Come to DC for 2018 Skills Summit

We'd love for you to join our AEU Skills Summit at the Washington Ethical Society Saturday, September 29, 9am-6:30pm. We will build on the success of last year's event in Philadelphia, expand on presentations given at 2018 Assembly, and introduce you to talented presenters. Workshops will focus on helping humanist communities build strong and effective outreach, public relations, and racial justice initiatives. See full schedule and register at aeu.org/event/aeu-skills-summit-2018.

Humanitas Film Premiere in February 2019

Jé Hooper is wrapping up his Mossler Fellowship and still working hard on his film about the inspiring relationship between Felix Adler and W.E.B. DuBois. All are invited to the premiere at the New York Society for Ethical Culture on Saturday, February 23, 2019. We can't wait to see *Humanitas: A Conscious Coloring of Kindness.*

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Letter from AEU President John McCormick

It would be difficult to summarize in a letter all that transpired at the eventful 103rd American Ethical Union Assembly in Albuquerque. So much is worthy of further discussion. For example, there were the Keynote speakers, Roy Speckhardt, Executive Director of the American Humanist Association, and Rick Chavolla, Board Chair of the American Indian Community House. Richard Moore of the Los Jardines Institute spoke at the National Ethical Service Luncheon. At the Anna Garlin Spencer Awards presentation we learned about ethical action heroes in our local Societies. The delegates selected a new AEU logo and passed bylaw amendments to permit individual membership. There were workshops on a wide array of topics such as the hazards related to uranium mining and factory farming. We applauded the announcement that Christian Hayden of the Philadelphia Ethical Society has been accepted into Leadership Training. Rather than attempting to be comprehensive, permit me to offer just a few of my own personal reflections in the hope of conveying a sense of the positive energy shared by those in attendance.

In the workshop “Ethics, Spirituality and Climate Justice,” Sr. Joan Brown, Executive Director of New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light, explained how faith communities are addressing environmental concerns and how we might engage directly or in solidarity. Environmental degradation is widespread in New Mexico often impacting vulnerable low income, minority, or indigenous people. Some of the most serious threats are related to nuclear weapons and nuclear waste, mining enterprises, and the fossil fuel industry. The Four Corners region hosts the largest methane plume in the United States. Areas of the state such as the bomb-testing site have already become uninhabitable “sacrifice zones.” With respect to the treatment of indigenous peoples, the speaker offered some historical background that was new information to most listeners. She discussed the Doctrines of Discovery and Terra Nullius (“empty land”) which date back to the 15th century and are referenced in multiple Papal Bulls, Royal Charters and U.S. Supreme Court rulings as recently as 2005. While they may be ancient history, these doctrines continue to provide “legal” justification for governments to invade and seize indigenous lands and subjugate indigenous peoples. The doctrines are derived from the so called “Theology of Entitlement” based on a few scriptural texts including Romans 13, the very passage cited by the Attorney General in his defense of the abhorrent “zero tolerance” policy being carried out at our southern border. The forcible separation of children from their parents is not something new in this country as Native Americans can attest. The government-funded boarding schools whose purpose was to “kill the Indian, and save the man” persisted until the 1970s.

The Elliott-Black Award was presented to Yankton Sioux elder and water protector Faith Spotted Eagle, grandmother, educator, PTSD counselor and environmental activist. She chairs the Ihanktonwan Treaty Steering Committee and has served as a delegate of the Treaty Committee NGO of the United Nations. She has emerged as one of the nation’s most prominent anti-pipeline organizers, forging alliances between Native tribes and white farmers and ranchers. She was an elder leader of the Oceti Sakowin Camp at Standing Rock under the rallying cry “Water is Life.” In her captivating address to the Assembly, she shared her life story starting at age 18 months when construction of a dam on the Missouri River caused the inundation of her traditional community of White Swan. Thus began a lifelong fight to protect water.

She takes greatest pride in her efforts on behalf of her own people, especially the Brave Heart Society that she co-founded in 1994 together with a circle of other grandmothers. The Brave Heart Society, located within the Ihanktonwan homelands, is a grassroots organization dedicated to advocating for environmental justice within indigenous communities, healing survivors of sexual violence and using traditional Native American ceremonies to heal trauma victims, “bringing back our people from emotional death” through the rediscovery of cultural identity. “We are occupied peoples but maintain our tie to the land, and that makes us sovereign with the earth and all living things.”

Our Assembly Platform address, “A Guide for Weaving Justice”, was delivered by Curt Collier, Leader Emeritus and Director of Groundwork USA’s National Youth Program where he oversees youth projects in National Parks. Groundwork USA was created by the National Park service and the Environmental Protection Agency. It is the only network of local organizations devoted to transforming the natural and built environment of marginalized communities working at the intersection of the environment, equity and civic engagement. He sees this effort as a way to use his training as an Ethical Culture Leader “to build a culture that allows all to flourish.” He notes that you can predict sites of environmental

continued on p. 3
injustice merely by studying the demographics of a given zip code with respect to age, ethnicity, and poverty levels. Earlier environmental efforts in the urban setting often involved some outside agency going in and fixing something or building something like new parks or bike lanes without first learning what the community itself actually needed or wanted. New environmental justice is not about investing in places but rather in people and giving them the necessary tools. It “requires not only a firm commitment to equity and fairness, but a similar commitment to interlacing the ecosystem with the beings who live there. Beauty can be a guide in determining whether we’re heading in the right direction.” He believes that inner city youth will lead the way. In closing, he quoted Matthew Ies Spetter, Leader at the Riverdale-Yonkers Ethical Culture Society over a span of 40 years: “Hope is not some undiscovered country we stumble into, it is a place we build.”

Curt also reminded us why it is that we meet in Assembly. We come together as a “community of people with similar insights in order to be refreshed, to refortify, to rethink our purpose and to move forward into the world.” I believe that is exactly what was accomplished in Albuquerque. The 104th AEU Assembly will be in Tampa from June 20-23, 2019. I urge you to mark your calendar now to take advantage of the next great opportunity to become refreshed and refortified. See you in Tampa.

President letter continued from p. 2

New AEU Logo and Old AEU Tag Line

The AEU has a new logo! In a close vote at the Assembly in June, the Delegates selected the new logo. This logo emphasizes the importance of relationships in Ethical Culture by depicting more than one person. It also connects us visually with other Humanist organizations worldwide, drawing inspiration from the international symbol of Humanism. In the coming months, the AEU will be rolling out the new logo in our communications, and also making it available to member Societies to use if desired. It is important to note that member Societies are not being asked to change their existing logos, though they are welcome to use the new logo if they wish.

Many people have wondered why the AEU needed to develop a new logo. For answers to this and other questions, please visit the 2018 AEU Assembly Delegate materials web pages. Delegates at the Assembly also voted to retain the existing tag line, “Inspiring Ethical Communities,” which is used in conjunction with the logo. Both the new logo and the tag line are part of a larger branding effort.
Letter from Executive Director
Bart Worden

Our American Ethical Union Assembly in Albuquerque was wonderful in many ways. We had a stronger than expected turnout, attracted a number of people from the local area, and enjoyed the energy and camaraderie of coming together for purposeful action and play. As to the play part, more than any Assembly I can recall, people made a point of coming early or staying longer to enjoy New Mexico. Many took balloon rides, rode the tram to Sandia Peak, visited local museums, or checked out other New Mexico locations. In fact, my wife, Ruthanne, and I kept running into people in Madrid and Santa Fe and we almost crossed paths with other Assembly attendees at Bandolier National Park and in Taos. If you missed going, consider making the trek in the future. There’s much to do and a lot to see and, since New Mexico is the second most economically disadvantaged state in the country, they could use our business.

Great things are afoot with the AEU. At the business meeting, the delegates approved amendments to the bylaws to support Individual Members of the Union. I am inclined to name it the “Harry Strickholm Amendment” after our dearly departed, long-time advocate for Members-at-Large and Lifetime Memberships. It took us a while to figure a way that the Union could be both a federation of Societies and an organization that supports individuals who are not members of a Society. As much as we prize membership with our brick and mortar Societies, the realities of our Movement’s size and scope demand that we encourage more people to connect with us individually and support their interest in Ethical Culture.

What we did to move toward that end was make a new category—Individual Member—and we will spell out the benefits of membership on the application along with ways to support the American Ethical Union. Individual Membership is open to all, so you can be both a member of an Ethical Society and an Individual Member of the AEU.

We expect Individual Membership will be helpful to our New Society Development Team (NSDT) who has been working to organize a group in Albuquerque and is looking to do the same in Tampa, where the 2019 Assembly will be held. And as we continue to receive inquiries about starting groups in new cities and towns, the team is sure to be busy going forward. Fortunately, the NSDT has grown to include our newest member, Elena Nash-Graham, who is also a Mossler Fellow and will be developing the resources we need to communicate with and provide supports for the groups we are organizing. These resources, by the way, will also be available on our AEU Resources website.

Which brings to mind another important event coming up: the annual AEU Skills Summit! This year the Skills Summit will be hosted by the Washington Ethical Society in Washington, DC September 29. The focus of the Skills Summit will be on outreach and communication, and will feature hands-on training for communications, live streaming, and program development. Please join us.

The Assembly also passed a resolution on Climate Action and the AEU Ethical Action Committee will be developing avenues for Societies to plan and organize responses. The resolution was based upon one passed by the American Humanist Association and we are looking to partner with the AHA going forward.

The resolution calls upon Ethical Humanists to:

“...recognize that the responsibility to create and maintain sustainable methods of living is a collective one. As Ethical Humanists, we acknowledge the damage done to our environment has been caused by human action and constitutes an existential threat to humanity and many other species that have not already been wiped out. As Ethical Humanists, we understand that only humans can save ourselves from the climate crises we have created.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the American Ethical Union calls all Ethical Humanists to take personal and collective action to save our planet.”

We encourage people who are interested in building the capacities of the Ethical Movement to consider joining our national efforts by signing on to our Google Groups for Ethical Action and Ethical Education, or if you are looking for even more involvement, ask to join a core committee and help with the planning and organizing of the AEU’s national efforts!
Ethical Action Feature:

Planting the Seeds for Our Future in Albuquerque
Carolyn A. Parker, Co-chair 103rd & 104th Assembly Committee

American Ethical Union planned to plant seeds for our future when we went to Albuquerque for our 103rd Assembly, and so we did. In one instance, we did so quite literally in a moving and inspiring ceremony with earth, water, and seeds as we all gathered for the planting. In another instance, we planted seeds with the founding of Ethical Humanist Society of Albuquerque. (Welcome, ABQ!)

As co-chair, with Law’rence “L” Miller, for the Assembly Committee, I am proud of the work that we all did to make the Assembly a place to plant these and other seeds. We all owe thanks to the committee members and the volunteers who worked behind the scenes, at the soundboard and cameras, managing the meals, keeping us oriented and supplied with our needs, and more. For the committee, our work is not yet done. We now have the task of cleaning up, following up, and assessing what we did well and what we need to do better next time.

To those who attended Assembly, thank you! Even if you did not attend Assembly this year, you can still volunteer to serve on the Committee for the 104th Assembly to be held in Tampa, FL. (Email lmiller@aeu.org.)

All of us, however, still have work to do—regardless of whether we made the trip to Albuquerque. The seeds that we planted still have to be nurtured before we can actually harvest them in our future. Some of this work may take place at the national level with the AEU Board or its Committees. Most of it, I think, will have to take place in our local Societies, our communities, and our hearts. Now the real work begins. With bylaws changes, the resolution on climate action, the plenary and workshop sessions, each house that we met in Assembly brought us new information and new challenges to act in support of the Ethical Culture Movement. How will you nurture these seeds?

Videos and photos are being added to AEU website. Some videos are currently available on our YouTube Channel.

Wall of Remembrance
Compiled from Societies’ and newspaper obituaries

Virginia Arnold (New York) was an accomplished artist and poet. She died in July and is greatly missed by her wonderful extended family at the Society, recent and life-long treasured friends, neighbors, and former co-workers.

Patricia Cohen (New York) died July 16 at the age of 81. She was a longtime member of the New York Society and enjoyed attending their various programs even when her health made that difficult. Dr. Cohen was a research psychologist at Columbia University who studied the natural history of psychiatric problems from childhood to adulthood and helped to create a framework for future long-term studies. In the 1970s she was a New York State Office of Mental Health.

E Betty Levin (Essex) was a longtime, dedicated member who raised her children and grandchildren in Ethical Culture who passed away May 16 at the age of 92. She was a psychotherapist, psychoanalyst, and considered herself a “clinical philosopher.” Betty was a founding member of the New Jersey Association of Women Therapists, and received the Person of the Year Award from New Jersey Peace Action

Clare Schwartz (Northern Virginia) of Oakton, VA, passed away on April 23 at the age of 93. Clare and her husband Hyman, who died in 2005, were active in the Northern Virginia Ethical Society starting in the 1990s. Previously, they were members of the Washington Ethical Society starting in the early 1960s. Their five children—Heidi, Terri, Gary, and twins Ricky and Randy—were all WES Sunday School graduates.
Notes from Your AEU Board

Jill Aul, Board Secretary

The American Ethical Union Board of Directors met in New York City on Saturday, April 28, 2018. The meeting focused largely on preparations for the June Assembly in Albuquerque. This included work on the budget with treasurer Ken Novak, preparing the presentation of the new proposed logos and tag lines to be adopted by the AEU, preparing a bylaw change, so that individual members can soon be included in the AEU’s membership, examining the resolution on climate action that was submitted by the Ethical Society of Austin, and approving the various nominees for the Anna Garland Spencer awards and Mossler Fellowship grant.

The Board also focused on the work being done by Momentum, the public relations firm that we have hired on a trial basis. We are very pleased with the exposure that Ethical Culture has received around the nation so far, due to the firm’s hard work.

We were very pleased to promote the Ethical Humanist Society of Asheville from a Circle to a Fellowship.

One of the changes that the Board has adopted this year is to invite an AEU employee to attend each Board Meeting. Communications Coordinator Emily Newman was the first to join our meeting virtually, and we enjoyed visiting with her. We learned about her many accomplishments and asked about ways that we can better support her efforts. Thank you, Emily, for everything that you do for us all.

On Thursday, June 7, the Board met in Albuquerque, prior to the start of the 103rd Assembly. Along with the usual agenda items involving reviewing committee reports, making budgetary adjustments, etc., the Board was happy to learn from New Society Development Team leader Bill Aul that a new Ethical Society is in the process of forming in Albuquerque! Two days earlier, the team hosted a Meet and Greet, for prospective members, at the Assembly hotel. Seven folks attended from the Albuquerque area. Several also attended various Assembly events later in the weekend, and three presented a workshop. Many future events were scheduled, including a video-conference discussion on June 14. We are all quite excited about the work that the Team is doing, to help our Movement grow.

Also very exciting is the fact that a representative from Momentum traveled from New York to attend the Assembly, along with six members of local media outlets from around the Albuquerque area.

All of us on the AEU Board of Directors are very proud to serve you, and we are very happy that all who were eligible to run for re-election did so. We are a cohesive and productive group, and we look forward to another exciting and productive year.

Support American Ethical Union

With your generous support we can learn, share, grow, and make a difference in our Societies and the world.

Donate [online](http://www.aeuusa.org/donate), or send a check to the AEU at 2 West 64th St, Ste 406, New York, NY, 10023, or call 212-873-6500 with your credit card information. All contributions to the AEU are tax-deductible.
FES Works to Bridge the Divide  
Christian Hayden, Future of Ethical Societies & Philadelphia Ethical Society

Amid the social and political turmoil, the question of the 2018 Future of Ethical Societies (FES) Conference in St Louis was “what could be done to bridge the gap?” Wally Siewert, a professor who has a background in philosophy and a passion for political process, led attendees through an ethics exercise meant to show the slight issues and aspects of framing that end up being a very small chasm compared to a much wider possible divide, in terms of where others stand on issues. The crew also volunteered at an urban farm run by International Institute of St. Louis with Joel Walker. Joel shared how the most important aspect of the farm was not the food produced but how it gave recent immigrants and refugees a piece of a life they once knew, a chance to connect with land, and a chance to connect with home, old and new.

The next day FES led the Ethical Society of St Louis platform sharing the stage with an energetic teenage band and taking the opportunity to promote some of their understanding of the world and life through the prism of the weekend theme. Carmen gave a reflection on language. Julia explored the history of Rwandan genocide and how the project of peace and reconciliation involved confronting their past. Anya explored how business forced her to be open and upfront about her affiliations and learning how forming an intentional relationship around a common goal makes building bonds across bonds easier. Doug gave an image of his neighborhood in Baltimore where the straightforward talk of people with less education and social standing revealed more truth about the ills of our society. Lastly Christian talked about the idea of freedom, and how a blind and limited attachment to the idea hindered his ability to love.

FES this year is continuing a new tradition of slimming down roles to fit closer with the way FES practically functions. Officer roles will be:

Community Manager – Christian Hayden & Sharalyn Fields  
Outreach Manager – Anya Overmann  
Conference Planner – Doug Miller & Christian Hayden  
Service Coordinator – Julia Julstrom-Agoyo & Christian Hayden

FES will meet in Baltimore next year and it will be a Gathering, not a Conference. FES also hopes to plan more events including a week-long exploration into its own approach to Ethical Action, somewhere at some point in the winter.
Old and New Friends at AEU Assembly
Sharon Stanley, AEU Board Trustee

“Make new friends but keep the old. One is silver and the other gold.”

Chris and I joined the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island in 1995. We were married by Dr. David Harmon, in a beautiful Ethical Humanist ceremony in 1996. And we welcomed our son Gabriel to the congregation in 1998. We knew the Ethical Humanist Society would be the place we wanted to raise our family.

In 2004, I attended the American Ethical Union’s Lay Leadership Summer School in the heart of the Smokey Mountains in North Carolina. Despite it being the worst vacation I’ve ever had weather-wise (it rained every day!), it enabled me to meet and bond with many people connected with the Ethical Culture Movement. That was when I became aware of our “mother organization;” the American Ethical Union. Chris attended the Lay Leadership Summer School in 2006 and had a wonderful, “great weather” experience. The experience at the Lay Leadership Summer School was the beginning of forming close relationships with other Ethical Humanists from around the country. I began attending the annual American Ethical Union Assembly on a regular basis.

The Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island has a long history of being involved with the American Ethical Union and we’ve had many members who have been active by joining the AEU Board of Trustees and AEU committees, beginning with Muriel Neufeld, one of our founding members. On the national level, Joan Beder served in the Leadership Committee; Wayne Outten served on the Legal Committee; and Richard Rapp was on the Finance Committee. Others who have served on the AEU Board include Ivo Antoniazzi, Linda Napoli, and most recently, yours truly. At the Assembly in Virginia several years ago, I first met Richard Koral, who was the AEU Board President and now Leader at Long Island.

The 2018 Assembly was my first where I was on the Board of Trustees. In many ways, it was the most meaningful. This year’s theme was “growing ethical seeds;” personally, physically, and emotionally. Many of the workshops continue to resonate with me. One was Environmental Wisdom and Strategies from Indigenous Leaders, facilitated by Anne Klaeysen and Rick Chavolla, an “urban Indian” living in New York City who is an activist on behalf of Indigenous tribes all over the country. He spoke about the people who came before Europeans “visited America” and chose to claim it as their own, literally stealing the land and forcing Natives to settle farther and farther west. Their traditions meant learning how to survive in such an arid and harsh environment. And yet they persisted!

Rick was fascinating! He pointed out that, “Indigenous people were the first scientists. We always needed to understand botany, astronomy and meteorology! We had to be cognizant of the seasons, weather patterns and where to find water.” His next statement was true and shocking to me. “We are the owners of this land and America, you have been renting it. Now the rent is due! It’s past due!”

Another person at the same workshop was Angelo Baca, who had created a documentary about “Bear’s Ears.” Shásh Jaa’ (Bear’s Ears) is a proposed 1.9 million acres of Utah wilderness considered sacred lands to the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition (Navajo, Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, Hopi, Zuni) coming together to protect this pristine area from natural resource extraction and make this area a designated National Monument in collaborative...
management partnership with tribes. I think watching this documentary would be fantastic.

AEU presented the Elliott-Black Award to Faith Spotted Eagle, the most phenomenal and bravest person I’d ever met. And such an amazing storyteller! I was riveted! You can read about her here in this Seattle Times piece and on the AEU website.

Another workshop that was particularly meaningful to me was called Humanism, Skepticism, Atheism, Non-Theism and other Heresies. Leader Hugh Taft-Morales had gathered representatives from four different groups; Randy Wall from the Humanist Society of New Mexico, Cory Corwin from the Freedom from Religion Foundation of Albuquerque, Don Lacey from American Atheists of New Mexico, and Babs Mondschein from American United for Separation of Church And State (and a member of all of the above). They discussed how organizations serving non-believers can work in collaboration while remaining true to their respective philosophies.

Before Assembly started, Chris, Gabe and I, along with our friends Bill and Jill Aul from Ethical Society Mid Rivers, and AEU Executive Director Bart Worden were able to enjoy a Meet and Greet with eight people from the local Albuquerque groups. We became fast friends while enjoying snacks and lively discussion.

The Assembly is an opportunity for individual Societies to bring up important social issues that they would like the AEU and individual Societies to focus on. You can find a list of this year’s and resolutions of years past here: https://aeu.org/resource-category/resolutions.

So, why is it important for there to be an American Ethical Union and an annual delegate assembly? The American Ethical Union is an organization of organizations. It is the umbrella organization that works to keep Ethical Humanism/Ethical Culture cohesive, without forcing each Society to forgo their individual strengths. The Assembly is where it all begins, where business meetings are held to plan for the continuing future of Ethical Humanism.

Here is the “gold and silver” part. It’s important to have representation at every Assembly from our Ethical Society, my family’s “spiritual home.” This way our voices can be heard, and our concerns can be addressed. But, it is also so exciting to be working with others from across the Movement as dedicated and passionate as we are. This was, by far, the best Assembly I’d ever attended!

These are some goals for 2018-19:
1. Expand public presence - AEU Ethical Action Facebook Page, Rapid Response Team
2. Develop vehicles for effective and consistent fundraising
3. Facilitate the creation of new Ethical Societies
4. Redesign AEU website
5. Reorganize the Leadership program
Public health measures such as clean water, sanitation, and the beginning of scientific drug development have increased the average life-span by nearly 40%—from 50 years at the start of the 20th century to 77 years in the 21st century so far.

Pharmaceutical companies have pioneered key drugs to combat illnesses such as antibiotics, vaccines, insulin and penicillin. But in recent years, there have been increasing ethical concerns about some of the activities of the multi-billion-dollar pharmaceutical companies. One concern is high drug pricing that makes drugs unaffordable in much of the poorer parts of the world. Another concern is the globalization of research and the outsourcing of clinical drug trials. These trials have been carried out with reduced and often questionable ethical oversight.

Because pharmaceutical companies are businesses, there is often a lack of research into diseases that primarily affect the world’s poor populations. The companies rarely make a profit when developing drugs for those diseases. Another concern is the politics of patents. Many developing countries are facing high drug prices because patents are blocking the development of lower-cost generic versions of medicines. Some of these patents and their extension are unwarranted. Doctors Without Borders has launched a campaign to combat unwarranted patents requests.

Medical research and human experiments require special attention to ethical concerns. After World War II, the barbaric medical experiments by the Nazis on concentration camp inmates resulted in ethical guidelines, known as The Nuremberg Code, to govern medical experiments. The most pertinent of the ten principles is the first one: human subjects in experiments should understand what they are getting into and have agreed to participate. Experimental subjects should not be powerless prisoners of war and the like. In other words: “informed consent.”

During the 1950s and the 1960s, medical researchers continued to conduct experiments on powerless subjects, clearly violating the Nuremberg code. For example, in 1952 Jonas Salk conducted early trials of his experimental polio vaccine on mentally retarded children at the Polk State School in Pennsylvania. In many cases, only the state officials, who were legal guardians of the children, gave permission. This is hardly in the spirit of the Nuremberg code.

The Salk trials are reminiscent of the shocking infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Study. This study began in 1932 by the US Public Health Service in Alabama. It involved depriving hundreds of poor syphilitic African Americans of proper medical treatment (while pretending they were being so treated) to make a study of the long-term degenerative effects of syphilis on the nervous system. They were not given penicillin in 1947, which had become the recommended treatment for syphilis. The study was not ended until 1972. The untreated Tuskegee subjects had unwittingly infected twenty-two women and seventeen children. It is only in 1997 that President Clinton issued an apology. The study revealed nothing about syphilis, but much about racism.

Increasingly, pharmaceutical companies have been using clinical trials for new drugs in developing countries. The main advantages for them are easier access to patients, less stringent ethical review, lower risk of litigation and lower cost. In short, a less demanding environment. In some cases, the trials are subcontracted making it difficult to monitor them.

The upsurge of outsourced clinical trials has led to problems. Some examples:

- In 2005 and 2012, the deaths of 2,644 Indian subjects were linked to unethical clinical trials. A number of schoolgirls were alleged to have died after taking part in trials of the human Papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine.
- In Uganda, between 1997 and 2003, women took the anti-transmission drug Nevirapine and experienced serious adverse effects (unreported). Fourteen women died in Hydererabad, India, in 2003, eight test subjects died during the testing of the anti-clotting drug, Streptokinase.
- In Kano, Nigeria, Pfizer tested a new drug called Trovafloxacin on children infected with meningitis without informing their parents; five died in treatment. Clearly, these and other examples, call out strongly
for much more monitoring in third world countries.

A patent for a new drug lasts 20 years. During this period, the patent holder charges as much as they decide. After this period, companies that manufacture generic versions of the drug can market them usually at a much-reduced cost.

Pharmaceutical companies have several strategies for prolonging the life of a patent. One technique is called “product hopping”—making small structural and insignificant changes in, and then re-naming, a drug whose patent is about to expire so that the drug is technically new. Another technique that drug companies use is to aggressively advertise prescription brands long after their 20-year patent has expired, so patients ask their doctors for them by name. America is one of the few advanced countries that allow direct consumer advertising for prescription drugs.

Still another tactic is for drug companies to pay the makers of generic drugs to delay their cheaper version. These “pay-for-delay” agreements are profitable for both. The consumer pays. The drug companies claim that they need the additional profits to pay for researching and developing new drugs. This argument is questionable since much of the research is supplied by the government through the National Institute of Health (NIH). Big pharmaceutical companies spend more on advertising and marketing than on research and development.

This brings us to a basic question: to what extent should the research, development and availability of vital drugs depend on the profit motive?
Broad Horizons and Soft Systems: A Different Kind of News from the National Leaders Council
Hugh Taft-Morales, NLC President

From the moment I landed in New Mexico, I’ve more appreciated broad horizons. As a result, I will change how I report on our pre-Assembly June 5-7 National Leaders Council meeting. I will not give you a boring run down of the basics. Instead I’ll begin by sharing that three of my Leaders colleagues went up, up, and away in a hot air balloon.

I’ll leave it to James Croft, Anne Klaeysen, and Randy Best to describe their experience hundreds of feet above the desert floor. I prefer to have my feet on the ground (and yes, I’m probably a bit of a chicken). But that’s not to say that I didn’t seek out intellectual broader horizons through discussion of one particular article at our NLC meeting: “Soft Systems,” by Sanford Kwinter. (Found at online here)

I shared with Leaders this article given to me by Leader-in-Training Jé Hooper because if there is ever a moment the NLC, and the American Ethical Union, should seek broader horizons, it is now.

My oversimplification of Kwinter’s argument-through-metaphor is as follows: understanding and directing social evolution requires appreciating “soft systems.” Soft systems arise at times of transformation when things that seem chaotic are, in fact, operating in highly complex, subtle, and confounding ways. In physics as things get hot this is represented by the liquid system between a solid and a gas. In human culture such change can be existentially, socially, and sensually challenging.

Without fuller explanation, my synopsis may seem overly abstract and obscure. Fair enough—I’m a philosopher. To bring it down to earth I will add this: when change and chaos frightens us, we tend to grab a hold of what is familiar and cling to accepted truths. Perhaps we need to let go a bit, and, for the lack of a better term, “go with the flow.” Kwinter might encourage us to embrace the softness that opens us to new perspectives. Soft systems are flexible, adaptable, and evolving.

It’s in that spirit that I also put on our NLC agenda discussions of new ways to lead, to be a Leader—new ways to be a humanist minister. It’s in that spirit that I wanted us to explore alternative approaches to leadership training. It’s in that spirit that I hope we change.

Change is never easy, but the time is now to embrace change for it is the key to our future as a beautiful, ethical paradigm about how to be human. For those of you yearning for Ethical Culture to adapt, evolve, and flourish—which, if you are reading this, is most likely most of you—we must begin to let go of perspectives which no longer inspire us or others. This need not mean we abandon of our shared ideals. We can fully commit to treat others as being of inherent worth. We can strive for social justice. And we can do all this through personal, ethical relationships.

But our vision for ourselves and for our Movement must guide us through changes that the future inevitably brings. There are challenges before us—in Ethical Culture, in our nation, and in the world. It can seem that we are in a desert with too few resources and too many miles to travel. Who knows what the future holds in our journey, but as we travel let us not overlook that even in a desert, seeds will sprout and plants will grow.

If this article makes you think that the author of this article became delirious in the desert, let me recall some thoughts shared by Roy Speckhardt, Executive Director of the American Humanist Association, in his keynote address. As humanists we do not try to transcend nature, we try to transcend through nature. Well, the June NLC meeting left a lasting impression on me that we must raise our vision to the horizons all around us. I hope our next NLC column offers some down to earth methods of doing this.
New Mossler Fellow is Developing New Societies Across the Country

Elena Nash-Graham, of the Ethical Culture Society of Westchester and Ethical Society of Northern Westchester, is using her Mossler Fellowship to get Ethical Societies into more areas across the country. Her project includes “demographic and geographic research to identify promising locations for new Ethical Societies” and creating management systems for our New Society Development Team. Given her “fifteen years of experience in financial planning, product development, marketing, and customer relations” we are very excited to have her get started.

The Mossler Trust was developed by the estate of Adele S. Mossler, a member of the New York Society for Ethical Culture, to provide funding (a) to create, annually, one or more Fellowships for Leaders-In-Training, preferably women, under the AEU Leader Training Committee; and (b) to create, annually, one or more Fellowships to members of minority groups and/or women for the spread of the Ethical Culture Movement nationally. Applications are accepted each spring.

The 2018 Anna Garlin Spencer Award Goes to...

Leonard Weeks & Sharon Wallis - Philadelphia Society
Ken Gans - New York Society
Emil Volcheck, Ph.D. - Baltimore Society
Rich Harrison - Austin Society
Steve Harris - St Louis Society
Colleen and Matthew Kapklein - Westchester Society
Henryka Komanska - New York Society
Rebecca Lurie - Brooklyn Society
Perry and Beth Stein - Bergen Society

We appreciate all of you and what you mean to your Societies as well as to the whole Ethical Culture Movement.

Right top: Emil Volcheck
Right bottom: Rich Harrison
Below left: Leonard Weeks, Bob Bueding, Sharon Wallis, Bart Worden
Below right: Richard Koral, Ken Gans, Anne Klaeysen, Bart Worden
Write for the Dialogue
We are accepting submissions for Fall 2018!

Send submissions to communications@aeu.org by September 25, 2018.

Please include a headshot and related images with your submission.

World Humanist Day Announcement
Christian Hayden

On World Humanist Day (June 21) I decided to announce to the world that I was accepted as an Ethical Culture leader-in-training. I tried to use it as a moment to explain Ethical Culture, as well as to seek to contribute and where I think the Movement is going. Here was my Facebook post:

I have been accepted into Leadership Training with the Ethical Culture Movement. In essence, I will be training to be a clergy person within a humanist movement.

First what does it mean to be a humanist? Many things but for me it means that my code of ethics and my moral compass are framed, shaped, and inspired by relationships with other humans, as well as other living beings, and the earth.

No God? How can you be a clergy person? Simply, people that have this worldview need guidance and support too. Their children need moral instruction as well.

Do humanists need leaders, clergy people? Peep the last answer, but also, maybe not. I do not think of this so much as job or a career but a vocation. I think people who are uniquely dedicated to exploring humanist ideals, sharing them with others and being a resource for those who are interested are important. Walking like me won’t give you salvation but we may, together, find ways to make life easier and the world a better place. I don’t accept this opportunity with the idea that I am good or special but with the idea that the question of how to be better guides me and my interactions, even if I fall short of that at times.

I have had a busy last two weeks, so I have not had the chance to spread the news, or thank those who have offered me well wishes. I can say, there have been few other moments in my life that have moved me so and I have finally accepted that I am born to serve and I can now articulate some inkling of how—even as that may change and develop. Happy World Humanist Day and thank you for being by my side during this journey.