



The Ethical Humanist

The Newsletter of The Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island

Vol. 61, No. 9 -- MAY 2011

From Our Religious Director



*Calvin Dame
Religious Director, EHSLI*

I, along with Ellen Braunstein, attended the American Humanist Association meeting in Boston earlier this month and it was a treat: thought provoking speakers such as Richard Dawkins, Stephen Pinker, Rebecca Goldstein and Steve Wozniak; workshops exploring the edges and development of humanist thought in 2011; and a chance to meet and mingle with other humanists from the American Ethical Union, the Unitarian Universalist as well as the American Humanist Association circles. There was a lot of energy!

Though we here at EHSLI are Affiliate Members of the AHA, our roots are in the AEU, and there are both similarities and differences in these organizations. There are many more AHA Chapters than AEU Societies and interesting initiatives in Science, Advocacy and Law.

AHA Chapters do not tend to present themselves as religious organizations, or even philosophical and religious organizations, as we do. Religious Humanists and Secular Humanist, I guess you might say.

And, I heard a number of times during the conference of the need for AHA chapters to find ways to strengthen the connections between people and to nurture the bonds of community that for humanism to flourish there needs to be a stronger sense of connection and community. Just what we in the Ethical Humanist movement are good at, I thought to myself!

Ethics is our religion, we often say. And our community, I believe, is where we explore what that means and where we learn to put our religion into practice.

Our Ethical Family Files:

The recent, unexpected death of member Paula Grenot was a demonstration to many of us of the power of our community. The Memorial Service on April 17 was dignified, comforting and underlined the importance of our connections.

And, it was a reminder that good community takes intention, planning and effort. Once we knew of Paula's death, the process of planning for her memorial was greatly facilitated by the fact that Paula had a folder, Our Ethical Family, on file with the Society with important details on who to call and what she would like in a memorial service. Joan Beder, who led the service that said it was invaluable.

It was a clear reminder of how important these folders can be. This is the sort of task that is easy to put off; nobody really wants to think about this. I know from conversation through the year that many of you have these folders waiting on shelves desks or in the back of closets at home! But putting this information on file at the society would be helpful.

I will be reaching out to members for help in gathering this information.

If you have one at home, please look it over and get in touch with me. If you have one on file, this may be a good time for a review and update. I am happy to meet with you, to help think things through or just to review

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HAVE YOU MAILED IN YOUR 2011 PLEDGE TO EHSLI? YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED FOR OUR SURVIVAL.

**Ethical Humanist
Society of
Long Island**

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http://ehsli.org

Affiliated with the American
Ethical Union, a Federation
of Ethical Culture Societies

*The Ethical Humanist
Society of Long Island is a
religious community
dedicated to fostering
humanist beliefs and
values and to improving the
human condition through
individual and collective
action.*

17th Annual YES Pasta Dinner

Saturday, May 21st

We are very excited to invite Society members and friends to the YES group's premier event for the Society, and we're hoping for a HUGE turn out this year! The event includes a tasty buffet meal prepared by YES members and volunteers, a keynote speaker from a social justice organization that relates to the group's topic of gay rights, and great entertainment. The dinner starts at 6:00pm and the event is \$12 for adults and \$8 for students.

EVENTS WITH CALVIN

Ethics Café

May 18th 6:30pm: *What Is The Most Important Invention of the Last 50 Years?*

Wednesday Lunch Discussions

May 4: The Ethical Perspective On Gay Marriage
May 11: TBA, Calvin is away
May 18: What Is The Most Important Invention of the Last 50 Years?
May 25: An Ethical Dilemma



Ellen Braunstein, Director of Religious Education

CEP NEWS

Here's how we summoned spring with poetry on April 17 at our Spring Fest when we broke into small clusters to compose Haiku, Cinquain, Limericks, a couplet and a spring rap. Enjoy:

Haiku:

The sun is high
again to warm us well.
Thank you spring.

The shrubbery
a rabbit jumps in
the west wind blows breezy

Caterpillar once
now fluttering by tulips
Monarch butterfly

Couplet:

Spring is the time when birds make their nests.
Flowers in bloom, the time we like best.

Cinquain:

Its Spring
My garden sings
My flowers in the jar
Their colors brightly singing songs
Fragrance.

Limericks:

There once was a chick with a beak
who thought it was time for a peek.
He looked under a flower
and was hit by a shower
and thought that the sky had a leak.

Rap:

"It's spring, it's spring", said Mr. Bunny
Oh that's lie, you ain't so funny
Don't you know my nose is red
I spent all winter sleeping in bed
"It's true, it's true", the bunny said
you go out there, you'll end up dead
The bunny said, "okay, okay, I've heard enough what
you had to say"
So out they went in a run
Cause it was spring, they had some fun.

APRIL BOARD MINUTES

ETHICAL HUMANIST SOCIETY OF LONG ISLAND MINUTES OF THE APRIL 6, 2011 BOARD MEETING

PRESENT: Mel Haber, David Sprintzen, Wayne Outten, Alison Pratt, Joan Beder, Jim LoPresti, Don Morgenstern, Deborah Strube, Tara Klein.

ABSENT: Carol Pincus-Smith

GUEST: Calvin Dame.

1. Financials: We're doing better this year than last. We have \$2,000 more in pledges from 1/1 to today than we did in the same period last year. Also, rental income is higher this year than in the past.

2. June elections: Joan is not eligible to return next year. Mel, Wayne, David, and Jim can be on next year's Board. Jim and Deborah will contact members to ask them if they want to be on our Board next year. For voting purposes, our membership meeting will be on June 5.

3. American Humanist Association: Calvin and Ellen will go to the AHA meeting in Boston. We voted to give Calvin \$400 and Ellen \$300 to cover meeting expenses.

4. Platform Committee report: We agreed to do the following:

1. Move announcements to the end of the platform.
2. Limit the number of people who can make announcements, with the permission of the Presider.
3. Change the name "platform" to "Sunday Meeting."
4. Ask Chris Stanley to move the sound equipment to the back of the auditorium and do the appropriate wiring. We will give him a deadline by which to give us a cost estimate.
5. Have a person designated in advance to run the sound system.
6. Ask members to opt out of receiving a print copy of the newsletter in favor of an email version.

5. Patio walkway: Vinny told us. The contractor needs two days in a row without rain.

6. Our meeting with AEU reps: Calvin sent an e-mail to the AEU Training Committee, as they suggested, saying that he wants to know the reasons he was denied training. They replied that they will meet on April 15 and get back to him.

7. Membership: Some people have looked at our Web site and donated money to Ethical Friends of Children. Alison said that we had many visitors to Darwin Day, but they did not return to our Sunday meetings. To attract members, at the Teen Arts Festival, we will collect email addresses of visitors and send them announcements about our upcoming events.

8. Fall weekend retreat (Sept. 30-Oct 2): Our fee will be \$150 per person for adults and \$75 for kids. The minimum number of people we need to run the retreat is 25. Financial assistance will be available for those who request it.

9. Pasta dinner: The dinner will be on Saturday, May 21 from 6p.m. to 10p.m. We'll have fliers at the Teen Arts Festival about it.

10. Water tower: Wayne has not heard back from Garden City yet.

The meeting ended at 9 p.m.



Tara Klein, YES Advisor

YES NEWS

YES Spends Spring Break in New Orleans!

From April 17-23, members of our Society's teen group participated in one of the biggest and best YES events of all time, with a trip to New Orleans to help rebuild homes that were destroyed in Hurricane Katrina!

Dan, Mayra, and Tara flew down and met up with 17 other people, mostly teens, from the Washington Ethical Society and the Interfaith Families Project. We spent 5 days working on two houses, under the instruction of the St. Bernard Project and their Americorps volunteers. Most of our group worked at Milton Johnson's house in the Broadmoor neighborhood. We mudded and sanded the ceilings and hung drywall on almost the entire house. We were told that we worked very quickly and efficiently! We were fortunate to meet Mr. Johnson, who was very appreciative of our work.

One afternoon, the St. Bernard Project chose our group to visit one of their completed houses. Ronald and Paula Mott welcomed us into their beautiful home, where Mrs. Mott cooked for 40 people and Mr. Mott told us his family's Katrina story. We had a great time eating delicious home-cooked gumbo, jambalaya, and rice and beans; hearing about the Motts' 8 children and 20 grandchildren and their Katrina stories; and seeing what our work could become!

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. *The Ethical Players* present the Nobel Prize winner Harold Pinter's most controversial and compelling play:

THE HOMECOMING

at The Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island
38 Old Country Road
Garden City, NY 11530
516 741-7304

Saturday, June 11, 18, 25 at 7:30 PM
Sunday, June 12, 19 at 2:30 PM

Donation--\$20

Directed by Ken Schwartzman

OUR TIMES COFFEEHOUSE

Our Times Coffeehouse will be at the Ethical Humanist Society of LI on **Friday, May 20th** @ 8pm. The featured artist is [Eric Andersen](#). ERIC ANDERSEN'S songs, voice, and guitar have created a career, spanning over 40 years, that includes 25 albums of original songs, and numerous tours of North America, Europe, and Japan. His songs; have been recorded by artists all over the world, including Judy Collins, Fairport Convention, Peter Paul and Mary, Rick Nelson, Linda Ronstadt, The Grateful Dead, and Françoise Hardy. Tickets for the show are \$20.

For more information visit
www.ourtimescoffeehouse.org.

YES in New Orleans continued from page 3

In addition to the build, we spent some time learning about and enjoying the city. We took a driving tour of the area directly adjacent to the levee that broke. We saw the levee (a long and relatively short concrete wall), the new "Brad Pitt houses," the Superdome (where people were told to go immediately after Katrina), and the destruction that the hurricane left that has yet to be repaired over 5 years later.

We spent a few evenings in the famous French Quarter, with its small streets, beautiful balconies, and thriving restaurant and music scene. We also spent some time at our lodgings, a volunteer camp run by a Lutheran church called Camp Restore. It was a good experience to be around lots of teens with different beliefs than us

Some other highlights included the drive-thru daiquiri bar, the penniless street band we made friends with called Sally Sells Sea Shells By The Sea Shore, Tony's authentic New Orleans restaurant, eating outside at MoJo's in the French Quarter, and beautiful weather!

Thanks to the Society for helping to fund our trip! We had a great time stepping out of our comfort zones and working together to help an important cause. We are considering returning next year!

Humanists in New Orleans



SPICE Events

A SPECIAL BOOK DISCUSSION

Back by popular demand:

Arthur will read and hold a discussion based on two additional short stories from his collection "The Harder Right," which be accessed at arthurdobrin.wordpress.com

Adoption, honor codes, prejudice and mixed motives are some of the situations that Arthur will explore as he reads from The Harder Right, a collection of short stories that he has written. Most of the stories are inspired by real events.

This is Arthur's fourth book of fiction, but the first that focuses on morality. The stories present an interesting way to think about ethics, as it takes abstract ideas and makes them specific to individuals.

The last reading and discussion was so successful that a repeat performance was requested.

Date- Saturday May 7, 2011

Time - 2 P.M.

Hosts- Lyn and Arthur Dobrin

Number of Participants- 10 adults

Cost- \$15

The Music of Harold Arlen

Hosts- Barbara & Mel Haber

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Haber SPICE will be re-scheduled to the fall.(Date to be announced.)

SAVE the DATE

Saturday September 10 at 5 P.M.

The annual, very special: Poolside Dinner at the Feifers

SPICE Rules: After the platform there will be sign up sheets on the bulletin board. You can always sign up by calling Phyllis at the Society Office at (516) 741-7304.

Note: When you sign up for an event, you are pledging to the SPICE committee that you are donating a certain amount of money to the Society. No refunds will be issued unless an event is canceled or a new date is selected for which you are unavailable. If an event has a limited number of people that can attend, and there is waiting list, you can also get a refund, if requested. If the SPICE events have unlimited participants, non Ethical members are cordially welcome. If however, there is a limited amount of people that can attend, non Ethical members are welcome, only if space allows.

Pat Spencer, Alice Sprintzen, and Lorraine Abrams

TEEN ART, MUSIC, AND POETRY FESTIVAL

The fourth annual festival was held on April 16th and was by far the biggest and the best. The theme of the festival was "Create a Caring World." This year we had over 120 pieces of art and poetry from Nassau County Schools and listened to hours of great music from some very talented teens.



EHSli SUNDAY MEETING SCHEDULE

May

- 1 Founders Day Celebration
- 8 Calvin Dame
- 15 Dr. David Sprintzen
- 22 CEP – Coming of Age Ceremony
- 29 TBA

June

- 5 Recognition Day Celebration
- 12 Calvin Dame
- 19 TBA

Check other Society sponsored events online at:

<http://www.meetup.com/Ethical-Humanist-Society-of-Long-Island>

THE SOCIETY WILL NOT BE CLOSING FOR THE SUMMER. Look for a full slate of Sunday Meetings in the June Newsletter

FALL EHSli RETREAT

September 30 – October 2

We invite you to join us for two nights away in a beautiful nature setting in the Poconos, just over a 2 hour drive away. We will be staying in cabins at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) from Friday evening, September 30th through Sunday afternoon, October 2nd. The weekend will include organized hikes, campfires, games, discussions, free time to enjoy the grounds, and more! This isn't a business meeting, just a fun way to come together to celebrate our community and bond with one another!

The cost will be \$150 per person (children \$75) and includes accommodations (bunk-bed style cabins), all meals, and use of the grounds including PEEC staff to guide us in some of our activities. If you can only come Saturday-Sunday, there is a reduced cost. There will be special discounts for families TBA.

Official registration forms will be available soon, but for now we are asking folks to sign up to "Save my Spot." There will be a sign-up sheet on Sunday, or you can send your name(s) to Phyllis in the office. If you have any questions, or if you have any ideas for activities during the retreat, please email Tara at YES@ehsli.org. Stay tuned for more details!

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