'd like to be a dialogue partner, email Elinore Kaplan at ethicaloutlook@gmail.com.

Larry Hurst & Elinore Kaplan moderate

4th Thurs. | Apr. 22 | 2pm

**F
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Y**

PROACTIVE MEDITATION & DEEP LISTENING

In this guided experiential session, we first take time to relax body and mind in order to sense how we really are in each moment. We allow ourselves to focus on listening deeply and empathically for what may be calling for our attention. We stay present with that. This proactive approach to meditating can open up fresh ideas and connections. Larry is a certified trainer and workshop leader with the International Focusing Institute.

Larry Hurst moderates

Fri. | 2 - 3pm

SUNDAYS AT THE SOCIETY

PLATFORM TALKS | 11 – 12:15pm

Join us to hear informed and inspiring speakers, including our own Leaders, while enjoying music provided by David Gracia, our Music Director.

PLATFORM PLUS | 12:15 – 12:45pm

After Platform Talks, enjoy this purely social half-hour to chat with each other.

APR
4



ALL IS WELL, JUST NOT YET

DR. NORI ROST

Barbara Carlsen presides

We've rounded the corner on a year of social distancing, virtual relationships, and shuttered buildings; theatre and concert venues are cautiously opening to reduced crowds. Many of us have been longing to return to business as usual, but those days are gone.

How can we go forward into this new normal? How can we learn the lessons this pandemic has taught? And how are we to go deeper into the mission of our ethical union as we face the challenges this pandemic has left behind?



NORI ROST has travelled a circuitous path in search of truth and meaning. She was a minister with Metropolitan Community Church (a queer Christian denomination) for almost 20 years before making a UU turn 13 years ago. Since 2008, she has served as minister of the All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church.

Nori calls herself an "optimistic humanist" and believes we each have within us something that calls us to our highest selves. Whether that's the

evolutionary impulse that first led us ashore, the universal innate experience of love, or something else, she's still following that call and is always in awe of the miracles and mysteries of life in its most common forms.

She is passionate about social justice and has been involved in social rights activism since she was 17. She is an outspoken advocate for justice and equity and has received numerous awards and recognition for her work.

Nori holds a Master of Divinity from Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado, and a Doctor of Ministry from the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She also holds a Certificate for Spiritual Direction from the Benet Hill Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

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11



STAYING CONNECTED ACROSS THE POLITICAL DIVIDE

RANDY BEST, LEADER

Steve Serling presides

In today's increasingly polarized environment, it is increasingly difficult to communicate across the political divide and maintain relationships. How do we separate the personal and the political?

It is particularly difficult when people that we care about are on the other side. How can we keep relationships with those with such differing versions of truth and reality? How can we connect without compromising our values? Does maintaining relationships lead to complicity in aberrant views? When is confrontation productive or necessary?



RANDY BEST has been a life-long member of Ethical Culture. Born in St. Louis, Randy grew up attending the St. Louis Ethical Society, where

his mother is still an active member. Since 2016, Randy has served as the Leader of the Northern Virginia Ethical Society. He is also Dean of Leader Training for the American Ethical Union. Previously, he was Leader of the Ethical Humanist Society of the Triangle and the Ethical Society Without Walls.

Randy received a B.A. from Grinnell College and a Master's Degree from Harvard University. He is a graduate of the Humanist Institute, a certified Mediator, and Pastoral Counselor. Randy divides his time between Northern Virginia and Durham North Carolina, where he lives with his wife Sarah Howe, a ceramic artist. They have four grown children whom they homeschooled.

Did you know we have our own YouTube channel?



Go to [YouTube.com/NYSEthicalCulture](https://www.youtube.com/NYSEthicalCulture)

APR
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**GET OUTSIDE (SAFELY)
NOW!**

CURT COLLIER, LEADER

Sarah Spratt presides

COVID-19 has proven exceedingly deadly. The health impacts of this virus will plague humans for a long time to come. But there are also other impacts to our wellbeing, especially to our mental health, which we need to address. Researchers have seen a rise in violence (witness the attack on Capitol Hill), increased suicide rates, an explosion in addictions and opioid abuse, and soaring rates of depression.

Youth appear to be especially impacted as the loss of the social-emotive learning context due to school closures has led to increased dropouts and absences from online learning and a regression in school achievement. Now, more than ever, we need to tackle these issues head on.

But how? How can we do this safely without increased risk of spreading the virus? Research arising from studies on Nature Deficit Disorder may prove insightful; it is perhaps decreased isolation from nature that is impacting our mental health.

In this talk we will explore how encounters with nature can help stop and even reverse some of the virus' impacts on our welfare, and which types of nature encounters appear to be most productive.



CURT COLLIER is the National Youth Program Director for Groundwork USA, an organization created by the National

Park Service and the EPA to help raise the capacity of communities to deal with local environmental challenges.

He has created a number of programs with federal partners and supporting agencies to create environmental job training, resume building experiences, and career pipelines for diverse youth of color in multiple states. He is also an Ethical Culture Leader, having served three Societies during his nearly 20 years of service.

APR
25



**MOVING BEYOND
COVID TOWARDS A
JUST FOOD SYSTEM**

KAREN WASHINGTON

Dr. Richard Koral presides

...Continued from page 1

adversely affected by food apartheid. In the name of food justice, Covid has shown it is time to change to a food system that must be fair, equitable and just for all.

KAREN WASHINGTON is a farmer and community activist. As a community gardener and board member of the New York Botanical Gardens, she worked with Bronx neighborhoods to turn empty lots into community gardens. A former president of the NYC Community Garden Coalition, Karen spoke out for garden protection and preservation. As a member of the La Familia Verde Garden Coalition, she helped launch a City Farms Market, bringing fresh vegetables to the community. As a board member of Farm School NYC, she leads workshops on food growing and food justice across the country. Karen is a board member of Soul Fire Farm, an organization committed to undoing racism and injustice in the food system; and of Why Hunger, a grassroots support organization aimed at ending hunger.

Karen is a co-founder of Black Urban Growers, which supports growers in urban and rural settings; and of the Black Farmer Fund, which supports NYS Black farms and businesses. In 2012, *Ebony* magazine voted her one of the 100 most influential African Americans in the country, and in 2014 she was the recipient of the James Beard Leadership Award. In 2020 *Essence* magazine named Karen an Essential Heroes recipient. Karen is co-owner/farmer at Rise & Root Farm in Chester, NY.

**ETHICAL ACTION
COMMITTEE PRESENTS**

BOOK DISCUSSION:

**Caste, The Origins of
Our Discontents**

By Isabel Wilkerson

Caste points to our entire social structure as an unrecognized caste system. Wilkerson agrees that America is indeed racist. She says that we tend to refer to slavery as a “sad, dark chapter” in America when in fact it lasted for hundreds of years—but, in order to maintain a social order and an “economy whose bottom gear was torture,” it was necessary to give Blacks the lowest possible status. Whites, in turn, got top status. In-between came the middle castes of Asians, Latinos, indigenous people, and immigrants of African descent. Such a caste system allowed generations of whites to live under the same assumptions of inequality.

Apr. 25 | 1:30 - 3pm

**SHARED CHARITY FOR APRIL
RISE & ROOT FARM**

This organization is devoted to supporting their communities while keeping their businesses afloat in these challenging times. That includes those who sell plants and grocery items as well as green markets. They also donate groceries to local food pantries, and plants to community gardeners. You can find their members and shopping information at their website: www.riseandrootfarm.

ETHICS AND THE THEATER



By Pat Debrovner, Producer

Since it began in 2005, the Ethics and the Theater play-readings have been among our Society's favorite programs. The consistently excellent presentations by professional guest actors and directors—and by Society members—are followed by a discussion of the ethical issues of the plays, admirably led by Betsy Ungar. The program is an interactive social event as well as a stimulating theater experience.

Just as the desire to build ethical relationships is central to our Ethical Culture philosophy, the goal of Ethics and the Theater is to gain greater insight into the behavior of the characters in our plays, to engage our audience members in thoughtful discussions of ethical issues, and to move them to consider what it means to be a person who lives an ethical life.

Having retired after a lengthy acting career, I have enjoyed the challenging and very rewarding opportunity that Ethics and the Theater has given me to play a host of celebrated theater roles within the comfortable, supportive atmosphere of the New York Society for Ethical Culture, my home away from home.

In the course of fifteen years, we have presented most



of the dramatic classics, and the Ethics and the Theater Committee, which I chair, is now selecting more current plays that are focused on contemporary issues with casts that reflect the diversity of our country.

Our actors have enjoyed performing in person before our attendees in Ceremonial Hall, but, after a six-month hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the readings have been presented virtually on the second Thursday evening of each month at 7:00pm, attracting an audience as well as casts from both near and far. As Shakespeare said, "The play's the thing." Indeed, our popular Ethics and the Theater makes for a very rewarding experience for all involved.



NOTICES FOR MEMBERS

How recently have you gone to the Members Only section of our website? You may have visited the Member Directory in search of a member's contact information. But there's so much more! Have you checked the videos of our "Getting to Know You" sessions? They're all there.

And now you can make that section even more useful. Communications coordinator, Ed Beck is adding a new section called Notices for your outreach to our membership. Is your committee looking for some new members? Post a notice. Is there an ethical action activity that you'd like to invite members to participate in? Post a notice. Does your committee want to alert members to events coming up in future months? Are you in search of volunteers to help out with an activity or event? You know what you can do. This is the place to post that.

GROWING UP IN ETHICAL CULTURE

Ellen McBride



MONICA WEISS

I am a first-generation American, born to refugees. My mother's family escaped pogroms in Romania, and my father, at age 17, fled the Nazis in Austria. In around 1923, my mother's family arrived in Brazil, where she was born and raised. As a young woman, she came to live with relatives in New York City. My father, here as a transplanted refugee, was eternally grateful to have become a naturalized American citizen.

How it began

Suzana and Gerhart met on a blind date set up by a mutual acquaintance, also a war refugee from Austria, and subsequently a close friend of our family. When they decided to marry, neither had any connection to a religious community, but they had been listening to Algernon Black's Sunday morning radio Platforms on WQXR. It occurred to them that, since he reflected the values they shared, he would be the right person to officiate their wedding. Thus, our connection to Ethical Culture began.

Although they were not "joiners," my parents were always committed to ethical ideas and ideals and occasionally went to Society meetings in Queens. I attended Sunday School sporadically when the Queens Society met at the Bellerose YMCA. Growing up in a neighborhood of mostly displaced German and Polish Jews, I never had an answer to the question "What are you?" as we had no religious identity and no name for what we believed.

At Christmas we'd put up a tree because my father's mother had been Christian before she converted to marry my grandfather, probably to placate her in-laws. We celebrated Chanukah and Passover with our Jewish friends. So we felt connected to both worlds.

“*Thirty years after having been married at Ethical Culture, my parents found themselves once again in the Leader's Office, this time for our wedding.*”

children would attend. School was fun on those days because we didn't do any work, but I soon realized that my Jewish friends were having a lot more fun at home after a brief morning stint at synagogue. My mother and I struck a deal that if I went to synagogue with my best friend, I could spend the rest of the day playing at her house.

And resumed

When Dan and I decided to marry, we looked no further than Ethical Culture and Algernon Black. Dan had rejected the ...Continued on page 11

I remember having to go to school on Jewish holidays when the schools were open, and only a handful of

REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR OF ONLINE

By Donna Pang

NYSEC's online programs have helped many of us to fill the social interaction void we have all been enduring while following the community guidelines to isolate ourselves from the Covid pandemic for the past year. These daily, weekly, and monthly activities have provided us with opportunities for close individual and group relationships.

We can all realize and really appreciate that an enormous amount of volunteer and staff work is necessary to bring us these beneficial programs on Zoom. Although we are not together physically in the same room, our access is made relatively easy—without having to commute! Among the many benefits for us have been learning to really listen to each other, adjusting our own speaking patterns, and finding how incredibly interesting are the people who join NYSEC.

One program that I've found increasingly beautiful is the proactive meditation session

“*Among many benefits for us have been learning to really listen to each other, adjusting our own speaking patterns, and finding how incredibly interesting are the people who join NYSEC.*”

conducted twice a week. It has been a re-introduction to meditation for me, with additional types of learning. We explore internally what we are about within our own environment, along with a supportive group accompanying us in meditation on Zoom. And in the process, we learn to “hear and listen to each other's silences.” Now that is feeling comfortable with people!

You're invited to contribute your own reflection on the experience of being an Ethical NYC member in the course of the pandemic. Just email Larry Hurst, Associate Editor, at larry.hurst@focus-in-touch.com



OUR ETHICAL FAMILY

CONGRATULATIONS... Kudos to member and artist **Maria Solé**. She has received the New York International Prize for her painting, "Embrace Over the Symbols." Maria professionally uses the name Solé Xusca. The work was done in 1989, before 9/11. The buildings in the center, and reflected below, are those of the World Trade Center. The prize was awarded by Art International Contemporary magazine.



ETHICAL NYC STAFF
212-874-5210

Dr. Joseph Chuman,
Leader, jchuman@verizon.net

Dr. Richard Koral,
Leader, ext. 1119

Robert Liebeskind,
Executive Director, ext. 1116

Edward Beck,
Communications Coordinator,
ext. 1144

Margaret Determann,
Membership Coordinator,
ext. 1113

Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk,
Office Manager, ext. 1117

Leonardo Gibson,
Facilities Manager, ext. 1107

David Gracia,
Music Director

Audrey Kindred
Youth & Family Programs
Coordinator
youngethicalexplorers@gmail.com

Yolanta Kosmaczewska,
Bookkeeper, ext. 1104

NEED HELP GETTING AN APPOINTMENT FOR THE VACCINE?

The Caring Committee has been keeping in touch with our members during the pandemic. With vaccines becoming more available, we are reaching out to our members to ask if they need help with arranging appointments online. Three of our members who are experienced in the ways of computers have volunteered to serve the community by aiding any member who so requests. They are Henryka Komanska and Chris Bernhardt, and committee chair, Beth Everett. Their contact information is in the Member Directory of our website's Members Section.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

JAQUELINE POPE..... 4/3	PAT DEBROVNER, PAT MALKIN.....4/14
MARY HOUTS, LAW'NENCE MILLER.....4/2	NANCY MCGEORGE LOVELADY...4/17
CHRIS BERNHARDT..... 4/5	LOREN FOX.....4/19
DIANE DEBROVNER, SHARON	SUSAN BREMER4/22
POPE-MARSHALL.....4/6	ABE MARKMAN.....4/24
BILL BAKER.....4/11	MEG CHAPMAN.....4/25
	SY AMKRAUT.....4/29

ETHICAL OUTLOOK

Elinore Kaplan,
Managing Editor
ethicaloutlook@gmail.com

Larry Hurst, Associate Editor

Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk,
Proofreader

Khayeni Sanders,
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ETHICAL ESSENTIALS ANSWER (See p.3)

The Ethical Culture Movement played a very significant role to help ensure that non-theists could win conscientious objection. The issue was played out against the background of the Vietnam War.

Historically, affiliation with so-called "peace churches," such as the Quakers, Amish, and Mennonites, was required to be considered for conscientious objection exemption. Congress had codified into federal law that one had to claim belief in a "Supreme Being" to be granted such status. This was challenged by Daniel Seeger before the Supreme Court in the "United States v. Seeger" in 1965. Seeger won the case and the Court unanimously decided that a non-theist could be considered for conscientious objection if his philosophical beliefs personally functioned in a manner parallel to that of a Supreme Being in the traditional religions. Needless to say, this was of great interest to the Ethical Movement.

Leaders Howard Radest, then Exec. Director of AEU, and Ed Ericson, then Leader of the Washington DC Ethical Society, met with General Hershey, Director of the Selective Service, to make the case that humanists should qualify for conscientious objection. General Hershey was a feared figure who was seen as harvesting generations of young men to throw into the maw of war. Going to meet with him was a brave act. Nevertheless, Radest and Ericson prevailed. They convinced General Hershey of our case, and he changed the rules. The report back that he was open-minded and indeed cordial and friendly was as newsworthy as their having succeeded in their mission.

During the War, the AEU created a small subsidiary organization, The Fellowship of Ethical Pacifists, outlining the case for humanist conscientious objection. Dale Drews, former leader of the Queens Society and later a member of the Philadelphia Society, developed a very informative and useful handbook on humanist objection.

GROWING UP IN ETHICAL CULTURE

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Catholicism of his youth, and this was the only faith connection I had. And so it was that thirty years after having been married at Ethical Culture, my parents found themselves once again in the Leader's Office, this time for our wedding.

It wasn't until our daughter turned five in 1990 that we sought a faith community in which to raise her. We joined the Ethical Culture Society of Queens, where we met some wonderful families that we're still close to. We dove in with Sunday Platforms, Sunday School, religious education, and family weekends. Eventually I joined the Board, then later attended some AEU conferences and, with training, became an officiant in 2005.

Being in Ethical Culture has had a profound influence on my parenting and on my life as an adult. It became a place for affinity with people who shared my deepest values, and who sought to raise their children with the support of a community that promoted those values. We agreed it was especially important for our children to feel a connection to other kids and adults who had the same ethical guideposts for navigating life's challenges. We wanted them to be leaders, not followers, to think for themselves and have a sense that choosing differently from the group was sometimes the best choice one could make.

The Queens Society did not have its own home or fulltime Leader, and that had its advantages. As members for many years, we were exposed to many of the wonderful Leaders in the Movement who served us as part-time Leaders, including Lois Kellerman, Walter Lawton, and Richard Kiniry. With other Sunday School families, we enjoyed visiting Societies that had their own buildings. Over the many years, we visited Brooklyn, Northern Westchester, Riverdale/Yonkers, Long Island, and even Philadelphia, Washington, and North Virginia.

And continues today

After a brief stint as members in Long Island when Anne Klaysene was the Leader, we followed her to NYSEC in 2008. The new three-Leader model here, with Anne, Curt, and Joe, created a rich and vital Ethical community. It was the first time we experienced the benefits of being in an Ethical home with a building, full-time leadership, and a community that wasn't going anywhere. And that's where we've put down what we expect will be permanent roots.

THE *Voice* of ETHICAL CULTURE

ETHICS IN ACTION

...Continued from page 1

Here's a sneak peak at what your in-box will include in the future with actions you can take to make a difference.

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE
ETHICS IN ACTION SINCE 1876 - ETHICAL.NYC



**Actions you can take
to make our city, state,
planet a better place!**

Environmental Stewardship Committee



- Earth Day is April 22nd:
Write a letter to your local politician(s) letting them know you care about the environment...and they should too. Voice your concerns as a constituent and let them know the environment is an issue you are basing your vote on. To find your elected official, use this link:
<http://bit.ly/3bsGSGN>

Ethical Action Committee

- Be civically engaged and educate yourself about **Ranked Choice Voting** to be able to fully participate in the Mayoral Primary in June. Learn all you need to know at: <http://on.nyc.gov/3lngvFD>
- Organize a one-hour food drive in your building or set up a collection for a week or longer. The Roses will pick up the donations and deliver them to one of three food banks in the city. Contact jrose@nysec.org for details



For Young Ethical Explorers

- Address the need for children's clothing sizes 4T - 14 requested by one of the regular recipients of the Food Insecurity Initiative by collecting lightly used, clean children's clothes. For more info contact jrose@nysec.org.

PLATFORM Inspired

- In support of the April 25th platform: "Moving Beyond Covid Towards a Just Food System presented by Karen Washington", patronize your local green markets.

ETHICAL

We are Ethical Culture NYC,
a humanist community dedicated to ethics, social justice,
and education since 1876.

We celebrate life's joys, support each other through life's crises,
and work to make the world a better place.

Join us for hundreds of community and cultural programs
where people meet to explore and embrace ethical living.

Learn more about us at our website, www.ETHICAL.nyc —
or, better still, visit with us. You're always welcome.

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2 WEST 64TH STREET • NEW YORK, NY 10023 • 212.874.5210 • WWW.ETHICAL.NYC