

# ETHICAL OUTLOOK

TWO WEST 64TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10023 TEL. 212 874-5210 E-MAIL OFFICE@NYSEC.ORG

## **Sunday Morning Meetings**

**10:15 AM—Ceremonial Hall**

**August 3**

**The Ethics of Caring: Pluses and Minuses at the United Nations**

*Martha Gallahue*

*AEU Leader-in-Training*

Elaine Berman Presides

**August 10**

**Our Future: Are Radical Solutions Essential?**

*Jim White, Leader Emeritus,*

*Essex Society*

Carol Nadell Van Deusen Presides

**August 17**

**A Novel Approach to Ethics: A Thousand Splendid Suns**

*Joseph Marvel*

JoAnn Mason Presides

**August 24**

**Ethics and the Theater**

*Patricia Bruder Debrovner*

Carole Chamlin Presides

**August 31**

**East Harlem in the Sixties:**

**A Personal Odyssey**

*Abe Markman*

Eric Volpe Presides

**Register for NYSEC's  
Sunday Ethics for  
Children Program**

Beginning Sunday, September 7, registration forms and more information will be available at the Society on the Youth and Family Programs bulletin board in the lobby.

For more details call: 212-874-5210, ext. 106.

## **Annual Report**

### **Senior Leader**

*Tony Hileman*

In announcing my departure in the December issue of *Ethical Outlook* I pledged that, "I will continue to serve this Society with the same vigor and dedication as I have since coming here." That I have done for eight months. However, the Trustees recently expressed their strong desire that I use all of my accrued vacation time so there will be none due and owing when I leave. In respect of the Trustees' desires, it has been agreed that I will no longer be speaking, presiding, or evident in the many areas of the Society where I have been a presence. I continue to work with the Trustees on loose ends.

I miss my active role in the Society and the opportunity to properly say goodbye as I had planned. But I do welcome the freedom to turn my attention to those things a full schedule prevents. Though the time I will be spending in the office will be sparse and sporadic, I will of course make every effort to remain available to members as needed. Please do not hesitate to call me, or my assistant, Sheleigah, to set-up a time.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you, this majestic institution, and this noble Movement.

### **President**

*Andra Miller*

This *Ethical Outlook* is the special annual issue that features reports from several of our active committees, and serves to keep you apprised of their progress in the last year. I extend from the Board *and from you* our thanks to all those involved for their accomplishments as they keep programs running, events happening, and NYSEC humming with good deeds, enlightening entertainment, and great ethics education.

The committees that were unable to report for one reason or another (chairs on vacation, etc.) are Ethical Action Communication, and Scholarship. Committees that are currently inactive and/or unstaffed are: Ethical Action, Membership Services (for now, a part of the Membership Cultivation Club), Nominating, and Public Relations (also part of MCC and handled by staff member Julie Blutstein). A new committee is under consideration, "Programs," which will serve as a coordinating committee for programs, be they Sunday, weekdays, cosponsored, or NYSEC-originated. The Pledge Drive Committee is in full swing, with calls now being made to unpledged members. The rental task

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force is looking into ways to increase our rental income so that we can better cover the wear and tear on our building and staff from servicing space-sharers, and the rental-policy task force is establishing policies to appraise and approve renters.

I hope this listing of committees and their work will show you all what goes into keeping everything going and shipshape. I hope even more that you'll be inspired by all that these folks do, get an idea of the fun that they have, and be encouraged to volunteer. Call me if you would like to take part (212-627-3944) – members are expected to share their talents, training, and time with us. Come join in!

**Executive Director**

*Robert Liebeskind*

I am very pleased to report that we have closed out the 2007-2008 fiscal year in a positive, fiscally responsible manner. We are very proud to have operated this way for the past three years.

I would like to praise the staff for having provided us with another year of excellent service. All of the staff are very dedicated to the Society and work hard to meet expectations. I thank each of them for their efforts.

Over the past year, we have added Julie Blutstein as our Director of Development and Communications and Moe-Swe Myint as our Membership Associate. Both are off to an excellent start and we look forward to working with them in the years ahead.

We are pleased about the many groups that are renting our space. They bring informative, interesting, and sophisticated programs to the Society, which helps us to make the Society a very vibrant, visible organization.

We continue to maintain close working relationships with The Nation, WNYC, WBAI, Amnesty International, the Center for Social and Emotional Education, the Center for Constitutional Rights, and the Center for Inquiry. Maintaining these ties strengthens the foundation of Ethical Culture.

Lincoln Center and Juilliard report that they both have thoroughly enjoyed using our Auditorium over the past year and will continue to use it for their wonderful concerts through next February.

As you are all aware, we are housed in a very beautiful but old building. We have been confronted with several concerns regarding its upkeep. Over the past year, with your assistance, we have successfully implemented a building campaign. With these funds, we will replace a number of windows

on the fifth floor over the next several months, repair the parapets on the roof, repair the air conditioning and the pews in the Auditorium, and more. While we still have a way to go to meet our goals, we have been very successful with this campaign and look forward to moving forward with this much-needed work.

I believe that, as we now have a new team of officers and several new Board and Society members, we have an excellent opportunity to move forward and make the New York Society even more vibrant and visible. I very much look forward to working with all of you over the next year, as we set out to meet our many goals.

## Leader Search

*Bonnie Bean, Carol Van Deusen  
Co-Chairs*

The members of the **Leader Search Committee** are in the process of interviewing several very promising candidates. We look forward to coming to a final decision on an individual to present to the Board of Trustees and the membership in the very near future.

## Audit

*Dr. James W. Farer*

The **Audit Committee** has reviewed the Auditor's report and found our financial record keeping in order. The auditor made a few management recommendations that are being carried out.

This committee is also responsible for the safekeeping of all our records and property. We are now locking offices and files that have sensitive or

valuable records in them. We are also going through older files to discover what is in them and to index them. We will also do an inventory of the building and its contents.

## Endowment

*Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross*

This year the **Endowment Committee** was reconstituted; its members are: Phyllis Harrison-Ross, MD, Chair; Dr. Ruth Cohen; Meg Chapman; and Ivanhoe Ffriend. The members reviewed the history of the endowment records, identified a need for and helped develop a format for separation of the various endowment bequests, and designed an individualized monthly reporting balance sheet for use going forward. This will enable the Committee to monitor each bequest for corporate and IRS compliance on a monthly basis.

Investments were placed into more conservative vehicles at Morgan Stanley. A bequest and plaque subcommittee was established, chaired by Dr. Cohen, to implement a plan to have plaques made for gifts to NYSEC of \$10,000 or more.

Current and potential new financial managers are being interviewed, so that the Committee can educate itself to determine the best fiscal strategies and money managers with which to work.

## Finance

*Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross*

Members: Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross and Dr. James Farer, Co-Chairs; Heather Grady, Treasurer; NYSEC, Chris Bernhardt; Bob Berger, Immedi-

ate Past Treasurer; NYSEC, Ivanhoe Ffriend; Andra Miller, ex-officio; and Bob Liebeskind, staff.

**Current Issues:** redesign of the Profit-Sharing Agreement for cosponsorship agreements; fourth-floor lease agreement with ECS; AEU's request for more space; relocation and protection of the Archives; seeking and evaluating equity loan proposals; legal assessment, reassignment, and realignment of the Endowment Investment Accounts; clarification of issues relative to the Robert Hirsch Endowment; and the rental manager proposal (a consultant has been engaged). Other issues including revising the Endowment and Financial Monthly Report format, improving administrative record retention and storage, and monitoring the 2006-2007 audit and management reports on an ongoing basis for compliance. Finance Committee procedures and policies are being updated or developed.

**Issues Resolved:** A union contract was signed; a contract was signed to work with ADP to participate in the employee benefits program of NYSEC; 5<sup>th</sup>-floor office security was strengthened; and our Investment Account was realigned more conservatively.

## Nominating

*Andra Miller*

The last **Nominating Committee** has done its work and we have a new member of the Board, Sheila Kleinfeld—elected at our Annual Meeting, May 4, 2008. The bylaws state that we start to form a new Nominating Committee in September for the following

year's Trustee election. Be sure to let your President know if you would like to be on the committee—or on the Board. Keep in mind that if you are on the Nominating Committee, you can't run in the election for which the committee is working. But of course you can run the following year.

It is a rule in our bylaws that there must be a new person elected to the Board every year. It's a way to ascertain that the Board isn't just a collection of old cronies. And, as President, I have to tell you the Board you have now is a superb one, mixing old and new and doing an excellent job of improving our procedures and making wonderful plans for the future. Come see it in action at the next Board of Trustees meeting, August 4, 6:30 pm.

## Personnel

*Margaretha Jones*

The **Personnel Committee** is newly formed and has taken for its first task the review of the Employee Handbook. Also in its plans are a full review of organizational goals and how they apply to staff organization and training. We welcome observations from all, and encourage volunteers (especially with personnel experience) to talk with us about joining our committee.

## Pledge Drive

*Heather Grady*

NYSEC has tried a different approach to pledges this year by asking all members to pledge two to four percent of their annual income in order to provide us with the financial stability and security to keep the Society healthy,

underpin our many important activities, and expand our membership outreach. So far, our performance in garnering pledges is better than this time last year, but still far from what we had hoped. Nevertheless, the **Pledge Committee** and all Trustees remain hopeful that with persistence we will reach our goals.

Our members are: Bob Berger, Maria Fridman, Margaretha Jones, and Andra Miller as advisor.

## Information Tables

*Janice Buzby*

Members of the Society staffed information tables twice in June, and both efforts were successes. On June 14 we were in front of the Time Warner Center collecting signatures endorsing the National Religious Coalition Against Torture's statement, "Torture is a Moral Issue." We collected 106 signatures that day and helped to let people know who we are and where we stand on this issue.

While I'm calling this "tabling," it was a bit more active than that implies. We approached passers-by and asked for their signatures, which gave us an opportunity to engage people on the issue and acquaint them with Ethical Culture. The next day, Sue Dye and Sy Amkraut collected signatures from members at the Society, bringing our total to 123. Special thanks to Pat Berens, Meg Chapman, Heather Grady, Helen Mecs, Andra Miller, Christina Nargolwala, Matt Robinson, Carol Rost, and Rich Sanders for all their efforts that day.

On June 21, our neighbor, the YMCA, sponsored a block party featuring performances by Lincoln Center

artists and others throughout the day. Julie Blutstein worked with the YMCA to get us a table at the party and we staffed it through the day. We talked to lots of neighborhood people, several students from the School came over with their parents to chat, and a fun time was had by all. Ruth Cohen, who was instrumental in recruiting people to table with us, received a donation of \$100 from one man who stopped by our table. Special thanks to Bonnie Bean, Elaine Berman, Ruth Cohen, Barbara Levenson, Scott McNabb, Law'nence (L) Miller, and Matt Robinson for their much-appreciated work.

We'll be out tabling again on Saturday, August 16, about other timely issues and we would appreciate suggestions about which issues and positions we should focus on. Ideally, we should be able to fashion our position into a petition to send to a politician or group of politicians. We also need volunteers to actively table on those days.

## Membership

*Moe-Swe Myint*

A hearty welcome to all our new members who joined the Society since January 2008: Aaron Balasny, Michael Darnell Dawson, Edward Gross, Susan Horowitz, Jesai Jayhmes, Cheryll Lynn, Scott McNabb, Sujata Patel, Hasoni Pratts, Michael Pratts, Neil Sukoff, and David Sheridan Waltzer.

It has been an exciting period for me so far, since I took over the duties of Membership Associate from Suzy Frazer in April. Suzy left her post at the end of March after several years to teach acting at Brooklyn College and to

further pursue her education. She was very generous with her time and efforts to help and guide me as I learned the ropes in my first week.

### Some Highlights:

My first Sunday at the Society started with a bang on April 6, when restaurateur Michael O'Neal was honored with the Society's Community Service Award, which was presented under a cosponsorship with Project Find. Michael was selected because of his devotion to causes such as providing an annual Thanksgiving meal to senior citizens at the Church of Saint Paul the Apostle, his advocacy for a smoke-free environment in bars and restaurants, and his dedicated involvement in the arts and with local political and civic organizations and committees. Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer and City Councilwoman Gale Brewer dropped by to add their good words. A beautiful catered luncheon followed. Thanks to Bonnie Bean and other members responsible for its success.

Democracy was in full swing at the Annual Meeting, which was held on Sunday, May 4, as members voted for new Trustees and took care of other matters. Many thanks to Pat Debrovner, Jim Hyland, Amy Schwarz, and Moira Whittington for serving as Inspectors of Election. Afterwards, at the Annual Members Luncheon we honored 31 of our members for their significant anniversaries ranging from five to 70. Lee Oppenheimer and Estelle Levinson were among those honored, for their 65<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> years, respectively. Elaine Berman spoke briefly for the fifth anniversary class, as did Paul Berman for the 25<sup>th</sup>. Senior leader Tony Hileman and

Society President Andra Miller handed out Certificates of Appreciation to Ben Bean, Pat Berens, Carole Chamlin, Jim Hyland, Alan Gardner, Sheila Kleinwald, Barbara Levenson, Joseph Marvel, Amy Schwarz, and Eva Yachnes in recognition of their extraordinary services to the Society.

Last, we remember with sadness the members who have died this past year: Sheldon Ackley, Frank Berger, Charlotte Brawer, Leon Cowen, Ruth Gruenberg, Francesca Sato Joelson, Gordon McCormick, Milton Rosenblitt, Edna Schleifer, and Claude Weiler.

## Membership Cultivation

*Sy Amkraut, Sue Dye, Co-Chairs*

This Committee consists mostly of new members and nonmember advisers, but everyone is welcome at our meetings; the next one will be August 6 at 7:30 pm. We hope, of course, that those who get involved as advisers might eventually feel that joining NYSEC is a good idea.

The Sunday Lunchtime Literature Exchange—a table for leaving and taking books, magazines, CDs, and DVDs—has been a big success. (That is, when we remember to wheel out the cart of books and magazines!) Our member, Chris Everett, is working on a seven-class series for nonmembers on Leading an Ethical Life and Rich Sander has conducted a class on being “welcoming” and will conduct another on volunteering. Helen Mecs will be helping him with the publicity.

Janice Buzby is in charge of developing petitions to sign for our tabling efforts. Sy Amkraut is seeking

extra publicity for NYSEC through expanded distribution of flyers. Sue Dye is planning the August 1 Film Forum, which will present a comedy, *Cold Comfort Farm*.

## Youth and Family

*Rita Chawla*

This was a year of new and wonderful happenings for our **Youth and Family** programs. We had 10 children participate in the Sunday School. Our theme, “Unity in Diversity,” created opportunities for fun, engaging, and eye-opening cultural and ethical explorations. Many of our activities centered around the idea of interdependence. Not only do we have a greater appreciation for people of all cultures, but we also better understand our responsibility to take care of one another and our home, planet Earth.

In addition, we launched the **Teen Ethical Leadership Program** in March. This six-week course was attended by eight teens (three of whom were former Sunday School students). The youths learned about positive leadership qualities through dynamic presentations on great leaders. They also learned about leadership through hands-on experiences, cooperative games, and communication and team-building exercises. Most of all, they enjoyed socializing and getting to know other like-minded positive and socially conscious teens!

### Local Pride, National Recognition

Kira Santiago, a member of Ethical Culture's Teen Program, daughter of Gilberto and Lucia Santiago, and sister of Matias, this year received a

National Scholastic Art Award. Two of her works were in the Gold Key Society and five were in the Silver Key Society. The former were exhibited, along with works by other award-winning youths aged 12 to 18, at the Reeves Contemporary Art Gallery in Chelsea. The latter were exhibited at the Scholastic Building downtown, and the award ceremony was held at Carnegie Hall. Kira was among the youngest artists. For the next two years, her two photographs, *Ghost Tree* and *Sanskrit*, will travel nation-wide in the Scholastic Award Exhibition. For more information, see the website: [www.artandwriting.org](http://www.artandwriting.org).

## Adult Education

Barbara Levenson

Though not appointed until after the program year had begun, the **Adult Education Committee**, consisting solely of Barbara Levenson, Chair; and Tony Hileman, Senior Leader, managed to put together two very successful programs.

Last fall we presented a four-part **Foundations of Ethical Culture** series with talks by: Tony Hileman, “The Eight Commitments of Ethical Culture”; Joe Chuman, “The Social and Intellectual Roots of Ethical Culture”; Curt Collier, “The Ethics of Ethical Culture”; and Anne Klaeyen, “Moral Education.” It was the best-attended Foundations series in memory and prompted Joe Chuman to remark that in all his years of contributing to it he had never seen so many people attend.

Over this winter we introduced a **Philosophy Now** series run by Professor Massimo Pigliucci of Stony Brook University. The first series, “Ethics and

How We Live Our Lives,” included sessions on “Egoism,” “Selfishness and the Evolution of Morality,” “The Ethics of Decision Making and the Presidential Election,” “Moms at Home: What to Think of It,” and “The Ethics of Global Warming.” It was so well attended, by both members and nonmembers, that it has been extended through the summer with monthly sessions in July and August on “Heresy and Heretics.” The first session was on the basics of the ideas and the second examines the defenders.

In stepping down as chair of the Adult Education Committee, I want especially to thank Tony Hileman for his support and contributions.

**Ethics and the Theater**—This was another rewarding season for our popular play-reading series. The plays that are chosen highlight the moral conflicts with which their characters are struggling, issues that stir our interest and passions. This year’s lineup of stimulating works included *The Little Foxes* by Lillian Hellman, *The Wild Duck* by Henrik Ibsen, *The Retreat From Moscow* by William Nicholson, *Bee-Luther-Hatchee* by Thomas Gibbons, *The God Committee* by Mark St. Germaine, and two plays by Edward Albee—*The Death of Bessie Smith* and *A Delicate Balance*. (Our Sunday, August 24 morning meeting will present a reading of Terence Rattigan’s *Table Number Seven*, part of his prize-winning play, *Separate Tables*.)

## Archives

Dr. Marc A. Bernstein

This year, the **Archives** were at the center of two new projects, one sponsored

by the New York Society, and one by the American Ethical Union.

In January, the New York Society applied for a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to plan a video documenting its social impact on New York City. This was a major effort, requiring months of work by Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Dr. Ivan Quervalu, and me. We got the cooperation of a number of important institutions in the city—Hudson Guild, Hamilton-Madison House, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and others. We also received permission to interview on film several leading academics, the head of the African-American Studies Department at Harvard, and Randy Balmer of Barnard College’s Religion Department, among them. The application outlined several themes that the documentary would develop. These include the Society’s role in developing the social gospel, that is, the use of religion to improve social conditions, as well as our work on improving race relations in the years before the civil-rights movement.

The grant for which we applied would not fund the creation of the video—that would require a second-tier application for much more money—but would permit us to put in place all the elements to create it: hiring a script writer and a videographer, choosing which archival materials we might use in the film, and selecting a narrator. Even if we do not win this grant—we will learn the result of our application in the next few months—Phyllis, Ivan, and I feel that

we have done enough work to make it possible to get funding elsewhere. We want to record the story of the New York Society on film, and we think we can find a suitable sponsor.

The Archives were also at the center of a new project launched by the AEU, an effort to reissue classic documents of the Movement that are now out of print and unavailable. The first volume to be republished was Felix Adler's *Our Part In This World*, one of his lightest and most intellectually accessible books. A collection of short essays edited by Horace Friess, it is a pleasure to read. How often can you say that about something Adler wrote? Iuniverse has reprinted the book as a handsome paperback. Thirty copies are available in the AEU office at \$15 a copy.

## Awards

*Jerome Chamlin*

This was a stellar year. We gave Matthew LaClair, the New Jersey high school student who blew the whistle on a proselytizing evangelical teacher, the New York Society for Ethical Culture Humanist Award and gave restaurateur Mike O'Neal the Community Service Award. Both were excellent chances to honor two wonderful awardees—and Ethical Culture itself. I would like to thank committee members Bonnie Bean, Muriel Berger, Carol Van Deusen, Mary Ellen Goodman, Joe Marvel, and Maria Fridman.

## Caring

*Virginia Scherer*

The reconstructed **Caring Committee** had its first meeting last August 26 and has met six times since last

summer. We try to meet every six or seven weeks and will probably meet at least once this summer.

Our mission is to keep up with elderly or handicapped Society members who can no longer come to Sunday platform meetings but who wish to continue to have contact with the Society. Members keep in touch with our "members of concern" through telephone calls, birthday cards, holiday greetings, and occasional visits. We've also sent flowers to four active members of the Society within the past year when each has been hospitalized. One of our members visits and reads to a 100-year-old "member of concern" once a week.

Our committee consists of nine devoted members who do a wonderful job performing assignments that are sometimes rather difficult, and occasionally even trying. I thank them all.

## Cosponsored Programs

*Henryka Komanska, Elizabeth Ungar, Co-Chairs*

During the 2007-2008 season the **Cosponsored Programs Committee** (Henryka Komanska, Elizabeth Ungar, Barbara Levenson, and Tom Weishaar) reviewed over 25 requests from various organizations and individuals seeking NYSEC cosponsorship. The committee recommended 16 of these to the Board of Trustees for approval. The cosponsorships varied and included book readings, e.g., S. Wax, *Kafka Comes to America*, 6/8/07; educational programs, e.g., the Bowne House Event, 11/15/07; a panel discussion on *Satyagraha* (one

of many city-wide events held in conjunction with the premiere of the Philip Glass opera at the Metropolitan Opera, April 2008); large events such as "Realizing Rights: The Ethical Global Initiative," 9/25/07; a panel on "Real ID" 2/28/08; and the Sirleaf Market Women Foundation fundraising event, 6/4/08, at which Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was the guest of honor.

These cosponsored events brought to our historic building large and diverse audiences, enabling NYSEC to both support the causes and issues consistent with our mission and make ourselves known to a wider audience. All the events were open to the public and many of our own members participated in them. The Committee would appreciate feedback on the Society's cosponsored programs in the future. We hope that if members have any comments, suggestions, or questions after attending future cosponsored events they will contact one of the Committee members.

## Criminal Justice Pilot Program

*Elaine Berman*

Since February, five Ethical Culture members have been working at "**Getting Out and Staying Out**," a literacy and math program for young men who have been released from Riker's Island prison. This is a pilot program and still very much in development.

## Internet

*Julie Blutstein*

The **Internet Committee** is currently working on assessing the state of our

website. Our aim is to have a site that can be useful for members and welcoming for the public. We hope to update some of the content and to make the site more user-friendly, interactive, and dynamic. We are also reviewing options for creating a members-only area.

## Music

*Patricia Bruder Debrovner*

This past year we were treated to a rich variety of musical styles, presented by our music director, Gerald Ranck, and an impressive group of guest artists. Among the highlights were: Milton Sawyer singing in celebration of Black History Month (Copland, spirituals); William Zito playing the guitar (Britten); Beverly Radin on the flute (Widor Suite); Myra Vasian singing Appalachian folk songs; and Jon Liechty joining music director Gerald Ranck in Mozart piano duets. These included pieces by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Richard Rodgers, and many others.

Our chorus has developed into a first-rate singing ensemble that has gone a long way in helping us to sing together. Plans are already underway for next year, Jerry's 25<sup>th</sup>! Stay tuned.

## Newsletter

*Selma Friedman*

Every month staffer Deborah Foster and I do the hands-on work of creating *Ethical Outlook*: gathering and publishing news about NYSEC's meetings, events and developments. NYSEC committees and the AEU administration send articles, photos, and announcements to Deborah,

who emails the material to me, gets answers to my queries about the text, acquires and verifies calendar information, and puts the edited articles and photos into newsletter format for my final edit. All this is done very well and with unfailing good cheer by Deborah, and I thank her for her dedication and exemplary hard work.

I edit and check everything she sends me, sometimes calling members with questions, and Deborah makes needed changes to the pages. Before *Ethical Outlook* is printed and sent out, she asks other coworkers to proofread the final layouts. This year we've added another set of "fresh eyes" to give the newsletter a final "lookover" to make sure we're presenting "all the news that's fit to print." Many thanks to everyone involved for all of your help.

## Public Issues

*Abe Markman*

The **Public Issues Committee** was formed to develop ethical positions on current issues that affect all of us, regardless of our political affiliation. Our aim is to present these to members, the public, and officials of the local, state, and federal governments. We are currently dealing with seven issues: Iran, Iraq, Global Warming, Stem Cell Research, Child Health Coverage, Paid Family Leave, and Paid Sick Leave. As policies of NYSEC, adopted within the last two years, they are designed to meet urgent needs with strong leadership, and to find common ground.

We conduct weekly e-mail action alerts, hard copy mailings, and monthly forums or debates, and we

show documentaries. We also do non-partisan, educational lobbying and take direct action.

For example: We are planning a breakfast/forum on paid sick leave in the fall. We have found that thousands of workers, mostly in the private sector, choose to go to work sick rather than lose a day's pay or lose their jobs. With the hope of bringing about better understanding of different viewpoints on this issue, we intend to recruit panel members from among union and business leaders and local officials on a non-partisan basis. New York City Council Member Gale Brewer, who is conversant with the ramifications of paid sick leave, has volunteered to assist us. In addition, Sherry Leiwant, representing the Paid Family Leave Coalition, is on our Planning Committee. In order to raise funds for this event we showed two Wednesday night films, with cabaret-style seating this summer—*At the Death House Door*, July 16, and *Sir! No Sir!* August 20.

The members of PIC are: Nancy Ambruster, Virginia Arnold, Pat Berens, Pat Cohen, Maria Fridman, Ken Gans, Alan Gardner, Jim Hyland, Pearl Katz, Pauline Kravath, Lee Loshak, Abe Markman, JoAnn Mason, Barry Meister, Eric Norlander, Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Carol Rost, and Barry Snider. Others who have been very generous with their time, wisdom, and perspiration are: Dr. Charles Debrovner, John Gurney, Tony Hileman, Henryka Komanska, Michael Kriegh, Barbara Levenson, and Andra Miller. Last, but far from least, the entire NYSEC staff has been abundantly patient, highly skilled, and



just wonderful. Those who wish internet access to our materials can log on to: <http://www.nysec/sitemap/ethical-action/public-issues-committee/>. For hard copies contact Membership Associate Moe-Swe Myint.

## Radio Program

*Dr. Marc A. Bernstein*

During this past year, **Ethics on the Air** raised a number of new issues (the ethics of DNA testing, moral dilemmas at the end of life, ethics and the theater, and ethics and music), and brought a number of new guests to the radio program, including physicians, ethical leaders, and academics.

In our first on-the-air fundraiser in February, we raised over \$2,300 for WBAI, a worthy sum in the eyes of the station. We continue to receive good reviews from those inside and outside the Movement, and we are growing increasingly savvy with radio technology. This year, we interviewed two guests who could not make it to the station, and on July 25 we did a fundraising program for the station's emergency drive.

## Rental Task Force

*Dr. James W. Farer*

Our rental program is vital to our financial well-being because of the income it provides. The amount of money involved in this activity is substantial.

But it is a complex business to run a theater and rent out private rooms. We have to provide the expertise and personnel to: set prices, coordinate schedules, provide security and maintenance services such as set-up and

clean-up, do bookkeeping, billing, contractual agreements, and marketing, manage lighting, sound, and many other tasks.

I think you will be pleased to know we have hired a rental expert, Maria Bowen, who formerly managed Merkin Hall, to review these matters and make recommendations to assure that we are doing things right, and protecting and taking maximum advantage of our special and beloved facilities.

Maria will report to the Board of Trustees at its 8/4/08 meeting. If you have any recommendations about our rental operations, please let me know and I will make sure that your input is used in this process. All interested NYSEC members are invited to attend Board meetings.

## School Relations

*Andra Miller*

The **School Relations Committee** is also on the Ethical Culture Fieldston School Board of Trustees. We have attended several of their meetings and are getting to know the School and its Board better.

We're impressed with the quality of an ECFS education and the enthusiasm of teachers, staff, and students. We welcome the chance to strengthen our ties with the School and look forward to joint efforts and activities.

## Sunday Platform

*Carole Chamlin*

Our Sunday morning meetings aim to present Ethical Culture and its principles in a manner accessible to new-

comers while providing a deepening experience for longtime members.

The responsibility of the Platform Team was to identify, and secure guest speakers for those Sundays when our own Senior Leader, Tony Hileman, was not scheduled to speak. We made a special effort to invite Ethical Culture Leaders as often as possible to deliver the Ethical Culture philosophy and message. We were fortunate to hear Anne Klaeyen, Joe Chuman, Kurt Collier, Bart Worden, Randy Best, Fritz Williams, Kate Lovelady, Khoren Arisian, Hugh Taft-Morales, and John Daiken. Other speakers included our Archivist, Marc Bernstein, Dr. Massimo Pigliucci, Greg Epstein, President and past Presidents, Andra Miller, Charles Debrovner and Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh, Music Director Gerald Ranck, and Robert Gauges and David Callahan.

We were particularly pleased with the summer programs in Ceremonial Hall in 2007, kicking off with Paul and Matthew LaClair. We consistently drew the largest summer attendance from members and guests.

Our practice of sharing our collection with charities that reflect our beliefs continued. Since the start of this practice, the congregation has generously doubled its contributions.

Members of the Committee were Carole Chamlin, Chair, Alan Gardner, Barbara Levenson, Joseph Marvel, and Tony Hileman, staff advisor. Our thanks to Sheleigah Grube, Deborah Foster and Yolanta Kosmaczewska for keeping us on track.

We have enjoyed working together and will maintain our friendships—our best wishes to the new Committee.

## Sunday Program

*Andra Miller*

The **Sunday Program Committee** that we have come to appreciate for all its tireless work in getting speakers and presiders, planning the music, finding suitable quotes for the program brochure, finding good organizations with which to share the Sunday collection, lining up greeter/ushers, and countless other details, is losing some of its key players.

The Chair, Carole Chamlin, is stepping down after eight exhaustive years serving tirelessly in this demanding role, and two members of the speaker subcommittee, Barbara Levenson and Alan Gardner, have also decided to bring to a close their many years of voluntary speaker-search work. Joe Marvel continues to find and arrange for speakers, and of course there is the staff involvement—sending speakers a letter noting the details of their assignment and asking for bios, talk title, and description for promotional details, and preparing publicity through *Ethical Outlook*, Ethical Culture Weekly Events and the Sunday flyers—thanks to Sheleigah Grube and Deborah Foster. Still volunteering are Pat Debrovner, as the music subcommittee with Jerry Ranck; Muriel Berger and Carole Chamlin, the quotes-in-the-program subcommittee; Meg Chapman, Chair of the charities choice subcommittee; and Amy Schwarz, the greeter assignment subcommittee. Also serving, but as member of the Building Committee, is Bonnie Bean, in charge of the Auditorium or hall—the “house”—for Sunday

meetings. Please thank them all, those who are ending and those who are continuing their service. I appreciate and treasure them immensely.

## Sunday School, Family Programs

*Meg Chapman*

Our Director of Family Programs, Rita Chawla, completed a very successful pilot program in the spring on Leadership for Teens.

This past year, the Sunday School program, Unity in Diversity, explored ethics through studying the cultures of the world. The students also learned about the environment from guest speakers, and heard tales from a story-teller; they also visited the Tenement Museum.

The Sunday School has been expanding, particularly with five- and eleven-year-olds. Last fall the children raised \$75 trick-or-treating for UNICEF, and presented songs and poetry for the Winterfest celebration. This spring they distributed candy, cards, and flowers for Valentine’s Day at a seniors’ residence, and decorated the shelter at the Society.

We will expand on our successful Teen Leadership Program in the fall, as well as continue our thriving Sunday School.

## Younger Members

*Janice Buzby*

The **Younger Members Social Group** hosts periodic dinners and outings geared towards members in their 30’s, 40’s, and 50’s. Friends and interested individuals are welcome at most events.

We are hard at work planning the Fall Member’s Retreat, which takes place October 3-5 at the Warwick Center in Warwick, NY.

## Social Service Board

*Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross*

The **Social Service Board (SSB)** ended the fiscal year in June, by making a second donation in the amount of \$2,500 on behalf of NYSEC to one of our collaborating organizations, The Innocence Project for DNA testing. This followed an overwhelmingly successful collaboration with the Sirleaf Market Women’s Fund to bring to New York and the Society H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia and the first woman president of any African state. The occasion, June 4, was the kick-off of the fund, and it raised \$825,000 to build markets in Liberia—and we are still counting!

Other collaborating organizations included the Partnership for the Homeless, the Olivieri Center, the Citywide Homeless Coalition, All Healers Mental Health Alliance, the East Harlem School, the Queens Soccer Project, Metro Kids Inter-regional Soccer League, the Family and Supreme Courts in New York City, the Antidote Collective, and various wonderful individual Friends of the SSB, neighbors, and community agencies.

New SSB members are: Vincent Montaruli, SSB secretary, and Eric Norlander and John Hwang, Co-Chairs of the SSB Development Committee. New projects include an e-Bay donation site and upgrading of the SSB website

to include a donation page and matching it to the layout of our new brochure designed by Howard Parker and Friend of SSB Robert Pasternak. SSB members and project directors are: Valerie Leiman, Scholarship project; Dr. Christine Pagones, Lucile Kleiman, and Margaretha Jones, Supervised Visitation project; David and Valerie Leiman, DNA project; Phyllis Harrison-Ross, All Healers Mental Health Alliance; Vincent Montaruli, the Carpenter's Kids Project and, with Phyllis, the Middle Collegiate Church collaboration; Tony Hileman and Phyllis, the Disaster Interfaith Collaboration; and Dr. Maria Fridman, Homeless Women's Shelter and Homeless Artists Program. They all worked hard and many have designed brochures for their projects. Henry Bunch produced a five-minute DVD for the soccer team, which is now posted on the website. The brochures are available at the SSB table at the Sunday social hour staffed by Phyllis Harrison-Ross and other SSB members, who are ready to answer questions and take donations. Sadly, we lost long-time SSB member and secretary, Kenneth Wernz during this year.

All of the programs have been used more this year than in the past. The All Healers Mental Health Alliance held a "Heroes of Healing" celebration honoring the survivors and healers of the Katrina and Rita disasters in New Orleans in October, 2007. The Alliance received the MAYATECH New Public Health Leadership Award at the American Public Health Association annual meeting in Washington, DC, in November, 2007.

In keeping with the updated SSB bylaws, SSB member and former

chair, David Leiman, became the first Treasurer of the SSB. The title Financial Officer was retired.

While SSB has raised funds to produce the various collaborative projects, we continue to need to rely on our endowment to fund the Supervised Visitation Program and on the Partnership for the Homeless for the Homeless Woman's Shelter. Dark clouds are on the horizon for both of these signature programs. Worldwide financial woes also have negatively impacted our endowment investments, which we use to pay for the SVP, and the program is in jeopardy.

Contributions for the SSB are minimal and restricted, rarely for the SVP. A strategic SVP fundraising plan has been developed, for which SSB is requesting the support of the entire Society. It will be described in future articles and at other SSB venues. A \$25,000 challenge grant has been given by Paul Berman to kick-off this fundraising venture. SSB and Friends Committees and teams, including Suzy Frazer and Julie Blutstein, are working on individual projects for the year-long effort.

Additionally, city officials are looking to restructure their Homeless Drop-in and Shelter programs and that may impact our program, along with other faith-based programs. Advocacy efforts must increase.

We are increasing our presence in the community. We need your ideas and your energies to keep Felix Adler's vision for the Social Service Board alive and thriving! Visit our table or Room 505, e-mail us at [SSBEC@NYSEC.org](mailto:SSBEC@NYSEC.org), or call us at 212-874-5210, ext. 143.

## Help!

*Dr. Sylvan Wallach*

We mailed 214 copies of the July newsletter—at a cost of over \$2 each. Please help us save money. Get your newsletter electronically.

If you can receive e-mail and have access to the Internet, you can get your copy of each month's *Ethical Outlook* online, at no cost to the Society! Every month you'll receive an e-mail announcing the availability of the latest issue that includes a link to it online. Additionally, each Weekly Events e-mail from the Society includes a link to the current edition of the newsletter. To open and read the file, you need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is installed on most computers. If you don't have it, you can download it from: [http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2\\_allversions.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html). If you need help, you can e-mail me at [swallach@i-2000.com](mailto:swallach@i-2000.com).

Once you've downloaded the newsletter, you can read it on screen or you can print it. Your printing cost will be a few cents and you can personally save the Society about \$25 a year. Doesn't sound like much, but if everyone did it, the Society would save thousands of dollars each year. Please let us know if we can stop mailing a hard copy of *Ethical Outlook* to you each month by calling or sending an e-mail to Deborah Foster ([dfoster@nysec.org](mailto:dfoster@nysec.org)). Thanks for your cooperation.



**Ethical Culture** is a humanistic religious and philosophical movement in which people share a core of common values: the worth of each individual, ethics as central to our lives, eliciting the best from each other and doing good in the world.

We seek truth as a growing, changing body of knowledge based on experience, reason and scientific observation, and seek to use it in support of human well-being.

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR  
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