One of the most important activities of the work I do as a religious professional is talking to people. You might want to talk with me when you are feeling discouraged or angry or worried. You might want to talk when you are concerned about a relationship in your life, when you have suffered a loss, when there is illness in your life or when things are changing too quickly. You may have questions about what it means to be a part of a Ethical Humanist Society, or when you have ideas you are excited about for the future of the Society. You may want to share some concern about how something has gone or about my work. Or, you may just feel lonely and want to talk. I'd be happy to talk with you. I am planning to be at the Society on Wednesdays this fall, but you reach me at 718-640-7742 which is my cell phone. We can talk by phone or we can set up a time and place to meet.

We are now well launched on our fall schedule here at EHSLI, and we have also moved into our second full year with me serving as your Religious Director. I am still pleased to be here, and looking forward to our work together in the coming months. This year, I look forward to such events as the Thanksgiving Celebration, Winter Festival and Remembrance Day with a different sort of anticipation, one now rooted in experience.

There is always something to learn as a religious leader, and we are still learning how best to work together. This is the first time that I have tried to do this work half-time, and your experience with half-time leadership is limited. The work of a vital society is varied and broad: Sunday mornings, pastoral care, committee work, programs, education, communication, social action, community outreach, membership development, etc. I would feel overwhelmed if I did not understand that the work of vital community is a shared project; creating and sustaining community is work that we do together.

The question of how best to use my time as your Religious Director regarding priorities and goals is an ongoing discussion that includes the Religious Director's Advisory Committee (Jim LoPresti, Linda Napoli and Mel Haber) and members of the Board. Your input is welcome. If you have ideas, thoughts, encouragement or concerns, I invite you to speak directly with me. I welcome any conversations. Or you can speak with Linda, Jim or Mel, a part of their work on the Advisory Committee is to engage in conversations

(Continued on page 6)
Calvin’s Blog

The Religious Director’s Blog appeared on the EHS LI website Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011:

The End of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell …

It has been a long journey to get here, to this particular mile marker on the road to a just and equal society, and can see more road stretching out before us. But today, today is a day to celebrate!

One minute past the stroke of midnight, the 18 year old policy for gays serving in the military, commonly known as Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, officially came to an end. I was actually heartened at the relatively low key media coverage. The New York Times had a good article, though you had to look around the front page to find it; I saw some celebratory postings on Facebook. Huffington Post went with a big picture of a Vermont wedding couple at 12:02, but with a reasonable article and constrained by HP standards. I must admit, I didn’t check the television, but my position is if you start there you have to take what you get.

Of course, the signing of the Bill was several months ago, but as the right to marry has slipped from state to state, this particularly milestone has ceded the top of the front page, gigantic type headline it might once have garnered. I think that is a positive indicator!

From were we now stand looking back, it is easy to forget that eighteen years ago Don’t Ask Don’t Tell was a step forward. Terribly flawed and inadequate but it offered a protection that was not previously in place.

In hindsight, the inadequacies are glaring. Over 13,000 service men and women were discharged under this policy, with lives disrupted and careers ended, hopes shattered. And at a cost to our military preparedness and safety: qualified personnel dismissed, years of training thrown aside. I remember stories of able Arab linguists dismissed in the middle of two wars in the middle east!

So, now a serviceman or woman can keep a picture of their life partner in their wallet, perhaps bring them to a holiday gathering. Which is great. But, they still cannot

Events with Calvin

Wednesday Lunch Discussion Group
October 5: Ethical Dilemmas
October 12: What’s up with unions?
October 19: Fall Poems
October 26: TBA
Lunch discussion groups begin at noon.

Ethics Café
October 12: What’s up with unions?
October 16: The Challenge of Change
Ethics Café discussions begin at 6:30 PM

October Sunday Platform Speakers
October 2: Dr. Jan Witkowski,
Scientist Update from Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory
October 9: Charlene Obernauer,
Executive Director Long Island Jobs with Justice
October 16: Calvin Dame
October 23: Ethical Bowl
Roberta Israeloff, Executive Director of Foundation Sponsoring High School Competition
October 30: Joseph Chuman,
Leader of Bergen and New York Ethical Societies
Platforms begin at 11:00 AM
Sunday Colloquies begin at 9:30 AM

We stand at an important marker, but a true equality still lies further down the road. While all those serving in the military can assign insurance beneficiaries or designate hospital visitors as they like, certain benefits such as joint assignment for couples serving at the same time, or chaplains performing weddings where it is legal, remain to province of the heterosexual.

So, a good moment, but as is always the case with prejudice and discrimination. Since 1972, officially, and before that I am sure, the American Ethical Union, and Humanist Societies have worked for equality for gay and lesbian people in our communities and states and the military. Today, we celebrate, tomorrow we go back to work.

Calvin O. Dame
Exercise Classes for Seniors: Classes for seniors, led by instructor, Sue Salko, began Monday, September 26th, at the EHSLI.

Senior Exercise Class schedule:
Monday-Wednesday-Friday 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Classes are geared to needs of participants while addressing flexibility, balance, strength and endurance.

All are welcome!! Bring light weights, stretch bands (are available from instructor), wear comfortable clothing and sneakers.
Suggested contribution: $5 per class.

Our Times Coffeehouse: Our Times Coffeehouse will be at the Ethical Humanist Society of LI on Friday, October 21st @ 8pm. The featured artist is Brother Sun. Joe Jencks, Greg Greenway and Pat Wictor have become an amazing new male trio. Their harmonies, as much as their lyrics, tell what they are about. Calling upon contemporary songwriting, and informed by the deep roots of gospel, blues and folk, the trio weaves a tapestry of harmony that is heart warming, brilliantly fresh and yet familiar. For more information visit www.ourtimescoffeehouse.org.

The Women’s Retreat originally scheduled for October 21 – October 23, 2011 has been cancelled. Anyone that was interested in attending the retreat, keep Saturday October 22 open for a “mini retreat”. More information will be made available soon.

A SPICE Book Discussion: Please join us to hear Arthur Dobrin, Leader Emeritus, as he leads us in a reading and book discussion from his latest collection of short stories. The name of the book is, The Harder Right. These stories are about people making ethical choices. As always, this will be an interesting, thought provoking afternoon. The Dobrins provide a warm atmosphere, lively discussions and delicious desserts!

Date: Saturday November 5
Hosts Lyn and Arthur Dobrin
170 Salem Road, Westbury
Participants: limited to 15 adults

Cost: $15
In the event of a drawing it will be held on Sunday October 30.

Join us by calling Phyllis at 516-741-7304
All proceeds go to support the Society.

October Movie Group Discussion scheduled for October 29th was canceled. The next Movie Group meeting will be on November 26th at 2:30. The movies are TBA.

Free Yoga Classes: led by Sylvia Silberger will be held on Sundays from 1:00—2:30 PM.
**Kids In Deed!**

KIDS IN DEED (formerly the Children's Ethics Program) got off to a good start on September 17. We began by talking about The Golden Rule, and watched a video that showed religious teachings about of The Golden Rule from many faith traditions, including Ethical Culture. We talked about how The Golden Rule – "Treat others as you would like to be treated"— can apply in our lives. After agreeing that we all like to receive a get-well card if we are sick, we then started to apply the Golden Rule by making Get-Well cards for one of our Society members who has recently been ill.

We have many community service projects planned for the year. We will be learning about ethics as they arise from community needs, such as helping people less fortunate than ourselves. Stay tuned for some of our great projects coming up!

*Alison Pratt, KIDS IN DEED Coordinator*
**K.I.D. ANNOUNCEMENTS!**

**Teen Art, Music and Poetry Festival:**
Mark your calendars! The Teen Art, Music, and Poetry Festival is slated for Saturday, March 31, from 1 to 4:30. We are looking for talented teens to participate in our day dedicated to the arts and social action. The theme, as always, is “Create a Caring World.” Entry forms are available on our website in a downloadable PDF file.

**Kids In Deed Fundraiser:**
The KIDS IN DEED class will be participating in a walk-a-thon on Oct. 9 for FAAN, the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network. This organization helps to raise awareness of food allergies, educates parents and the public of the dangers of food allergies, and raises money for research for a cure (probably in the form of a vaccine.) We are hoping to donate at least $200 to this worthy group. If 20 people each donates $10, we will reach our goal. Can you help? To learn more about FAAN, go to [www.foodallergywalk.org](http://www.foodallergywalk.org). You can sponsor our team, KIDS IN DEED, right from the website (press the "walk locations" button to find "Long Island, NY", then search our team name, then click "donate to a walker," then search our team name, KIDS IN DEED. There you will see a list of our names to sponsor.) OR we will gladly take your cash or check donation directly! Thank you!

**The Weill Student Social Action Grant:**
It's fall -- and school is back in session. Time to get the word out again on our Weill Student Social Action Grant which offers up to $500 in seed money for student projects in community service or social action. If you'd like to volunteer to help with the outreach on this terrific program, please contact Alison Pratt or Linda Napoli. Also, if you know of any middle or high school students (or their teachers), please download a grant application from our website at [www.ehsli.org](http://www.ehsli.org).

**The Grand Old Lady Fundraiser:**
The EHSLI has begun a fundraiser to restore its Steinway piano. We need between $12,000 and $20,000 for a complete restoration. Buy your own piano key or note for $100 towards this cause. We opened the fundraiser on September 25th and netted $700 on the first day!

*Ryan Dobrin performs at the Teen Art, Music, and Poetry Festival*

*Calvin buys middle C!*
YES!

The YES group is off to a great start this year! We have welcomed a bunch of new members, including some who are new to the Society. It feels great to have a bigger group!

We have some exciting things planned this year. First up, our National YES Conference in NYC and Frost Valley in the Catskills, which will take place November 10-13. This is a great opportunity to get to know teens from other Ethical Societies, participate in discussions, and have an all around great time. This year's conference theme is "Instinctive Human Rights: What are we entitled to?" Dan as national president and MacKenzie as LI rep have been working hard on weekly conference calls to plan the weekend!

We decided to switch things up a bit this year: our annual YES Pasta Dinner will be taking place on December 10th. We will talk about our conference experience, bring in a speaker, provide entertainment and of course cook pasta! Stay tuned for more details but please save the date!

In the Spring we will participate in Darwin Day, the Teen Arts Festival, a voter registration drive with the children's program, and our much-anticipated New Orleans rebuild trip. We will also do a Sunday Meeting presentation on February 26th. And that's just for starters! It promises to be a fantastic year for the Youth of Ethical Societies!

Tara Klein, YES Adviser
YES@EHSLI.org

Note from the Editor

Newsletter Editor: Sylvia Silberger

Please send all 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 22nd of the month for the next month’s newsletter.

From Our Religious Director

(Continued from page 1)

about how things are going.

I have said it before, in this space and in other forums: our dreams are large, and the work of community is hard work. And the tradition in which we stand as Ethical Humanists is a challenging tradition. And audacious, I think. But, for my money, there is no more important work than this: we are gathered to create a community of caring, with the purpose of encouraging one another in our growth as human beings, centering ourselves in a long tradition of humanistic thought and using ethics as our guide, and determined to make the world a better place. Audacious? Maybe, but a vision worthy of the best that we can bring to it.

Best, Calvin Dame
September Board Meeting Minutes

ETHICAL HUMANIST SOCIETY OF LONG ISLAND
MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 7, 2011 BOARD

PRESENT: Don Morgenstern, Tara Klein, Sue Feifer, Deborah Strube, Pat Spencer, Jim LoPresti, Mel Haber, Liz Seegert, Wayne Outten, Alison Pratt, David Sprintzen.

ABSENT: Carol Pincus-Smith

GUESTS: Calvin Dame, Linda Napoli, Joan Beder

1. Finances: Money is tight because we lost several renters, one of whom paid us $600 per month. Another renter whom we may lose is the Long Island Coalition for the Homeless, who has been paying $1,800 to rent three rooms upstairs. They have been hit hard by the poor economy and find it hard to pay their rent. Don asked them to pay what they can because he wants them to be a long-term tenant. We also lost people who rented our auditorium for concerts because they did not want to pay for security guards. On a positive side, some of our tenants are using our building to a greater extent. Pledge funds are down slightly because of our having fewer members.

2. The retreat: It was cancelled, and we hope to get some money back.

3. The piano: Our 100-year-old Steinway piano is in bad shape. To repair it will cost about $15,000. Alison proposed raising funds by asking members and others to donate $100 per key for repair. If we get 80 to 100 people to donate $100, we will raise much of the cost to repair the piano. Members liked her idea. Don will ask Muriel Neufeld to ask Rhoda Weill for matching funds to be taken out of the Weill fund for the piano repair. David Sprintzen will ask Bob Lepley to do a concert at Ethical or elsewhere to raise funds for repairing our piano.

4. Open house: We had 13-14 people come to our Open House a month ago. We hope they will come back in months to come.

5. AEU relations: In recent months, we had stopped paying dues to the AEU because they refused to give Calvin reasons for denying him leadership training. However, as the AEU has recently given him their reasons, Don and the Board agree that we should resume dues payments to the AEU. Exactly when Calvin should re-apply for leadership training is up in the air.

6. The Kids program: Alison now has six kids in the newly titled Kids In Deed program. She will do community action with the kids and discuss ethics in that context. She also plans to do an Identity Day. Advertising should be done, Alison said, to attract more kids.

7. Fundraising and publicity. Liz said we need an identity to offer the community. Also, we need to maintain consistency in what we say and do. We should meet with members of the community whom we should ask for funding. There is a firm called Constant Contact whom we should consider using. They could send out our newsletters widely and they charge only $12 a month for their services. In addition, Alison suggested that we put up signs in our window for Kids in Deed, as well as Ethical Friends of Children.

8. Social Action committee: Tara and Linda Napoli will head up our Social Action Committee.

9. Summer programs: People liked our summer programs. We’ll run them again next summer.

The meeting ended at 9:50 PM
Minutes submitted by Mel Haber
Opt-Out of Paper Newsletter Mailings

To save both 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.