

EDIS Annual Business Meeting
June 29, 2003
Room 351, Founder's Hall
Cabrini College
Radnor, Pennsylvania

Approximately 38 present

EDIS President Jonnie Guerra convened the meeting at 10:00 a.m., welcoming all and reminding conference registrants with dormitory accommodations to return their keys and access cards before leaving. She added that conference t-shirts were still on sale for \$15.

Guerra began her President's report by recalling that this was the fifteenth anniversary of EDIS and that the tenth anniversary had been celebrated in Boulder, Colorado. She announced that this is the third year of the Scholar in Amherst competition and that:

- Angela Sorby is the 2002 Scholar in Amherst Award winner. The award honors Vivian Pollak, the second president of EDIS, and is partially funded by a gift from her mother, Sylvia F. Rogosa.
- James and Diana Fraser provided the funding for the 2003 award to honor his mother, Myra Fraser Fallon.
- For the 2004 award honoring Brita Lindberg-Seyersted, Guerra has offered a challenge grant of \$1,000, and \$550 remains to be raised.

She said a discussion of the fifth international conference in Hawaii would take place later. EDIS has been active in MLA, ALA, SSAWW, and local chapters of EDIS. Because of a decrease in Emily Dickinson *Journal* subscriptions, John Hopkins University Press (JHUP) billed EDIS \$1,610; Guerra encouraged members and friends to consider full or contributing memberships. She said that Michael Kearns would welcome comments regarding the *EDIS Bulletin*. The 2005 EDIS conference, entitled "Emily Dickinson and Her Family," will take place in Amherst, Massachusetts. Guerra thanked Betty Bernhard for her contribution as Member-at-Large for three years. Cindy MacKenzie is the new Member-at-Large for a three-year term until 2006.

Having distributed copies of the minutes, Secretary Barbara Kelly asked for and received approval of the minutes from the 2002 Annual Meeting in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Treasurer Ellen Louise Hart reported a balance of \$21,457.44. Expenses included publication of the *Bulletin*, the Scholar in Amherst Award, contributions to the Homestead, the Evergreens, and Jones Library, and payments to JHUP. She said the annual meeting will end in the black and will probably show a profit. In the discussion that followed, Cris Miller urged members to recommend that their school libraries subscribe to the *Journal*, noting that subscriptions ordered under an individual's name cost less than institutional subscriptions. Someone asked if having the *Journal* available on the internet at Project Muse might have caused the decline in subscriptions. Martha Nell Smith responded that usually Project Muse increases subscriptions.

Membership Chair James Fraser said at the end of May EDIS had 323 paid members, and membership should be close to 400 by December when the numbers usually peak. Two years ago membership peaked at about 405. Reminding members of the importance of renewing early and often, he encouraged everyone to consider a contributing membership and to participate in an “each one reaches one campaign” by finding a friend or colleague to join EDIS.

Nominations Committee Chair Ellen Louise Hart reported that the Board re-elected Paul Crumbley, Gudrun Grabher, and Suzanne Juhasz for three-year terms as directors, until 2006. Officers elected for 2003-2004 are Jonnie Guerra, President; Gudrun Grabher, Vice-president; Barbara Kelly, Secretary; James Fraser, Treasurer; and Erika Scheurer, Membership Chair.

Guerra asked members to introduce themselves. She then invited questions and discussion from the membership. The questions and discussion evolved into a brainstorming session on ways to increase EDIS membership and subscriptions. To increase the number of regular members, Lois Kaufman suggested eliminating the associate member category. Magdalena Zapedowska responded that the associate category is important for foreign students without a lot of money. Cris Miller said the Society had philosophically been against eliminating associate and student categories. Eleanor Heginbotham thought there should be other ways of reaching out. John Manear said the Society needed more publicity – perhaps in the *English Journal* to reach high school teachers. Guerra asked him to look into that and get back to her. Manear volunteered to take 150 EDIS brochures to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) meeting in November, in San Francisco. Cindy MacKenzie suggested an advertisement in *Yankee* magazine. Jon Morse suggested reaching out via e-mail lists. Zapedowska said the EDIS website needs updating; for example, the Scholar in Amherst information. Gary Stonum, the website manager, asked members to send updated information to him. Guerra sent the registration list around the room for corrections. Martha Nell Smith said she would create an EDIS listserv. Marilyn Stonum encouraged members to exploit Emily Dickinson connections; for example, at Case Western Reserve in Ohio, she discovered Dickinson connections that university officials were unaware of and were delighted to learn about. Miller urged members to contact Michael Kearns for brochures if they were attending a meeting where Dickinson might be of interest. Emily Seelbinder said she could make contacts if she had brochures. Georgiana Strickland agreed that brochures are helpful, but thought it would be even better to distribute extra copies of the *Bulletins*. Manear asked what happened to extra *Journal* copies and suggested distributing them. Erika Scheurer wanted to know the difference in cost between an individual subscription and an institutional subscription. Strickland asked what JHUP charged for back issues. Ready answers were not available for those questions, but Stonum said he would find the information. Bill Weaver thought there should be more links to EDIS on the internet. Ann Kline suggested EDIS links in anthologies, textbooks, and CDs for teachers. Zapedowska asked if there would be affordable accommodations offered for the conference in Hawaii. Suzanne Juhasz said the logistics of transportation between the conference hotel and the university campus

made dormitory rooms and renting a car less affordable than finding someone with whom to share a hotel room, but she would look into budget hotels.

Gary Stonum thanked Guerra for the annual meeting at Cabrini. Cindy Dickinson, on behalf of the membership, presented Guerra with a sachet pillow made by Cindy MacKenzie from the same fabric that was used to make the replica of Emily Dickinson's white dress. Referring to a comment that Guerra had made at the Friday evening banquet about her fingernail polish, and thanking her for the wonderful conference, Marilyn Stonum presented Guerra with a bottle of "Shock and Awe" fingernail polish. Recalling Dickinson's words, "A Letter is a joy of Earth – it is denied the Gods," Ellen Louise Hart presented Guerra with a card of appreciation signed by the membership.

Guerra introduced the 2004 conference coordinators, Suzanne Juhasz and Jonathan Morse. Juhasz reported a change in venue for the conference from the University of Hawaii campus to the Hilo Hawaiian Hotel on the beach at Hilo Bay. Rooms are \$85 per night. Morse wrote two web addresses on the board: www.castleresorts.com/hhh and home.hawaii.rr.com/jmorse. The conference, scheduled for July 29 – August 1, will include a trip to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park on Saturday afternoon followed by dinner. Led by a professor of geology, the trip is included in the registration but not the dinner. Entitled "Emily Dickinson: Realms of Amplitude," the conference will include three plenary panel sessions, each introducing two of the six realms of amplitude: the body, nature, the erotic, spirituality, language, and our relationship to Dickinson as critics, biographers, and readers. The conference will feature thematic workshops derived from the plenary sessions, poetry workshops focusing on amplitude in three signature poems (Fr517, Fr757, Fr1446), and workshops welcoming new work in Dickinson studies. If anyone wants to present a paper or organize a panel, abstracts of 200 words should be sent to Juhasz. A brochure and website with additional information will be forthcoming.

Guerra announced that EDIS had already given the Society's annual \$500 gift to the Evergreens in order to meet a deadline for a matching grant. Cindy Dickinson graciously accepted the Society's \$500 gift for the Homestead and a \$500 gift for the Jones Library.

Before adjourning the meeting at 11:00 a.m., Guerra reminded members that a picnic lunch would follow Georgiana Strickland's talk on "Emily Dickinson's Philadelphia" in Room 258.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Kelly
EDIS Secretary