The LLL Alumnae Association
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Continuum

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Seasons of Motherhood

The Empty Nest! Ours Is Empty and It Brings Time to Reflect

Thirty-three years ago, Louise Cox became an LLL Leader. She took a break from LLL for about ten years when she and her husband taught in an International School. This gave their children a chance to live in two richly fascinating countries, Saudi Arabia and Brazil. In 2000 she reactivated and served for four years on the LLLI Grievance Commission. She does Group work, leads occasional Series Meetings, and has been a speaker at Area and International Conferences. Louise's two children and stepson are adults now. She has two grandchildren and three step-grandchildren.

Since her children moved out of the house and live with their own families, Louise reflects on the fact that things are different. The nest where she raised her children is empty. She now has time to plan her own days. Her mind plays reruns of what she felt and did when the children lived at home. Her thoughts become interspersed with the reality of today's parents when she sees her children parent as well as new mothers who contact her for breastfeeding help.

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Shortly after I returned from overseas, I became a grandmother at a time when it was unexpected. This immediately led me back to LLL where I saw how LLL had grown (and was changing) and that more Leaders each year entered grandparenthood–in a variety of ways. I remembered the days when I was a young Leader. The seven Founders were there for inspiration and guidance. When I reactivated, another retired Leader, an airline stewardess about my same age, also reactivated. We saw an important role for us to play. She, like me, incorporated LLL principles into our jobs. She made sure babies and their mothers were well taken care of on flights. At my teaching job, I would often find myself carrying a preschooler on my hip when needed during class. I provided empathy and support to parents, too. Currently, I teach English Language Learning to adults who are from a variety of Third World countries, including Africa, South America and the Middle East. Many of the mothers don't want to be separated from their toddlers and bring them to class! It makes so much sense. How can mothers learn a new language (or anything) if they are worried about their children who are in another room I frequently try to introduce young mothers to LLL and encourage younger Leaders to continue their LLL involvement.

Fewer women seem to join LLL these days. However, they often share their breastfeeding joys with me. I wish I had more time to be involved with LLL. However, I travel frequently out of state to visit my aging parents who are 92 and my children live a long distance from me. A dynamic relationship with my husband takes time, too. I help LLL when I can–respecting whatever energy and time I have…as the "wheel of life" turns. *(continued on p. 2)*

Is "Last Issue" on Your Mailing Label?

This is the last issue that you will receive as we clear names from old LLLI files transferred to the new Alum database. Future issues will be mailed only to current paid-up members. If your dues expire soon, renew so your name is on the Sept/Oct *Continuum* mailing list. Contact Sue Steilen if you have membership questions.

The Empty Nest! *(continued from p. 1)*

I am reading *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*, a new book by Eckhart Tolle. He mentions the difference between DOing and BEing and writes on page 103:

> *Many children harbor hidden anger and resentment toward their parents and often the cause is* ***unauthenticity*** *in the relationship. The child has a deep longing for the parent to be there as a human being, not as a role, no matter how conscientiously that role is being played. You may be doing all the right things for your child, but that is not enough. In fact, doing is never enough if you neglect Being.*

When I read the above quote, it hit a nerve. Looking back at when I raised my children, I see where I was too often a "human doing" instead of a "human Being." I made sure they had this class or that, not many moments for "down time," etc. Go here; drive them there, etc. After all, I had a "degree." I could work as well! Why not wear all hats at the same time? You get the drift. I knew what was best for them…without taking time to softly watch and listen.

And then, I found, as they grew into adults, the connection I looked forward to wasn't there! It wasn't until I read what Tolle wrote that I could take a look and see where I just had not been available for connecting with them when simply "Being" would have been much preferred.

Fortunately, I am rebuilding that connection though practicing just "Being" present much more with my children (and grandchildren).

I do this by not showing my children-in-laws how to cook, do laundry, or DO anything and not giving advice. I sit more and they come to me. I'm quieter, just feeling love and receiving it because it's there. It's new for my adult children, takes time for them to trust, and it's delicious!

I'm wondering if any other Alums are finding similar experiences? How are your relationships with your adult children and those who have spouses? What advice would you share with younger mothers? What advice do you wish a grandmother had shared with you while you were still raising your children?

Louise Cox
Windsor Locks, Connecticut

The "Middle Wife"

I've been teaching for about fifteen years. I have two kids myself, but the best birth story I know is the one I saw in my own second-grade classroom a few years back.

When I was a kid, I loved show-and-tell. So I always have a few sessions with my students. It helps them get over shyness and usually show-and-tell is pretty tame. Kids bring in pet turtles, model airplanes, and pictures of fish they catch, stuff like that. And I never, ever place any boundaries or limitations on them. If they want to lug it in to school and talk about it, they're welcome.

Well, one day this little girl, Erica, a very bright, very outgoing kid, takes her turn and waddles up to the front of the class with a pillow stuffed under her sweater. She holds up a snapshot of an infant. "This is Luke, my baby brother, and I'm going to tell you about his birthday." "First, Mom and Dad made him as a symbol of their love, and then Dad put a seed in my Mom's stomach, and Luke grew in there. He ate for nine months through an umbrella cord." She's standing there with her hands on the pillow, and I'm trying not to laugh and wishing I had my camcorder with me.

The kids are watching her in amazement. "Then, about two Saturdays ago, my Mom starts saying and going, 'Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh!' " Erica puts a hand behind her back and groans. "She walked around the house for, like an hour, 'Oh, Oh, Oh!'" Now this kid is doing a hysterical duck walk and groaning. "My Dad called the middle wife. She delivers babies, but she doesn't have a sign on the car like the Domino's man. They got my Mom to lie down in bed like this." Then Erica lies down with her back against the wall. "And then, pop! My Mom had this bag of water she kept in there in case he got thirsty, and it just blew up and spilled all over the bed, like psshhheew!" This kid has her legs spread with her little hands miming water flowing away. It was too much! "Then the middle wife starts saying 'push, push,' and 'breathe, breathe.' They started counting, but never even got past ten. Then, all of a sudden, out comes my brother. He was covered in yucky stuff and they all said it was from Mom's play-center, so there must be a lot of toys inside there." Then Erica stood up, took a big theatrical bow and returned to her seat. I'm sure I applauded the loudest.

Ever since then, when it's show-and-tell day, I bring my camcorder, just in case another "Middle Wife" comes along.

Anonymous 2nd Grade Teacher

For our children are but gifts that we are given, a moment's grace that we are asked to shape and share. We should raise them to be open to the world. Show them the connection, not the obligation in their daily affairs. Let them see that the phone calls they make to grandmothers, and the thank-you notes they write to people they barely know, are really gossamer threads strung between hearts. Teach them that a life of service is a life of peace, and that a small faith can be as powerful as a large belief.

from *The Hidden Beauty of Everyday Life* by Kent Nerburn

Life After LLL

Meet Eleanore Ryan, PhD

Clinical Psychologist and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Specialist

Little did Dr. Ryan know, during her childbearing years, the challenging paths her life would take. Today, her six children live in various areas of the United States and she continues to be friends with women she met through LLL, especially Ida Gannon, Mary Ann Jung, and Mary Lea Murphy. (Other good LLL friends who have died are Bea Franson, Dale Simpson, and Carol Wilkinson.) Her story offers vignettes of La Leche League in its formative years and shows the influence the organization–directly or indirectly–had on her life journey.

I had breastfed my first four children but only for six months and with little or no support. During my fifth pregnancy, a pregnant neighbor (Louise) and I went to the first Childbirth Education Association Convention in Milwaukee. It was great to meet so many people who felt as we did–people who later became friends: Marian Tompson, Edwina Froehlich, Niles Newton, and Lynn Moen. From these friendships, Louise and I learned about childbirth education and La Leche League together.

After my son Chris's birth, I shared a hospital room with Mary Lea Murphy, another woman who was breastfeeding. (We were the only breastfeeding mothers in the ward.) She, too, had heard about LLL. We decided to go to a meeting as soon as we could. On the way home from that first LLL meeting, we said to each other, "Nursing a baby for two years? Withholding solids for six months?" Then we both went on to breastfeed our babies for more than three years, and did so with our subsequent children as well! Lea and I went to every LLL meeting in Downers Grove, Illinois, and read all the books and articles we could get. Group Leaders, Gloria Watson and Dale Simpson, had accumulated books and materials not only on breastfeeding and childbirth, but also on mothering, nutrition and other matters important for families. This was in 1960-1961 when the content of the four LLL meetings was developing. Fathers' Meetings were becoming a regular event. LLL Board Meetings in Franklin Park were large meetings, held in the city hall or a civic center. LLL was hearing from women all over the United States and later, from mothers in other countries.

As our Chapter grew, meetings became larger and longer. Women who were starved for information and support interacted with each other for hours. Mothers and infants were out as late as 1:00 and 2:00 a.m. Since their babies accompanied them, the urgency to leave for home was lessened. The babies were content to suckle while their moms chatted happily. A new chapter was needed in the southwest suburbs of Chicago. Lea Murphy and I were chosen to form and lead it. The first Series Meetings for the Clarendon Hills-Western Springs Chapter were held at my home. This Chapter grew and also had to split. The new LaGrange Group developed. The growth was an organic phenomenon. We'd grow and split, grow and split. LLL NEWS reported on our progress. LLL gained more and more public attention.

By 1962, there were International members–then International Chapters. LLL became LLLI. By 1963, we were planning the first LLLI Convention to meet, personally, the many Leaders who were representing La Leche League to others, especially to mothers. The Board considered the appointment of a Convention Coordinator. They decided that managing the convention would be too demanding for a mother. It would take her away from her important work as mother. A childless (and sympathetic) woman had tried and left. A second childless woman also had tried and quit. They did not seem to understand the philosophy of LLL. The Coordinator had to be an LLL mother. I was very interested in the convention. I had attended all the committee meetings and written "Convention Corner," a column for LLL NEWS.

At the Board meeting where the decision about the appointment of a new convention coordinator was discussed, Edwina Froehlich announced that the Board felt I was a natural choice since I was already aware of many convention details. Of course, I would be relieved of other LLL responsibilities. I thought about the position talked it over my husband, and accepted. I met with all the volunteers. Most decisions at the time were made by consensus. Leaders emerged from the various committees. Each committee developed a way to accomplish its function in a manner that worked best for them.

All of the committee members were mothers who were accustomed to bringing order out of chaos. Homemakers are the best managers and "multi-taskers." (I'm glad they finally found a good "business" term to describe what mothers do naturally!) Volunteers successfully solicited donations. Things were arriving at the LLLI Office and at members' homes. I don't remember how everything landed where it needed to be, but we did it. We estimated that about 125 mothers would come to the conference. The final attendance count was about 425, plus babies. The convention was a success and a love fest. The warmth spread throughout the hotel. One of the great things about managing it was how to handle spills and other accidents. "Call Housekeeping!"

(continued on p. 4)

Meet Eleanore Ryan, PhD *(continued from p. 3)*

The Convention Committee worked like a well-ordered organism. Nothing was too difficult for them. Dr. Michael Newton, who attended many professional meetings, commented that he had never seen such a well-run convention. I truly enjoyed working with the volunteers. Unfortunately, I have lost touch with many of them. If any of them reads this article, I would really like to hear from them. After the convention, the Board decided that we needed state coordinators so we could handle LLLI business better. Since I was not needed in my local Group, which was doing well with new Leaders, I became the Illinois State Coordinator for a year or so.

At that time, LLLI needed a new editor for LLL NEWS. Since I had been writing for it regularly and had edited my high school paper and had briefly been a technical writer, I was appointed as the new editor. My "assistant" was Mary Carson, who had been an editor for the University of Chicago Press–one of the most prestigious publishers in the country. Their Chicago *Manual of Style* is the "Bible" for many writers and editors. Mary was indispensable, wonderful, understanding, and irreplaceable. She was also a great friend. LLL NEWS mailings were often late. Mary and I evaluated the situation and made some changes.

Once a new editorial system was in place, LLL NEWS came out regularly and on time. Members were happy. We were able to publish more of the members' stories. I can't remember when LEAVEN began, but the same rules were applied with the same results. I edited other materials for LLLI as the need arose. I also explored the then "new" word processors and other production equipment and processes. Although we could not afford the expenditures at the time, these new developments were later adopted at LLLI.

At the time, other organizations promoting breastfeeding were springing up. Doctors were organizing their own groups of "advisors." None of these and subsequent ones could equal the spirit or warmth of La Leche League's mother-to- mother approach. In LLL and in work for my church and local school, I did a lot of counseling. People seemed to open up to me. I found that casual conversations turned into life stories and discussions of problems. I learned from these experiences that I liked to counsel people and they seemed to benefit from my work.

My undergraduate degree ~~is~~ in chemistry. I had originally intended to study medicine. Yet, at this time in my life, I considered the possibility of studying psychology. I'd met some great professionals through LLLI. I talked to Dr. Niles Newton about my interests. She encouraged me and gave me leads to follow. Before I had a chance to pursue these, however, I became pregnant again. The next time I saw Dr. Newton, I was in maternity clothes, expecting my sixth child. I told her I was still interested in graduate school. Again, she encouraged me. She had just had her fourth child when she received her doctorate. Marynel was born at home, to the delight of her brothers and parents.

When my first and only daughter was about five months old, Dr. Newton called to tell me that Northwestern University (NU), where she was a professor, was beginning a new program in clinical psychology. It was to be unique in that they were seeking students with varied backgrounds and life experience. She urged me to apply.

I agonized over the decision, because I had never left any of my infants. When I married, I had decided to be a stay-at-home mom. (My mother had to work when I was a child and I always came home to an empty house.) However, I finally decided to do it. I was concerned about the possible requirement of the Graduate Record Exam. My undergraduate grades and my life experience were sufficient to merit a waiver of that requirement. I awaited the news of whether or not I was accepted. I told no one about this except my family and a few intimate friends. I continued to work on LLL NEWS and LEAVEN.

When I learned that I had been accepted, I was thrilled, gratified, and a little apprehensive. I broke the news to the LLLI members at the annual meeting of State Coordinators. I announced I was leaving my job as LLL NEWS editor in order to attend graduate school at Northwestern University (NU) and to study with Niles Newton.

I was 40 at the time and filled with anxiety about whether or not I could keep the pace with younger students and manage my homemaking. My life experience was very valuable. However, I audited quite a few undergraduate psychology courses to "fill in the gaps" of my knowledge.

For the first couple of courses, my daughter accompanied me to my classes. I sat at the rear of the classrooms and fed her as was needed. We joked about her being the youngest-ever NU student. (Something must have impressed her. She continued her education beyond college and earned her PhD in history in 2005.) Being accepted to the program turned out to be one of the greatest gifts from God in my lifetime. In 1972, my husband was diagnosed with heart disease (after years of heavy smoking). In June of 1975, he died suddenly. I had just completed my coursework and was finishing my internship.

The next hurdle was my dissertation studies. Had I not chosen to make that giant step into graduate work, I don't know how I could have survived. I needed a way to provide support for my family. I really began to appreciate the burden of supporting a family which many husbands and fathers carry. I began to teach courses on both the downtown and Evanston NU campuses while researching topics for my dissertation. I had no time to grieve. In fact, it is only lately that I have been able to re-visit the ordeal and really process my emotions and reactions. My older sons had already moved out and were on their own. Three had left the Chicago area. My youngest son, Christopher, became the "oldest child" and was very responsible in helping me care for my daughter. He is still my "right hand" in keeping my house functioning.

(continued on p. 5)

Meet Eleanore Ryan, PhD *(continued from p. 4)*

Both Niles and I wanted my study to concern women's issues. After pursuing several possibilities that were not viable, I selected the topic of breast cancer. At the time, radical mastectomy was the standard treatment for it. There was little or no knowledge about the psychological responses of women to this surgery. The dissertation process required three years. I finally graduated in 1978.

For a few years, I taught a seminar on my dissertation findings. This course included acquainting the students with what appliances and clothing were available for post-mastectomy women. At the women's request, a separate "men only" session was developed for their partners.

I acquired clinical experience in various settings, earned licenses in Illinois and Indiana, and began a small private practice from an office in my home.

My major specialty is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I gained my experience and expertise in treating patients who had it before it was defined. My first such patients were women who had been sexually molested, abused, and/or violated in childhood. Over the years, I have treated Vietnam veterans and have encountered PTSD in many different settings.

Most recently, it is in employment situations where superiors have psychologically abused people. Other organizations where I have worked with PTSD are volunteering for the Disaster Mental Health Service of the American Red Cross, the Disaster Response Network of the American Psychological and Illinois Psychological Associations (APA and IPA) and the Marjorie Kovler Center for Treatment of Survivors of Torture.

After many years of holding various positions in the Illinois Psychological Association, I was President during the 2006-2007 term. I have been on the IPA Executive Committee for ten years. I am still in private practice. I was also instrumental in organizing the Association of DuPage County Psychologists in Professional Practice.

In my private life, I am on the board of SARET, a charitable non-profit group which aids those who "fall between the cracks" of our social assistance resources. I am also on the board of LIRA, Artists In Residence at Loyola University Chicago. LIRA promotes authentic Polish Artists and Culture through its symphony orchestra and dance troop. LIRA's director operates a Chicago AM radio station that serves all ethnic groups.

My husband and I had planned to travel after the children were grown. Maybe that's why I love to travel and I try to take one long trip per year while I can still walk. Although not intending to do it, I have traveled to all continents. Last summer, I went to Norway with Lynn Moen. The tour was enlightening and Lynn's family there graciously opened their hearts and homes to me.

As a mother, I tried to establish a milieu at home that fostered curiosity and education in all spheres. I read a lot to my children, monitored their TV viewing, and exposed them to experiences that I felt would be of use to them (museum visits, etc.).
As a family, we camped over a good part of the USA. At present, I can say that my six children support themselves, live in various parts of the Eastern and Western United States and seem to be reasonably happy. The married sons are excellent husbands and fathers. And I have eight living grandchildren! There would have been nine, but one granddaughter was stillborn at term. It was a difficult trauma for all of us. This August, my daughter will marry a wonderful man.

During the ten years I was involved with La Leche League, I loved the contact with the many kindred spirits I encountered. I loved helping other women to learn more about birth, breastfeeding, etc. And through this function, I learned a great deal about marriage relationships, family, personalities, group process, etc. Since I had been a student of the "hard" sciences (chemistry, biology and physics), my experience working in LLLI and with the advisors was irreplaceable.

I probably would not have become a psychologist if I had not been in LLL. If I ever wonder about all the experiences I've had, I console myself that each one of these has led me to newer, more interesting (though not always happy) experiences. I feel these have helped me in my work. I can often tell a patient that I really know their pain because I have "been there." Perhaps that is why I had these experiences.

Dr. Eleanore Ryan
Clarendon Hills, Ilinois

Edited by Fran Dereszynski, California, from a correspondence interview with Dr. Eleanore Ryan.

Moving? Remember to Notify Alums

Add the Alumnae to those you notify of a new address. Don't miss an issue of Continuum. The US Post Office does not forward bulk mail. Send changes to Sue Steilen, Alumnae Membership Coordinator. Thank you.

My Mother's Button Box

Once during a Group Meeting, we talked about things to do with bored kids. I asked if any mothers had a button box. I was surprised to find that many of the much younger mothers did have one. Many had "inherited" them from their mother. We talked about how playing with the button box was a neat thing to do with a small child and how such a simple pleasure could be used to teach color and shapes. All my children, as well as myself, loved to play with my button box which belonged to my mother and to her mother before her.

There was something very soothing and special about lounging on the quilt atop a parent's bed while clinking through the contents of the box. Actually, it wasn't literally a box–well, one of the containers was a box, but more about that later. The main container was an "ancient" pail–a *Swift & Co. Jewel Lard* pail. It was pail-shaped with a pail handle. The sides were red and white.

When I was a child, it was quite an effort to remove the lid. And when the lid finally yielded to my prying fingers, a cascade of multi-colored delight poured onto the quilt. I can still recall the scent of the Bakelite and plastic. In those days, women saved buttons, snaps, zippers, etc., for recycling–a concept that folks seem now to be again embracing. During the years of two World Wars and a depression, it was a matter-of-course; to insure reusing was de rigueur.

Judie's Button Boxes

Playing with the button box was sometimes reserved for ailing kids who were not well enough to join the family but not so ill they had to be confined to bed. Sorting these multi-colored bits was so appealing. They were inventive gems of glass, metal, Bakelite or mother-of-pearl. I would sort them by size, shape or color. Sometimes my mother would have me string matching buttons together to make searching for them less tedious.

There was another button box, a wonderfully made wooden box that contained only white buttons. It once held dried codfish. This box had a sliding top that fit exactly in the grooves on the sides and bottom. The sides were carefully mortised in a way that would make Norm Abrams, master carpenter of the TV show *This Old House,* proud. The buttons were all very old and all mother-of-pearl. They came from men's dress shirts, my grandfather's long johns, ladies' blouses, or children's clothes. They were good substantial buttons (not like today's plastic) and they made a lovely sounding ring like the shells they once were.

I still have these button boxes, a legacy from my mother and her mother. Why do I keep them? I'm not sure, because I don't make clothing any more. I do know I can't begin to consider parting with them. I search through them to find a replacement button for my modern duds. In the search I encounter some that bring sharp memories. I can recall the exact garment they were on and how old I was when it was made. The button boxes are a nice way to remember my mother and her mother when they had a needle and thread in their hands and thimbles on their index fingers.

Judie Gubala
Rocky Hill, Connecticut

Dilemmas in Childbirth Education

"Contemporary Dilemmas in American Childbirth Education: Findings from a Comparative Ethnographic Study" was published in *The Journal of Perinatal Education*, Vol. 16, No. 4, Fall 2007, pp. 25-37. The study used observations and in-depth interviews with expectant parents. Findings indicate childbirth educators encountered five dilemmas affecting the structure, format, and content of classes: pregnant women regard classes as an extra task, not a routine in pregnancy; preference was for shorter, concise classes to avoid information overload; they did not feel classes are needed as a place to bond, discuss, or to build relationships. Educators have placed a higher value on supporting a woman's decision, regardless of choices made. Their role shifted to providing information so women make informed choices rather than focusing solely on a natural childbirth as it was many years ago. Judie Gubala, Associate Area Professional Liaison for LLL of Connecticut, wrote, *"I found this article to be very telling about our times…and how Lamaze teachers must radically alter the message and what day and how many classes are offered, number of classes and specific day classes are scheduled. Many women are so busy; they don't bother to attend childbirth classes. They go online for information as I read recently in a news article. Years ago, Lamaze instructors taught how to mange labor without medication. Couples brought pillows with them to class, learned about breathing techniques, postures, etc., in a series of several classes. Now women want a comfortable labor that may include medications, including epidurals. They want less information in less time, too. I find this a shame since many women don't know much about their body and how it works, much less the added specifics to learn about pregnancy, labor, birth and breastfeeding. In addition, they miss out on the group dynamics, the bonding of a group especially for the male partner. Being able to ask questions and mutual learning are lost. Just like LLL meetings, childbirth classes are meant to be a shared experience."*

Keeping the Family Together After a Divorce

At a time when she did not know any breastfeeding mothers, Francine tried to breastfeed her first two sons. Before she was pregnant with her third son, she met a woman who was nursing her one-year-old daughter and who told her about La Leche League. Francine attended meetings and helped to start a Group in New Liskeard in Northeastern Ontario, Canada. She became an accredited Leader in February 1977. Through the years, she worked in different departments in Ligue La Leche (Québec, Canada). After being a Reserve Leader from 1990-2000, she went back to help LLL again for the next three years. Due to her job at a local mall, she had less time for volunteering and is again a Reserve Leader. In her spare time, she now writes poetry, romance and fairytale. Her writings have not been published; she did almost win a writing contest! Francine wrote: "Currently I am writing three books for my children: one about my life as their breastfeeding mother; one about my life with their father; and one about my life in general. My interests are with my writing, my children, and grandchildren. I now enjoy living on my own. My dog and cat keep me good company."

Last photo of all members of Francine's family, May 2000

When I decided to leave my husband after twenty-three years of marriage, I was devastated! I am an old-fashioned girl and I did not believe in divorce! But I was at a point in my life where I could not see any alternatives. It takes courage to leave; staying would have been so easy!

Before I left him, I sat down with my five children one by one and I told them my decision. At the time they ranged in age from eight to nineteen. Now they're twenty-three to thirty-five. My oldest son said, "You should have done that a long time ago!" My youngest son, who was eight, said, "I was so proud to be one of the five in my class that have their real parents. But the most important thing, Maman, is your happiness!" This was most shocking to my husband. I had always been the perfect wife and he could not believe it! He became very angry with me.

But when he realized that the only change in our family life would be that I no longer sleep or live with him, he began to calm down. Each time he came for a visit, I treated him with respect. I always made sure that the children respected him. He was their father and that was very important to me! I was determined to keep the family together at any cost. Whenever there was a holiday or a special day in our children's lives I was resolved to invite him. When we became grandparents twice, we shared the joy!

We were so close as a family that my granddaughter did not know that we were divorced. When she asked if it was true and I said. "Yes," she almost cried. Then I told her, "Do not be sad, we were divorced before you were born and that does not make a difference. He is your grand-papa and I am your grand-maman and we love you very much! Married or not married!" With time, my husband and I became great friends. We often went out together. I enjoyed my ex-husband's company because he makes me laugh. Over the years, his health began to deteriorate. I checked on him every day. If I was out in the evening and came home late, he asked me to call him no matter what time it was to tell him I was in! When I called him, I would say, "Ed, this is France, I'm in." He would reply, "Is everything OK?" My answer was, "Yes, everything OK! Good night!"

When my husband was found unconscious and brought to the hospital, the children and I stayed by his side. We were there with him when he died. That was in July 2005. My children's co-workers did not understand why I was there. They would ask, "Aren't your parents divorced?" Their response was, "Yes, but my mom and dad were friends and besides, she is our mother and we needed her!"

I had been with Ed since I was 17 years old, and I wanted to be there with him until the end. Just because two people cannot live together does not mean they cannot be civilized and friends. When I went home the night Ed died, as I went to the door and said, "Ed, it's France. I'm home and I am OK!" I am proud of myself. I may not have succeeded in my marriage but I succeeded in having what I consider a great divorce!

Francine Carrière
North Bay, Ontario Canada

Extra Pages in this Issue

Because this issue included the Philadelphia brochure, the printing company suggested that all pages be the same size to save considerably on printing and collating costs. Although the brochure is not a separate insert, it is still informative and practical. You may choose to cut out that page or photocopy it before sending in a trip deposit.

How to Keep Pizzazz in Your Life

Helene found LLL with her fourth child and became a Leader 37 years ago. She has three sons, one daughter, and ten grandchildren. This year, Helene and her husband, Ed, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary! LLLI Conference attendees may remember Helene as the dynamo who coordinated the Conference Pizzazz Team for many years. Her son, Fred, and his four children shared their musical talents at LLLI Conferences as well. Dance has been a driving force in Helene's life ever since she was a dance major at the High School of the Performing Arts (FAME). She is the author of five books on dance and has three more on the drawing board. She plans biennial conferences for the National Dance Education Organization. She writes, "I couldn't be doing this without the opportunity of working with Carol Kolar and learning so much from her. Viola Lennon taught me so much in the field of funding and development and I am honor to call her a FRIEND."

We live in a time of deep concern for our country (United States). People are worried that their children won't be able to get the jobs for which they trained. Others are worried that neighbors might lose their homes. We worry about how our grandchildren are being educated. We worry, worry, and worry. Do you see the wrinkles forming? Do you see the frown forming? Do you feel the slump of your shoulders as you wear your burdens? Here are some ways to keep or put back some PIZZAZZ in your life. People who suffered through the Great Depression had ways to keep lively. They knew what was important to them would make them happy. Maybe it was having family gatherings, maybe with an added theme. Maybe they had a love of music.

They would sit around the radio or Victrola (does anyone else remember that was the word for the antique phonograph?). They might even have band concerts in the park during the pleasant weather. I can see the smiles now…the curving of the corners of the mouth. Maybe the grandparents introduced crafts and old time sports to the grandchildren: whittling, knitting, needlework, soap sculpture, orange crate races, jacks, and just-for-fun games. Come on! I see the glow of things remembered. Think about what you can re-introduce in your family. Some might think it is silly. Talk about having a Karaoke night, learning at a line dance or square dance night, a game of croquette in the afternoon in the backyard or at the park. Take a nature walk in any season. Catch a good look at the glory that surrounds us.

There is much to discover in the city or country. How about a clown-face-day with the grandkids? Then take pictures of their creations. Kids can draw faces on paper; adults can help them put on the make-up. Write a short play and act it out. Include all people, young and old, whoever may be there. The creative process is one of the most thrilling activities.

So, my friends, put your wallets away. Put your smiles back in place. Lift your shoulders and declare, "I'm GONNA do it!" Then use what you created to put Pizzazz back in your life. Remember that old song, *The Best Things In Life are FREE!* And so are many of these ideas. OKAY so you are as old as I am!

Helene Scheff
North Kingstown, Rhode Island

A Little or a Lot, It All Counts

A belated Happy Mother's Day to everyone! I had a lovely day with my husband, our two sons, and one girlfriend. They cooked an amazing meal. We even had sunshine that has been in short supply this spring in Minnesota. Recently when the radio alarm went off, the reporter talked about hunger in America. According to the report, there is concern that parents are watering down formula for their babies to make it go farther. I was shocked that this is happening in our country. Probably I am naïve. We've also been hearing and reading about the dangerous chemical in plastic baby bottles. *WE* know the solution is so easy. It's evident that promoting breastfeeding and mother-to-mother support is as important as ever. Whether our children have grown or are getting older, we remain very busy. As Alumnae members, what can we do?

- Get connected through the Alumnae Web site: http://alumnae.llli.org/ Take time to read entries from those who have visited the site and add your own story.
- Join an online discussion group or propose a new topic for a discussion group. Help us keep up-to-date with news and events so that more members can participate.
- Think of ways to help or support LLL at the Group, Chapter or Area level. Let us know what you're doing.
- Write an article for *Continuum*.
- Support the Alumnae Association with your membership and donations. Encourage LLL friends to join.
- Donate an item for the Alumnae eBay site. Contact Karri Rickard at: lll.momof5@gmail.com.
- Support the LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US by volunteering with time or money. To donate, log on to: http:// donate2LLL.org/helpline. To volunteer, contact Christie Breen: christiebreen@yahoo.com
- Choose an area of donation to LLLI by visiting: www.llli.org//donate.

Whether we do a little or a lot, it all counts.

Marilyn Thompson
Plymouth, Minnesota
LLL Alumnae Association Coordinator

PHILADELPHIA
"THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA"

Exploring History, Art, Entertainment and Good Food With the **La Leche League Alumnae Association**

Join us
October 30–November 2, 2008

Register Today!

Phoebe Kerness
137 Spinnaker Walk
Savannah, GA 31410

Return with deposit. Keep a copy for your files and for final payment due 9-30-2008.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name_____

Address_____

City _____State/Province _____Zip Code _____Country _____

Telephone #_____ Cell Phone #_____

Email Address _____ Fax #_____

Current 2008 member of the La Leche League Alumnae Association? ____Yes ____No

Room Preference: ___Single ___Double ___Triple ___Quadruple

I will be rooming with: _____ ___Put me in with a new friend for a double room if possible.

___* $300 registration deposit due by August 30, 2008. *Registration is limited to 50 participants.

___ $20.00 option for Active LLL Leader/Member or Retired Leader/Member for 2008 membership to Alumnae Association

Non-Alumnae members add $20 to final payment. By* **September 30, 2008 *I will send my final payment* of:*

___ $743 for single occupancy ___ $430 for double occupancy ___ $320 for triple occupancy ___ $268 for quadruple occupancy

Please register early: *Registrations are on a first-come, first-served basis and will be taken until October 1, 2008,* ***space permitting.***

Make checks payable to "La Leche League Alumnae Association Trip."

Mail completed registration form with deposit to: Phoebe Kerness
137 Spinnaker Walk, Savannah, GA 31410

ITINERARY

Thursday, October 30th:
Arrival and registration followed by a welcoming **dinner**.

Friday, October 31st:
The day will feature a guided walking tour of the Historic District in the Center of Olde City Philadelphia. It will include visits to the Liberty Bell, Christ Church, Elfreth's Alley (the oldest residential street in the United States), Independence Hall, the Betsy Ross House, and the National Constitution Center.
***Lunch** will be served by costumed wait staff at the City Tavern which John Adams called the "Most genteel tavern in the colonies."*
***Dinner** will be on your own this evening.*

Saturday, November 1st:
Our morning excursion will take us to the National Liberty Museum.
***Lunch** will be on your own at the Reading Terminal Market, a traditional enclosed farmer's market with many Amish, international, and local food delicacies. The market dates back to 1892. After lunch we take a chartered bus tour through the city to see the colorful inspiring murals of the Mural Arts Program. There are 2,800 murals, earning Philadelphia the international recognition as the "City of Murals."*

*Our evening will include **dinner** at a Turkish Restaurant followed by a Beethoven concert presented by the Philadelphia Orchestra in the magnificent cello-shaped concert hall at the Kimmel Center.*

Sunday, November 2nd:
The morning will begin with a tour of an historic home in Fairmont Park, the largest city park in the country. Then we will visit the Philadelphia Museum of Art, known for the "Rocky Steps."

***Lunch** will be on your own in the museum. After lunch we'll walk to the Rodin Museum that has the largest collection of Rodin sculptures outside of Paris.*

*In the evening we will enjoy a closing **dinner** at a fine Italian Restaurant.*

Monday, November 3rd:
We will take leave of each other until the next Alumnae Association Trip.

The itinerary will require moderate to heavy walking over uneven terrain as we explore the historic streets and attractions that make Philadelphia famous and will proceed rain or shine.

~ Brochure designed by Teresa Victor ~

ACCOMMODATIONS

The Holiday Inn Historic District is located in Olde City Philadelphia, in the midst of a myriad of restaurants, art galleries, boutiques, fascinating architecture, and historic church sites. Hotel rooms will have two double beds. Hotel amenities include high speed Internet, voice mail, coffee pots, irons, hair dryers, dining facilities, and an exercise room.

The address of the Holiday Inn is:
Holiday Inn Historic District
400 Arch Street at the junction of 4th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
215-923-8660

COST

The cost of the trip includes 4 nights at the Holiday Inn, 1 lunch, 3 dinners, all tours, museum admissions, and the concert on Saturday evening.

$1,043.00 per person – private room rate
$730.00 per person – double occupancy
$620.00 per person – triple occupancy
$568.00 per person – quadruple occupancy
Non-Alumnae members add $20.00

Parking is available at the Inn for $20 per day. Travel, four breakfasts, two lunches and one dinner will be on your own.

Dates to Remember

Before Aug. 30:	**$300 deposit due**
Sept. 30:	**Balance is due**
Oct. 1:	**Last day to register**
Oct. 3:	**Last day deposit** (less $50 administrative fee) **will be refunded.**

TRAVEL

Multiple airlines fly into the Philadelphia airport. The city is also accessible by car and is serviced by Amtrak and Greyhound.

CONTACT

For more information contact:

Phoebe Kerness at:
pjmkdd@comcast.net
or 912-897-9261

PHILADELPHIA HIGHLIGHTS

Philadelphia is known as the Birthplace of the country, the city in which the Declaration of Independence was signed and the US Constitution was drafted. Known as the "City of Brotherly Love," it was once the temporary capital of the US.

Sites within the Historic District of Olde City Philadelphia include:

Liberty Bell Center which houses the famous Liberty Bell, a symbol of freedom throughout the world.
Betsy Ross House is the colonial home where the first American flag was stitched in 1776.
Christ Church, a 1717 church of early Georgian architecture, was the parish where 15 signers of the Declaration of Independence worshipped.
Independence Hall is the building where the Second Continental Congress voted to break with England and where both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were signed.
Elfreth's Alley is said to be the oldest residential street in the country.
The National Constitution Center is devoted to preserving the legacy of the US Constitution. One highlight is the Signer's Hall, a room featuring life-size sculptures of the signers of the Constitution.
The National Liberty Museum is a treasure of exhibits portraying American democracy throughout the nation's history.
The Mural Arts Tour features many of the 2,800 murals that adorn the walls of the city with scenes of peaceful gardens, exotic landscapes, historic figures, victims of violence, and local heroes.

Other locations we will visit include:
The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts is the home to the world-famous Philadelphia Orchestra.
Fairmont Park, founded in 1812, is the largest city park in the country. Situated in the park are seven historic homes that once belonged to wealthy Philadelphians. Mount Pleasant is a mansion built during 1762-1765 by a Scottish sea captain. The mansion features art and furnishings typical of the American Revolutionary period.
The Philadelphia Museum of Art was founded in 1876 and is among the world's major art museums.
Rodin Museum displays 124 pieces of original sculptures and casts of the French sculptor.

Philadelphia Trip: Reservations Are Open!

Join us in Philadelphia from Thursday, October 30 to Sunday, November 2, 2008. Enclosed in this issue of *Continuum* on p. 9-10, you will find the tri-fold brochure with the registration form and information about the itinerary and accommodations for the excursion. Registration is limited to 50 participants on a first-come, first-served basis.

Those of you who joined us on previous trips to Savannah and San Antonio, may wonder why the prices are higher for this trip. I have tried to keep the prices as low as possible. However, Philadelphia is a more expensive city than the others and the current economy hasn't worked in our favor. I look forward to an exciting, weekend filled with fun, friendship, history, art, music and good food. See you all in the "City of Sisterly Love."

Phoebe Kerness, Trip Coordinator
La Leche League Alumnae Association
pjmkdd@comcast.net 912-897-9261

Dates to remember: *Before Aug. 30:* $300 deposit due
Sept. 30: Balance is due
Oct. 1: Last day to register

Ed. Note: You may photocopy the brochure to share with others. It is also available at: http://alumnae.llli.org.

The Joys and Challenges of Grandparenting

My youngest child turned 32 in 2008. How did that happen so quickly? I have three adult married children and 11 grandchildren. It seems like only yesterday that my own children were preschoolers. Now they all have children of their own. I had heard that grandparenting was great. Now I have experienced that grandparenting is wonderful! However, like most things, it is the time you put into it that makes it wonderful.

The thing I like best is when I have built enough of a relationship with a grandchild that when he or she sees me, their face lights up and they come running to me. That is the joy of grandparenting little children. It takes an investment of time and energy to have that kind of relationship. It takes valuing the child, getting on their level and enjoying what they enjoy–maybe it's a story, play dough or playing "make believe." It is much like when we parented our own children. We put time into the relationship with each child.

We took time to be there as a parent and we knew that the time we gave would pay great dividends as they grew older. Now I have found that it was true. It is wonderful seeing the adults that my children have become. All three are wonderful spouses and parents, have a great love for other people; and are leaders in our society. It is such a joy to see them parent their own children. They do it in a loving manner.

When my children married, the person they married had grown up in an entirely different family culture. I make it an important priority to love and value my in-law children. I look at it as if I have six children and not just three. We all know that both parents bring their own thoughts about parenting into the relationship.

I have found that a big influence on my relationship with my grandchildren is my relationship with my children and in-law children. As that relationship strengthens, especially with my daughters-in-law, it makes them more comfortable with me and then the grandchild seems to be more comfortable also.

I believe it goes back to that mother-child bond and the baby feeling the mother's tension. So, if we desire good grandparent relationships it needs to start with time and energy in the primary relationship with the mother and father of the child. I offer to help with dishes, laundry, errands, taking the older child to the park or to my home when mom needs a break. I really work at getting to know the person and what their needs are and wait for the opportunity to offer help. It isn't an instant thing. It can sometimes take years to build. Waiting on the opportunities can be frustrating.

It is important to be an encourager and think the best of them. I have also found it is important for me not to do everything perfectly, but to be myself and let them be themselves. One thing I do when I go to their home and it is messy like mine used to be when I had young children, I often stop myself from being helpful by going around picking up. I sit down and play with the children. Sometimes I also help pick up things or fold laundry.

In the same way that we, as Leaders, tried to sense our young children's needs, we do the same with our adult children–I ask myself, "What is the need here?" I do that with my adult children so they can be who they are without thinking that I do not approve of their way of parenting because I have all the answers.

(continued on p. 12)

The Joys and Challenges of Grandparenting *(continued from p.11)*

My husband, Joe, and I were privileged to join LLL Co-Founder Marian Tompson and Margaret and Steve Goebel to speak at the session, "The Art of Grandparenting: The Joys and Challenges," at the May 2006 Area Conference for So. California/Nevada. Years ago, both Margaret and I served the Area as CLAs (Coordinator of Leader Accreditation). Our families grew up together.

Marian talked about her wonderful relationship with her older grandchildren. She told about her adult grandson coming over for dinner just to talk. That was such an encouragement to me because I had heard when grandchildren are older they don't have time for grandparents. She also sends post cards to her grandchildren when she is gone. Her home and car are no-fight zones so they have to work out any differences they have with siblings in other ways. She mentioned the special role that only a grandparent can have in the life of a grandchild. After hearing her wonderful stories, I'm thinking that if we build relationships with them when they are little, it continues through the years and into adulthood.

Margaret and Steve shared their experiences about long distance grandparenting and how it takes a different kind of time, energy, commitment and lots of trips back and forth to help out when your children do not live close by. They are at a time in their lives when they could go on cruises for vacation. But instead they just want to go visit their children and grandchildren. Steve and Margaret have a wonderful commitment to being there to help their children. If one of their daughters is in need of some extra help, Margaret will fly to Northern California and spend the weekend. Joe and I are very blessed that our children are all nearby right now.

I'm thinking that a commitment of a week or weekend visit is very different than an afternoon or evening that Joe and I give. Steve also mentioned how they rented a cabin for a family gathering and the great rewards of getting everyone together. Joe and I try to do something similar to that—a family retreat each year. We certainly agree that, although it can be expensive, it is time and money well spent to allow the entire family the opportunity to build relationships with each other.

At the session, my husband mentioned focusing one hundred percent on the child. The children know he is really focused on them. They think being with Grandpa is the greatest! Our daughter, Jenny English, has four boys and is a La Leche League Leader. I asked Jenny if she would attend the Conference session to share her thoughts about grandparents and she did join us. At the session she mentioned that it is a tremendous help to have grandparents available to help. And that it is so helpful to have the freedom to be able to get their input and then do things in her own way. She also shared that her in-laws love her and how supportive that is for her. It was fun for me when she talked about how her grandfather (my dad) made her feel very special by caring about the things she was interested in.

One of the things I have reflected on is how being a Leche League Leader has helped me to be a better grandmother. As a Leader I learned that I could only help mothers who asked for my help. If they didn't ask, I could carefully offer help but ultimately it was the mother's choice whether or not she wanted help. It is the same with grandparenting. I have learned that my children are going to parent differently than I did. That can be hard for us Leaders as we can be very opinionated about parenting. What happens if they choose not to breastfeed? Or, they stop suddenly breastfeeding at three months because their doctor says the baby no longer needs to be breastfed? (In those helping situations, I cried for the mother and baby and what I knew they would miss out on.)

Just like that mother who comes to us for help, our children will make their own decisions. As much as we would like to help them decide, we actually know the baby is theirs, not ours. They will make the decision they need to make for themselves in their situation. As grandparents, we must remember that.

Also, there will be times when they will make mistakes, just as we did. As I look back I realize that the mistakes I made were opportunities for learning that I might not have had otherwise. It is really fun when they call and ask for my advice. That isn't the norm, though, so, I have learned to not give my thoughts unless they are asked for. At times, this is very difficult for me. I've found that the relationship doesn't grow when mom is telling them how to parent. I learned this the hard way.

I was trying to give one of our sons some parenting advice (he had the first grandchild) and he said to me, "Mom, she's our daughter and we will raise her the way we want to." Yes, it hurt my feelings. However, I was very proud of the man my son had become and the mothering I had done that he could speak up and say that to me in defense of his own family. I now think, pray, and plan if I feel I need to say something because I know those times must be carefully chosen, short and meaningful.

So, grandparenting can be challenging but so very rewarding. We can truly make a difference in the lives of our children and grandchildren. We have the opportunity to have a very unique role in their lives.

Barbara Gillentine
Yorba Linda, California

This article was updated and originally published in *League Spirit*, Winter 2006-07, Area Leaders' Letter for LLL of So. California/Nevada

Our children are not going to be just "our children" – they are going to be other people's husbands and wives and the parents of our grandchildren. Mary S. Calderone

Promoting Breastfeeding in Europe...on Wheels!

Togni Autotrasporti is an Italian company that transports milk in tankers. A few years ago, they decided to promote its products on trucks throughout central Italy. After the success of this idea, Mr. Togni decided to use his tankers to promote universal values as well. So he contacted the Board of La Leche League Italy.

That is why breastfeeding and La Leche League now appear on three trucks that travel 12,000 km (over 7,000 miles) every year through Italy, Germany, Austria, Slovenia and Eastern Europe. Each truck carries the picture of a baby at the breast. Next to the picture is the logo for LLL of Italy and the words "grazie mamma!!!" which means "thank you, Mummy." The message is an invitation to all people to think about breastfeeding, an act that is so simple and natural. President of LLL Italy, Martina Carabetta, said, "This special message is a source of pride and satisfaction for La Leche League."

News from LLLI

Barbara Emanuel, LLLI Executive Director, Jane Tuttle, Chairman of the Board, and LaJuana Oswalt, Associate Executive Director, recently attended three meetings in Europe: the European Council meeting, the International Division staff meeting, and the April 11-13 European Mastery Symposium (EMS). They joined Leaders from 24 countries at the EMS in Assisi, Italy. Barbara said this visit confirmed that we in La Leche League are all very diverse. What brings us together is our goal to help mothers breastfeed. The LLLI representatives found discussions with Leaders to be very productive and a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the important work LLL Leaders are doing around the world.

Rebecca Magalhães, Director of External Relations and Advocacy, attended the Child Survival Collaborations and Resources Group Spring Meeting, "Child Survival Investigations–Atlanta," April 14-18, in Atlanta, Georgia. Rebecca took part in the Nutrition Working Group (NWG) planning sessions as an NWG co-chair and attended a meeting of working group chairs. She also networked with meeting attendees and took selected LLLI materials for distribution as well as to award as raffle prizes.

Rosemary Gauld, LLL Leader, LLL of South Africa, represented LLLI at the Countdown to 2015 Conference, Cape Town, South Africa, April 17–19, 2008. This conference was attended mainly by government delegations. LLLI and WABA were two of only a few Non Governmental Organizations invited to have representation at the conference. Salley Cotten, LLL Leader in the DC area, also attended a follow-up meeting hosted by *SAVE the Children* in Washington, DC. Salley reported on the South Africa Conference.

LLLI was invited to send a representative to the World Health Organization Consultation on Approaches for Scaling Up Breastfeeding Interventions at Community Levels. It took place April 28-30 in Geneva Switzerland. LLL Leaders, Gisele Laviolle and Mimi de Maza also attended.

Heartland International, a Chicago-based organization, asked LLLI to speak to a group of ten Russian health care workers about establishing LLL-style mother-to-mother networks in Russia. Marian Tompson will be a presenter at the June 4 meeting. The program will show how maternal and child healthcare works in the US to ensure a healthy pregnancy, birth and first year of life, and also demonstrate the role of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), medical and social service agencies, and educational and governmental entities in this process.

The 36th Annual Seminar for Physicians is the collaboration between LLLI and the Eastern US Division and will be August 15-16, 2008 in Providence, Rhode Island, USA. Carol Kolar, LLLI, Diane Baier, Amy Shaw, and others in the EUS, plan a program packed with the latest information dealing with hot topics and issues that affect lactation management today. Log on to: <www.llli.org/ed/PhysSem.html?m=0,2,0,1> for more information.

Jane Crouse, LLLI Public Relations Associate, was busy with media contacts in April and May, after the latest study from the Centers for Disease Control on breastfeeding rates in the US. *Women's eNews* Reporter, Molly M. Ginty, wrote to Jane: "Thanks so much for your help with the recent Women's eNews piece about breastfeeding, published for Mother's Day and online at <www.womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/3595/context/cover/>

For the second year in a row, LLLI won National Parenting Publications Awards (NAPPA) awards. This year, the Wrap 'n Snap nursing bra won the Gold Award for parenting products. *Breastfeeding an Adopted Baby and Relactation* received an Honors Award. For marketing and the Web site, LLLI will use the NAPPA designations. Electronic seals and one-inch stickers will be placed on products through the spring of 2009. The signed licensing agreement is in place so LLLI can continue to claim that two of its products are NAPPA award winners.

News About the Founders

At a recent Founders' Meeting, the Founders discussed the topic of the five Founders (Mary White, Mary Ann Cahill, Marian Tompson, Edwina Froehlich, and Viola Lennon) returning to the LLLI Board of Directors and how they hope to proceed with their work. The Founders appreciate and understand how Leaders feel about the changes in La Leche League, but have concluded that the LLLI Board of Directors is the governing body of LLLI, and that this Board, as well as past Boards, is doing what they collectively feel is the responsible course of action for LLLI.

The Founders are determined to be active members of the LLLI Board, expressing their thoughts openly, and listening to others' views, suggesting changes if necessary. Their hope is that the entire Board can then come together and decide what is best for LLLI.

Three Founders were speakers at US Area Conferences this spring. Mary Ann and Edwina spoke in Michigan in April. Marian spoke in Georgia in May and will speak in Redmond, Washington, at the LLL of Washington Area Conference in October.

Marian Tompson recently read and highly recommends *The Biology of Belief* by Bruce Lipton, PhD, a cell biologist. This quote is from the back cover:

> *He demonstrates how the new science of Epigenetics is revolutionizing our understanding of the link between mind and matter, and the profound effects it has on our personal lives and the collective life of our species.*

The book is highly recommended by Joseph Chilton Pearce as "the definitive summary of the new biology and all it implies."

Edwina is reading *The Law of Attraction: The Basics of the Teachings of Abraham* by Jerry Hicks and Esther Hicks. A book review states: "The best scenario is to desire something and to bring yourself into the belief or expectation of achieving it...If you have a strong desire for something but you doubt your ability to achieve it, it cannot come, at least not right now, for you must bring your thought of desire and your thought of belief into alignment." Edwina says she is following the plan that is set forth in the book—to be able to have what you want and create your own future.

World Breastfeeding Week Celebrations

LLL in the USA announces World Breastfeeding Week Celebrations (WBWC) from May-September 30, 2008. In conjunction with the August Olympics, the theme is *Mother Support: Going for the Gold*. These events recognize the importance of supporting mothers to achieve the gold standard of infant feeding.

Even as young athletes can only emerge from a healthy start in life, there is no question that optimal infant and young child feeding is essential for optimal growth and development. One objective of WBWC is to raise funds for LLL in the USA, with emphasis on local communities and the LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US.

To donate to WBW or find a WBWC in your Area, go to: <http://www.lllusa.org/wbw/index.php>

LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US Celebrates One Year!

June 1, 2008 marks the one-year anniversary of the launch of the LLL Breastfeeding Helpline–US, a 24-hour toll free helpline service, 1-877-4-LALECHE (1-877-452-5324). More than 14,000 callers have been helped this past year. Currently, more than 88 Leaders volunteer to provide support to more than 1,600 mothers each month.

Funding and staffing the Helpline continues to be a challenge. There was a lot of excitement and enthusiasm at the startup. That momentum of support needs to continue throughout the coming year. The Helpline has been funded by donations from generous individuals, including Alumnae members. Funding from corporations and foundations is being sought.

If you can help with corporate contacts or in writing proposals, please consider assisting the Helpline funding committee. If you are an Active Leader, please consider volunteering to take some calls on the Helpline.

To donate or volunteer, visit: http://donate2LLL.org/helpline volunteer, or contact Christie Breen at christiebreen@yahoo.com.

Sue Steilen
LLL Alumnae Resource Development

Alumnae Council

Coordinator
Marilyn Thompson
3650 Forestview Lane
Plymouth MN 55441
763-559-2173
<marilyn_cinnamon@comcast.net>

Publications/Web Site
Sue Christensen, 1304 Leeper Ave.
South Bend IN 46617
574-288-7151
<s.christe@sbcglobal.net>

Public Relations/Web Site/ Online Discussion Group Coordinator
Janet Jendron, 634 Timberlake Dr.
Chapin, NC 29036
803-941-7089 <jjendron@usit.net>

Publications/Continuum Editor
Fran Dereszynski
5502 Maryport Dr.
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
714-840-1136 <dereszyn@gte.net>

Alumnae Treasurer
Susan Geil
4868 N. Hermitage Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
773-561-2229 <srgeil@yahoo.com>

Alumnae Resource Development/ Membership Coordinator
Sue Steilen, 13958 Grenelefe Lane
Homer Glen, IL 60491
708-301-0890
<suesteilen@comcast.net>

Alumnae Liaison to LLLI:
Pam Oselka, 9701 Kruger Rd.
Union Pier, MI 49129
269-469-2706 <poselka1945@att.net>

Interim Area Alumnae Representative (AAR) Coordinator & Special Projects
Nancy Franklin, 3425 Turtle Village
San Antonio, TX 78230
210-979-6372
<NBFLLL77@aol.com>

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

From the Mailbag

It's June! The first day of summer will soon arrive. Will it be time for you to take a vacation or a short break from work and a busy routine? Most children regard summer vacation as a blessing and the best time of their lives. The weather is warm. There are longer hours of sunlight. For many families, it's time to discover the joys of traveling to a new vacation spot or to revisit a family's traditional place. Reconnecting with family and friends can be something those with an "empty nest" may do on a day or weekend trip. Of course, it's nice to return home so you can cool off, relax, put your feet up, reflect on that recent get-away, and share memories with acquaintances. Recently I read an article in the *Smithsonian* about a study of America's recreational habits. It revealed a decline in camping, fishing and visits of state and national parks over the past 25 years. The question was posed: Could this be due to the American public's fascination with electronic recreation–Internet, email, video games, DVDs, PDAs, podcasts? Conservation ecologist, Patricia Zaradic, coined the word "videophilia" to describe this cultural change. Instead of being out of doors and spending time with nature, this sedentary recreation has become more prevalent. Zaradic mentions that after taking her young children on an outdoor trip with no electronic entertainment, they "came back more well-centered, calm, able to focus on projects and work."

On page 7, Helene Scheff shares ideas families can do at no added expense. Going for a neighborhood walk can be a short get-a-way to look at the landscape and flowers or say, "Hi" to neighbors as you pass by. Bring nature into the house and gather a bouquet of garden flowers, dandelions or flowering weeds if you are not physically up to walking. Gaze at nature while you do chores in the house. Whatever you plan or even do on the spur-of-the-moment, I wish you a happy safe summer with joyful times–expected and unexpected. Maybe you will feel "more well-centered, calm, able to focus on projects and work," too!

Please take time to share your thoughts about news about LLLI and the Founders on p. 13-14. *(This could be a regular feature.)* Spontaneously created articles from readers arrived in my email box. They are published in this issue. Thank you for taking time to write your stories. Comments I also received from readers. From Helene Scheff: *I do look forward to getting Continuum and taking some time to read through it and see the names of people who have meant so much to me in the past. Thanks for the clarity of the look and the content.* From Marian Tompson: *I very much enjoyed the last Continuum. You did such a good job that I think you must be enjoying it.*

In the wings to come to you in the next issue:

- Book Review: *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*
- When Grandma Becomes Mother
- Anniversary Reunion and fundraising done by Alumnae in Springfield, MA
- Stories from new Leaders accredited after their children were adults

Won't you think about being a writer for *Continuum*? Write-on with your ideas. Did Louise Cox's article on page 1-2 trigger thoughts about an empty nest or your relationships with your adult children, daughter-in-law or son-in-law? What advice would you give to today's younger mothers? For those who are grandmothers, send me the name your grandchild(ren) calls you? Is there history or culture for a name? Are you G-Ma, MeMaw, Nanny, MiMi, or Gramma Mary or other? Send your articles and stories to me at: dereszyn@gte.net or by ground mail. Articles selected for publication may be edited for length, clarity, and adherence to LLL journalistic guidelines. *Send articles for the next issue by September 1, 2008.*

Until next time,

Fran

(published May 23, 2008)

A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken. James Dent

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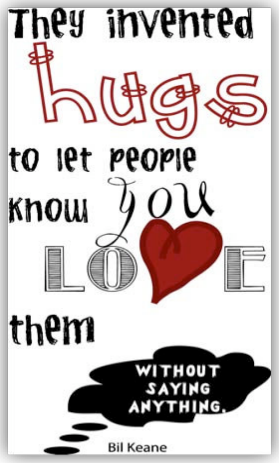

Join the Alumnae!

Yes, I want to keep in touch and support the LLL Alumnae Association. Use the short form below or the online Membership Form at: http://alumnae.llli.org/Alumnae/Join.html

Enclosed is:

- ☐ $20 for year-long membership
- ☐ $ _____ donation
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Questions? Contact Susan at: <srgeil@yahoo.com>

Send payment to:
Susan Geil
LLL Alumnae Treasurer
4868 N. Hermitage Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640