THE LLLI ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

Continuum

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This issue of Continuum is an indulgence for the readers among us. It's a chance to learn about new authors and titles and to stretch our literary boundaries. There's an additional treat as well.

We get to glimpse LLLI Board Members from a different perspective than the usual business of La Leche League.

Their delightfully diverse responses to the question, "What have you been reading lately?" not only demonstrate their individual differences, but also weave a wonderful web of common threads.

So fix yourself a cup of tea, cuddle up in your favorite chair, and enjoy the conversation.

The universal, delightful compulsion to read

Historical fiction. Scientific journals. Light romances. Children's literature. Personal growth books. Political tomes. Mysteries. Poetry.

The gift of reading knows no boundaries. It feeds the mind, sparks the imagination, kindles the spirit, and fuels the soul. It's no wonder, then, that we commonly ask a friend, "What have you been reading lately?"

That's the question that was recently put to the hard-working members of the LLLI Board of Directors. Perhaps it comes as no surprise that each carves out her own time and space to read—and that their collective reading list covers an interesting spectrum of substance and style.

Reading even a tiny fraction of the material that interests me …is a passion that rivals mothering as an essential in my life

—Donna Cookson Martin

❖ ***Donna Cookson Martin, Alberta, Canada:*** For me, as a blind person, reading even a tiny fraction of the material that interests me has always been a challenge and is a passion that rivals mothering as an essential in my life. My house abounds with books on everything from faith to psychology to disabilities, from breastfeeding to public speaking, from history to hockey. I have read very few of them from cover to cover, but I have honed the skill of determining what is important—a skill, born of necessity, that has helped me earn my university degrees. Thus I'd like to think of myself as well-read, even if not thoroughly read (smile).

History and biography, especially but not exclusively British history and biography, are my special delights. I rarely make time to read fiction, and when I do, it is usually historical and/or biographical in nature that I can listen to on tape.

By far the most moving and memorable book I have read recently is *Isobel Gunn* by Audrey Thomas, a U.S.-born Canadian writer who lives in British Columbia. Based on the life of an actual person, it tells the story of a poverty-stricken young Orkney woman who, disguised as a man, sailed on a Hudson's Bay Company ship to Rupert's Land (now western Canada) in 1806. Her disguise was discovered only when she gave birth to a son, the product of rape. She agreed to give up her toddler to the Hudson's Bay proctor, believing that her child would be raised "as a gentleman" and have a life that she would never be able to offer him. She was then sent back to the Orkneys where, in abject poverty, she raised her dead sister's child and forever mourned for her own. The raw emotions of love, exploitation, loss, and regret tear at my heart.

Currently I am reading *Lilibet: An Intimate Portrait of Elizabeth II* and *The Scaffold: The Life of Marie Antoinette*, both by Carolly Erickson, a wonderful biographer who has written the stories of many European monarchs and historical figures.

❖ ***Jane Tuttle, Kansas USA:*** Right now I am reading *Excellent Women* by Barbara Pym for my book club. It's a fine book! I really enjoyed *Coastliners* by Joanne Harris, which was a book club pick too. With four retired English teachers as members, we read an eclectic selection!

When I go to the bookstore and pick out something for myself, I tend to read lighthearted romances for escapism. I also gravitate to books on organization effectiveness/leadership or books about university governance.

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The universal, delightful compulsion to read… *continued*

❖ ***Phoebe Kerness, Georgia USA:*** I recently finished reading *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd. I thoroughly enjoyed this picture of the South set in South Carolina in 1964. I am always reading. I prefer novels that are good character studies and those that could be characterized as historical fiction.

I also have been reading *The Ladies Home Journal* every month since I was 18 years old when my grandfather, who was a magazine salesmen, gave me a subscription for my birthday. In addition, I read *Prevention* magazine monthly and keep current with LLL publications, especially LEAVEN and NEW BEGINNINGS.

❖ ***LaJuana Oswalt, Arkansas USA:*** I've always got several books going. I *love* to read! Right now, I'm reading *Maverick* by Ricardo Semler—a fascinating account of management style shift; *Divided in Death* by J.D. Robb—a murder mystery series set just a little in the future; and *Learn More Now* by Marcia Conner—an excellent, easy read that's applicable to my LLL work, homeschooling, and life in general!

❖ ***Susan Deo, California USA:*** In adult novels, I love a good story, especially mysteries or books that take me to a new place in the world. I actually read a lot of children's literature (primarily teen/young adult fiction) too, as there are some superb children's authors right now. Two teen novels that stand out which I have read recently are *A Year Down Yonder* by Richard Peck (Newberry Award winner) and A *Great and Terrible Beauty* by Libba Bray (another of the good children's lit that "crossed over" and is a *New York Times* best-seller). And, I'm reading a great how-to book, *Let the Crazy Child Write! Finding Your Creative Writing Voice*, by Clive Matson.

❖ ***Sharon Matuszek, New York USA:*** Right now I'm reading books by Dan Brown. I read the *Da Vinci Code* a while ago. I recently read *Angels & Demons* and I'm currently reading *Digital Fortress*. These books are quick reads, fast paced, and short chapters which fit into my currently hectic life.

I've also recently begun reading the Stephanie Plum series by Janet Evanovich. *Can You Keep a Secret?* by Sophie Kinsella was funny.

❖ ***Betty Crase, Illinois USA:*** I go from one extreme to the other in my reading. Right now I'm reading a number of very technical studies about various contaminants in human milk in preparation for an environmental contaminants biomonitoring workshop in which I am participating as an expert for both LLLI and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

In my free time, to get away from it all, I'm rereading some favorite romance novels! I was introduced to these books when I was working on the 1997 LLLI International Conference Program Committee. The recommendation was made to invite Susan Elizabeth Phillips, a romance novelist with roots in LLL, to be the banquet speaker. Susan always works breastfeeding—good breastfeeding information—into her books in some way. Committee members thought that I would be a good one to read some of Susan's novels because I'm pretty conservative and had never read a romance novel before.

I read *Heaven, Texas,* which is dedicated to LLL, and I've been hooked ever since!

❖ ***Marcia Lutostanski, Texas USA:*** I like reading fiction but most frequently choose non-fiction; I think it's because of the learning component. I am usually reading several books at the same time. I choose my reading based on my mood, the environment (harder to concentrate on tough reading at the airport), and what I'm curious about on any given day/week/month.

The most recent book I've finished is Marcia Conner's *Learn More Now.* I found it helpful for understanding my own learning style as well as others.

Since joining the Board, I've been reading more magazine articles as a way to stay current. *The Non-Profit Quarterly* always has lots of pertinent info for non-profit board members. This past year it has had several articles on network development. *Harvard Business Review* has been a good source for articles about leadership.

For lighter reading, I'm enjoying *Confucius Lives Next Door—what living in the East teaches us about living in the West* by T. R. Reid. The author writes with humor about living in Japan. Since we lived there for three years, it feels very familiar. My whole family laughs when I read sections to them of experiences that match our own.

I love *The Economist* magazine. It has such a variety of interesting topics and always new vocabulary words. These days, I wait for my husband to mark articles for my reading.

I wish I had more time to read scientific articles and studies—my true love. A fact not many know about me: I used to receive the *Morbidity and Mortality Report* put out by Centers for Disease Control.

I occasionally flip through *Southern Living* (my neighbor's subscription mistakenly gets delivered to my house) and drool at the recipes that I will one day have time to cook.

❖ ***Carmen Vandenabeele, France:*** I just finished *Learn More Now* by Marcia Conner. My copy is filled with highlighter marks and those little post-it page markers so I can refer back to what I haven't learned—or forgot! And I do. I've found the book helpful in more ways than one, in my personal life and in my LLLI Board work.

My preferred leisure reading is historical novels. I am in the middle of a series called *Fortune of France* by Robert Merle. It runs from the wars of religion in the 16th century to Louis XIV with the history and adventures of one family that over three generations served the kings in many varied ways. Lots of intrigue, some suspense, lots of vocabulary building, and a real insight into French history. I finally understand those wars of religion for example. The novels are in French.

When I'm done, *The DaVinci Code* is waiting for me. Board work and family occupations allow me little time for leisure reading, so by the time I get to this book (like perhaps once my term is up), it will probably have been made into a movie and there will be a sequel!

❖ ***Jean Moneyhon, Virginia USA:*** I have been reading the book *My Ishmael,* by Daniel Quinn, to my sons. One of them needed to read it for an assignment, so we read it together. It was very interesting and thought provoking. I'm anxious to see what kind of assignment they receive on it and what feedback they get from the teacher.

❖ ***Nan Jolly, South Africa:*** What a lovely question to answer! I am, as usual, in the middle of a few books. I have some open all over the house so my compulsion to read can be indulged wherever I am, whatever my mood.

Seems like most of my reading time is in the bathroom because there are three books there. They are *Leadership and the New Science* by Margaret Wheatley, *Why do people hate America?* by Sardar and Davies, and *Non-Violent Communication* by Marshall Rosenburg.

I have [books] open all over the house so my compulsion to read can be indulged wherever I am, whatever my mood

—Nan Jolly

I'm reading the *Leadership…* book for the third time and getting so much out of each idea that it feels like the first time! The ideas are so thought-provoking and I keep wanting to tell someone what I've read. I bought *Why do people…* at an airport after 9/11 and find it very interesting. I can identify with a great deal of it, but can't read it for too long —too depressing to see what a nation of ordinary people do with so much wealth, power, and influence. *Non-Violent Communication* is adding to what I've learned from Communication Skills Training (CST) in LLL. I'm hoping to be informed enough to be able to participate in a discussion on the CST email list soon.

In the lounge, I have a LEAVEN I am still getting through. In the kitchen, next to the stove, is the latest medical journal. On the dining room (which is also the office/study) table is a pile of magazines and journals, mainly medical and LLL. I never seem to catch up. Next to my bed is a book of achingly beautiful Afrikaans poetry by Antjie Krog and *The Little Book of Yin and Yang* by Richard Lawrence. Either works to de-computerise my mind before sleep.

I have a pile of library books (a travel guide to Zimbabwe, a Paul Gallico thriller, and a couple of Bill Bryson travel books) on the spare bed ready to take on our holiday next week. I usually buy a second-hand thick novel for reading on long trips—the trip to Board meetings takes two to three days, involving 24 hours in the air and tedious waits at airports.

Looking at this list, I notice now how dominant LLL is in my life—nearly all my reading has been inspired or influenced by my experience in LLL. Perhaps it's because of who I am, and LLL is the place I fit?

❖ ***Heidi Sloss, Missouri USA:*** I just finished reading *As A Driven Leaf*, which is a historical novel set around the end of the first century in Palestine, just after the destruction of the second Temple in Jerusalem. It is about a Rabbi who was torn between his Jewish heritage of learning and the Roman model of laws for free people and the emperor's rule. It was a fascinating novel, based on a historical figure who lives in two cultures and has to reconcile faith and reason/logic.

I have just started the latest book from Ann Crittenden, *If You've Raised Kids, You Can Manage Anything: Leadership Begins at Home*. I usually read fiction and lots of historical fiction, but the title of this one caught my eye. In light of some of the current conversations in the LLL community on leadership and mothering experience, I thought it would be interesting to read. Someday I'd like to be able to present a session on this topic for Leaders.

The universal, delightful compulsion to read.. *continued*

❖ ***Cathy Liles, Texas USA:*** This summer I read *The DaVinci Code* by Dan Brown and enjoyed it—very thought provoking. My current favorite author is James Patterson. I read a lot, mostly action, religious, travel, dramatic, legal and medical fiction. I also love biographies, inspirational, and self-help books. I will read almost anything that is given to me.

❖ ***Rachel O'Leary, Great Britain:*** I recently finished *Dreaming the Bull*, the second of the Boudicca trilogy by Manda Scott. I love to bury myself in another world, meet people very different from the people I meet every day, see customs and laws and ways of living that make today seem strange and new.

The Boudicca trilogy is a story of the British resistance to Roman imperialism, led by a warrior well respected among her tribe. It takes me far away in time but close to home geographically—Boudicca lived just up the road from me!

In Manda Scott's vision of this historical time, women were warriors or Dreamers (druids) and only slowed down temporarily when babies arrived.

It's a violent and deeply tragic story, lit by the bright courage of the guerilla fighters flaring against the leaden tramp of the Roman legions. But I have to wonder—who won in the end? The Roman empire, for all its hierarchy and stringent organisation, vanished. Historians still argue about the causes of its downfall. We British don't brandish spears nowadays, or paint ourselves blue, but we are still here....

❖ ***Mimi de Maza, Guatemala:*** I love to read and have very small amount of time to do so. I have a full time job now, a 20 month granddaughter at home, and have to do my board work at night on the computer. However, I try to take advantage of time when I travel, on the plane, or when I am away from home for any reason.

What I enjoy reading are books of self help. I love to read and to learn from what I read. In January I had surgery and the book I read during my stay in the hospital and when I came back home was *The Woman's Book: the Power of the Feminine*, by Osho, who is an Indian writer born in 1931.

During the last four weeks, I have been traveling in my country to train young Mayan volunteers about infant feeding in some rural areas in Guatemala and I haven't been able to have Internet access in the hotels. So, I have taken a book that my daughter bought in Mexico, *The DaVinci Code*. I haven't finished it yet, but looking forward to completing it soon. It is a very controversial book.

❖ ***Sharon Vines, Virginia USA:*** I just read a book called *Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs and Communications of the Dying* by Maggie Callanan and Patricia Kelley. It was excellent—easy to read and filled with practical advice on responding to the requests of the dying and helping them prepare emotionally and spiritually for death. This is information that would be helpful in dealing with the family and friends of the dying as well. I have not been reading books on dying recently, but this one was loaned to me while on vacation by my father's oldest friend who lost his wife a few months ago.

Learning—a give and take process

It's not surprising that several members of the LLLI Board of Directors are reading Marcia Conner's new book *Learn More Now: 10 Simple Steps to Learning Better, Smarter & Faster* (Wiley, March 2004). La Leche League was first introduced to Marcia, a writer and educator, a few years ago at a meeting where she was explaining learning styles. Since then, she has been deeply engaged with the LLL community both professionally and personally.

Marcia has been a frequent speaker on learning at LLL conferences and acts as a leadership coach to the Board. Most recently, she has been prototyping a leadership development workshop that will be available next year for Leaders to facilitate in their local areas.

Marcia has also secured funding to create an online community where Leaders and Alumnae can learn about and from one another. Marcia has been working on this project with LLLI Web manager Sue Ann Kendall and a skilled development team. The LLL Community Network will be making its debut soon (see more about it on page 5).

From their home in rural Virginia, Marcia and her husband, Karl, run Ageless Learner (www.agelesslearner.com), a small company that helps families and organizations across the globe learn and adapt to the changing information environment.

This September, Marcia and Karl welcomed into the world their first child, Clarke. Marcia has lived her learning advice—she is an active LLL Member in Waynesboro, Virginia, who has absorbed breastfeeding information through La Leche League meetings, extensive reading, and countless conversations and consultations.

For more about Marcia, visit <www.marciaconner.com>

Learnings from Marcia Conner's *Learn More Now*

What's your attention style?

Ever been in a meeting where the dynamics just didn't work? What may have seemed to be a clash of personalities, suggests Conner, was probably something more fundamental, with each participant focused on—and paying attention to—very different things.

According to Marcia, attention styles are based on a person's preference for structuring or ordering thoughts, according to one of four simple patterns: by time, space, comparison, or contradiction. Although we use all four, most of us rely on one style more than on the others.

Are you a time learner?
"Time-oriented learners reveal their preference by making lists and turning them into priorities, then schedules. When asked to explain something to other people, they itemize points and assign these items an order" such as, "when" and "then, and then, and then." Time learners are likely to keep all their scheduled appointments and complete all the tasks on their lists.

Are you a space learner?
"Space learners pay attention to the order of things by finding a place for them. They categorize ideas and break overwhelming concepts into manageable parts." Rather than writing lists, space learners illustrate their ideas with flow charts or mind maps. They also may focus on making the space around them feel right.

Are you a comparison learner?
Comparison learners often connect the ideas or situations they encounter to other situations they've already experienced. They highlight or illustrate points they're trying to make "with descriptions of people they know or a sequence of examples pulled from something they've seen or heard."

Are you a contradiction learner?
Contradiction learners confront new information by challenging it and playing devil's advocate. They're prone to debate and pay attention to what *something is not*. They can't find a place for something new in their own thoughts until they first look at it from an opposite angle. Seeing something from opposing perspectives gives these learners time to take it under consideration and helps them understand their own thinking better.

"Knowing that these differences can arise in a group can help you recognize another person's pressure points. For example, time and space learners are often impatient with comparison and contradiction learners' lack of straightforward thought. Comparison learners, in particular, might find time and space learners too rigid and too impatient. Contradiction learners may panic everyone else by picking apart a good idea, and comparison learners can take an idea on frequent side journeys, as well as into extenuating circumstances they feel compelled to share…

"As you become more familiar with your own style, you'll find it much easier to discover a way to see other people's styles and to pay attention to how you can complement each other's work. You'll find that comparison and contradiction learners are great at providing analysis. Time and space thinkers are great organizers and doers once a decision is made."

LLL's online community is evolving

La Leche League's Web site has garnered awards and drawn millions. LLL online meetings have opened up access to breastfeeding information and support to countless mothers for the past several years. Use of the Internet has expanded our ability to share information and communicate in remarkable ways. As this virtual medium advances, so, too, do the possibilities for its use.

The LLL Community Network will be an easy-to-use online environment that will let us work together with all the tools we need in *one* place. It is not designed to replace our other means of communicating or interacting, but to supplement and expand upon them.

Through the Network, Leaders and Alumnae can:

- develop private email lists
- use networking tools, like shared notes and resource recommendations, to work collaboratively on projects
- keep individual address, phone, and email information current with LLLI
- find others with expertise in any topic
- store LLL forms, handbooks and other data via a simple interface
- create libraries for members, sales, or anything else needed for Leader work, and share them if desired
- hold real-time online meetings for Group, Area work, or just for fun
- share stories—successes, challenges—and comment on the stories of others
- create online journals, like the popular "blogs," and give feedback on what others write
- post photos of projects, staff, children...safe in the knowledge that only fellow Leaders have access
- communicate in one of five languages
- create new uses for the Community Network.

Watch for information soon about the LLL Community Network kickoff.

The 2005 LLLI Conference: top-notch speakers, intriguing topics

It's not too early to begin plans to attend the 2005 LLLI Conference, "Breastfeeding: Ancient Art—Modern Miracle." It takes place July 2 - 5 at the Hilton Washington and Towers in Washington, DC, USA.

You'll hear more in upcoming issues of CONTINUUM *about exciting new Alumnae activities. For now, check out these top-notch speakers and intriguing topics. You can find more in-depth descriptions at <lalecheleague.org/05conf/speakers.html>*

❖ ***Jeanne Watson Driscoll*** *~ Women's Moods: What Every Woman Must Know About Hormones, the Brain, and Emotional Health*

You will discover everything you need to know about women's moods at this session based on Driscoll's book by the same title. She uses the acronym NURSE to describe the therapeutic program she and her co-author, Dr. Deborah Sichel, have developed using Nourishment and needs, Understanding, Rest and relaxation, Spirituality, and Exercise to address women's unique biological needs.

Supporting her arguments with solid, pertinent research, Driscoll will address a new way to understand emotional well-being. In her book, she demystifies the menstrual cycle, connects reproductive hormones and mood, talks about depression in pregnancy and postpartum depression. Whether you are menstrual, pregnant, postnatal, perimenopausal, or menopausal, you are sure to receive a wealth of detailed information on how to maintain a proper hormonal balance and a happier and more productive life.

A Certified Adult Psychiatric-Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist in private practice, Driscoll is co-founder of the Hestia Institute in Wellesley, Massachusetts, dedicated to the treatment of women with mood and anxiety problems across the reproductive cycle.

❖ ***Lawrence J. Cohen, PhD*** *~ Empowering Girls and Connecting with Boys*

Dr. Cohen will offer hints on how to help boys improve their emotional literacy as he talks about playing games that encourage communication but don't seem unmanly. For example, he suggests playing the game "Fortunately/Unfortunately." In this game, one person starts a sentence by saying,"Fortunately." The other person starts the next line by saying, "Unfortunately." The two people build a tale of disaster and rescue that fosters communication and connection.

He also suggests that a father play a game with his daughter to help her reject sexual stereotypes. He says that Dad might take the role of a character who is a parody of girlishness, a fashion fanatic so-to-speak. Or on the opposite end of the spectrum, a father could take the part of a funny, sexist pig of a prince who cares only about the looks of the daughter's doll. Dr. Cohen believes that provoking laughter with this type of game helps daughters build confidence.

Playing is serious business to Dr. Cohen, author of *Playful Parenting: A Bold New Way to Nurture Close Connections, Solve Behavior Problems, and Encourage Children's Confidence*.

He believes that playing with children is a central behavior in helping children with feelings of isolation and powerlessness.

Dr. Cohen is a licensed psychologist specializing in children's play and play therapy. His "go for the giggles" approach to parenting has made him a much sought-after speaker.

Dr. Cohen also has written *Best Friends, Worst Enemies: Friendship, Popularity and Social Cruelty in the Lives of Boys and Girls* and *Mom, They're Teasing Me: Helping Children Solve Social Problems*.

❖ ***Ana Tampanna, MFA*** *~ Surviving by Your Wisdom and Wit: Inspiration to Handle Stressful Life Situations* and *Meaningful Connections: the Importance of Women's Friendships*

Tampanna, author of *The Womanly Art of Alligator Wrestling* and *Managing Life's Difficult Times: 75 Tips for Handling Crisis and Tragedy in a Healthy Way*, has spoken extensively to women's audiences about taking control, facing life challenges, and living life passionately through personal creativity, humor, and "out of the box" resources. You will leave her sessions inspired and informed.

❖ ***Kristie Tamsevicius*** *~ I Love My Life: A Mom's Guide to Working from Home*

Tamsevicius left a corporate career in marketing and media to start a home-based business so that she could spend more time with her children. A vibrant speaker who has appeared on television and other media, she is host of a radio show, "Working from Home." If you are serious about starting a home business or would like to improve the outcome of the business you're in, Tamsevicius will provide management and marketing guidance that will help you create the life you love through entrepreneurship.

❖ ***Naomi Drew, MA*** *~ Peaceful Parents, Peaceful Kids: practical ways to create a calm and happy home*

Author of six books on peacemaking/conflict resolution for parents, teachers, and children, Drew will offer general principles for peaceful living as well as a day-by-day plan of action for achieving a more peaceful family. Drew is hailed as a visionary. Her work has been featured in magazines, on radio, and on TV. She is a former teacher and member of La Leche League.

❖ ***Barbara Coloroso*** ~ *Children and Ethics* and *The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander: From Preschool to High School—How Parents and Teachers can Help Break the Cycle of Violence*

Coloroso, internationally recognized speaker and author, believes that all parents must teach their children that they believe in them, trust in them, have faith that they can handle situations, are listened to, are cared for, and are very important to them. She is a sought-after speaker who gives practical information in a clear, interesting, and inspiring format. Barbara will draw on her decades of working with youth and her world-wide experience with conflict resolution. You will leave the sessions better prepared to be the parent you want to be.

"Chicago Parent" magazine says: "Hearing Barbara Coloroso talk about raising kids is like being exposed to good art—both experiences resonate with clarity, insight, and honesty, and all the components are in ideal proportion."

Her *Kids are Worth It! Giving Your Child the Gift of Inner Discipline* and *Parenting through Crisis* are international best sellers.

❖ ***Gordon Neufeld, PhD*** ~ *Hold On To Your Kids: Why Parents Matter* and *Making Sense of Adolescence*

With clarity and depth, Dr. Neufeld presents the big picture of parenting—the foundation of which, he believes, is attachment. He will show you how to help children resist the peer culture, teach you how to preserve trust, empower you to use discipline that does not divide, and help you make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of your children.

Dr. Neufeld is a developmental psychologist from Vancouver Canada, a father of five, grandfather of three, and frequent guest on television and radio.

❖ ***Marcia Conner*** ~ *Parents Have Learning Styles, Too!*

In this fun and interactive session, discover how learning styles, learning-together styles, and motivation styles influence how you and your children approach information and learn new things. You'll also master how your whole body learns and how you can learn more no matter how busy you are. Find out, too, how learning styles develop and change over the years and how to build on your strengths so you can learn more from life.

Marcia Conner, author of ***Learn More Now!*** is an advisor to schools, corporations, associations, and other busy people around the world.

❖ ***Rita Emmett*** ~ *Mastering the Art of Doing It Now*

A self-described recovering procrastinator who took thirty-eight years to write her first book, Emmet promises to get your accomplishment juices flowing. Watch your self-esteem and productivity grow as you listen to her outrageous humor and invaluable take-home advice. She offers surefire ways to help overcome the damaging habit that keeps you from beginning a task.

Emmett, who has a master's degree in adult learning, has appeared on television shows throughout the United States and in Canada and Great Britain. She is author of *The Procrastination Handbook* and the recently released *The Procrastinating Child: A Handbook for Adults to Help Children Stop Putting Things Off*.

❖ ***Linda Budd, PhD*** ~ *Living with the Active Alert Child: Groundbreaking Strategies for Parents*

Does your child have more energy, more creativity, and more intensity than anyone you've ever known? Is she sensitive to every injustice? Is he suffering from low self-esteem? Do you feel as if you've been struggling to keep up since Day One? If so, then you will appreciate Dr. Budd's session. Her book, *Living with the Active Alert Child,* is now in its third edition, which includes information about teenagers. Dr. Budd helps parents understand what motivates these bright, capable, and exhausting children.

As always, there will be a rich selection of breastfeeding and continuing education topics. Here is a sampling of some that go beyond the technical "how-tos."

❖ Researcher ***Jan Riordan EdD, RN, IBCLC, FAAN*** with cutting-edge information about breastfeeding.
❖ ***Michael A. Young, MD, FAAP*** on the risk of not breastfeeding.
❖ ***Ros Escott, BAppSc, IBCLC*** on the life-long implications of infant feeding choices on each of the body's systems.
❖ ***JoAnne Scott, MA, IBCLC***, on applying IBCLC ethics to practice.
❖ ***Audrey Naylor, MD, DrPH, FAAP,*** with a global look at breastfeeding.
❖ ***Marsha Walker, RN, IBCLC***, on the marketing of human milk substitutes.
❖ ***George Kent, PhD, Miriam Labbok, MD, MPH, FACPM, IBCLC,*** and ***Marian Tompson*** on human rights, HIV, and breastfeeding.
❖ ***Roberta Hewat, PhD, RN, IBCLC*** on breastfeeding as a strategy to prevent obesity and type 2 diabetes.
❖ ***E. Stephen Buescher, MD*** on human milk and its effect on disease prevention.
❖ ***Ken Friedman, JD*** on current legal Issues in breastfeeding.

A unique view from the altar

Like the mother of every bride throughout history, I found myself marveling at my daughter Kirsten's grace, beauty, and dignity as she joyfully held her father's elbow and approached the front of the church.

I had the solemn and happy privilege of viewing my daughter from the platform, since I am an Assembly of God minister and she and Bart had asked me to officiate at their wedding. The ceremony was very formal, with traditional dress, music, flowers, and familiar vows. Kirsten and Bart had asked his mother and me to light their candles, which they would then use to light their elaborate unity candle. Shane, Kirsten's thirteen-year-old brother, looked handsome and dignified as he sang a solo. The wedding party was large and there were over one hundred guests for the ceremony and sit-down meal. How had my tiny nursing baby become such a lovely young woman so suddenly?

Kirsten's older brother, Frank, and his fiancee, Robin, were so impressed by the event that they asked me to officiate at their wedding a few weeks later. This is the only time that I have worn blue jeans and a western shirt and hat to a wedding! A few friends attended the ceremony, which was held at a small town park. There was no music, certainly no formality, and the service was equally joyful but brief. More friends joined us for a meal at a local restaurant.

As if to carry on family tradition, my son James and his bride-to-be Megan also asked me to officiate at their wedding a couple of years later. This lovely, dignified, formal sevice was held at a beautifully decorated distant country club. There was live music, a poignant duet by a mother who accompanied her son at the keyboard, and a riotous best man's toast by James' lifelong best friend. The very formal and traditional meal was follow by a couple hours of lively dancing.

Each wedding was as unique as each pregnancy, our children's nursing years, childhood, and early adulthood. My sons each nursed until nearly school age; my daughters weaned earlier. Most nursed through one or more subsequent pregnancies. Some of their early hobbies were shared; others were as individual as the children themselves.

Our adopted daughter is gravely disabled and will probably never marry. Shane, now twenty and busy with college, does not have a serious girlfriend, but he looks forward to some day continuing the family tradition established by his sister and brothers.

Beverly Kirk
Alaska USA

We need to hold on
to our children and
help them hold on to us.
We need to hold on to them
until our work is done.
We need to hold on
not to hold them back
but so they can venture forth.
We need to hold on
not for selfish purposes
but so that they can fulfill
their developmental destinies.
We need to hold on to them until
they can hold on to themselves.

—Gordon Neufeld, PhD
2005 LLLI Conference speaker

Breastfeeding can save over one million lives yearly, UNICEF reports

If more infants worldwide were exclusively breastfed until the age of six months, at least 1.3 million lives could be saved this year, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). With more than 10 million children dying annually from mainly preventable causes like diarrhoea and pneumonia, exclusive breastfeeding for the first half-year of life could save an estimated 3,500 lives each day.

UNICEF cited these statistics in calling for greater global commitment to support breastfeeding. "If a child dies a preventable death, it's because mothers and infants are not getting the basic support they need," said UNICEF chief Carol Bellamy. Calling breastfeeding "the most natural act of mother and newborn," she said the practice "has not been supported for what it is: the key to good health and development for millions of children."

Bellamy said that all mothers who choose to exclusively breastfeed for six months "have the right to services and support from their governments, communities, and families."

UNICEF reports that in the first two months of life, an infant who is not exclusively breastfed is up to 25 times more likely to die from diarrhoea and four times more likely to die from pneumonia than a non-breastfed baby. The child also stands a greater risk of obesity, heart disease, and gastrointestinal problems in later years.

Despite this evidence, only 39% of babies worldwide are breastfed exclusively in the first six months, the agency said. UNICEF works with governments to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding, including legislation to protect against commercial bias, health system training and services, and community mobilization.

Exclusive breastfeeding rates in USA far below worldwide average

In 2003, for the first time, the Centers for Disease Control included breastfeeding questions for all recipients of the National Immunization Survey. As a result, the 2003 NIS findings provide a clear picture of the population's breastfeeding practices, including overall estimates for the initiation, duration, and exclusivity of breastfeeding, as well as geographically specific rates.

Key findings of the 2003 Survey regarding breastfeeding practices:

❖ Close to 71% of mothers in the US initiated breastfeeding. At six months, 14% were exclusively breastfeeding (compared to 39% worldwide).

❖ Fourteen states in the US have achieved the national Healthy People 2010 objective of 75% of mothers initiating breastfeeding. Only 6 and 8 states have achieved the objective of having 50% of mothers breastfeeding their children at 6 months of age and 25% breastfeeding their children at 12 months of age, respectively.

❖ The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that an infant be breastfed without supplemental foods and liquids for the first 6 months of age. However, only Oregon has achieved an exclusive breastfeeding rate above 25% at 6 months.

❖ Six states have achieved all of the Healthy People 2010 objectives on breastfeeding: Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, and Washington.

❖ Consistent with previous research, the NIS breastfeeding data reveal that non-Hispanic blacks and socioeconomically disadvantaged groups have consistently lower breastfeeding rates.

Detailed information about the National Immunization Survey is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/NIS_data/>

To newly retired Leaders: thank you & an invitation

Some of you reading this article will have received this complimentary issue of CONTINUUM because you have recently retired from being an active Leader. It is one of our ways of saying *thank you* for all that you have done for La Leche League. We salute you for your dedication in helping mothers to breastfeed their babies.

You have spent countless hours helping mothers over the phone, you have led numerous meetings, attended Area Conferences and other special events, and you have read volumes of breastfeeding literature. All the while you took care of your family, cooking and cleaning, chauffeuring, and, of course, breastfeeding your own child or children. Now you feel the need to move in another direction and La Leche League will be playing less of a role in your life.

Some of us, when we reached the same stage in our lives that you are at now, decided that we did not want to leave LLL altogether. We may have struggled for a while figuring out where we would fit in now that we did not have a young child anymore. But, eventually, we realized that there were still worthwhile things we could do within LLL. Some women use their previously acquired skills in business, accounting, communication, etc., and become administrators. Some use the experiences they have gathered as Leaders and become sought-after speakers on complex breastfeeding issues. And for some of us, the Alumnae Association was a logical next step.

We invite you to join us so that you can continue to receive the benefits of this great organization and also to ensure that LLL continues to be there for breastfeeding mothers and babies for a long time to come. Membership is open to all current and former Leaders and Members. The cost is $25/year for non-members and $8/year for those of you who are still paying Leader or Member dues. You may also subscribe on-line at: <www.lalecheleague.org/>

A listing of Area Alumnae Representatives (AARs) was in the last issue of CONTINUUM. An updated list can also be found on the Web at <http://www.lalecheleague.org/Alumnae/AAR.html>. Please contact your AAR to find out about local activities or if you would like to offer your help.

Carol Meredith, Coordinator of Area Alumnae Representatives

Send a message with every check you write

Spreading the breastfeeding message and supporting La Leche League just got easier! You can now purchase LLLI checks, address labels, and checkbook covers from Message!Products. With every purchase, 10 percent goes directly to LLLI.

❖ Custom-designed checks and address labels feature a beautiful photo of a nursing couple.

❖ LLLI checks cost less than most bank checks.

❖ Checks are guaranteed to work at all U.S. financial institutions.

❖ It's great PR: each check is viewed by about 10 individuals as it moves through the financial system.

❖ Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed.

These LLLI products are now available for purchase online or by phone. Visit <www.messageproducts.com> or call toll free 1-800-243-2565 to order.

Nurse-in sends strong message to Starbucks

Lattes are okay, but lactation is not. That was the message given this summer to Lorig Charkoudian, a Maryland mother who was asked by a Starbucks employee to either cover up with a blanket or breastfeed in the bathroom.

But Lorig fought back. After contacting the regional vice president of Starbucks, the corporate office apologized to Lorig and advised its Maryland stores to comply with that state's law protecting the right of mothers to breastfeed in public.

Lorig and over two dozen other breastfeeding mothers took a stronger stand. They believed that Starbucks should adopt a policy that allows breastfeeding in all of their U. S. coffee shops. A "nurse-in" at Starbucks helped bring attention to their request.

According to Reuters, the fast-food chain Burger King was faced with a similar protest in Utah and adopted a policy late last year that allows breastfeeding in all its restaurants.

Currently, about 20 states in the US have laws protecting the rights of mothers to breastfeed in public.

"Ultimately every ... state should have a law," said Charkoudian, "We want Starbucks to set a precedent and be a leader, since it is a leader with a claim to being socially conscious."

New studies reinforce importance of breastfeeding

La Leche League International is always pleased to learn of new studies that affirm what mothers have always known: that breastfeeding is best. Here are three recent studies that address breastfeeding's effects on mortality rates, diabetes, and breast cancer.

❖ **Lower first year mortality rates.** According to this study by Aimin Chen, MD, PhD and Walter J. Rogan, breastfed babies are less likely to die during the first year of life than those who are formula fed.

It has long been known that breastfed infants in the United States have lower risks of becoming ill from infectious disease and that world-wide mortality rates are lower in babies who are breastfed. However, there have been few studies about first-year mortality rates in the developed world.

Furthermore, this study in *Pediatrics* states that longer breastfeeding was associated with lower risk. The authors of this study concluded, "The case for breastfeeding is already very strong, but this benefit on such a basic outcome might still increase encouragement and support for breastfeeding in US children."

❖ **Lower cholesterol as adults.** The prestigious medical journal *Lancet* recently published the results of a new study that demonstrates infants who are fed human milk have 14 percent lower cholesterol as adults than their formula fed counterparts. It has been estimated that even a 10 percent reduction in cholesterol would cut cardiovascular disease by a quarter.

Breastfeeding's immunological, nutritional, and health benefits for babies have long been documented. Until recently, the life extending benefits of breastfeeding for adults has not been as well understood.

This study reaffirms the opinion that breastfeeding has benefits that extend well beyond infancy. Previous research has shown a relationship between breastfeeding and weight control in later life. Human milk feeding has also been shown to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.

❖ **Reduced chance of breast cancer.** Women at very high risk of developing breast cancer—those with the BRCA1 mutation—have a lower chance of developing the disease if they breastfeed. According to an article on WebMDHealth, women who breastfeed for at least the first year of their child's life have a 45 percent reduced chance of developing breast cancer. However, this does not seem to apply to people with the BRCA2 mutation.

In the US, about 180,000 women develop breast cancer each year, and about 70 percent of women who develop breast cancer have one of these two gene mutations.

For more information, go to <http://my.webmd.com/content/article/91/100948.htm?lastselectedguid=%7B5FE84E>

Government, other employers offer giving programs

La Leche League International relies on donors through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and United Way for approximately $40,000 a year. These donations from US Government employees and others with workplace giving programs provide LLLI with a small but steady source of funding for ongoing support of our worldwide volunteer efforts. If you or anyone you know has an opportunity to designate LLLI (number 1957 on the pledge card) as a recipient charity, the contributions will be most welcomed.

For more information about CFC or other ways to donate, please call the Funding Development Department at 847-519-7730 x240, e-mail to <donor relations@llli.org> or visit our website: www.lalecheleague.org/donor.html.

LLLove notes from the Web

♥ La Leche League was a tremendous support to me not only in my mothering, but in the following ways as well:
❖ providing a forum to meet my two best friends
❖ providing role models
❖ providing the opportunity to practice and develop professional skills while mothering and nursing my babies
❖ providing valuable resources to assist me in making informed decisions, and
❖ providing the opportunity to use and develop leadership skills.

Angela Miller, Indiana USA

♥ Who would have thought that your own children would become an inspiration? My daughter, Kathy, is a Leader Applicant in Lynchburg, VA. She is the mother of Jonathan, 4 1/2, who still nurses occasionally; Laura, 3, who still nurses frequently, and Megan, 1, who nurses constantly. She has also just found out that baby number four is due this fall! She has nursed through many difficulties, including gestational diabetes, which has been more difficult with each pregnancy. My "favorite" (and only) son-in-law, David, is a tower of strength and her advocate in breastfeeding.

I also have a daughter-in-law, Nuriman. She met my son David in China while he was studying there. In China, it is most common to breastfeed, so she thought it odd when David asked her if she would breastfeed their children. "Of course!" was her reply. They are expecting their first baby shortly.

While our family is not complete at this point, it certainly is completely satisfying just to watch your own children parent. Thanks LLL for allowing our family to grow with love.

Brenda Sheets
Maryland USA

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 a retired Leader/member LLLI Alumnae Membership (includes CONTINUUM)
- ☐ $44 for CONTINUUM and an LLLI Individual Membership (includes NEW BEGINNINGS)
- ☐ $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

Your support keeps LLL programs and services alive

Please consider a year-end gift in response to the 2004 End-of-the-Year Appeal and clip the giving form below to include with your check. That way, you'll not only be supporting this organization that we hold so dear, you'll be making a statement that Alumnae donors are alive and well, still benefiting from skills learned as Leaders, and committed to the future of LLL.

Yes, count me as an Alum who's proud to support LLL!

Here is ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $250 ☐ $500 ☐ $1,000 ☐ $_____ to continue the La Leche League flow of breastfeeding information and support to new mothers worldwide.

☐ Enclosed is a check made payable to La Leche League International
☐ Please charge my credit card: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
Card number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

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

Continuum

La Leche League International
P. O. Box 4079
Schaumburg IL 60168-4079 USA

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La Leche League
International

The LLLI Alumnae Association Council

Coordinator:
Pam Oselka
9701 Kruger Rd., Union Pier
MI 49129 · 269-469-2706
At LLLI: 847-519-7730 x257
<poselka@llli.org>

Administrative Assistant
Wendy Masters
703 Audubon Dr.
Valparaiso IN 46383
219-462-9709
<wendy38mm@yahoo.com>

Communications:
Sue Christensen
1304 Leeper, South Bend IN
46617 · 574-288-7151
fax: 574-237-1071
<schriste@michiana.org>

Public Relations/Web Site:
Janet Jendron
112 Park Springs Road
Columbia SC 29223
803-736-1585
fax: 803-935-5342
<jjendron@usit.net>

Area Alumnae Representative (AAR) Coordinator:
Carol Meredith
225 Autumn Lane,Centreville,
MD 21617 · 410-758-3462
cell: 410-739-2964
<cameredith@yahoo.com>

Finance Coordinator:
Patti Hope
4303 Ashwoody Trail NE,
Atlanta GA 30319-1436
770-452-7818
<pjhope@mindspring.com>

Special Projects:
Nancy Franklin
13230 Blanco Rd. #1007
San Antonio, TX 78216
210-479-1369
fax: 210-593-4106
<NBFLLL77@aol.com>

Janice Horvath
4564 Winderwood Circle
Orlando, FL 32835
321-438-0036
<PackerJanice@cfl.rr.com>

She is too fond of books,
and it has turned her brain
—Louisa May Alcott, 1873

LLLI and Alumnae news and announcements

❖ Will you be coming to the LLLI Conference next July? Consider volunteering as an LLLI Founder escort, a service coordinated by the Pizzazz Team. You can be an escort once or multiple times for one or more of the LLLI Founders. This opportunity affords you a special time with a Founder while you escort her through the crowds to her assigned place in a timely manner. For example, you can help find her table at a luncheon and, if you desire, share a meal with a Founder and a new Leader or two—acting as a link between generations.

To be a part of this service corps, email Helene Scheff at <hscheff@cox.net>. Let her know about any other obligations you will have at the Conference so the team can fit your assignments in with the rest of your plans.

❖ Kudos to LLLI's Funding Development Department for over 500 new $50 and up donors to the organization this past year!

❖ The 2003 - 2004 *LLLI Annual Report* is available. If you would like to receive a copy, please send a request to: Funding Development, LLLI, PO Box 4079, Schaumburg IL 60168-4079 or email <fdassociate@llli.org>

❖ LLLI staff met recently with the Executive Service Corps of Chicago, a group of volunteer retired and semi-retired area business executives who lend their expertise to not-for-profit organizations. While Chicago is the largest, there are 40 Executive Service Corps programs throughout the United States. This group has worked at various times with LLLI for more than 20 years. Three workgroups are currently meeting with different Service Corps representatives to address education and membership, publications, and marketing communications. The end result will be an overall marketing plan with goals, action steps, and a work plan.