



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

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NOVEMBER 2009

SUNDAY MORNING PLATFORMS

Nov 1 William G. Russell, *“Transitioning to Green: A World of Possibilities.”* Bill Russell will discuss ways you can explore context and definitions for sustainability, learn about the new Green Economy, explore what you can do in your career and as an individual to contribute to the transition



to a more sustainable/green economy, and to distinguish three scenarios for the future which you can help shape.

Bill is President of SKN Worldwide-USA, Inc, a management consulting and technology services company. He is a global leader in advancing sustainability aligned strategies and management systems. He works with a variety of clients to assess and financially quantify opportunities and risks posed by current environmental, social, economic and sector specific trends. He is advancing more collaborative business models that change how companies engage with external experts, their employees, customers, and other

Gigi Goldstein memorial

A Memorial Service for Gigi Goldstein will be held on Saturday, October 31 at 2 p.m. at the Ethical Culture Society.

Gigi, who had for many years served admirably as the Society’s secretary, died on Sunday, September 27. She was 61 years old. She was a devoted member of the Society, admired for her songs, her warm, embracing personality, and her astute knowledge of character.

— Mira Stillman

stakeholders. He also saw the potential of people, technology, and the internet to dramatically improve our ability to innovate, implement self-organized actions, and collectively learn and founded the Sustainability Knowledge Network (SKN). He administers the Transitioning to Green™ Knowledge Exchange and Community Network, leads its Business Assessment service and facilitates its network of affiliated sector and role specific Green Business practitioner leaders.

He is the former US environmental practice leader of PricewaterhouseCoopers and currently serves as an advisory board member and research fellow of Fairleigh Dickinson University’s Institute for Sustainable Enterprise (ISE) and its Sustainable Business Incubator. He is a co-editor and co-author of *The Sustainable Enterprise Fieldbook* by Greenleaf Publishing. He received his B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Maryland and his M.B.A. from Rutgers University.

Nov 8 Ingrid Reed, *“What the election reveals about our political mood this season.”* Ingrid Reed will analyze the outcome of the Nov. 3 gubernatorial and NJ State Assembly elections. A great deal has changed in the year since Barack Obama’s momentous victory, but there are also currents witnessed then that might have shifted choices in this



Platforms begin at 11 a.m. All are welcome. Platforms are subject to change without notice. For information, contact the Society office, 973-763-1905.

off-year election. What do they reveal about present dynamics, and what do they predict for the future?

Ingrid W. Reed directs the New Jersey Project, an initiative designed to reinforce and expand the contributions of Rutgers’ Eagleton Institute of Politics to the governance and politics of its home state. Among its initiatives are programs on campaign, election and ethics reform, governance issues and initiatives to promote information for citizen participation.

Reed has directed studies on television and press coverage of New Jersey election campaigns, on election administration, on ethics reform and issues of voter participation. She is frequently interviewed for analysis of New Jersey politics by state, national and international media and has written op-ed columns for major New Jersey newspapers.

Nov 15 Kal Wagenheim, *“The shortcomings of the prison system in New Jersey.”* Kal Wagenheim points out how much it costs per year to house and feed a prisoner (\$40,000) and how little is spent on education and rehabilitation, so that once released, the inmates can find jobs, support families, and pay taxes. As a case study, he will describe the banning of the book he compiled of prose and poetry written by inmates, and the stoppage of his prison writing workshop, and the year-long “adventure” he has had trying to get that book made available to the people who wrote it!



Kal Wagenheim (born *(continued)*)

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



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Editor's note

The newsletter invites you to submit articles, announcements, commentary, etc. for publication. ITEMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE EIGHTH OF THE MONTH FOR INCLUSION IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH'S EDITION. Items should be no more than 150 words, preferably submitted via email to the editor (gilman.howard@gmail.com). Items can also be delivered to: Editor, Ethical Society Newsletter, 516 Prospect St., Maplewood, NJ 07040. Please call the office, 973-763-1905, and leave word especially if your item is time-sensitive.

Editor reserves right to edit for length, clarity and content. Opinions offered in this publication are those of the authors.

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Our web site: www.essexethical.org

**...act so
as to elicit
the best
in others
and in
ourselves**

Attention members! Please submit your email addresses to ethicalessex@netscape.com to receive newsletter and other special event notices.

in Newark, N.J. in 1935) is a journalist (formerly with *The New York Times* and currently editor of *Caribbean UPDATE* monthly newsletter), author and translator of eight books, and ten plays and screenplays. His biography of Babe Ruth was a *Playboy* Book Club selection and was adapted for an NBC-TV film. His plays, *Bavarian Rage*, *We Beat Whitey Ford*, *Wegotdates.com* and *Coffee With God* have been produced off-off-Broadway. *Coffee With God* has been published by the Dramatic Publishing Co. and is being produced at festivals and schools nationwide. It is also being produced as a short film for broadcast on NJ cable TV. His poetry and fiction have been published in online literary magazines (www.jerseyworks.com) and *PulpLit.com*. His nonfiction articles have been published in *The Nation*, and *The New Republic*. He has also taught creative writing at Columbia University and The State Prison in Trenton NJ. Member: PEN American Center and The Dramatists Guild of America. Film producers may access his screenplays on the website www.inktip.com.

Nov. 22 Linda Eckhardt, “*What we’ve got to be thankful for and where to find it.*” Multi-talented food writer Linda Eckhardt will discuss the abundance of foods available in this country, and how to ensure that Thanksgiving — for many families, the most indulgent feast of the year — is both pleasurable and healthy. Linda, will also provide a taste of the healthy-eating guidance offered in *The Silver Cloud Diet*, *The Sustainable Diet for the 21st Century*, the e-book and website she has co-authored with acclaimed physician, Dr. John Salerno of New York City.



In addition to winning the James Beard Award, for *Entertaining 101*, veteran cookbook author Linda West Eckhardt also won the Julia Child IACP Award for her innovative book, *Bread in Half the Time*, which was named the Best Cookbook in America for 1991, and also the best book on the subject of baking for that year.

In addition to a busy schedule writing

books and magazine pieces, and as a public relations writer specializing in food-related topics, she co-hosts the national radio show “Don’t Talk with your Mouth Full” with Jennifer English on The Food and Wine Radio Network, nominated for a James Beard prize in 2002, and teaches monthly Master Classes at A Cook’s Table, Baltimore, Md, as well as teaching in cooking schools from coast to coast. An animal lover herself, she has also written about making nutritious meals for your pets.

Linda Eckhardt is a longtime Maplewood resident.

Nov 29 Dr. Felix Ukponu, “*What is the Grail Message?*” The speaker will share insights from the work *In the Light of Truth: The Grail Message* by Abd-ru-shin (Oscar Ernst Bernhardt, 1875-1941). *The Grail Message* gives the foundation for a new philosophy of life, intended — in its clarity and simplicity — to be comprehensible to every human being. The author aimed to provide a universal key to all hitherto impenetrable cosmic mysteries and humanity’s unsolved questions. He wrote: “I wish to fill the gaps which have so far always remained unanswered in the souls of men, and which never leave any serious thinker in peace, if he honestly seeks for the truth.”

Felix Ukponu, MBA, Ph.D. is Chief Operations Officer of Enenia Biometrics, Inc., USA. Dr. Ukponu has an eclectic background in science, biotechnology, education, IT, business administration and management. In a career spanning over 20 years, he has held research, teaching and professional positions at the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture, and the University of Benin, Nigeria; the University of Medicine and Dentistry, Bloomfield College, and AT&T in NJ. Dr. Ukponu has also served as a consultant with local governments, NGOs, mentorship programs, leadership training and business fellowship organizations. In the most recent past, he was with the Newark Public Schools. He has presented many papers at conferences and workshops in biotechnology, and local government administration, and authored several scientific publications. Dr. Ukponu is a member of the Society of Industrial Micro-

biology. He holds a Ph.D. in Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology and an MBA from the University of Benin, Benin-City, Nigeria, as well as a Certificate in Molecular Techniques. He can be reached via ukponu@eneniabiometrics.com.

An Ethical Culture Patient

A Review by Esther Barcun

An inspirational platform address was given on September 13 by Betty Levin in which she described how she was able to “bring out the best in others” while coping with her own health and health care system issues. While recuperating in a rehab facility, Betty successfully engaged her very unhappy roommate and turned a source of discomfort and disturbance into a mutually beneficial experience. By not letting

her anger govern her behavior, by reflecting first on what she wanted to say and how she wanted to say it, by listening to the concerns of the other person, Betty turned an unpleasant and stressful situation for her into an opportunity to be helpful and to overcome the problematic situation.

When the audience was invited to share their own experiences with illness, recovery, and the healthcare system, many valuable comments were made. Receiving support and sharing experiences can be very empowering and enable the person who is ill to find inner strength and develop coping strategies. Learning what questions to ask the doctors and other staff can help a patient make difficult choices and decisions. One such experience involved a woman who had to choose a surgeon to

operate on a tumor inside her skull. She interviewed four doctors, all of whom were unknown to her. She asked each one the same question, “Have you seen my x-rays?” Although all of them had touted their professional experience and expertise, only one had bothered to look at her x-rays prior to speaking with her. He is the doctor she chose. Another valuable comment concerned the need to have a patient advocate readily available at all times while in a hospital or health care facility to make sure the facility is providing the correct treatment, medication, and nutrition. Mistakes happen all the time. If the patient is very ill or otherwise unable to keep on top of everything, a family member, friend, or other designated advocate is invaluable in helping the patient make a proper re- *(continued)*

In Memoriam

ANITA ROBERTS

A personal remembrance by Betty Levin

Humankind and Ethical Culture have suffered a severe loss in the death of Anita Roberts.

Anita died on September 22nd at age 93 after suffering a stroke in late summer and then a heart attack in September, preceded by a long siege with Alzheimer's. She had been living in Georgia with her son, Keith, who moved her to Georgia with him, bought a new home and housed her in the master suite, hired a companion for her and used his gourmet skills to prepare fine meals for her.

Anita leaves a long legacy of social action and a passionate commitment to making this a more humane world. After her divorce, she left a luxurious South Orange home to move to an apartment in integrated East Orange. She organized a Tenants Association and became its leader when she became outraged that greedy landlords were treating renters unfairly. She often testified on behalf of the tenants and appeared before the East Orange Town Council to influence the creation of more fair laws governing rental practices. Not an attorney, she was nevertheless able to help others through her mastery of the legal ramifications of renting codes. She organized tenants in several buildings in East Orange and as her leadership role became increasingly time consuming, she relinquished her volunteer position as newsletter editor for Physicians for Social Responsibility.



But she also found time to take a role in feminist and racial hot-button issues. She spoke five languages and earned a modest living serving as a Russian translator in the courts for immigrants experiencing legal difficulties.

Anita said she regarded our Ethical Culture Society as holy ground and often referred to our community as “The Ethical,” as if a monument. She gave new meaning to “Where People Meet to Seek the Highest is Holy Ground.” Anita had a deep aesthetic sense and is responsible for choosing much of the art work adorning our walls. She enjoyed regularly attending the Mozart concerts at the local church and off-Broadway plays in New York City. Her writing ability was elegant. She was also an accomplished cook — her blintzes were in a class all by themselves.

Anita had been married three times and had an enduring relationship with Saul Swanger who predeceased her. Her loyalty as a friend was unsurpassed; I personally suffered a deep bereavement when she was overtaken by the “Alzheimer trap.”

Anita's survivors include her son Keith and five grandchildren: Lauren, twins Keith and Sean, Rachel, Zachary, and deceased daughter Sherry's son Derrick. Keith plans a memorial service, scattering her cremated remains on her beloved Long Beach Island and in our Ethical Culture Peace Garden. A memorial service for her will be held at our society on Saturday, November 14, at 2 p.m.

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY NEWSLETTER · NOVEMBER 2009

Patient, *continued*

covery. How many of us have a designated advocate or medical proxy? How many of us feel comfortable questioning our physicians or other medical professionals? How many of us would take a pill given to us in the hospital without first asking what it is, why it is being given and what are the side effects? How many of us have prepared the necessary legal paperwork to allow medical providers to share information about us with our health care advocate that would be prohibited under HIPPA regulations?

Perhaps we can seize the opportunity offered by Betty's wonderful platform address, and the Q&A that followed, to have a conversation on how we can better prepare ourselves for the inevitable encounter with illness and the health care system. Those who are interested in continuing this conversation and sharing strategies for becoming an empowered Ethical Culture patient are invited to contact Esther Barcun or Betty Levin at 973-763-1033 or 973-671-1331.

Nov 13 Folk Friday at Ethical

Singalong with friends Lucky, Dusty, Rusty & Tio Pete, every second Friday of the month at the Society. No admission fee. Bring acoustic string and rhythm instruments, join in play-

ing with us; bring some refreshments to share. Ethical Culture Society, 516 Prospect St., Maplewood; 7:30 p.m. (973) 763-1905 or 763-8293; lnovemsky@comcast.net

Leader of the Month

Our astute president, Terry Sues, suggested at a recent Board meeting that since our previous leader was now designated Leader Emeritus, and until we hire another leader, that each Board member volunteer to become "Leader of the Month."

I volunteered to be that leader for the month of October (I'm a month late due to illness) and have decided that a leader's primary goal is to develop lay leadership and also provide pastoral support as needed.

As for the former, I have decided to chair our Caring Committee and I need the help of ALL members and friends to make the function work effectively. Having survived two major illnesses, I feel qualified to fill this role, most particularly having benefited from the caring of our remarkable community. My emerging so healthy is due in part to this caring.

Based on an idea from Susan Kennedy, I would like to develop a "buddy"

system where we would be responsible for keeping in touch with another person in the society (other than spouse) and keeping informed of their well-being (or lack of it). Any significant change in that well-being would be reported to me as chair with appropriate confidentiality honored. I would then follow up with appropriate cards, calls or visits as needed. I presume I shall be driving soon.

I am asking that each of you participate in this buddy system to make the Caring Committee function well. This is the time to forego your solitary strengths and talents, to get in the loop, to stretch your connection to our Ethical community to help all of us. Please select a buddy with whom you feel comfortably connected or alternatively, with someone with whom you feel distant and would appreciate a closer connection. As E. M. Forster says, "Only connect." I say "ditto."

Please phone me (973-763-1033; if line is busy, cell phone 973-671-1331) with your buddy choice by the first of the New Year — January 1, 2010. With all our busy lives, this should provide ample time — but don't wait until the last moment. I await your choices and thank you in advance for making my volunteer job successful.

— Betty Levin

