THE LLLI ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

Continuum

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"What," you might say, "does this Renewal Initiative have to do with me?"

The answer is simple. Everything. Yes, there was a Drafting Team and a Review Network—other Leaders who were willing and excited to do the preliminary thinking, listening, sorting, challenging, writing, experimenting, agonizing, and sharing.

But much as these two groups have been living and breathing the Renewal Initiative for the past two years, we all have a stake in the outcome.

This issue includes an overview of where the Initiative stands now, drafts of the purpose, principles, and organizational concept that have been developed, and answers to some frequently asked questions.

LLL's Renewal Initiative is in your hands

Listen up. Whether you've avidly followed the work of the Drafting Team, lurked on TalkChaordic, formed your own circle to practice principles, ranted to your co-Leader, written letters to the Board, or ignored the whole Renewal Initiative, here is an important piece of information.

When the Drafting Team completed its work in October 2002, the baton was passed, so to speak, simultaneously in two directions.

One, to the Formal Agreements Workgroup (see page 4) and two, to the LLL community at large. That's all of us.

So what does this mean? Marcia Conner, a consultant working with the Chaordic Commons, attended the last Review Network meeting and made the following analogy.

The Drafting Team has been "house building." They've gathered ideas and input, determined a basic design, agonized over details, and put together a structure that feels good and right and comfortable to them.

Now they have moved on and this house belongs to all of La Leche League. Are we ready to move in? That's the question that all of us—Leaders, Applicants, Board Members, Area Administrators, Founders, League Mothers, and Retired Leaders—will need to grapple with for the next several months.

Ultimately, says Chairman Lynne Coates, the LLLI Board of Directors is committed to seeing an LLL that is best equipped to meet current and future challenges. The Board favors an organization where power and decision-making are spread more equitably throughout. Board Members also concur that, especially in a worldwide organization, there is seldom just one "right" answer for developing Leaders, reaching mothers, sharing information, or even establishing goals. The Board supports more open and respectful communication as well. These were just some of the ideas that the Drafting Team drew upon to build its "house"—purpose, principles, and organizational concepts (p. 2-3).

Drafting Team members would probably agree that their "finished product" represents a *beginning* to the Renewal Initiative. How we make this house into an LLL home—one that feels good and right and comfortable to Leaders everywhere—is the next step in the process. So how does this happen?

> *To realize, deepen, and share the love and wisdom inherent in breastfeeding.*
>
> —DRAFT purpose statement for LLLI

One good outcome of the Renewal Initiative that has already started is an opening up of conversations among Leaders about why LLL exists and how we want to work together. Another is that more Leaders have begun to think more creatively about how they might do their jobs more effectively and meaningfully.

In a way, these dialogues are like wandering around this new house, wondering out loud about this or that, thinking how our current "belongings" will fit, figuring out if the structure is sound or what might need changing, finding things that work and things that don't.

Few houses come ready-made perfect. This is one that LLLI is seriously taking a look at. As a "family member" it'll be your house too. What features do you like? How would you change those that you don't? What's missing? The Board would like to know. As a member of the Review Network, I would too. Please write.

Sue Christensen, Indiana USA

LLLI Renewal Initiative: DRAFT Purpose, Principles, and Organizational Concept

Draft Purpose: **Realize, deepen, and share the love and wisdom inherent in breastfeeding.**

The purpose statement is intended to be a clear, simple statement of intent that defines, identifies, and binds our community. The Drafting Team worked to find wording that encompassed three elements they saw as the foundation of LLL work—breastfeeding, mothering, and creating a supportive environment.

The DT's aim was to develop a statement that provides a "large enough basket" to hold all the purposes that Leaders feel is the *why* they are involved in La Leche League.

According to the Chaordic Commons, the consulting group working with the Renewal Initiative, a strong purpose statement "speaks of an abiding and important activity within a healthy society; is a purpose for every individual and for the community as a whole; is never exhausted, even as participants' understanding evolves; and gives meaning to every step along the way."

A weak statement is "a platitude, full of sentiment but with no real power; can be achieved or made irrelevant; is meaningful to only a subset of all relevant and affected parties; and requires a lot of explanation."

Does this purpose ring true for you?

Draft Principles:

Participants* honor each others' right and responsibility to:

- Determine their own identity and needs, and follow their own judgment and instincts.
- Protect what belongs to them, what is important to them and their privacy.
- Inform their choices considering scientific knowledge, experience, and intuition.
- Voluntarily connect with others to pursue their goals.

…and right to:

- Create new parts of the system.

** Participants can be individuals or parts of the system.*

Participants, when working with others:

- Make room for family.
- Honor obligations.
- Educe, not compel.
- Are open to and look for opportunities for generosity and joy.
- Work through and resolve conflict without threats, coercion, or intimidation.
- Freely and fully exchange information.
- Are explicit about values.
- Are mutually affirming, supporting, and accountable.
- Deliberate and make decisions in ways that reasonably represent those affected without any one dominating.
- Entrust only sufficient authority and power as necessary to accomplish common work.

Participants work as a system to:

- Remain open and welcoming to new participants and parts.
- Ensure diversity and health.
- Create conditions that foster learning, development, and growth.
- Keep or shift power, authority, and resources to the smallest or most local part that includes those affected.
- Create no built-in advantage or disadvantage for any part or participant.
- Remain coherent and disciplined as a whole.
- Protect, not undermine, breastfeeding, mothering, and family.

Principles work for the organization as a whole as well as for the individuals within it. They are statements of common beliefs and values for how we operate and relate to others.

The Chaordic Commons (CC) suggests that principles are "touchstones for judging all structures, decisions, actions, and results." As such, principles "never prescribe, only describe."

Strong principles, according to the CC, are "unambiguous; embody creative tension and balance; anticipate potential risks to the integrity of the system; include only those principles necessary and sufficient for success; require exercise of judgment, but have ring of being 'principled;' and really are believed by all participants."

Principles that are weak "don't clearly differentiate one action from another; contradict other principles; are too specific; are really a statement of organizational goals; are meaningful but not essential to success."

Do these principles speak to your common beliefs and values?

Draft Core Elements of Organizational Concept:

An organizational concept answers the question "How are participants in this system related?" The organizational concept proposed by the Drafting Team includes these five core elements:

- **A circle is the fundamental organizing unit**
  Made up of at least two participants
  The work of the circle must further the purpose
  Circles link to other circles in the community; Connected circles form the community
- **Mutuality and mutual accountability are the basis for the connection**
  Mutuality: participants come to the relationship voluntarily and as equals
  Mutual accountability: we work together to maintain our equality
  Mutual accountability is the means to continue our relationship, to keep it strong as long as we have consensus
- **Consensus is the basis for "defining decisions"**
  Defining decisions describe the nature of and set the limits for the community
  We come together voluntarily when we agree that we share a task, goal, or belief
  Deep agreement between participants already exists (does not have to be built)
  This agreement or "common sensing" is used to form circles
- **Has a distributed structure**
  Circles are linked into a coherent whole; and no one part controls the whole
  Leadership can arise from anywhere and everywhere
  Creative activities of individual parts shape the growth of the system
  Resources and decision-making stay with local parts that include those affected
- **Community is purpose-centered and principle-based**
  Purpose is the core commonality, the reason for coming together (not just a product or service); encompasses the many individual purposes and activities of those participating in the community

  Principles are the elements of "right relationship" for our community; descriptive, not prescriptive; with these, we agree to act with each other in a way that is respectful and fair (the principles are explicit and precise about what that means); we (individuals and parts) yield just enough of our individual sovereignty to work together

Potential approaches to starting points for implementing this organizational concept are being explored by the Formal Agreements Workgroup (p. 4).

The following ideas represent the kinds of things that *might* happen, not what is "definitely going to happen."

A growing experimentation with innovative practices, led by Leaders. For example, exploring new ways to serve more mothers and babies; creating new programs in different settings; exploring how Leaders and their support network can be empowered to make more independent decisions.

Gradual changes in organizational structure, led by Administrators. For example, enabling interested Areas to experiment with new concepts of structure, such as how ACLs, Area Councils, or Groups are defined; exploring new ways for Groups and Areas to form; or experimenting with alternative approaches to managing resources or defining membership.

Initiatives to improve, diversify, and extend external relationships with partner organizations. For example, clarifying current policies that support partnership and collaboration; or creating "safe" ways to explore new partnerships that further our purpose.

Board actions to support renewal. For example, communicating support for ongoing experimentation and learning; clarifying existing policies that already support innovation and learning; exploring potential changes in policies on such issues as "resource flows" and how they might be phased in.

FAQ: The Renewal Initiative

Leaders have asked countless questions about the Renewal Initiative, as well they should for any major undertaking that their organization might engage in. The questions below are some that have been often heard.

What has been the process for the Renewal Initiative?
Early in 2001, a small Planning Team (7 members from 4 countries appointed by The Board of Directors) met with the Chaordic Commons facilitators to determine next steps for the initiative, including criteria and selection process for Drafting Team and Review Network members, multiple language communiques to the entire LLL community, and an estimated timeline.

The 18-member Drafting Team (DT) held their first meeting in late spring 2001 and have met seven more times since then. Their work centered on creating a draft Purpose and Principles based on our most deeply held values and beliefs, and determining an organizational structure that would best reflect these beliefs. The DT held its final meeting in mid-October 2002.

The Review Network (RN), made up of 30 Leaders and Applicants from 14 countries, was charged with bringing information from the community to the DT as well as sharing the DT's progress throughout LLL to ensure that members felt ownership of the changes envisioned. The RN has met four times and continues to carry the work of the DT out to Leaders.

A small group, the Formal Agreements Workgroup (FAW), made up of members of the DT, the RN, the BOD and the CC, has worked on legal aspects to implementing structural changes and will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors in February. The FAW, with DT and RN input, also has developed recommendations for "starting points" within the organization for putting the purpose, principles, and organizational concept into practice.

How might LLL change?
The Renewal Initiative has at its core the creation of a Purpose and Principles that will enable the LLL community to work together effectively. When Leaders or groups within LLL agree to abide by purpose and principles, they can be used as a common guide for working together, resolving differences, and exploring new ideas.

It is likely that changes might appear in the following areas: 1) We may see changes in the administrative hierarchy of LLL. 2) Leaders, feeling more freedom and empowerment, may redefine their roles as they see them within the Purpose and Principles. 3) The Renewal Initiative may help LLL learn new ways of working with other organizations while staying true to our values and principles.

No changes are being considered through the Renewal Initiative for the LLLI Mission Statement, the LLL philosophy as summarized in the ten concept statements, or Leader Accreditation criteria.

It's important to remember that the Drafting Team, Review Network, and Formal Agreements Workgroup are not decision-making teams for LLL.

When might any changes take place?
The Board may consider initiating some aspects of the Renewal Initiative recommendations, such as "starting points"—how Leaders and administrators might begin using the draft Purpose and Principles to develop new programs for mothers and babies, to explore potential changes in organizational structure, or to create new partnerships with other organizations.

The LLLI Board anticipates looking at final documents from the FAW at the February 2003 meeting. If changes are called for to the LLLI Bylaws, they will most likely be made some time after the July 2003 meeting.

Meanwhile, the draft Purpose and Principles will continue to undergo revision for probably another six months to a year. During this time, the LLL community should continue to provide input to the Board of Directors and/or to RN members. A sub-group of the RN is working to create a set of more " LLL- friendly" wording of operating principles.

This interim time provides a chance, too, for Leaders to try out and adapt the draft Principles as they carry on their existing LLL work or begin new endeavors.

Want to know more?

Additional information
on the Renewal Initiative
is posted on the LLLI Web site:
lalecheleague.org/chaordic/index.html

Your questions, ideas, and feedback are welcome!

Send an email, write a letter,
or give us a call. We're interested
in your thoughts, your experiences,
your observations, and your
recommendations.

Pam Oselka and/or Sue Christensen,
Review Network Members
(contact information on page 12)

or email to: ReviewNetwork@llli.org

Take a hike!

In late September 2002, 38 women from ages 28 to 68 joined together to tackle the LLLI Alumnae-sponsored hike down Arizona's Havasupai Trail in the Grand Canyon. The following pages provide a glimpse of the learnings and lessons of the journey from the different perspectives of fellow travelers.

Eight miles? A piece of cake! Or should I say a bag of trail mix? Was it easy? Yes and no. Although I trained by walking and biking, I had never walked eight miles at one time before. As a woman approaching forty, this accomplishment meant so much more than the walk. It was a discovery of the adventurer within and a test of physical and inner strength. It was my own personal "camino."

My natural pace is fast, so I moved ahead of the pack and glided along effortlessly. The constant motion created a flow of energy and became a walking meditation. Many thoughts, questions, and dreams of mine were brought out for examination and processed accordingly. I also received these valuable lessons along the path:

Sometimes, when life delivers manure, it is a blessing. At one point, I heard the rush of a stream and was excited about finally being able to see the "blue-green water" I had heard so much about. I cut through the woods and stood at the bank, enjoying the shady coolness and the relaxing sounds. After my brief rest, I began looking for the path, but was unable to find it. My mind began to panic. I was lost! Quickly, my calming, logical side decided to look closely at the ground for a sign. Of course, there it was—horse manure! If the horses had been here, the main path was not far. Yes, often the path of an animal is the best way. And if life hands you manure, fertilize!

The path of least resistance is not usually the best way. As I walked along the main trail, it often forked off into side trails and I had to choose a path. Many times, the side trail appeared to be much easier and I would choose this "easy" way. To my surprise, often what at first appeared to be simpler ended up with more rocks, a steeper incline or more challenges in some other way.

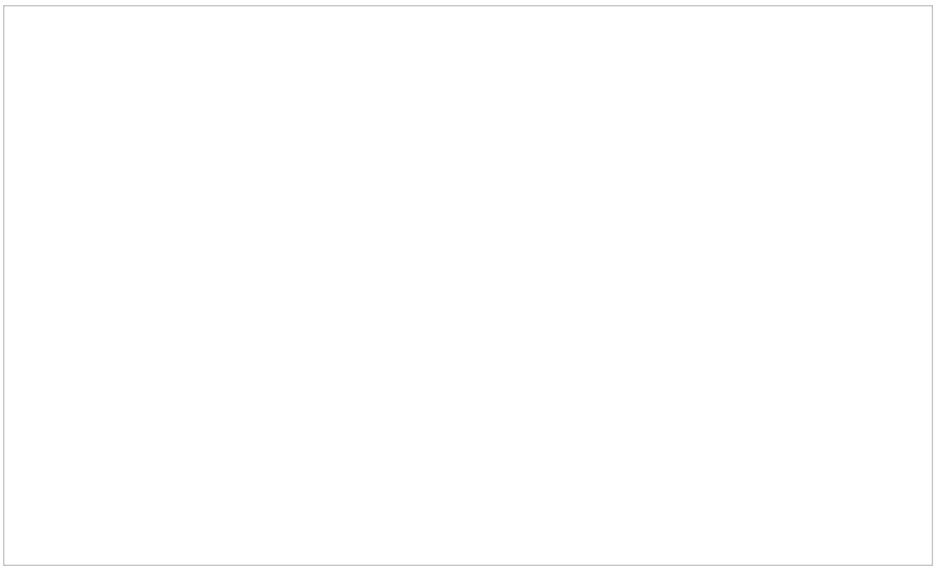
We also must make these split decisions in life. How many times do we choose the path of least resistance because we want to avoid the peripheral or inner work it may take to reach our goal? Do we really save any time or work? Of course not! In hiking and in life, there are no short cuts.

You are all you've really got. Yes, I started out with a large group, walked with smaller groups along the way, and met people from other parties as well. In the end I walked alone, peacefully, because I knew there were people ahead of and behind me—and sooner or later we all would arrive at the same place.

This parallels my life. People come and go, and I grow and change as a result. All have helped me, in one way or another, to become the person I am today. Eventually, we too will arrive at the same place.

In hindsight, I was surprised at my stamina and strength. However, the physical was dwarfed by the metaphysical. True, it was an eight-mile hike, but the inner journey is infinite.

Michelle Starkey, Florida USA



2002 Grand Canyon Alumnae hikers

We are changed

The Havasupai Trail, merely by its remoteness, soon eliminates all views of civilization and the Canyon's silence is a quiet retreat for those who seek it. The hike provides a lesson in humility for those of us who need it. Bright cottonwood leaves backlit by sunshine and Canyon walls glow deep red while the waterfalls seem to defy the desert. We are changed by both the adversity and the beauty of this exquisitely natural place, by the physical challenges that we have faced, but most significantly by the relationships forged with our LLL sisters in a real and true adventure.

Pam Bridgmon, Arizona USA

Hike Havasupai: Notes on the physical experience

We're here!
Out of the van, a slight chill in the late
September air,
A note that fall is arriving on Hilltop.

Pack on the back, the journey begins.
Dropping down over the rim, out of the wind,
Over the stoney switchbacks, we watch our steps.
Watch out for the pack animals ascending!
Stepping aside to let them by,
The sun comes out, the day warms.

Down the gorge, a dusty, hot trail.
We're dwarfed by the steep canyon walls.
Overhangs provide welcome shade,
Pause for water and photographs.

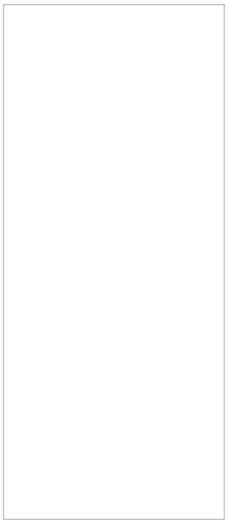
In the afternoon sun, hot and dusty and dirty,
Faint sounds of water over rock beacon us onward
Toward the junction with Havasu Canyon.

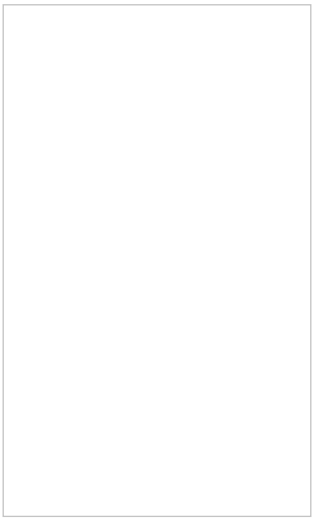
Welcome!
Havasu Creek rushing along,
Cooling, refreshing,
It says,
Not far to the Village (Supai).

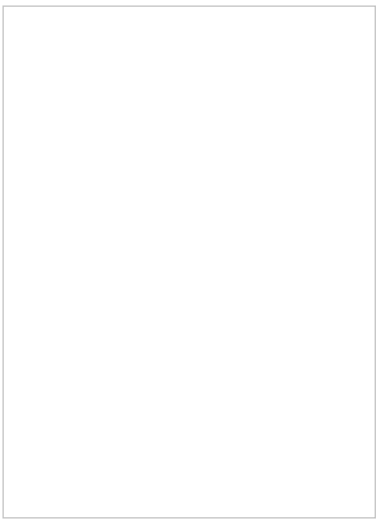
Trees and gardens,
Wigleeva stands guard above the homes.

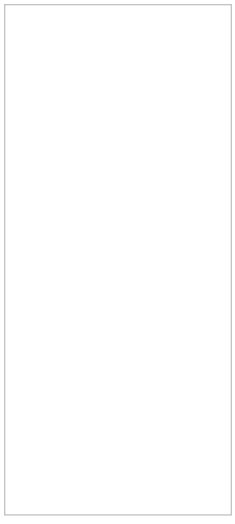
A dirt path encircles the village,
Fences enclose corrals and yards,
But dogs and cats roam free.

They're building a 4-teacher house.
A helicopter lands in the center of town.
The restaurant deck, a gathering area,
provides a viewing spot,
An opportunity to remove the pack and rest,
Eat and drink a bit.
Take in the village and people.









Down the trail,
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Dusty, steep, a
Past Navajo Falls

Fatique h
Rest, enjo
A photo

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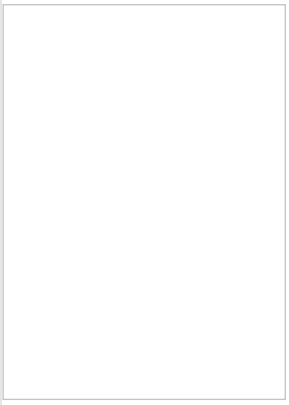
At Havasu, I heard many stories.... those we shared among ourselves as we walked; the ones overheard by the residents of Suapai themselves..... and if one listened carefully, the water, rocks and canyon walls had their own stories to tell also. …then there were those 'told' by my muscles ,eyes, head and heart. I hope you get a chance not only to hear some of these stories for yourself, but to find your own too!

Louise Cox, Connecticut USA



two miles, to the
ground.
nd rocky again
s and Havasu Falls

nits again.
y the view,
moment.

d--the campground
rom the heavy load
g down
gs, knees and feet.

feels so good.
o set-up the tent!
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es and numbs the
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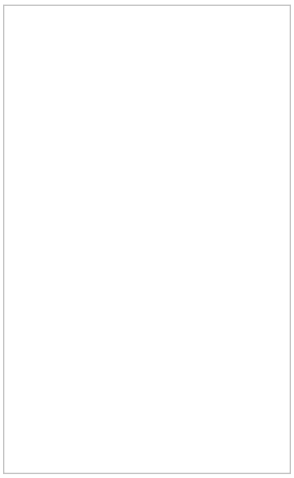
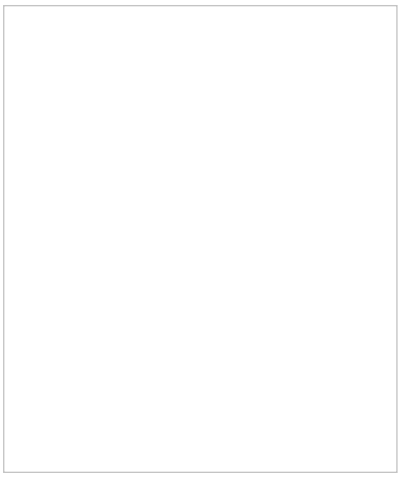
spraying.
playground,
ging over the edge
hallow pool.

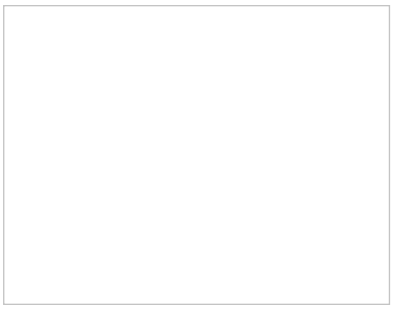
ark
15, 5:30,.
ps head out,
oid sun and heat
switchbacks.

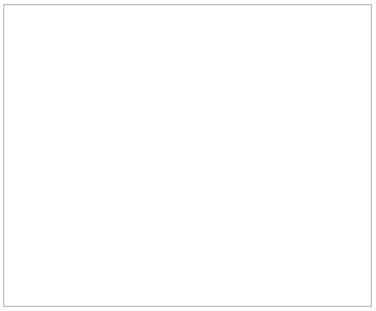
…while I was in the canyon, uncluttered by non-essentials, I found a beauty, a stillness that took my breath away. Those rocks, billions of years old, layer upon layer are a historical record. They hold a story of time and place and people far past any living memory. The story is simple, yet complex. In such a sacred place, one realizes that all of humanities' story is one and the same, and that each of us has a responsibility to see and touch the world as honestly as we know how.

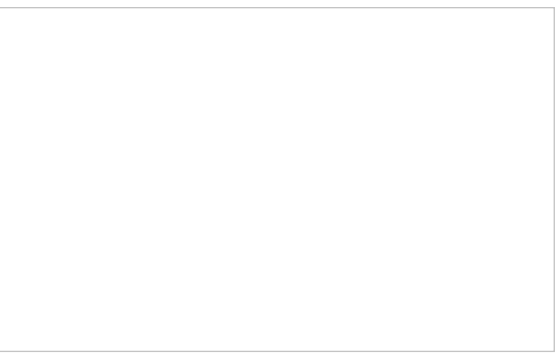
Darlene Bergman, Iowa USA

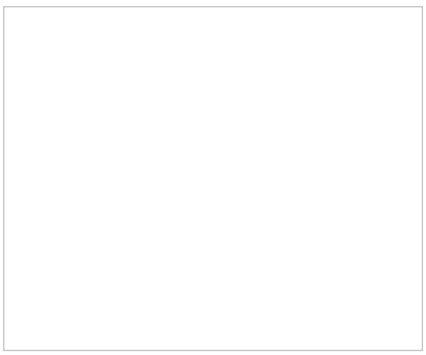












Moving forward at a brisk pace,
We pass others,
A dog keeps pace,
Another leads the way.
With a steady rhythm,
The miles melt away.

Three forms on horseback,
Ghostly just before dawn.
Day breaks,
The Light plays down the canyon walls,
Revelers are revealed.

It's almost over.
Stopping on the switchbacks
To savor the view, the experience.

The Top!
Exhilarated,
We did it!
Whether afoot or on horseback
The sense of accomplishment
Is Great.

The wind is blowing,
Grey, laden clouds are moving rapidly.
Pull out the jacket,
Take a last picture.
The rain hits.

The hike,
A dream again,
Memories now of
Shared experiences.

Sandy Davis, Tennessee USA

Red dust at morning: Ten things I learned on our Havasupai Hike

1. **I could train myself for something hard.** As I lengthened my twice daily walks around my neighborhood parks and streets, I wasn't sure I could really train well enough to prevent soreness and stiffness. A few months before our hike, I added a 30-pound pack to my training, gaining the comments and admiration of fellow walkers at the park. As it turned out, the long hours in the car made me much stiffer than anything the canyon could dish out.

2. **I am part of a community**. I have only lived in the Salt Lake City area for a little over a year and know very few of my neighbors, but I found that one close neighbor was also training for a hike into the Grand Canyon in September. Naoma and her husband were planning to hike rim to rim. She and I hiked together, carried our packs together, and discussed hiking equipment, training, and strategies on many trips around Willow Creek and Flat Iron parks.

3. **It's the journey that's important.** Although I was anxious to see Supai Village and Havasupai Falls, those destinations paled in comparison to the camaraderie, love, and caring between the LLLI Alumnae hikers. I have two brothers and no sisters, but, with so much in common in philosophy, values, and life experience, it truly felt like a group of sisters journeying through the red dust that September.

4. **Life changes.** When I signed up for this hike, my mother was alive. Not well, but she was alive. When she died in January, I found myself questioning many decisions I'd made about the year ahead. Should I rearrange my travel time to see my brothers in California and Colorado? My cousin in Minneapolis? My son at college? How important was this hike with so many strangers? I finally decided to do this hike for me, for my friends, for women who weren't in good enough shape to go, and for my mother who will never hike again.

5. **The weather changes.** When we hiked into the canyon at 9 AM on Thursday morning, it was hot, still, and we were guzzling water as we descended the switchbacks. When we hiked out of the canyon on Saturday morning at 5 AM, it was breezy and cool and then cold and blustery when we reached the end of the switchbacks six hours later. A huge thunderstorm descended on our heads within moments of the last person getting out.

6. **Relationships change.** The 37 strangers who started out from Havasupai Hilltop on the morning of September 26 didn't feel much like strangers once we'd plodded back up the switchbacks several days later. My roommate Teresa Carpenter from North Carolina had packed down to the Lodge her coffee maker—with glass carafe—and we talked into the night about families and hiking expectations . . . and that darned coffee maker! I talked with women from all over the country on the trail, at the Lodge, at the falls, and then on the trail again.

7. **It's a small world**. Even though I wasn't exactly close friends with many of the hikers and indeed lived far away from most, it was such a joy to discover how much we had in common. I laughed with Alice Edwards about the three-hour long talent show she'd emceed at the USWD TEAM Meeting in 2000. I talked with Edna Kelly about choices in putting out USWD publications. And a special treat was discovering that Nancy Fako had used my grandfather's book *The History of Music in Cleveland* to help her research a book she was writing.

8. **Grandmothering isn't for wimps.** I've known grandmothers in my own family and throughout La Leche League, but I heard many more stories on the trail, at the falls, and in the village about conflict, love, and overcoming difficult odds in family relationships. As much as I'd love to become a grandmother, I've got some getting ready to do for the important motherwork of welcoming new members into our family.

9. **La Leche League creates its own family.** I had a "blind date" with Grace Jackson in Las Vegas. She was a hiker from Hawaii who needed a ride to the Canyon and I had agreed to pick her up. We had a wonderful two nights at an Egyptian-themed hotel, sharing buffet and natural foods store meals, and driving around Las Vegas for last minute supplies. We then drove on to see Hoover Dam before meeting up with the rest of our party. As we talked about our families and the passing scenery, we quickly felt at ease and comfortable in the bosom of our shared organization.

10. **I could do it.** My husband Tom is an experienced mountaineer who usually does the planning, the packing, and the driving on our family outings. This time he wouldn't be there. This time I was the one doing the planning, the packing, and all the driving. And I found out I could do it all. I drove slower, packed with less finesse, and planned much farther in advance than Tom usually does, but I did it in my own way, my own style, and reaped my own success. It may be a while before I clean —or even try to clean—that red dust off my hiking boots.

Kathy Grossman, Utah USA

For more pictures and canyon reflections, visit <www.lllialumnae.org/memories/photoalbum/GrandCanyon2002/index.htm>

Tight financial times require action

You may have heard that LLLI is experiencing financial difficulties, partly due to the current economic times, and also as part of a pattern for LLL for the last few years. Money earned from our traditional sources—sales, memberships, subscriptions, advertisements—is just barely enough to cover the expenses for these activities. Many activities do not earn more money than they cost (nor must they in a mission-driven organization). LLL has experienced large deficits for several years, using available reserves to cover these deficits. Those reserve funds have been exhausted.

Throughout the past year, the LLLI Board has had serious and difficult discussions with a renewed emphasis among Board members on working together to increase donations. Furthermore, the Board has examined closely the programs, services, and personnel that are funded by the LLLI budget.

The critical nature of the situation has made it necessary to reduce some staff positions in the LLLI office in Schaumburg, Illinois, USA. This has been an emotionally difficult decision, but the Board has taken this action to ensure that LLL remains a viable, sustainable organization.

Recent in-depth discussions at the October 2002 Board meeting led to four priorities set by the Board for activities. They must be 1) sustainable (for revenue generating activities), 2) international, 3) distributed (with consideration being given to running some at a more local level) and 4) facilitative (with the focus on helping to develop skills and experience for effective management at a more local level, rather than program management centered at the office). This does not mean that every activity must fulfill every priority, but these priorities reflect the direction the Board wants the LLLI budget to move toward.

How can Leaders and retired Leaders help during this time?

- Donate financially, as able.
- Pay dues and bills promptly.
- Buy the newly revised BREASTFEEDING ANSWER BOOK
- Encourage memberships.
- Ask for donations from the local community.
- Attend the 2003 LLLI Conference.
- Encourage the sale of LLL publications.

To be involved in the decision of how LLL functions, read LEAVEN, contact the Board, and read the Board responses to letters from Leaders on the LLLI Web site. We all want LLL to be here for another 50 years.

Breastfeeding is good for grandmothers, too!

My daughter Ardith is a patient woman. She recently gave birth to her third daughter and, once again, I am mesmerized by a nursing grandbaby. It's not enough that Ardie is home schooling her kindergartner, or that her two-year-old has periodic meltdowns on the living room floor. She also good-naturedly indulges my oohing and aahing as I hover over her shoulder to watch my newest granddaughter nurse.

Nursing is not only beneficial to mother and child, but to grandmother as well. One gaze at the nursing duo and I am transported back thirty years to a time when my daughter was the breastfeeding baby. For a brief moment, my imagination places me in the rocking chair, baby at my breast. How familiar that perfect little rooting mouth; the eager swallowing sounds that seem to say, "this is delicious;" the dribble of milk at the slack corners of a sated infant's mouth.

I remember thinking years ago that life could get no better than those precious moments nursing my baby. Let me tell you that life is pretty good now watching this next generation of nursing mother and child!

Judging from past experience, my hovering will lessen as I grow used to this new grandchild. But for now, I am so grateful that my daughter welcomes my doting and takes it in stride.

I like to think that gifts come full circle—that all those tender moments in my rocking chair are reaching through the years to my daughter and her child and back to me.

Janet Wilcke, Kentucky USA

(PS—*An article I wrote when Ardith herself was tandem nursing still appears in* THE WAB. *Ardie is now happily tandem nursing her own newborn and toddler.]*

Thanks for the Memories

a magnificent, musical Afternoon Tea

LLLI Conference · Friday, July4, 2003

featuring LLL Founders as special guests, an elegant light meal, the LLLI Alumnae award, We Remember, and more

High Tea attire optional

Coming to the California for the conference? Think wine!

Even if you're not a wine connoisseur—or even a wine drinker—the Viansa Winery & Italian Marketplace is bound to be a memorable evening out among LLL friends.

Viansa is the destination of the Alumnae-sponsored event traditionally held the evening before the LLLI Conference opening night. This year, on Wednesday evening, July 3, join us for wine-tasting (non-alcoholic available), a sumptuous meal with vegetarian or meat selections, and shopping for culinary treats and imported treasures.

Viansa's Tuscan Villa, Winery and Marketplace is located on a hilltop surrounded by olive groves and vineyards in the Sonoma Valley. The Villa is filled with hand-painted murals, massive beams, and Italian marble.

The extensive grounds overlook Viansa's 90-acre waterfowl preserve, one of the largest restored nature preserves in Northern California. Each year, more than a million birds—from golden eagles and tundra swans to canvasback ducks—visit the preserve, which has drawn acclaim from environmental groups across the US.

Viansa was founded in 1989 by Sam and Vicki Sebastiani, who wanted to share their love of good wine and Italian food. The Sebastiani name is synonymous with winemaking in California. Sam's grandfather began making wine in the US in 1904, but their family can trace its winemaking roots back to 14th century Italy. For more about Viansa, visit their website at www.viansa.com

You can sign up for the Viansa trip on your conference registration. All CONTINUUM subscribers should receive one in the mail. The registration can also be downloaded at <www.lalecheleague.org/03conf/LLLICF_03.pdf>

To Scott at Sixteen (And One Month)

Gone are the days, when safe in my arms, you blissfully nursed your fill
Gone are the nights when, snuggled in bed, you sleepily nursed at will

Gone is the babe whose every need was met in his mother's arms
Who wooed her and won her and earned his keep with nothing but baby charms

Gone are the firsts - first teeth, first steps, first words and crayon art
Gone from all but the Baby Book - yet etched in a mother's heart

Gone are the years spent close to home keeping Mom at her tasks in sight
Or shyly visiting his best friend's house, but refusing to spend the night

Years spent learning to run and ride, to throw and kick a ball
To bounce back up and dust himself off after a nasty fall

Gone are the boo boos needing the kisses that Mommy would impart
Healed and forgotten 'neath fresh new skin - but etched in a mother's heart

Gone is the boy who proudly greeted Mom when she came to class
To read favorite stories, eat lunch with his friends and answer the questions they'd ask

Gone is the boy who, growing fast, for years was not too proud
To cuddle in bed with Mom each night for a cherished read aloud

Gone are the days and nights and years, as all times must depart
Gone from the view of the casual observer - but etched in a mother's heart

Now before me stands this tall young man who shaves and asks to drive
And chafes at the rules as he eagerly waits for his day of freedom to arrive

When he'll come and go with no constraints, responsible only to him
Live as he pleases, do as he chooses, indulging every whim

Yes, you'll soon be grown and on your own and perhaps we'll be far apart
But you'll always be here - both tall and small - etched in this mother's heart.

Susan Switzer, Georgia USA
January, 2002

"Birthing the Crone" Project—artistic perspectives of our female life cycles

Since the early sixties, Helen Redman's art has been inspired by her experience of being female—pregnancy, mothering, the death of a child, the various stages of her children's growth, and her own aging.

Her Birthing the Crone Project: Aging into Full Creativity includes an ongoing series of paintings, drawings, and mixed media works; a traveling exhibition; workshops; slide lectures; an Internet Web site <www.birthingthecrone.com> and a book in progress.

Having always depicted female physicality in her art, Helen's project took shape as she began to think more about the crone in relation to her own aging process. "The crone builds upon the other phases," says Helen. Rather than connoting the end of life, the crone encapsulates all previous phases, drawing from the wisdom of each.

Helen will be sharing some of her work in a slide presentation at the LLLI Conference in San Francisco this summer. "Through a Mother's Eye: A Lifeline of Art" presents her images from mother to grandmother, pregnancy to menopause, child to wise woman.

Roland Reiss, Dept. of Art Chair at Claremont Graduate University in California, writes of her series: "Images in this work float, bob and dance. They get too close and then fly away. We fall through in-your-face immediacy into another dimension. Everything is more, much more, than it appears to be at first glace. Bits, pieces, fragments, parts, wholes are smashed, stretched and pulled in the direction of meaning. High intensity charges every painting and drawing. Images will stick in your mind long after the show is over."

Helen also will lead a workshop on "Creativity and Aging: Trusting our Transitions" in the Alumnae room. Sign-up will take place at the "Navigating the LLLI Conference" table that will be located near the registration area. This workshop will focus on journaling, collage, and discussion to explore shifts in our female life cycles.

"I am not an artist who is concerned with what society equates as beauty," writes Helen. "The more we are told to fight aging and remove all traces of it from our lives, the more it becomes necessary to see the beauty of old. …I'm drawn to things that show the traces of time. I look for forms and textures that are ripe, mature, furrowed, expired, exploded, decayed, faded, ancestral, autumnal, hoary and time-honored."

Don't forget: Alumnae nominations due soon

The LLLI Alumnae Association is seeking nominations for its biennial award to be presented at the LLLI Conference in San Francisco July, 2003. The award is given to past or present LLL Leaders who have gone on to demonstrate excellence in their professional, personal, or volunteer accomplishments, and who are recognized as leaders in their field. These accomplishments may be in any area, including business, government, the arts, media, education, social services, sciences, health care, literary or humanitarian endeavors.

Nominees must be submitted by another person, with the following criteria included:

1) A description of the nominee's professional, personal, or volunteer accomplishments.
2) An explanation of why this person is a recognized leader in her field.
3) Information on when and where the nominee was (or is) an LLL Leader.
4) Contact information (mailing address, email, and phone number) for nominee (if available) and nominator.

The nomination is due on or before March 15, 2003. Send the nomination to: Kathy Hays, LLLI Alumnae Association, 806 Ruxshire Drive, Arnold, MD 21012-1355, USA or e-mail it to lllalumnae@hotmail.com.

If you have questions you may contact Pam Oselka, Coordinator of the Alumnae Association at 616-469-2706 or <pamoselka@triton.net>

All nominations must follow the guidelines and meet the deadline.

Join the Alumnae!

YES, I want to keep in touch and support LLLI. My Alumnae membership category is checked below. Enclosed is:

- ☐ $8 for CONTINUUM (I am currently an LLL Leader or member)
- ☐ $25 for an LLLI Alumnae Membership (includes CONTINUUM)
- ☐ $44 for CONTINUUM and an LLLI Individual Membership
- ☐ $60 for a 3-year LLLI Alumnae Membership (includes CONTINUUM)
- ☐ $100 for a 5-year LLLI Alumnae Membership (includes CONTINUUM)

Name: _____
Address: _____
State/Province: _____
Zip/Postal Code: _____
Country: _____
Current LLL status: _____
e-mail: _____

Send to: LLL International, P.O. Box 4079 Schaumburg IL 60168-4079 USA

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LLLI & Alumnae updates

❖ What makes the Alumnae presence bigger and better at each International Conference? Put a committee together, work them hard, feed them well, and the ideas just flow! The Alumnae conference team this year, in addition to Council members (see column to left), includes Sue Steilen, Janice Horvath, Alice Ziring, Meg Sondey, Patty Jacobs, and Gail Moak Gesley.

Watch for a complete listing of Alumnae conference activities in the next CONTINUUM—including wonderful rejuvenation opportunities, a reunion "walk" for everyone who hiked the canyon (or wish they had), interesting sessions tailored to Alums, and a late-night-kick-your-shoes-off Alumnae gathering.

❖ Thanks to retiring Webmasters, Kathy Hays and her son, Seamus Leahy. We are very grateful to Kathy and Seamus for sharing their time and talents to set up and maintain our first LLLI Alumnae Web site.

❖ Please note—LLLI Conference registration correction: hotel room is $150 for single or double, $190 for Towers or Executive Level.

❖ The third revised edition of the **BREASTFEEDING ANSWER BOOK** is now available in searchable CD-ROM format or in traditional hardcover, spiral bound format. Order online at: <http://www.lalecheleague.org/books/bab.html>

The revised **LEADER'S HANDBOOK** will be available in February 2003. Order now to take advantage of combination discounts.

Your picture wanted...

We want the Alumnae room at the LLLI Conference in San Francisco (July 3 - 6, 2003) to be filled with friendly Alum faces! Whether or not you are coming to the conference, please send a photo of you at work or play, alone or with others, to: Sue Christensen, 1304 Leeper Ave, South Bend IN 46617 USA.

Include your name (and former name if changed); city, state/province, country; info about your current job or volunteer work; Leader status; phone number; email address. If you'd like your photo back, also send a self-addressed, stamped envelope (USA only).