



CHICAGO ETHICAL HUMANIST

Newsletter of the ETHICAL HUMANIST SOCIETY OF CHICAGO

May 2009

Welcome to Our Sunday Morning Programs in May

HUGH TAFT-MORALES, Intern Leader at the Northern Virginia Ethical Society and graduate of the Humanist Institute, speaks on **Sunday, May 3rd**. His topic is **“Psychotherapy and Ethical Culture.”** Morales will explore the inspirational role of counseling in nourishing personal relationships and congregational life in the Ethical movement. He will weave in his own family’s “psychotherapeutic adventures.”

TOM CAMPBELL, local attorney and amateur historian, speaks **Sunday, May 10th**, on **“Fighting Slavery in Chicago: Abolitionists and Lincoln.”** In commemoration of Abraham Lincoln’s birthday bicentennial, Campbell will discuss how a courageous group of local activists helped to influence the president in the epic struggle to end slavery.

JAN SCHAKOWSKY, a member of Congress from Chicago and northern suburbs, speaks on **Sunday, May 17th**. Her topic is **“President Obama: My Appraisal and Expectations.”** Newly elected to Congress, Schakowsky spoke to

the Society in December 1998. An early supporter of Obama in his runs for Senator and President, she will share her thoughts on how well our country is doing.

Our **MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND** at Tower Hill Camp in Michigan features a 10:30 a.m. platform program on **Sunday, May 24th**. If you can’t be there for the whole weekend, come Sunday morning and stay for lunch. From downtown Chicago, the drive is about an hour and a half. *There is no regular Sunday morning program at the Greiner Center in Skokie.*

Our annual **MEMBERSHIP RECOGNITION** and Sunday School graduation program is on **Sunday, May 31st**. We’ll salute our hard-working staff and volunteers, honor our Sunday School children, parents, and teachers, and welcome our many new members. To remind us of anyone who deserves special recognition, you can contact Tom Hoepfner. The program will be preceded by an “A-for-appreciation” breakfast featuring baked goods with *apples* and *apricots*.

Coming Society Events

- **“The Adler Workshop,”** latest in our Saturday Seminar Series, is on **May 2nd**, 1:30–4 p.m. *Hugh Taft-Morales*, our speaker the next morning, provides an opportunity to delve into the life and philosophy of Ethical Culture’s founder, Felix Adler. Participants will discuss the roots of our movement as well as the strengths and limits of Adler’s perspectives on religion, service, relationships, and democracy. RSVP to Ken Novak at 847-414-4314 or kennovak@gmail.com.
- Our **Sunday Morning Colloquies** are from 9:30–10:00 a.m. in the library. Led by Ken Novak, we meet in a small, nonjudgmental group to examine how we feel about our lives. The topics this month are *Character* on **May 3rd**, *Compassion* on **May 10th**, *Hope* on **May 17th**, *Will* on **May 24th** (at Tower Hill), and *Recreation* on **May 31st**.
- Our **Second Saturday Coffee House**, hosted by Vicki Elberfeld, is on **Saturday, May 9th**, at 8 p.m. We’ll welcome back Society members **David and Gail Hardesty**, who have entertained family and friends for years by singing and playing popular and folk music. Open mike sign-up (acoustic only, all genres) begins at 7:30. There is a \$5 minimum charge, and low-priced refreshments will be available.
- Our next **Fiction Circle** meets on **Sunday, May 10th**, at 12:15 p.m. Led by Ken Novak, we’ll discuss Anthony Bur-

gess’s dystopian “horror show” novel *A Clockwork Orange*. The book is available at most libraries. (A glossary of the “Nadsat” language used in the book is at <http://bit.ly/1I6XD>.) You’re welcome even if you’ve seen just the film.

- Our **Ethnic Dinner Out** is on **Saturday, May 16th**, at the popular **Thai Sookdee** restaurant, 1016 Church St., in downtown Evanston. Enjoy excellent Thai food at reasonable prices with marvelous decor. We’ll order at 5:30 p.m. There is metered street parking and a nearby city lot. To confirm your attendance, see Richard Curren or contact him at richard_curren@yahoo.com or 773-743-7976.
- Our **Film Discussion Group**, led by John Ungashick, meets on **Monday, May 18th**, at 7:15 p.m. We’ll discuss two current films. *The Soloist*, about a homeless musician who is befriended by a journalist, was directed by Joe Wright, with Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey, Jr. *The Informers*, a drama about 1980s Hollywood, was directed by Gregor Jordan, with

(Coming Society Events continued on page 2)

The meetinghouse of the Society is at **7574 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie**. Our **Sunday programs** and **Sunday School** start at **10:30 a.m.** Childcare is available. A social hour follows. There is parking on Jerome St. and at the nearby Albany Bank. If you need transportation, call the office by 1 p.m. Friday—we’ll try to get a ride for you.

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Billy Bob Thornton, Kim Basinger, Mickey Rourke, and Winona Ryder. Newcomers are welcome.

• Our **Creative Writers** group, led by Milt Zerkin, meets on **Sunday, May 31st**, the last Sunday of the month, at 12:15 p.m. As always, newcomers are welcome to share their short original works with us.

Recent Sunday Programs

• **Jerri Zbiral**, filmmaker and photographer, presented her film *Never Turning Back: The World of Peggy Lipschutz*, on March 8th. With her was the film's protagonist, the now-retired pioneer in the art of chalk talks, 90-year-old artist **Peggy Lipschutz**. They were introduced by Cynthia Diaz.

Zbiral described her short film as a tribute to the life of Peggy Lipschutz and "her lifelong commitment to art and social change." The film featured clips of her inimitable arm-sweeping chalk talks, typically accompanied by music and poetry. Included were testimonials by Pete Seeger, Rebecca Armstrong, Mark Rogovin, Ella Jenkins, and Angela Davis. The program also featured a live performance by folk song writer and singer Kristin Lems.

Afterward Lipschutz recalled her participation in "20th century political struggles." She said, "I couldn't write or speak, but I could draw," adding "good art is like good writing." Asked about her art technique, she chuckled, "It isn't as easy as it looks."

• **Litjen (L. J.)Tan**, an immunologist and Director of Medicine and Public Health at the American Medical Association, spoke on **March 15th**. His topic was "**Calling the Shots on Pediatric Vaccines**." The meeting was moderated by JoAnn Hoepfner.

Tan pointed out that vaccination has virtually eliminated many infectious diseases—such as polio, smallpox, measles, and rubella. "It has proven very cost effective," he said. But in pediatrics, "we're a victim of our own success," he added. "There's been a shift from the benefits to the risks."

Tan decried "celebrity voices" and a web-based campaign that, though there is no known case, link autism to vaccination. "It is impossible to prove a negative," he said. "There is a need to show causality," he insisted. Nevertheless, he regretted scientists' "failure to communicate" to a fearful public the difference between "perceived risk and actual risk." He urged us to "know your sources of information."

• **Terri Buffalo Star**, Elder Minister of the Native American Spiritual Center in Chicago, spoke **March 22nd** on "**The Good Red Road: Cherokee Spiritual Beliefs**." The meeting was moderated by Marne Glaser.

Rev. Buffalo Star said that Native Americans see "the spirituality in all objects" and "work to have a connection with the Earth." In our prayer circles "we are witnesses for each other," in our sweat lodges "we cleanse and renew our-

selves," and in our vision quests "we seek to look back at our lives, conquer fear, and think of service to others," she said.

At our meetings, "we share our stories," Buffalo Star went on. "The message of our ceremonies is that there is a great spirit inside us." She pointed to our attitudes about the land. "The Earth is your mother—how can you sell it?" she exclaimed. She concluded with an exhibition of various Cherokee ceremonial objects and, thumping a drum, said, "Like our beating hearts, it brings us together."

• **Karen Helm**, sociologist, community activist, and member of the Baltimore Ethical Society, spoke **March 29th**. Her topic was "**The Ethics of Endorsing the Concept of Race**." The meeting was moderated by Yolanda Adler.

"Race," Helm began, "is not a biological reality." It is, rather, she said, a historical social construct that served to justify slavery and colonialism by creating a class of "non-white subhumans." She contrasted the history of slavery in the United States with that in Brazil, where she said the children of slaves were no longer considered property.

Helm contended that the concept of race "leads us to disidentify with oppressed groups," placing them "outside the mainstream of society." She said, "We're hiding reality when we use race to describe conditions of poverty." Children don't do well "not because they're black but because of socio-economic conditions," she added. "It harms us as a country when we substitute race for class," she concluded.

From the President . . .

I commend all those who attended and contributed to our April 5th Town Hall Meeting, dedicated to solidifying the future of our Society. As expected, our members came up with a myriad of ideas to increase our giving and enlarge our membership. I think we left feeling even better about "our place." Raam Jani was kind enough to take thorough notes and will soon disseminate them to those who could not be there. The next meeting of paramount importance to the Society is our June 7th Annual Membership Meeting. Please show up—it is your Society and we all need to hear your voice.

May is always a delightful month because it is when we have our Memorial Day weekend retreat. This year, thanks to Tom Hoepfner and Lisa Crowe, we'll be singing, laughing, eating, and sharing stories at a new place—Tower Hill Camp near Sawyer, Michigan. I urge and invite you all to come, bring friends, bring family. Making new connections at a new place—what could be better?

—Matt Cole

The **Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago** is a democratic fellowship and spiritual home for those who seek a rational, compassionate philosophy of life without regard to belief in a supreme being.

Like traditional religious communities, we celebrate births, conduct wedding ceremonies, host memorial services, and provide for the caring, ethical education of our children. We believe in deed beyond creed and in working for a better world.

Activities and Announcements

• Our **Memorial Day Weekend** this year is *May 23–25*, at a beautiful new location—**Tower Hill Camp**, in the dunes of southwestern Michigan. Members and friends are invited to join us in this traditional season-ending getaway. It's a great chance to enjoy the outdoors and get to know each other better. The price for two nights and six meals (Saturday lunch to Monday breakfast) is unchanged from last year—\$135 for members, \$170 for nonmembers. Children ages 5–16 are half price, younger ones are free.

We'll have comfortable rooms, buffet-style meals, and lots of activities for both adults and children. For information and reservations call Tom Hoepfner at 847-256-3622 or the office. Program suggestions are welcome—especially if you can lead or help. For adult activities, call Ken Novak at 847-414-4314; for children's activities, call Sharon Appelquist at the office.

• Our **2009 Pledge Drive** has gone over the top, reaching an all-time record of more than \$56,000! John Ungashick, Society treasurer, says, "Given the poor economic situation, this reflects the dedication, loyalty, and generosity of the vast number of our members." It would be very helpful, John adds, if the \$4,000 in unpaid pledges were cleared up by the June Membership Meeting.

• Our **Board Nominating Committee** reports that five candidates have announced for election to four open spots on the Society's Board of Trustees. Running for reelection are *Carolyn Welch, Oliver Pergams, Sheila Caplan Curren, and Susan Burck*. Also running is *Sue Walton*. Additional nominations can be made by May 8th to committee members (Ellen Rae, Paul Ozarowski, David Hardesty, Mike DuPuis, or Ed Drower) or at the June 7th membership meeting.

• Our **Environmental Footprint Committee** is working on how we can live the four R's: reduce, reuse, recycle, and restore. To know more about solar and wind power, organic gardening, and reducing your carbon footprint, contact us at environmental@ethicalhuman.org. The committee meets on Sunday, May 17th, 12:30 p.m. All are invited.

• The **Annual Assembly** of the **American Ethical Union** is scheduled for June 11–14, in St. Louis. For information on the program and going as a non-delegate, contact Sue Walton at sns@swalton.com or 847-475-0391.

• **Sunday Coffee Hour Hosts** have been named for the summer by "kitchen mavens" Judy Carney and Sue Walton.

They're taking a well-deserved rest—but we hope to keep those cups full!

• Another **Summer Rummage Sale** is planned for this year. So think of us as you're doing your spring-cleaning. For details on bringing in items or if you need a pickup at your home, call Ken Novak at 847-414-4314.

• **Outreach.** Matt Cole and Ken Novak spoke about the Society and Ethical Humanism to an interested, friendly group at the Sedgebrook retirement community in Lincolnshire on April 6th. They were invited by resident Irwin Levine, who thought his fellow retirees might benefit in learning about religions less theistic than most of them were familiar with.

Our People . . .

• **Joseph and Rose Manak** have joined the Society. They live in Rogers Park and are retired psychiatric social workers. The Society, they say, "reflects our thinking," and in us "we have found common ground." Welcome, Joe and Rose!

• **Rivian Zeff**, sister-in-law of Renee Sullivan and longtime friend of the Society, died on March 12th in Iowa. Our condolences to Renee and her daughter Jane and to Rivian's daughters Anne Hrbek and Jan Zeff.

• **Luke Larmee and Yoomi An** were married by our Ethical Officiant Ken Novak on April 4th in Skokie. Our congratulations and wishes for a long, happy life together!

Sunday School Scoop . . .

In April we learned about Passover and Easter and had our Ethical Egg Hunt. We also worked on our Spring Festival play and prepared flowers in hand-painted pots for gifts to our membership. A special thanks to David and Katie Wokosin for a presentation on alternative energy and helping the kids make their own windmills. The children of today will have to continue grappling with this issue as they become the policymakers of tomorrow. We're so grateful that our children have access to this information.

May will be a busy month, beginning with a service project at Emily Oaks to prepare their walking trails for the summer, and a special project to honor our mothers. We'll end with our last-day-of-Sunday-School picnic, the Memorial Day Weekend retreat, and our Sunday School graduation. It's been a wonderful year and it's hard to believe it's coming to an end!

—Sharon Appelquist, Director

Tribute Fund

• *In memory of Irving Haber, with sympathy to Norma and Laura Haber* —from RENEE SULLIVAN AND JANE SULLIVAN

• *In celebration of the birth of Cole Uhle, our grandson* —from DAVID AND GAIL HARDESTY

• *In celebration of Stephanie Ungashick being named to the Dean's List for the spring quarter and her June graduation from Northwestern University* —from JOHN UNGASHICK

The **Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago**, founded in 1882, is a member of the American Ethical Union and a chapter of the American Humanist Association.

Officers & Trustees: Matt Cole, President; Yolanda Adler, Vice President; Paul Ozarowski, Secretary; John Ungashick, Treasurer; Susan Burck, Lisa Crowe, Sheila Caplan Curren, Steven Freedman, David Hardesty, Oliver Pergams, Renee Sullivan, Carolyn Welch

Sunday School Director: Sharon Appelquist

Newsletter Editor: Alan Kimmel

Ethical Officiants: Marne Glaser, JoAnn Hoepfner, Tom Hoepfner, Ken Novak

ETHICAL HUMANIST SOCIETY MAY 2009 CALENDAR

The office of the Society is open every weekday - Noon to 4 p.m.
Call 847-677-3334 with any questions.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
10:30 HUGH TAFT-MORALES “Psychotherapy and Ethical Culture” 12:15 - Membership Orientation	3	4	5	6	7	8
10:30 TOM CAMPBELL “Fighting Slavery in Chicago: Abolitionists & Lincoln” 12:15 - Fiction Circle 12:30 - Environmental Committee	10	11	12	13	14	15
10:30 JAN SCHAKOWSKY “President Obama: My Appraisal & Expectations” 9:30 - Sunday School Committee	17	18	19	20	21	22
10:30 TOWER HILL CAMP PROGRAM	24	25	26	27	28	29
10:30 MEMBERSHIP RECOGNITION 12:15 - Creative Writers	31	Golden Rule Sunday School: Sundays, 10:30 a.m. to Noon Sunday Colloquies (9:30–10:00 a.m.) “Character” 5/3; “Compassion” 5/10; “Hope” 5/17; “Will” 5/24; “Recreation” 5/31 Sundays next month: June 7: Membership Meeting; June 14: Dick Whitaker; June 21: YES program; June 28: Ken Novak				
10:30 HUGH TAFT-MORALES “Psychotherapy and Ethical Culture” 12:15 - Membership Orientation	3	4	5	6	7	8
10:30 ADLER WORKSHOP 1:30–4 2ND SATURDAY COFFEE HOUSE 8:00 p.m.	9	10	11	12	13	14
10:30 FILM DISCUSSION GROUP 7:15 p.m.	17	18	19	20	21	22
10:30 ETHNIC DINNER OUT 5:30 p.m.	23	24	25	26	27	28
10:30 TOWER HILL CAMP	30	31				

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