Many of you have expressed condolences following the death of my mother, the Rev. C. Elsie Dame, and I want to thank you. She was a warm and witty woman, and her memorial service was a wonderful celebration of a life well lived. So, thank you all for your thoughts.

When my kids were in grade school I arrived hungry to a Soccer Awards Banquet, only to discover that the word Banquet was a sobriquet: turns out the event was merely an awards ceremony and any suggestion of food was an historical artifact. The reason I mention this is our Ethical Café; as I was typing the title The Ethical Café recently, it occurred to me that the word café might be misleading. We usually have tea available, but no sandwiches or scones or the like. I think we had some cookies, once.

No, the word café, I think, is meant to evoke the idea of an lively exchange of ideas. It is meant to suggest the kind of engaged conversation that I imagined took place in the 18th Century Coffeehouses of Boswell & Johnson's London, the Parisian Left Bank artist cafés of the late nineteenth century, the West Village beats and poets of the 1950s!

Romantic, I know. But not so far off when you think of EHS over the last fifty years. The Café is the Society in spirit, and embodies a part of our common life that is vital and enlivening. For what has been more important in the life of our community than the engagement of ideas, the insights gained, the broadening of horizons, the sympathies awakened, the spur to action? And the friendships and community that arise from our endeavors.

We are all a part of the Ethical Café, generally speaking. And you are all invited to the Ethical Café on February 13th, speaking specifically.

Our January 27th speakers, Maryann Sinclair Slutsky and Hendel Leiva, talked about immigration on Long Island. They offered us a look at Welcoming Long Is-

(Continued on Page 7)
**KIDs Update**

Our Kids In Deed class has been busy with a variety of lessons and activities. After the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, we signed letters to President Obama, Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand, and Congresswoman McCarthy, asking for better gun control laws and more money for mental health treatment.

We recently had a yoga lesson taught for us by Sylvia Silverberg. It was harder than we anticipated! But it was a lot of fun to try it, and we learned that yoga is much more than exercise; it is a philosophy that encompasses both the body and the mind to attain an inner peace. As humanists, we are interested in yoga to help us understand the practices of other people in the world. In fact, we can incorporate these concepts into our own daily lives for improved health and mental calm.

Last week's lesson was on climate change and its effects on birds. Humanists care about climate change because we have an obligation to take care of the earth for all of us to use wisely, preserve the earth for future generations, and to create a better life for all. The children were already very knowledgeable on the subject. We made bird cakes out of rice cakes, bird seed, popcorn, and cheerios to hang on a tree in the side yard. Birds must have been watching us-- they showed up soon after to partake.

Alison Pratt, KIDs Director

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**Weil Student Social Action Grant Winners**

Our Society has just awarded the Weill Student Social Action Grant of $425 to Michael Garcia, Jennifer Gentile, and Michaela Beck of South Side High School in Rockville Centre for their project, "Drinking is Not a Minor Problem." The students are members of their school's SADD club and the Rockville Centre Youth Council. Their project aims to educate adults about New York's social host law, which forbids providing alcohol to minors. The teens have enlisted local liquor stores and pizzarias to put signs in their windows and stickers on pizza boxes informing people of the law. The grant helps to defray the cost of printing the materials, which were designed by the students. It was delightful to meet such talented and motivated students who are working to create a better world.

Alison Pratt and Calvin Dame congratulate Michaela Beck, Jennifer Gentile, and Michael Garcia of South Side High School.
YES Update

After a successful Pasta Dinner in December and a nice winter break, the YES group is back in full swing! We have two major events coming up:

First, our annual Sunday Meeting will take place on March 3rd. This year’s topic is very timely, focusing on youth and gun violence. As always, you can look forward to a completely youth-led presentation that features cutting-edge technology and mature, thoughtful remarks by our Society’s teen group.

Second, we are going back to New Orleans! After a serious discussion about whether our efforts would be better spent cleaning up at home after Sandy, we decided it would still be worthwhile to make this trip. This will be our third year going down to volunteer with the St. Bernard Project on rebuilding homes that were destroyed back in 2005 during Hurricane Katrina. Long Island will have 5 teens, and we will be joined by teens from the Brooklyn and Washington Ethical Societies. We will volunteer for a week, and in the evenings enjoy tours of different neighborhoods plus a bit of Cajun culture!

The teens are fundraising to help cover the cost of our trip. We need to pay for our airfare, lodging at a volunteer camp, meals, and transportation for the week, and the costs add up. If members are able to help us out, you can drop off a check or cash to Phyllis (made out to Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island). Be sure to leave us your name and contact info. Every little bit helps—as little as $10 will make a world of difference for us!

As always, for any questions about the YES group you can reach out to us at YES@ehsli.org.

Sincerely,
Derek and Tara

Some of the YES group at a diner meeting
Goings on at and Announcements from EHSLI

SPICE Events — It is with pride that the SPICE committee wants to announce that for the 2012 year $1325 was given to the Society. As always, and I think even more importantly, there were wonderful warm feeling of friendship and belonging during these events. We want to thank all the SPICE leaders who so generously gave of their time, effort and knowledge. Of course, it wouldn’t have been a success without all the people who attended. We appreciate everyone’s participation. We also want to sincerely thank Sylvia and Phyllis for their efforts publishing all our events, in both Newsletters and weekly emailings. I personally wouldn’t have been able to accomplish anything without the help and support of my committee members (and friends) Alice Sprintzen and Pat Spencer. Lorraine Abrams (chair)

Our Times Coffee House: On February 15th, Miles to Dayton will be playing for Our Times Coffee House. Come and meet the family you never knew you had. Miles to Dayton’s music happens at a personal level, their message of love blending elements of folk, rock, classical, and funk into an irresistible invitation. The M2D recipe is simple: four-part vocal harmony, clever songwriting, improvisational violin and cello, and an infectious rhythm section that stirs up the creative stew. Performance starts at 8:00 PM, doors open at 7:15 PM. Come early and enjoy refreshments before the show. Donations: Adults $15, Seniors (65 & Up) & Students (w/school I.D.) $12, Children (under 12) $6 (very young children are free). For more information on Our Times Coffee House visit http://www.ourtimescoffeehouse.org/ and for more information on Miles to Dayton visit http://www.milestodayton.net/fr_home.cfm.

Exercise Classes for Seniors: Instructor Sue Salko will resume her popular Senior Exercise classes on Mondays and Fridays 9:30 - 10:30 AM. Classes are geared to the needs of the participants while addressing flexibility, balance, strength and endurance. Bring light weights, stretch bands (available from instructor), wear comfortable clothing and sneakers. Suggested contribution: $5 per class. More information from Sue at Sue.Salko@yahoo.com. More information on Sue at www.SueSalko.com.

Yoga on temporary hiatus through first half of 2013: Sylvia Silberger will not be around regularly during the first half of 2013. When she is in town, she will hold a yoga class on Wednesdays at 5:30 PM at the EHSLI. However, if you are thinking of attending, please contact her at matsbs@yahoo.com so that she can put you on the email list confirming the yoga class will be held.

The Caring Connection: our commitment to taking care of those of us who are sick or in need. We encourage involvement from all. This is core to who we are as Ethical Humanists.

Suggestions for Sunday Speakers: If you have heard any speakers whom you would like to recommend to the Sunday Committee, based on their excellence and subject matter including ethical issues, to consider for next season, please send suggestions to the office to be forwarded to committee members.

Weekly Food Drive: Members of the EHSLI are collecting food items for INN (Interfaith Nutrition Network). Please leave non-perishable food items in the basket in the lobby.

Sponsor a Coffee Hour: $15 and, with enough advanced notice, add your name and message to the Sunday Meeting bulletin! Contact Phyllis at ethicalsociety@optonline.net.

Visit EHSLI Online!

EHSLI Website: http://www.ehsli.org
EHSLI on Twitter: www.twitter.com/ehsl
EHSLI on Facebook: www.facebook.com/LIEthical
K.I.D. on Twitter: www.twitter.com/KidsInDeed
EHSLI on Meet-up: http://www.meetup.com/Ethical-Humanist-Society-of-Long-Island/. This site lists a full schedule of our events. Support us by becoming an EHSLI meet up member.

Leader emeritus Arthur Dobrin is blogging weekdays at arthurdobrin.wordpress.com

Photos: picasaweb.google.com/LIEthical
February Sunday Meeting Schedule

**February 3:** Arnell Dowret, freethought activist, writer, and producer and host for America’s longest running radio program for the free thinking community, WBAI’s “Equal Time for Freethought,” on 99.5 FM, Saturdays 3—4 PM.

**Finding Humanism’s Killer App.** A Naturalistic world view involves more than skepticism. Can we allow ourselves to live happier, healthier, more empowered lives and reduce thoughts and feelings that diminish our effectiveness and debilitate us? This presentation will teach us what a heightened understanding of ourselves and the world around us can offer.

**Bio:** Arnell Dowret is a freethought activist, writer, who has been involved in developing and facilitating interpersonal group workshops since the 1970’s. For the past ten years he has produced and hosted America’s longest running radio program for the free thinking community, WBAI’s “Equal Time for Freethought,” on 99.5 fm, Saturdays from 3 to 4 PM. Dowret is a contributing author to the books “Towards a New Political Humanism” (2004, Prometheus Press) and “The Myth of Freewill” (2010, Cafe Essays). His interviews and articles have appeared in “The Humanist” and “Free Inquiry” magazines. He developed the “Secular Connections” workshop for CFIMetro New York in 2001, and over the past ten years he has facilitated several Naturalism oriented workshops at WBAI including the 2011 NYC based Meetup group “The Experimental Zone.”

**February 10:** Darwin Day — Speaker: Jeffrey T. Laitman, Ph.D., Professor and Director of Anatomy and Functional Morphology, Professor of Medical Education, Professor of Otolaryngology, Director of Gross Anatomy, Editor for Functional and Evolutionary Morphology The Anatomical Record

**February 17:** Calvin Dame

**John Dewey’s Voice.** In 1933-34, John Dewey delivered four lectures on humanism and religion for the Dwight H. Terry Lectureship at Yale. His ideas, published as “A Common Faith,” are with us still.

**February 24:** Cindy Hacken and Juli Owens, **Transgender Perspectives**

**March 3:** YES!

**March 10:** Calvin Dame, **New Beginnings**

Sunday Meetings begin at 11:00 AM
Sunday Colloquies begin at 9:30 AM
Calvin’s Blog: A Dangerous Movie

I have just seen the gripping and disturbing film, Zero Dark Thirty (oh dark thirty is military slang for the middle of the night). Named best picture of 2012 by the New York film Critics Circle, nominated for five Academy Awards and directed by Kathryn Bigalow, the first woman to win an Academy Award for Best Director for her 2009 picture, The Hurt Locker, Zero Dark Thirty tells the story of the decade-long hunt for Osama bin Laden. Or purports to tell the story. Hundreds of CIA and military personal participated in that hunt, but the movie necessarily reduces the narrative to a handful of characters, one of whom carries the narrative.

So let’s be clear: this is terrific, edge of the seat movie making! Even the extended torture sequences, while difficult to watch, are riveting. The problem is that, while claiming to be factual, these scenes are untruthful, and, I think, dangerous. The director and her writer, Mark Boal, assert that the movie grows from extensive interviews with the CIA personnel involved in the manhunt; the message of the movie’s narrative is that the key to bin Laden’s location emerged from those torture rooms. This claim is highly disputed, and impossible to assess given that so much of the record remains classified. But the movie has been forcefully criticized: Sens. Dianne Feinstein, Carl Levin, and John McCain, for instance, wrote a letter to Sony Pictures, urging the studio to correct the misimpression "that the CIA’s use of coercive interrogation techniques led to the operation against Osama bin Laden."

Torture is always reprehensible, but is it always wrong? It seems wrong, but what if the torture of a guilty person produces information that saves the lives of ten or a hundred or a thousand innocent persons? That is the central dilemma of the morality of torture. I think that historically the American people would have said that torture is just plain wrong. Until the 9/11 attacks. And in our fear following those attacks, many Americans came to the uneasy conclusion that it was something we had to do. And what we found was that, in the chilling bureaucratic phrase, enhanced interrogation techniques did not save innocent lives. In fact, long term, a case could probably be made that the anger, mistrust and anti-American feeling our actions engendered in the world put Americans lives in danger.

Movies lie all the time, of course. Partly because that it is the only way to tell a complex story. And, movies change the world all the time. Usually, we like that. We could make a case that movies like Philadelphia changed the world and opened the path towards gay marriage, or that Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner helped open Barack Obama’s path to the White House. Movies have an unrivaled power to shape public consciousness. And, the creators of Zero Dark Thirty either carelessly or cynically or opportunistically or for political purposes, set that power loose.

The filmmakers claim that they are not pro-torture. But their film belies that, and what the movie tells us is that torture led directly to bin Laden. Hence, torture is regrettable but necessary. Even acceptable.

And that is dangerous for us, morally, ethically and as a country.

Calvin O. Dame
Religious Director

Note from the Editor

Newsletter Editor: Sylvia Silberger

Please send suggestions for additions to future EHSLI newsletters and comments to

Sylvia Silberger
96 Vermont Avenue
Hempstead, NY 11550
matsbs@yahoo.com

Submissions due by the 15th of the month for the next month’s newsletter.
January Board Meeting Minutes
ETHICAL HUMANIST SOCIETY OF LONG ISLAND
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2nd, 2013 BOARD MEETING

PRESENT: Joan Beder, Lois Blatt, Sue Feifer, Mel Haber, Bill Larsen, Jim LoPresti, Don Morgenstern, Alison Pratt, Liz Seegert, Pat Spencer, David Sprintzen and Deborah Strube

ABSENT: Wayne Outten

GUESTS: Calvin Dame

1. Financial report: There are no major new problems or expenses. However, the closer on the side door is broken and will need to be replaced. We now have about $3,000 in our bank account. As to rentals, not much is happening.

2. Alison’s report: Alison passed out a flyer done by a Weill grant winner related to underage drinking. It will soon be widely distributed. Sylvia Silberger will be discussing yoga with the KIDS members on Sunday, January 6th. This group will be having its own Darwin Day in the future.

3. Deciding who should remain on our membership list: The Board voted to take names off our Membership List of those who have not paid dues for two years. Currently, people can remain members for three years without paying dues.

4. Bus Rider’s Union project of the Long Island Jobs for Justice: The Bus Riders Union, a project of the Long Island Jobs for Justice organization, wants to hold a meeting at our Society. The Board voted to host their meeting because it is a good cause, as well as good publicity for us.

5. Liz’s report: Our Pay Pal button has now been fixed and will accept payment for items purchased on our Web site. Visitors to our Web site have increased this past month compared to the previous month.

6. Calvin’s report: For the Sunday platform between Christmas and New Years, Calvin came up with the idea of doing a play reading. There were about 17 people who attended and took turns reading the play aloud. A good time was had by all! The Garden City Clergy will be holding their next meeting soon and encourage our members to attend.

7. Founder’s Day: Don Pat Spencer will be the honoree at our next Founder's Day on May 5th, 2013.

8. Author’s mentoring program: Don and Calvin will work together to modify Arthur's proposal and bring their revision in to next month's Board meeting.

The meeting ended at 8:05 PM
Minutes submitted by Mel Haber,
Board secretary

From Our Religious Director, Cont.

(Continued from Page 1)

land's mission to change what has been, disturbingly, too much a culture discrimination and violence into a culture that is welcoming of people and affirming of the gifts that immigrants bring. There was some interest expressed for hosting Listening Circles, where immigrants share their stories and provide time for reflection. It seems a perfect fit for EHS, so if anyone would like to work with me to make this happen, let me know.

Calvin O. Dame
Religious Director
Opt-Out of Paper Newsletter Mailings

To save resources and postage costs, we encourage you to email Sylvia at matsbs@yahoo.com if you would be satisfied with an email-only version of this newsletter rather than a paper copy.