

# Continuum

*Our Mission:*

*To provide an opportunity for current and former LLL Leaders and members to continue a lifelong connection with one another, extend LLL values and wisdom into all stages of life, and support the mission of La Leche League.*

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Announcing the new Alum logo! The Alumnae Council thanks Paul Torgus, former LLLI graphic designer, who created it.

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## ✕ Holiday Thoughts and Traditions ✕

This issue of *Continuum* comes to you during the summer months, but I decided to include ideas pertaining to the winter holidays. Some ideas may apply to summer holidays. The comments started when I presented a question to the ALLLumnae Yahoo! online discussion last fall when I asked members to share their ideas and customs for the winter holidays.

**Question posed:** Do you have winter holiday traditions to share, practical gift ideas, favorite foods you cook, or what your family counts on you to serve at gatherings—no matter what? Here is a summary of some tips I heard for November or for any month of the year on the topic of "How not to gain weight during the holidays." Following these tips may help you to not gain weight plus your digestion will thank you. You may certainly modify them to your own likes and what you keep in your pantry or refrigerator.

- Have something nutritious before going to a party to curb your appetite so you are not hungry or tempted to over consume at the gathering. It can be a little snack of vegetables and/or possibly a half piece of toast with a small amount of jelly and a dab of non-fat cottage cheese added.
- Make sure *half* of your lunches and *half* of your dinners are healthy vegetables.
- Bread, potatoes, and desserts should NOT equal more than half of each meal.
- Also, *no* seconds on anything.

Three Alumnae members shared their input about food and family traditions and gave permission to print them in *Continuum*. Some of you may be super-organized and shop for holiday gifts all year round, wrap them early, or address holiday cards in September/October ready to be mailed out after the first of November. I have two out-of state friends who have done that for years! At any rate, here are food tips and customs for a "head start" any time. I hope you find them useful in some way for any holiday celebrations your family shares. You can also incorporate ideas into your family's traditions any time of the year or start new ones!

☞ Our Christmas tree always goes up on December 7. It went up on that day in 1983 because shortly after I purchased the tree, I realized I was in labor. I left the tree at home to go to the hospital. My husband helped the two older children decorate it that night after my son, Douglas, was born that afternoon. The next year the children insisted it needed to be put up that same day since that was what had happened the year before. Thus are traditions born!  
*(continued on p. 2)*

# ❄️ Holiday Thoughts and Traditions ❄️ (continued from p. 1)

I find that putting out all the decorations, etc., right after Thanksgiving means I am tired of them by Christmas Day. So I start using Christmas Spode dinnerware on the day after Thanksgiving, but I bring out other decorations gradually. Everything is finally complete, even to the holiday mugs, a few days before December 25. We have boxes packed with the various installments and can pull a box out when we are ready for the next set of decorations. What is really interesting is what your children tell about your family traditions that you never thought about—as in this comment from my daughter. My friends inform me that she has me "nailed." At least she loves me! My daughter wrote:

*My mother always made gargantuan batches of cranberry banana bread when I was growing up. It was the habitual gift to anyone who'd had enough involvement in our lives to earn a "Thank you!" present at Christmas time. From the tiny loaf pans for the school's music teacher who taught us for less than an hour once a week, to the huge 9"x 5" loaf pans for the teachers who taught us the basics of education five-plus hours a day, five days a week, and everywhere in between. She made cranberry banana bread for everyone. For more than a week, we'd be carrying cranberry banana bread to every organized event we went to—to choir practice and Sunday school, to school ("Here's the loaf for the bus driver, and you have art today, so here's the loaf for the art teacher..."), probably even to Boy Scout gatherings. (I don't remember taking any to Girl Scouts, probably because my mother was the troop leader.) The first half of December was dominated by cranberry banana bread and lists of recipients. Apparently, the lack of this is why my house has never smelled like Christmas to me (because my husband is allergic to bananas). A few years ago, I looked for a candle that would make my house smell like Christmas, and couldn't find one. Now I know why: None of the candles were labeled, "Cranberry banana bread." Does anyone have a recipe for cranberry not-banana bread for me to experiment with?*

*With laughter from,  
Anne Marie Miller  
Lilburn, Georgia USA  
[annemariem@bellsouth.net](mailto:annemariem@bellsouth.net)*

☛ In our family at Thanksgiving dinner, we all share what we are grateful for. Everyone has to take part right down to Jacob who is two-and-a-half-years-old. Then we all share in the desserts that everyone brought to share. Years ago, we stopped exchanging gifts on Christmas—except for the younger kids. All of the adults do a little research on needy organizations all over the world. Then on Christmas Day before we have dinner, we decide where our pooled money will be best used to help others. In past years we have bought goats, enabled a town to drill five water wells, supplied supplies to schools, helped farmers in Peru, and bought personal products for teenage girls in the Middle East. We also alternate between choosing projects outside the USA and within USA.

For Thanksgiving 2010, we drove to the San Francisco Bay area to visit my daughter and son-in-law and their twin boys born earlier in May. I made napkins out of leftover fall Halloween and Thanksgiving material. I will do the same for Christmas. I also created an "envelope" out of holiday yardage to wrap the napkins in. My two adult daughters love getting the napkins for their home!

*Jan Hann  
Huntington Beach, California USA  
[essenjay67@yahoo.com](mailto:essenjay67@yahoo.com)*

☛ Actually, I think we're going to try the half plate of veggies.

That's a great idea! Jan, I *love* your idea of giving to a specific charity! I told my husband about it and we are now proposing it to his siblings. I plan to do the same for my siblings. We are really at a point in our lives that we don't really need more "stuff." How much more awesome and meaningful to share our abundance with those who don't have as much! I am *so* excited to do this—hope everyone agrees.

My husband, Phil, and I live in the community of Henderson, Nevada, southeast of Las Vegas. Our three adult children are scattered to the south and east of us.

My daughter and her family live in Kansas City, Missouri. My two sons live in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas area where one son and his wife have two children (5) and (9); the other son is single. In 2010, we will spend Thanksgiving in Missouri while my daughter-in-law's mother visits with them in Texas. My husband will first take a short "road trip" to Texas for our granddaughter's eighth birthday before Thanksgiving and then meet me in Kansas City. The best part! His sports utility vehicle (SUV) will be loaded with boxes of the kids' stuff that we have been storing for years, including high school memorabilia, sports jackets, sports stuff—you name it. Now they have basements and attics and *they* can store it! Most of our extended families still live in California where we traditionally go for December holidays to visit my dad who is 86 and the only one of our parents still living. He loves our traditional Italian family Christmas Eve dinner that has been modified over the years—used to be all kinds of fish/shellfish. Now that I have a shellfish allergy, everyone agrees they'd rather have sausages and peppers, along with antipasto, cold broccoli salad, linguine with olives and optional anchovies, and a scrumptious cauliflower dish made from a family recipe. When I cook for any special holiday or occasion, my kids always want and expect my broccoli casserole. After cleaning up, it's birthday time for me (December 24) and for my niece (December 25). Next is the seasonal gift exchange. Before his parents passed away, Christmas Day was usually spent with my husband's family. That has changed and now we often go to my long-time best friend's home and exchange gifts. ☆

*Marie Bevins  
Henderson, Nevada USA  
[marie@negrino.com](mailto:marie@negrino.com)*

**Book Suggestion:** *How Do I Live When I Know I'm Going to Die*, by Rev. Anton Grosz, PhD, an empathetic look at the gradual dying process, the perspective of one dying, their caregivers, and their surviving ones. Includes insights about life's most challenging experience, along with hospice and end-of-life information.

Here are articles on the topic of *Family Memories and Smells* found on the Alumnae Web site. *Fran Dereszynski, Continuum Editor*

*Nothing is more memorable than a smell. One scent can be unexpected, momentary and fleeting, yet conjure up a childhood summer beside a lake in the mountains.* —Diane Ackerman

## ✧ Family Memories and Smells: What smells remind you of your childhood? ✧

I have been thinking of different smells and how easily I can be transported to a memory by certain smells. The combination of bleach and Old Spice cologne reminds me of Chad, my first boyfriend in high school, and when I went with him to see *Sound of Music* in a theater in Chicago. Lilacs take me back to Lombard, Illinois, and the Lombard Lilac Festival. Lilacs always make me smile.

*Nancy Franklin  
San Antonio, Texas USA*

Smells and sounds are truly evocative to me. My first memory is that of hot tar on the road outside my grandparents' home. It brings back the feeling of being special, being on holiday, having to be careful not to get tar on our clothes or skin! Other smells are associated with coming home after school when my mother had been baking, along with the smell of my own home and the feeling of real pleasure and relaxation it brings when I walk in the

door. The smell of shoe polish—lovely. I can still feel the sun on my back when I polish my black school shoes outdoors before the start of another week. The hot warm smell of the beach at Cape Cod. Sounds are also important—the sound of sparrows twittering takes me back to the chapel at school. Birds seemed to roost immediately outside windows. Certain songs bring back memories, too. The sense of smell and hearing are such gifts.

*Anne Devereux  
New Zealand*

The smell of tuna fish salad with eggs and sweet pickles makes me think of my kitchen when I was growing up and watched my mother cut *everything* into tiny, tiny pieces. No slap-dash salad making for her! I used to get impatient but now I watch TV cooking shows and see how small pieces sometimes enable flavors to blend better—so she knew what she was doing! The smell of a

motorboat—the mixture of gas and oil—reminds me of my dad and the countless hours he spent pulling us around the lake in Texas. I thought he loved to do it, but now I realize it was a sacrifice, too. The smell of slow-cooked pinto beans reminds me of my grandmother. I spent hours watching her make biscuits and corn bread. She grabbed and sifted flour from the kitchen “flour drawer.”

*Janet Jendron  
Chapin, South Carolina USA*

I love the smell of a library. Must be why I became a librarian! At the school library where I worked, every so often someone would come in—an adult or child—and give a big sniff. Ah, the library! ☆

*Edna Kelly  
Houston, Texas USA*

## ✧ LLL Alumnae Changes: Web Site, Listservs, and Mission ✧

When the LLL Alumnae Association Council met in November 2010, the mission and goals were updated. One of the goals for 2011 is to update the Alumnae Web site, give it a new look to accompany the new logo—using a new format and software that Alumnae Council members can easily access to post files and updates. The new site is slated to go “live” this summer. To make the transition as smooth as possible, visitors to the old site will be redirected to the new site.

On the Council meeting agenda was the topic of online discussion groups (listservs): *Empty Nesters, Aging Parents, Children and Challenges, Inbetweeners, Marital Changes, and Reality Check*. After careful consideration, the LLL Alumnae Association Council has decided to focus on supporting one main online discussion group for all Alumnae members, the ALLLumnae Yahoo! Group. The moderators and members of each listserv have been

notified of this change. Listservs will no longer be listed as a benefit of Alumnae membership. The Web site and Alumnae materials will be updated to reflect this change. Each listserv will be independent and determine any membership pre-requisites and whether there is a membership cap, etc. The LLL Alumnae Association name has been removed from the name and description on each listserv. The Alumnae Council wishes continued success to each listserv.

The mission of the LLL Alumnae Association is to provide an opportunity for current and former LLL Leaders and member to continue a lifelong connection with one another, extend LLL values and wisdom into all stages of life, and support the mission of La Leche League. We encourage Alumnae members who discover shared interests—whether it is knitting, a hobby, new topics or raising teens—to create their own spin off topics

separate from the ALLLumnae Yahoo! Group. Note that only this Yahoo! Group will use the LLL Alumnae Association name and we are happy to see that it is growing and reached over 100 members in April! Log on to <http://alumnae.llli.org/Alumnae/Join.html> for information about membership.



If you are a current Alum Member, request to join the ALLLumnae Yahoo! Group by contacting or Sara Dodder Furr [saradfurr@gmail.com](mailto:saradfurr@gmail.com) or Kathy Parkes [Kparkes@aol.com](mailto:Kparkes@aol.com) ☆

In 2007 the generation length in the United States was 25.2 years. This year, the Alumnae Association is 26 years old and enters its second generation! I thought this would be an opportunity to look at how the Alumnae Association began and its milestones over the years. As Alum members you build the legacy that will transcend into 2036 when the third generation steps up to the plate. —Fran Dereszynski, Continuum Editor

## ✧ The Alumnae Association: A Second Generation Begins ✧

**1985:** Marian Tompson chats with former Texas Area Coordinator of Leaders, Ellen Goodrich (King). They conceive the idea of an alumnae association as a means for inactive Leaders to stay in contact with each other and La Leche League (LLL). The idea grew. Ellen became editor of *Alumnae News*. Leaders began subscribing. The LLLI Board of Directors issued a directive that an Alumnae Association be established.

**1989:** LLLI Conference in Anaheim, California—Betty Wagner scheduled a gathering. The wealth of wisdom, experience, and enthusiasm in the room energized everyone. In a few weeks, a volunteer staff was formed.

**1990:** In the spring, a questionnaire was sent to members with questions about who we are and why we exist. In June, Sue Christensen, Sharon Fairborn, and Roni de Lao met in Chicago with Betty Wagner, Judy Torgus, Faye Young, and Sandy Tauber. Deciding on a name was first and sent them to the dictionary. We are “alumnae” spelled with an “ae,” the Latin feminine plural of alumna. Then there was the dilemma that the name connotes graduation from a class or school. The alumnae group encompasses those who are active Leaders all the way to long-retired members. Among us are mothers with younger children, teens, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. From what have we graduated? Most have not stopped mothering. Some have not stopped leading LLL meetings. At long last, it’s safe to say that it is likely we have all weaned at least one child! Our name is, and will remain, the Alumnae Association. We want to stay in contact with women with whom we have shared significant parts of our lives and established deep friendships over the years. We want to maintain contact with others who hold similar values and philosophies. We can continue to help and be helped as our life experiences expand. In the following years, Alum activities were popular at LLLI Conferences held every other year.

**1992:** Havasupi Canyon Hike, Arizona, was the Alum trip. Outdoor fun!

**2002:** Havasupi Reunion Hike in area of Grand Canyon, Arizona.

**2004:** Under the travel expertise of Alum member, LLL Leader and tour guide for hostels, Phoebe Kerness, there were 49 women who traveled to Savannah, Georgia, and enjoyed a city tour by bus, visiting the historic district, walking tour of historic homes, museums, a theatre production, and group dinner. Phoebe lives in Savannah and added her personal insights to the city’s culture and attractions.

**2006:** For the Alum trip to San Antonio, Texas, 34 members joined this gathering. Again Phoebe Kerness was the experienced tour guide, assisted by local Leader, Nancy Franklin. The Alums traveled by bus, city trolley, and river barge in between walking tours and strolls on the city’s famous River Walk. Itinerary included the Alamo Mission, narrated city tour, stops at two additional missions, cultural museum, botanical gardens, the renovated art deco Aztec Theatre, lunch at a Mexican restaurant, and dinner at a local steak house.

**2007:** The LLLI Conference in Chicago, Illinois, celebrated LLL’s 50th anniversary. The Alums again hosted the Founder’s Parlor and Alum Room. Janet Jendron was Mistress of Ceremonies at the Founder’s Tea. Special memorabilia were given to each guest. A special blue hard cover limited edition of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* signed by the Founders was available through pre-orders from the Conference Bookstore. In the following summer months, the LLL Alumnae Association transitioned to become independent with its own officers and treasury, was accountable for its own expenses, and production, printing, and mailing of *Continuum*. Leaders and members began to send dues directly to the Alum Treasurer instead of to LLLI.

**2008:** The Alums donated \$3,000 to the LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US and continued the same donation during 2009 and 2010. Philadelphia was the destination of the fall trip when 29 Alums participated. Phoebe Kerness coordinated the trip with Evy Simon, LLL Leader who lives in Philadelphia and who is a docent for the city. Evy connected the group to docent friends including one in full period costume (think Betsy Ross!). Everyone appreciated this personal attention. Philadelphia, the Birthplace of the United States, featured the Liberty Bell, Betsy Ross House, Independence Hall, Mural Arts Tour, Rodin Museum, Philadelphia Museum of Art (“Rocky Steps”), lunch at the City Tavern—John Adams’ favorite tavern, dinner at a Turkish restaurant and an Italian restaurant, lunch at the open-air Farmer’s Market, and impromptu late night chats.

**2010:** In November, Leaders and Alum members were invited to attend a brainstorming session at the Council meeting to share future plans and ideas. Alum members who could not attend were invited to submit their ideas ahead of time for the group discussion.

**2011:** In March, the new Alum logo was unveiled! The Alumnae Council is thankful to Paul Torgus, former LLLI graphic designer, who designed the new Alum logo. “Delightful! I love it! It’s great! I love the colors!” are responses about the logo! The Alumnae Association becomes a Ruby Sponsor for World Breastfeeding Week. Go site seeing to view the logo at: <http://www.lllusa.org/wbw/sponsors.php> In November 2011, the Alum trip will be to the oldest city in the US, St. Augustine, Florida, and includes a private tour of the Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche.

A vague idea and a newsletter started an organization 26 years ago, continuing to support current and former Leaders and LLL members. Information from *LLLI Alumnae News*, Summer 1990 was a resource for this article. ☆

*Fran Dereszynski, Continuum Editor*

Since November 2010, I have been the new Alumnae Representative Coordinator (ARC). During that time, I've enjoyed hearing about Alum activities and getting to know Alumnae Representatives (ARs) across the US. Here are a few of their stories. For those of you considering becoming an AR, please note that an AR will not necessarily do all the activities mentioned. Choose what meets your interests and the needs of your community. Email me at [gmgesley@gmail.com](mailto:gmgesley@gmail.com) for more information. I look forward to chatting with you. Maybe we'll meet in person in St. Augustine this November.

Gail Gesley, Alumnae Representative Coordinator, LLL Alumnae Association Council  
Oakland, California USA

## ✧ Update from Gail Gesley, ARC ✧

I have been the Alumnae Representative (AR) for LLL of Pennsylvania West (PA-West) for almost six years now, and I LOVE it! The Alum members meet monthly from January to October and have a nickname, MiLLLky Way LLLadies. We get together at different locations throughout the western PA area. We just celebrated the fifth year of being together as an Alumnae group. At the meeting we welcomed two former Leaders: Martha Peelor and Mary Pam Kilgore. Martha was around during the beginnings of LLL of PA-West. She is now a lactation consultant and was one of the first to take the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) exam. Mary Pam, the Area Coordinator of Leaders years ago, also became an Alum member. They both stressed the importance of La Leche League in their lives, and the influence it has had on the careers they now have.

I began as an AR when I was an LLLI member and Alumnae Association member. I was a Leader Applicant\* at the time and decided to finish the application process. This was at the same time that my daughter, Ariel, was also a Leader Applicant. We were both accredited in 2006 and we still love to help mothers. My daughter is also a physician and comes to Pittsburgh every year to speak at the Area Conference. The Alum MiLLLky Way LLLadies became Ariel's Great Auntie Network. Many have become my good friends. I'm very proud to be counted as an LLL Leader and feel very fortunate to be in the company of such interesting, compassionate and fun-loving women. Now I have eight grandchildren. Many of the Alums are grandmothers, too. I can say that the support we get from each other is priceless. Talk of the family bed, nursing a toddler, or having a home birth is accepted, often celebrated even more

so now that we are embracing the next generation of LLL families. If you are thinking of being an AR, here are some tips. Plan get-togethers. Leaders really do like to hang out with other Leaders, especially those who are more seasoned. Don't stress over the little things, have fun, and enjoy the moments.

Janet Burt  
Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania USA

\* Note: Janet wrote about her journey to becoming a Leader in *Continuum*, p. 10, Jan-April 2009, posted in the *Continuum* online archives <http://alumnae.lli.org>

I am the AR for LLL of Southern California/Nevada. In early March, we had a brown bag lunch to discuss the upcoming Area Conference in May and the role local Alumnae members can play to celebrate the Area's 50th anniversary.

Sharon Fairborn  
Newport Beach, California USA

I'm the Alumnae Representative (AR) for LLL of Eastern Pennsylvania (PA-E). My years of service on the Area Council positioned me well to be an AR because I know many retired Leaders either personally or from putting their labels on the Area Leaders' Letter or *Area Directory* for bulk mailings. I have a database of what I hope is most Leaders who were ever accredited or passed through our boundaries either as a Leader Reserve (status years ago) or a retired Leader. (Some don't tell us when they land in our Area, but I do my best). I think our Area Alumnae database now has over 700 names, but unfortunately only about one-fourth to one-third of them are accurate addresses. I do my best to keep in contact with all those who retire or move away since taking on the position of AR in the early 1990s. I have a pretty good email list of 271 Alumnae, too, and keep in

touch when news hits, like the deaths of three beloved Founders and some of the even sadder news happening in LLL today, notably Marian Tompson's resignation letter. I invite the Alums to our Area Conferences for the same registration fee as active Leaders and have a reserved luncheon table and a gift for those who attend! Usually in November, we enjoy an annual gathering of retired and long-time local Leaders in one of the suburban Philadelphia counties. Long-time active Leader, Mary Ann Albert, has been a great hostess and planner. I drive an hour to be with them, because a) I've been a Leader so long (over 31 years) that I know almost all of them, and b) to represent the Area. We usually have 10-20 attendees. The first year Mary Ann invited us all to her home for a regularly scheduled evening LLL Meeting #1 of her local Group. So we had some of her regular Group moms present, who were impressed by the breadth of experience of the former Leaders and we all enjoyed the evening. Since then, Mary Ann has planned a dinner in a private room of a local Italian restaurant yearly. It's been great fun!

Judy Polley  
Exton, Pennsylvania USA

I have been the AR for LLL of Kansas since 2003 and have retired from the position. For a few years, I did an annual newsletter and some fundraising during World Breastfeeding Week as well as an Alum reunion. I think the AR position offers value and potential to the Area. LLL has played a very large part in who I am today. I shall always remain a part, one way or another. ☆

Barbara Gabbert-Bacon  
Wichita, Kansas USA

### ✧ We Remember ✧

If you know of a Leader who has died, send her name, city, state and country, where she served LLL, and year of death to Nancy Franklin at: [nancyblake.franklin@gmail.com](mailto:nancyblake.franklin@gmail.com) Please note this is Nancy's new email address.

## ✧ Update on My Grandmother's Kit ✧



*In the last issue of Continuum, Mary Baker wrote about the Grandmother's Kit she puts together when visiting her grandchildren, changing it for their age and interests. Many members mentioned they liked this idea. Here is a follow-up on Mary's spring visit.*

It was so much fun visiting Madeline for her third birthday! I was able to make valentines with her (see photo) but since our visit was so short and sweet, I had to leave the cookie baking to her mother to do with her so they could use the heart-shaped cookie cutter I bought at a retail gourmet store. It has soft silicone around the top for little and big hands to press down on. ☆

Mary Baker  
Thousand Oaks, California USA  
[Mary\\_Baker91789@yahoo.com](mailto:Mary_Baker91789@yahoo.com)

## ✧ When You Look Like the Real Grandma: Surprise—Instant Bonding ✧



One weekend last November, my husband and I visited our niece and her two-year-old daughter, Wren, who is our grandniece. Wren had not met me before. When I arrived, she took one look at me and eagerly shouted, "Grandma!" That surprised her mother to no end. We speculated that her real Grandma had visited recently. Both of us have short hair, wear glasses, and had the same color jacket yet I am a foot taller than her grandmother. Wren hung on my legs,

bounced on my lap, wanted to sit near me all the time, and bubbled in the morning when I woke up! Could it have been comfy energy? It was a treat to be so revered because my own grandchildren live far away. Wren's grandmother lives a long distance from her and loves nature. When she visits, she brings small plastic animals for her to play with. Each morning, little Wren finds one or is given one wrapped in tissue paper. She can identify a meerkat, polar bear, black bear, grizzly bear, etc. As soon as she sits at the table, she begins to play.

Her favorite approach is to tell them "good night" and lay them down on their sides. She has quite a collection. Apparently those daily gifts kept her occupied for hours! In one photo, Wren puts the animals to sleep. In the other photo, granduncle David (my husband) and Wren eat orange slices after she watched him peel off the skin. My husband and I experienced an instant bonding experience with Wren that weekend. Wren's imagination and creative play with the plastic animals is ongoing. ☆

Louise Cox  
Windsor Locks, Connecticut USA  
[davlouc@cox.net](mailto:davlouc@cox.net)



## ✧ The Grandparent Gap ✧

For the first time in US history, millions of children (and their parents) are vulnerable to having less time with their grandparents than more. Between 1970 and 2007, the average age for a woman to give birth rose 3.6 years. During the same period, life expectancy for a 65-year-old increased 3.4 years. At the same time, studies show grandparents take care of more children than nursery schools and day-care centers combined. This can have a ripple effect for each family member. Many parents raise their children without the support of their own mothers and fathers. In addition, their children don't have the social, behavioral, and cognitive benefits that come with a grandparent/grandchild relationship. Allison Gilbert, author of *Parentless*

*Parents: How the Loss of Our Mothers and Fathers Impacts the Way We Raise Our Own Children*, reports:

*Researchers have long studied the influence grandparents have on grandchildren, and it's been determined that kids are shaped by grandparents in irrefutable and incalculable ways. Children who spend time with their grandparents often have higher self-esteem, tend to have fewer behavioral problems and do better in social circles. The cumulative lack of these influences, and many others, is the grandparent gap. Grandparents often pass on their love of art, books and music. They teach skills related to their jobs and interests. They provide unconditional love and acceptance. And, especially important as children age, grandmothers and grandfathers often provide a*

*safe and trusted refuge away from parents. For the teenage children of parentless parents, having fewer places to turn is a particular challenge, as many begin facing mounting peer pressure related to sex, alcohol and drugs.*

If our parents have passed away recently or many years ago, they can't pass on family traditions or tell the stories passed down over the ages—those interesting tales about ancestors or living relatives. When grandparents are not around, some families make efforts to have grandparent role models in their children's lives. And vice versa, some parents who don't have grandchildren of their own feel fulfilled if they take on that type of supportive role with friends' children. ☆

# ✠ Visiting the Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche in St. Augustine ✠

“Nuestra Senora de La Leche y Buen Parto.” I’d heard that Spanish phrase ever since I’d started attending La Leche League meetings in southern New Mexico in 1982. “Our Lady of Happy Delivery and Plentiful Milk” was the loose English translation. The Catholic shrine with an 18” tall statue portraying a crowned Mary nursing baby Jesus inspired medallions that Dr. Gregory White gave out to his obstetrical patients in the Chicago area in the 1940s and 1950s. When the Founders were looking for a name that didn’t include “breastfeeding,” (thought to be a word too graphic for the time), Dr. White suggested the alliterative shrine-inspired “La Leche League.”

And now I was actually here. Giving myself the January birthday gift of two weeks of warmth, I was on my way to Key West for a writing seminar. But St. Augustine was my first stop after I flew into Jacksonville.

Coming from a desert state, it was a bit challenging to navigate the twisty inlets, islands, causeways, peninsulas, rivers, marshlands, and intracoastal waterways. Historic St. Augustine stretches north-to-south along Florida’s upper Atlantic coast, and the shrine itself is on the grounds in the northeast end or “uptown” of this coastal stretch. Many antique shops line San Marcos Boulevard, so this area is also called “antiques row.”

## History

Juan Ponce de León (day lay-OWN) was the first European to discover Florida in 1513 on an exploratory voyage from Puerto Rico. The Timucuan Indians already there stood six foot to seven-foot tall, so the 4’ 11” de León may have thought he’d found the legendary Fountain of Youth. In 1565, another Spanish expedition landed and stayed. An early version of the shrine was erected after Father Francisco Lopez de Mendoza Grajales (“Father Lopez”) held the first Catholic Mass here in 1565 with the Pedro Menendez de Avilés (ah-vee-LAYCE) expedition. Members of the Menendez expedition founded the Nombre de Dios (Name of God) Mission and thus began missionary May – August 2011

work of the Diocesan priests, Jesuits, and Franciscans along the Atlantic coast to convert the Timucuan Indians. The Spanish built a fort, but the French also built a fort to the north. After the Spanish slaughtered the French troops, the name *matanzas* (massacres) was applied to several area forts, estuaries, and bays. The La Leche Shrine sits along Matanzas Bay’s Hospital Creek. The Spanish fort’s military hospital gives the creek its name.

The shrine grounds are bordered by Hospital Creek on the east, Ocean Avenue on the north, San Marcos Boulevard on the west, and Pine Street on the south. The current incarnation of the La Leche Shrine was built in 1915 but has its roots in a 4th century grotto in Bethlehem in what is now Israel. This “Milk Grotto” is maintained today by the religious order of Franciscans.



Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche  
Photo taken by Kathy Grossman

## Visiting the La Leche Shrine

I was in St. Augustine a total of three days in January 2011. My first visit was on a blustery, rainy morning. Standing in the little shrine I’d heard about since my Leader Applicant days was thrilling and moving. The wind and drizzle outside contrasted perfectly with the quiet, humble little sanctuary. I’d seen this statue of Mary (or perhaps the earlier version of her, now housed in the nearby museum) countless times in our literature and books. After parking my rental car in the spacious lot near the gift shop, I now stood alone in the room with guttering votive candles along the walls and this sweet little statue.

On the Nombre de Dios Mission grounds sits this first and smallest Marian Shrine of the Americas. The

outer walls are espaliered with boxwood, the roof is Spanish tile, and a bas-relief statue of St. Peter sits above the front door. Small stained-glass windows let in the light to reflect warm golds, creams, and beiges on the white-washed walls. On the second day of my visit, these windows were open to let in the calmer breezes. Five plain wooden benches and several small wooden seats stand along the walls. I recommend arranging to have a few moments alone in this small and intimate setting.



Older versions of statue  
Photo taken by Kathy Grossman

## The statue

The present Nuestra Señora/Our Lady of Leche statue is 18” tall (which includes the crown), was created in the 1970s, and was recently renovated. It sits in a highlighted niche on the south wall of the shrine. Two older versions of the statue are housed in the nearby museum.

## Lagoon, Bridge, and Grounds

The 208’ high “Great Cross” stands on the shores of Hospital Creek. As a stainless steel artwork, it is second in height only to St. Louis’s 630’ tall Gateway Arch. Nearby, a statue of Father Lopez reaches to the sky. One of several statues scattered throughout the grounds, the manmade structures are actively complemented by nature.

I crossed and recrossed the footbridge over the lagoon where families were taking photographs. Herons, egrets, ducks, pelicans, and wood storks were alternately preening themselves along the banks and stretching in the sun, diving for fish, and perching on the bridge railings. (continued on p. 7)

## ✧ Visiting the Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche in St. Augustine ✧ (continued from p. 6)

Frequent rain, dew, and tropical humidity mean a lush landscape *and* constant pruning, picking up of fallen palm fronds and tree limbs. The cedars, various palms, ferns, and live oaks draped with Spanish moss provide an intense green setting for the little white shrine. Many parishioners had set plaques dedicated to loved ones among the plantings.

### Gift shop, museum, and church

The gift shop has restrooms and vending machines. Friendly clerks sell many religious items including medals in sterling silver and aluminum; silver, crystal, and wood rosaries; La Leche statue replicas in bisque, plaster, and resin; memento boxes; bookmarks; Mother's Manual prayer books; and postcards. The Nombre de Dios Museum opened in September 2010 and houses two older Nuestra Senora statues. Director Eric Johnson commented

that the 1930s statue seems to show the most skin. The bookmark I bought in the gift shop seems to show the 1970s statue. The Prince of Peace Catholic Church actively serves the parish.

### IF YOU GO

**Getting around:** The city is walkable, but you can also take horse-drawn carriage tours. The Old Town Trolley tour cars snake through the city, where the shrine is a stop.

**Seeing the sites:** Castillo de San Marcos (old Spanish fortification) National Monument; The Senator, a 600-year-old live oak tree; the St. Augustine Lighthouse; San Sebastian Winery (free tours and tasting); St. George walking district with restaurants and shops; Flagler College (housed in a 19<sup>th</sup> century luxury hotel when St. Augustine was the "Riviera of the Americas"),

Potter's House of Wax; the original Ripley's Believe it or Not! Museum; the Old Jail; history museum; and the Pirate and Treasure Museum.

**Other sights:** Florida State School for the Deaf and Blind (where Ray Charles attended), art galleries, alligator farm, ghost and graveyard tours, pirate shows, seafood restaurants, a chocolate factory, and the Bridge of Lions that crosses Matanzas Bay. ☆

*Kathy Grossman*

*Midvale, Utah, USA*

*LLL of Utah Area Coordinator of Leaders*

*USWest Leader Support and*

*Leaven Managing Editor*

[hkgrossman@gmail.com](mailto:hkgrossman@gmail.com)

*Editorial Note: Not able to attend the Alum trip? Look for a trip summary in a future issue of Continuum.*

## ✧ Call Out for Alumnae to "Nurse Along" New Leaders ✧

The LLL Alumnae Association recently received an idea (to "nurse along" new Leaders) from an active Leader from a small Area with 30 Leaders. She wrote that there are many young mothers who have just become Leaders or who are interested in becoming Leader Applicants. For many mothers in today's economy, money is tight. Would Alum members be willing to sponsor a new Leader? Have you retired and would like to donate *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* (2010) or *The Breastfeeding Answer Book* (2003) to a local Group in your state or Area? If you no longer need or use *The Leader's Handbook*, perhaps you would like to donate it as well? Check with a local Area Administrator to ask if they could use your donation. Or perhaps a Leader could put a message on a local chat list or a list (The Leader Connection 2/TCL2) about this donation. Those willing to donate could contact the Alumnae Representative (AR) in their Area for more information. If your Area does not have an AR, contact Alumnae Representative Coordinator, Gail Gesley at: [gmglesley@gmail.com](mailto:gmglesley@gmail.com)

Actual donations to further help LLL in your community and today's mothers and Leaders might be:

- A \$25-\$50 donation would be a start to purchase these items at Leader prices: *The Leader's Handbook* (\$15, 2003 edition), a copy of the 8th edition of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* (\$14) or *The Breastfeeding Answer Book* (\$26, 2003 edition)
- Other Group expenses: the Leader Application Fee (\$31) or the new Leader Fee (\$30) to LLLI after signing the Statement of Commitment
- Would your Alum group opt to pass the hat at the next gathering for donations to a needy Leader Applicant, much like adopting a sister-Area?

Wouldn't it be wonderful if members reconnected with the Group or Area they used to belong to and adopted a Leader Applicant or a new Leaders who they would "nurse along" financially and with words of encouragement in their LLL work?

These costs (and other resource books) could range from \$150-\$200 for a mother to become a Leader. This amount of money might be difficult for a mother to come up with if she is from a one-income family in a small city. When most Groups help interested mothers to become Leaders, they make it clear that the books the Group provides belong to the Group and are to be returned if she does not complete the application process or if she resigns.

The Leader wrote: "I know that many young mothers do not have money to spend on Leader Applicant books and fees. Many would make wonderful Leaders if donations were available. Over the past few months, I mentioned this idea to several Alumnae, including the Alumnae Representative from a nearby Area. She sent \$31 to help a Leader Applicant from my Area start her application. In April, I told another Alum about the idea and she gave me a check for \$100. Now I am working on setting up guidelines for a Leader Applicant scholarship fund." ☆

Another Adventure Sponsored by  
the LLL Alumnae Association  
November 10-13, 2011

Tour of Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche  
Explore St. Augustine, Florida,  
the Oldest City in America



Celebrating LLL's 55th Anniversary with  
LLL Founders:

Mary Ann Cahill, Mary Ann Kerwin and  
Marian Tompson



Old Town Trolley Tour

A fun trip! Engage in group activities!  
Opportunities for small groups to visit sites  
of personal interest. Space is limited.



Our Lady of La Leche Shrine  
Photo courtesy of Kathy Grossman

#### Registration includes:

- Meet & Greet, refreshments, Thursday evening
- Trolley: to shrine, private shrine tour, and private one-hour city tour on Friday morning
- Group dinner, Friday evening
- Old Town Trolley ticket for 3 days

## Itinerary

*Final itinerary will be in trip packet.*

### Thursday, November 10

3:00 p.m. Hotel check-in available.

Dinner on your own.

Evening (time to be announced onsite) for  
Meet & Greet/Refreshments with LLL  
Founders and Alums. *LLL Founder  
Mary White was unable to be with us.*

### Friday, November 11

6:00 a.m. Hotel buffet breakfast opens

9:30 a.m. Board trolley for private shrine tour.  
followed by private group city tour,  
ends at St. George Street historic  
district for lunch on your own.

Afternoon: leisure time

6:15 p.m. Depart/walk to restaurant in nearby  
historic district for group dinner

### Saturday, November 12

6:00 – 10:00 a.m. Hotel buffet breakfast.

Sightseeing on your own.

Lunch and dinner on your own.

9:30-10:30 p.m. Cake. Alum celebration of  
LLL's 55th anniversary

### Sunday, November 13

6:00 – 10:00 a.m. Hotel buffet breakfast.

10:00–12:00 p.m. All attendees invited to  
brainstorming session with Alumnae Council.

11:00 a.m. Hotel check-out.

## During the trip

Budget for incidental expenses: admission to  
museums, attractions, shopping, \$5+ for short cab  
fare. Lunches (2) and dinners (2) are on your own  
as well as meals during travel to and from your  
home.

#### What to bring

LLL memorabilia if you wish. Pack comfortable  
walking shoes and medications you need or may  
need. Leave hotel contact info with family.

## Hotel Accommodations

### Hampton Inn St. Augustine-Historic District

2050 North Ponce de Leon Blvd.

St. Augustine, FL 32084

Ph: 904-829-1996, direct to hotel

Toll-free: 1-800-426-7866

[www.staugustinehamptoninn.com](http://www.staugustinehamptoninn.com)

Two queen beds per room, up to 4 people.  
Free: Onsite parking & wireless Internet.  
Hot buffet breakfast, 6–10 a.m. daily for hotel  
guests. Hot items rotated. May include cheese  
omelets, waffles, sausage, bacon or ham,  
potatoes, toast, cereals, bagels, muffins, juice,  
tea, coffee.

**Room reservations:** call the hotel directly at  
904-829-1996, before **Oct. 7, 2011**. Use the  
Alumnae group code: *La Leche League Alumnae  
Association's Room Block*. Want to arrive early  
or stay later? Discounted rates are available  
Nov. 9-14. Sunday-Thursday: \$109 per night;  
Friday-Saturday: \$129 per night (tax not  
included). St. Augustine is a renowned tourist  
city. Room rates are higher on weekends.

**Total Alum room rate: \$367** (plus 10% tax)  
up to 4 persons in a room with 2 queen beds,  
for 3 nights, November 10, 11, and 12.

**After October 7**, room block goes back into  
the hotel inventory at non-discounted rates.

**Cancellations, room changes:** call hotel.

Note: Specify the *Hampton Inn St. Augustine  
Historic District* at above location. The hotel is  
within 1.5 miles of the historic district's  
specialty shops and restaurants.



Printed May 3, 2011/fd

# Registration Form

**September 9:** Deadline for Early Bird registration.  
Save \$15!

**October 7:** Last day to register. **Register early!**  
Hotel and trip registrations are first-come,  
first-served until October 7, space permitting.

**November 1:** Last day for full refund, less \$20  
administrative fee.

*Please print clearly.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ cell \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Yes, you may add my contact info to trip roster

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I have a disability-related condition requiring  
accommodation to participate fully

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I am a current 2011 Alum member

\_\_\_\_ \$20 enclosed for 2011 one-year membership

\_\_\_\_ \$70 early bird registration, 3 days, 2011 member

\_\_\_\_ \$95 early bird registration, 3 days, *non-member*

\_\_\_\_ \$85 regular registration by October 7, for 3 days,  
2011 Alum member

\_\_\_\_ \$110 regular registration by October 7, for 3 days,  
*non-member*

\_\_\_\_ \$35 per person to attend ONLY the Shrine Tour  
*and* group dinner on Friday evening, Nov. 11

\_\_\_\_ My dinner choice, per person, **circle only one:**  
Chicken      Fish      Vegetarian

\_\_\_\_ **Total registration fee paid**

\_\_\_\_ My donation to help cover costs for the Founders  
to attend

\_\_\_\_ **Total enclosed (Fees & Donation)**

Make checks payable to *LLL Alumnae Association*. Send to:  
Susan Geil, 4868 N. Hermitage Ave., Chicago, IL 60640.  
Keep a copy of the form if you register by mail. Your  
registration will be confirmed by email after processing.

*You may photocopy the registration form.*

☛ Registration by mail: available *now*.

☛ Online registration available *after* June 20, 2011 at:  
<http://alumnae.lli.org>



St. George Street Historic District

**Old Town Trolley Tours:** Your registration packet includes a trip roster, itinerary, 3-day trolley pass, 30" x 18" brochure, 100 points of interest on Old Town Trolley map, free admission to St. Augustine History Museum, discounts for museum restaurants and attractions, and a free shuttle to Anastasia Island's Alligator Farm and Lighthouse Museum. Getting around is easy: walk, ride the trolley or even a horse drawn carriage. Open-air trolleys hold 30-75 passengers with bench-style seating, first-come, first-served.

#### Resources:

[www.trolleytours.com/st-augustine/](http://www.trolleytours.com/st-augustine/)  
[www.florida-staugustine.com/](http://www.florida-staugustine.com/)  
[www.st-augustine-travel-guide.com/](http://www.st-augustine-travel-guide.com/)  
[frommers.com/destinations/staugustine](http://frommers.com/destinations/staugustine)  
[www.airportshuttlestaugustine.com](http://www.airportshuttlestaugustine.com)

#### Need a roommate? Share airport shuttle?

Contact Fran with your request. You may contact Fran [dereszyn@verizon.net](mailto:dereszyn@verizon.net) to be added to the trip discussion for attendees.

#### To request electronic registration form:

Fran [dereszyn@verizon.net](mailto:dereszyn@verizon.net) or 714.840.1136  
Gail [gmgesley@gmail.com](mailto:gmgesley@gmail.com)  
Pam [poselka1945@att.net](mailto:poselka1945@att.net)

#### Registration questions? Refunds?

Contact: Susan Geil [srgeil@yahoo.com](mailto:srgeil@yahoo.com)



# The Ancient City

St. Augustine, the nation's oldest city, also holds the distinction of being one of the nation's most charming cities. Known as the *Ancient City*, St. Augustine boasts a year-round mild climate perfect for strolling the delightful historic district. Depending on what attractions you decide to visit, light moderate walking over uneven terrain may be involved as you explore the historic streets that make St. Augustine famous.

**Climate:** November temperatures are pleasant and sunny, ranging from 73° F. (light clothing) during the day to 56° F. (sweater or jacket) at night. Check online for ZIP Code 32084 weather before departure.

**Airports:** Jacksonville (JAX) and Daytona (DAB) airports are the closest major airports from St. Augustine, about 55 miles. Some airlines offer non-stop service from several East coast cities. From other cities, a connecting flight change in a hub may be needed (Atlanta, Cincinnati, Charlotte or other locations). Log on to [www.ifly.com/jacksonville-international-airport](http://www.ifly.com/jacksonville-international-airport) or [www.ifly.com/daytona-beach-international-airport](http://www.ifly.com/daytona-beach-international-airport) for airlines servicing connecting cities.



**From the airport:** Commercial taxis and airline shuttles are available from airport terminals as well as car rentals. Shop online for advanced reservation for an airport shuttle. Prices vary from \$49-\$75 (gratuity not included) for 1-4 and up to 6 passengers, based on amount of luggage and available seating.

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[frommers.com/destinations/staugustine](http://frommers.com/destinations/staugustine)  
[www.airportshuttlestaugustine.com](http://www.airportshuttlestaugustine.com)

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## Book Review

Louise Cox submitted notes after reading *Friends for Life: Enriching the Bond Between Mothers and Their Adult Daughters* (1997) by Susan Jonas and Marilyn Nissenson who drew on their expertise as psychology professionals. Over 100 mothers were interviewed about their maternal experience as the basis for the book. Louise wrote, "I really like the book. It reminds me that our daughters (and children) are here for us to grow up and help them grow up as well. The book provided concrete examples of helpful dialogue and redefined what a positive and healthy relationship really can be. It also helped me navigate the waters of a mother-daughter relationship. I wish there was more online from mothers in LLL about the growing struggles of connecting with adult children. Sometimes I think I'm the only one. This book opened up doors for me to realize that I'm completely in the norm and have done a pretty good job!"

## ✕ Friends for Life ✕

**Celebrate/tolerate differences.** A mother can tolerate and celebrate ways her daughter is different from her so she won't feel rejected or hurt when another choice is made. She knows when to tell her daughter the truth as she sees it and when to tell her what she needs to hear. Her love fosters rather than stifles her daughter's sense of self-worth. She wants her child to be like her or wants her to accomplish what she hasn't and may try to make up for what it is she is lacking.

**Just be there:** Your daughter is not going to live your life for you, may not be interested in your standards or interests. Just be there for each other. You each have your own life to lead. A daughter may make the choices she does because she needed to—for reasons she has yet to discover. The most important thing in our life as mothers is to help decent people grow up. Our daughters are the recipients of our dreams.

**Timing when speaking out:** As long as you make it clear that what you're saying reflects what **you** think, that you realize your comments may or may not be important to her, there is likely to be an appropriate time to speak out. For example, a mother might say, "I feel an obligation to tell you exactly what I think. I don't expect you to act on it or even like it, but I hope you can listen. Help me understand what this means to you." Then express any fears you have with this type of phrasing, "This is who I am. This is how I feel. This is what I want to communicate."

**Respectful:** Your mother-daughter relationship counts a lot in your life. If you don't like her partner, be respectful. Do everything possible to stay connected and in dialogue with her. One mother wanted her daughter's husband to pay more of the bills, but it was what the mother wanted, not what the daughter

wanted (good to know). The mother came to agree he was right for her.

**Study shows:** When mothers discuss sexuality with their daughters, it is usually to advise them on how to protect themselves rather than on how to be self-directed. Small wonder that a mother's messages to her daughter about sex are mixed.

**Don't presume.** No matter how open your communication may be, a mother can't presume to know what is right for her daughter. Her lessons are not what your lessons are. Her challenges are for her to discover. Not you. It's not your life. She has to learn those lessons and get on with her life.

**Listen for discovery.** Listen when she tells you something powerful. Listen in a way that helps her discover for herself what she really feels. Give her a chance to reveal that vision of herself, what she most wants to share with you—approaching the realm of true mutual discourse. Listening can be more valuable than expressing an opinion because our daughters must figure things out for themselves and we really can't know what is best for them.

**Your relationship is unique.** One mother assumed she knew what her daughter felt because she had been through a similar situation. In this case, her own voice silenced her daughter. Because we mothers believe that the mother-daughter relationship has the potential to be uniquely intimate and fulfilling, we are troubled when our own connection to our daughter turns out to be something different. What can happen when a mother-daughter relationship turns out to be different than we expected? For whatever reason, it's important to sustain whatever connection we have. Are you your daughter's friend? This

means you can cook and savor a Thanksgiving dinner together one year, a different direction the next.

**Re-framing.** If we tend to frame things differently, daughters are likely to hear us out. If the daughter makes a decision that her mother thinks may not be *good* for her, the mother can accept it as *right* for her because it fills a need a mother may or may not ever fully comprehend. If it turns out to be a mistake, it's a mistake the daughter has some need to make.

**Daughters may begin to ask for mother's opinions.** As time goes on, mothers may come to realize advice is frequently useless, even when their daughter seeks it. Daughters are learning to solve their own problems as adults, along with making their own decisions and learning from them. The paradox is that by doing this, mothers tend to gain a stronger connection. When we share more of what is going on in our lives—the good news and the bad, daily details as well as more profound thoughts—we learn to ask for our daughters' advice and their opinions. ☆

Louise Cox  
Windsor Locks, Connecticut USA  
[davlouc@cox.net](mailto:davlouc@cox.net)

### Another Book Recommendation

*Here If You Need Me* by Kate Braestrup. This memoir is about a woman with a mid-life career (chaplain for the state of Maine) like few others. Do not expect it to be overly theological. It is the story of a widow who works through her grief in unconventional ways, but it is also reassuring and eye opening. A unique story of someone whose calm presence you might like to have at your side during a time of crisis. ☆

Wendy Masters  
Valparaiso, Indiana USA  
[www3@frontier.com](http://www3@frontier.com)

## ✧ Continuum Mailings ✧

Continuum continues to be a favorite benefit of membership and a great way to stay current with articles of interest to Alums as well as Alumnae news and events. Just as young mothers enjoyed reading *LLL News* or *New Beginnings* in the early years of their mothering, today's Alum members say they feel affirmed and inspired when they receive *Continuum*. They love members' stories of today and yesteryear.

Alum member, Pat Purdy, wrote: "I read my issue tonight. Congratulations again on another wonderful issue. Some of the things that I liked especially were the many pictures, like the one of Gail Gesley, our new ARC, and your happy picture at the end. I also liked the quotes that were very good."

*Continuum* is mailed three times a year to those with paid up memberships in the calendar periods:

- January 1 - April 30
- May 1 - August 31
- September 1 - December 31

If membership expires between May 1 – August 31, LAST ISSUE is on the back page. You need to renew before August 31 to be included in the fall/winter mailing. Please take a few moments to

check that page. If LAST ISSUE is *not* on the back page, your expiration date is listed. It's OK to renew early. Pre-payment rolls over, starting from that expiration date. Some members make a calendar notation. Renew by check sent to Susan Geil or online via credit card at <http://alumnae.lli.org>

If you move and you have not sent the new address/or email address to Sue Steilen [Suesteilen@comcast.net](mailto:Suesteilen@comcast.net) then you may not receive future issues as promptly. Bulk mail is not forwarded even when an address change is submitted to the post office. In these instances, the issue is returned to me with the new address. I then resend it to the correct address, if available. Although there is lag time, you eventually receive the recent issue. At times, there is no forwarding address and I do "detective work" to find current contact information. If you think you missed an issue, please contact me at: [dereszyn@verizon.net](mailto:dereszyn@verizon.net)

### Ways to stay connected between Continuum mailings:

- Join the ALLLumnae Yahoo! discussion group for Alum members by contacting Sara Dodder Furr [saradfurr@gmail.com](mailto:saradfurr@gmail.com) or Kathy Parkes [Kparkes@aol.com](mailto:Kparkes@aol.com)

- Like us on Facebook, *La Leche League Alumnae (Former-Current LLL Leaders and Members)*, open to Alum members and non-members.



We live in an age of fast-paced information, rapid global communication, and online networking that continues to shape our society. If the ALLLumnae online discussion list or Facebook is not be of interest to you, an Alum friend may keep you up-to-date on Alum news and announcements. I don't have a smart phone, do texting, have an iPad, or e-book. I guess I am an in-between with a basic cell phone for emergencies, voice mail, and the old standby desktop computer. I do remember when my access was dial-up! A few years from now, it is bound to change to keep up with the speed of technology or when the devices I use are no longer reliable. No doubt, you've heard that story before—*time to upgrade!* ☆

*Fran Dereszynski*  
Continuum Editor

## ✧ Thank You from LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US ✧

Thank you to the LLL Alumnae Association for graciously donating \$3,000 to the Helpline in 2008, 2009 and 2010. We also had a wonderful holiday giving season with donations totaling around \$10,000. The Helpline is run entirely by donations so these large donations allow us to "breathe" a little in the fundraising department. Since

January 1, 2011, 877 4 LA LECHE has been dialed over 3,000 times! Our number one goal is to have more Leaders taking "live" shifts with someone to take a mother's call right away. Contact me if you are an active Leader willing to help with calls. To donate to the Helpline, visit the

secure donations page:  
<http://www.breastfeedinghelpline.com/donors>  
For more information about the Helpline, visit [www.breastfeedinghelpline.com](http://www.breastfeedinghelpline.com) ☆

*Sue Prado*  
Coordinator, LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US  
[sueprado@gmail.com](mailto:sueprado@gmail.com)

## ✧ Alums: A Ruby Sponsor for World Breastfeeding Week 2011 ✧



By making a donation to World Breastfeeding Week Celebrations (WBWC), the Alumnae Association became a Ruby Sponsor for WBW to provide a link to the Alumnae Web site throughout the year. The new Alum logo and link is on the WBWC home page, sponsor page, prize page and will be recognized in *New Beginnings*, the LLL USA online magazine.

The year's theme, **Breastfeeding = Communication**, focuses on connecting with other breastfeeding advocates and recognizes the importance of communication in supporting and encouraging mothers throughout their breastfeeding experience—giving them the information they need to be successful. WBW is August 1 - 7 and celebrated in 120 countries on various dates. New this year is **Big Latch On**, at 10:30 a.m. local time. Saturday, August 6, 2011. Join us as mothers and babies gather to set a record for synchronized breastfeeding at multiple sites across the United States. Log on to the WBW site to find events in your community or to donate to the celebrations. <http://www.lliusa.org/wbw/sponsors.php> ☆

## ✧ Coming to Sacramento, California: Alumnae Tea in December 2011 ✧

Alum members, active and retired Leaders are invited to an Alumnae Tea in Sacramento, California on December 3, 2011. If you know a retired LLL Leader, who may not currently be in touch with LLL, please invite her. She may connect with a friend from long ago. Babies and children are welcome. Bring tea sandwiches to share if you wish. For more information, contact Karen Evon at: <gamma7k@yahoo.com> ☆

## ✧ News about New Zealand's February Earthquake ✧

*Yvonne Procuta (now Foreman) founded the first LLL Group in New Zealand in 1967, 44 years ago. She is the co-editor of Kaleidoscope, a Journal for Former LLLers La Leche League of New Zealand Alumnae Association. The following was lovingly reprinted from Kaleidoscope, March 2011, Issue 55. It impressed upon me the ever-widening scope of LLL throughout the world when Yvonne, a sister-editor, wrote about what transpired in her country. Janine Pinkham, Administrator of Publications for LLL New Zealand (LLLNZ), Janine Pinkham's "After the Shaking Stops," conveys the impact in those affected by the earthquake.*



While working on the layout for this issue, we received news of the devastating earthquake in Christchurch. At first it seemed to be a more severe than usual aftershock—then as the TV and radio coverage continued, extent of the earthquake became horrifyingly clear and our thoughts turned to people; family, friends, colleagues who could be caught up in its violence. We've all been impressed by the spirit of the people of Christchurch, their resilience, their determination, their selflessness and care for others in the midst their own shock and turmoil.

Along with other New Zealanders we are deeply grateful for the many nations that have sent experienced personnel to work alongside our own as they clear the rubble and help put back this broken, but unbowed city. We wondered how the mothers of the youngest babies were managing. Breastfeeding mums are able to offer the comfort of the breast immediately. While we knew many women would breastfeed, there would be those who had chosen otherwise. Where would they get enough clean water, the facility to heat the formula? We talk so blithely at La Leche League meetings about the advantages of breastfeeding, yet rarely in this country is the choice a matter of life and death. We do know that in whatever way they can, La Leche League women in Canterbury are supporting mothers especially with what is needed most, words of comfort, reassurance, and practical help. Our LLLove to you all. ☆

## ✧ After the Shaking Stops ✧

*Janine Pinkham, LLLNZ's Administrator of Publications, wrote this article in response to those concerned about LLL friends. She lives in Kaiapoi, just 30 minutes north of Christchurch.*

The enormity of the earthquake that hit Christchurch on 22 February, 2011, is still clearly etched in our minds and will be for some years; forever for many people. After the shaking stops, and once you realise that you and those around you are unscathed the first thing you think of is those you know well and if they are all right.

I live in Kaiapoi so when I found out that the epicentre was near Lyttelton, I was worried about all the people I knew who lived between there and my place. The most effective way of checking on people was by text. The cell phone networks worked very well for texting with only a few glitches and delays. It was a huge relief to receive text replies that people were fine, but worrying to learn about damage to homes. None of our local Leaders or their families or any other LLL contacts I know of suffered injury or loss

of life as a result of the earthquake. Unfortunately several Leaders have suffered damage to their homes. Some are living outside the city at present. The next job was to check on who was available for breastfeeding help and to run meetings, as well as checking on meeting venues. We have only had to cancel one meeting so far and next Monday's meeting is being run by two stand-in Leaders as the two regular Leaders are both out of town.

We don't seem to be getting a lot of extra calls from mothers with breastfeeding concerns and we are doing our best to let emergency services know about the help that is available. We are hoping that mothers just keep breastfeeding. And of course that's what we are encouraging to keep the babies comforted and help the mothers relax. There are a lot of infant formula donations being made and that is upsetting but babies who are formula fed

do need feeding so it is hard to protest about donations. It is the cleaning of bottles, etcetera, that could be problematic.

Our local Breastfeeding Advocacy Services Coordinator (and LLLNZ BoC member), Carol Bartle, who is highly knowledgeable about infant feeding in emergencies has released a range of fact sheets for breastfeeding mothers and those helping them to understand their circumstances and how to cope better. These will be posted on the LLLNZ Website. Electricity and water are now on in most houses and some families are able to return to live in damaged homes. Schools are putting emergency plans in place and workplaces are setting up in temporary premises. It's not normal but people are making the best of a difficult situation. Human fortitude and resilience are clearly being demonstrated. ☆

Take a few moments to call or email a former Leader or member. Those friends from the past may be thrilled to know that the Alumnae Association is still here, operating independently for the past four years. Truly welcome them to re-activate a past membership or to become a new member! At the same time, the Alums are always looking for an Area Representative for Areas that don't have one currently in place or someone to take on other small tasks. The positions of Alumnae Coordinator and Web site/Online Communications still need to be filled. If you are interested in using skills you have used in LLL, spread your wings with the Alumnae and contact an Alumnae Council member listed on page 15. We're a caring and fun bunch to be involved with!

## ✧ Heart-to-Heart Fund for LLL Japan ✧

LLL Alliance for Breastfeeding Education (formerly LLL Eastern United States) is coordinating donations for LLL Japan. To donate to *LLL of Japan (Earthquake Heart-to-Heart)*, send donations to: LLL Alliance Finance Administrator, Anne Marie Miller, 792 Ridgeview Dr., Lilburn, GA 30047. Please specify the donation is to benefit *LLL of Japan*. Online donations may be made through the LLL Alliance Web site at: <http://www.lleus.org/Donations.html> All donations will be acknowledged and tax receipts issued. LLL Alliance will work in partnership with LLL Japan to transfer funds. Many thanks to all who are willing to donate to our sister Leaders in Japan. If there are questions, contact Anne Marie [annemariam@bellsouth.net](mailto:annemariam@bellsouth.net) or Amy Shaw [amyshaw12@gmail.com](mailto:amyshaw12@gmail.com)

Amy Shaw  
LLL Alliance Director  
Hull, Massachusetts USA

## ✧ Update on LLL Japan Disaster Efforts ✧

**Dateline: April 12, 2011** - Today was the official start to the toll free helpline for mothers that some LLL Leaders in Japan have volunteered to help with in addition to other calls that may come our way via the emergency breastfeeding helpline organized within days of March. Leaders will be taking one-hour shifts from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Since the toll-free line is through Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT), only Leaders who have contracts with NTT are able to participate. Quite a few Leaders who volunteered were unable to help due to this fact. At the moment there are 17 of us taking shifts for the toll-free helpline. [Japan Committee for UNICEF can cover most of the helpline fee.]

Leaders have been concerned that mothers in need of breastfeeding help don't know how to find us or can't due to lack of means to contact us. We are hoping that the toll free helpline, which started as of today, will make it easier for mothers in need of support to contact us. It is supposed to be widely advertised via local radio stations in the areas most

affected by the disasters, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Web site and flyers.

Although many Leaders in Japan may not have been directly affected by the earthquake and tsunami of March 11th, all of us have been touched in numerous ways because of it. I don't think there is anyone who does not know someone who was directly affected with either the death of a loved one or has missing family and/or friends. There is also the loss of security and the feeling of safety from natural disasters and the unseen foe, radiation. Whether it be warranted fear or not, many are very concerned about radiation contamination in water, food and the air from the Fukushima nuclear reactors.

So far all help calls from breastfeeding mothers have been in regards to the safety of continuing to breastfeed due to radiation concerns. We are fortunate to have Leader friends around the world who are experts in this area and have willingly kept us up-to-date on whether there is any real concern.

Some Leaders and/or their families have been going through emotional stress from all that has happened, some are having to cope with shortages, lack of electricity and water, rolling blackouts, difficulty moving around due to gas shortages, etc.

Watching news just after the earthquake and tsunami was shocking and at times made me physically ill. More recently I find myself breaking down in tears at times when reading or hearing about the many who have died, those still missing, children without parents, parents who have lost children, those in need of basic necessities, so many without homes, the countless aftershocks (over a thousand some have said) that bring fear and great stress. Lately there have been a number of strong aftershocks that must be very scary for those who have already gone through so much. ☆

SharingLLLly,  
RuthAnna Mather  
LLL Japan

## ✧ Message to Leaders from LLL Japan Coordinators ✧



We have received a number of messages from you. The translations are being

sent to Japanese Leaders including those in the disaster areas. We wish so much that we had time to contact each of you separately and express our deepest gratitude for your kind thoughts and encouragements. The overwhelming task of offering support to mothers in the disaster areas leaves us little time for anything else.

We hope it is okay to send a general message to all of you. Your messages have reassured us that we have LLL Leaders' strong support. This reassurance helps us to pursue our mission.

Your messages made us realize that you are all there for us and you are willing to help us. You have given us much needed energy. Although the scale of the disaster is immeasurable and overwhelming, Japanese Leaders are working together to help mothers and babies in the disaster areas. However far away you are from us, we feel very close to you. Thank you for being there to offer us emotional as well as practical support.

We are grateful to be able to serve LLL in this wonderful support network. Arigato gozaimasu (Thank you very much). ☆

Yuko Omodaka, ACL for Japan  
Eri Kido, CLA for Japan

Note: there may be more updates about LLL Japan in the summer issue of *Leaven* at [lli.org](http://lli.org)

Order printed copies of *New Beginnings*, *Breastfeeding Today* and *Leaven* from [MagCloud.com](http://MagCloud.com) for your personal use.

## ✧ LLL Alumnae Association Council Contact Information ✧

The LLL Alumnae Association Council is the decision-making body for the organization and its activities. The Council stays up-to-date with issues and regular reports through conference calls on a monthly basis and as needed.

*Alumnae Representative Coordinator (ARC)*

Gail Gesley  
838 Calmar Ave.  
Oakland, CA 94610  
510-832-5740  
<gmgesley@gmail.com>

*Publications/Continuum Editor*

Fran Dereszynski  
5502 Maryport Dr.  
Huntington Beach, CA 92649  
714-840-1136  
<dereszyn@verizon.net>

*Membership/Secretary*

Sue Steilen  
13958 Grenelefe Lane  
Homer Glen, IL 60491  
708-301-0890  
<suesteilen@comcast.net>

*Member-at-Large*

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

*Finance/Treasurer*

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

*Open Positions:*

*Alumnae Coordinator*  
*Website/Online Communications*  
If interested, contact Pam Oselka.

## ✧ From the Mail Bag ✧

On Friday, March 11 at 4:30 a.m., I was awakened by an emergency notification phone call. The city was under a National Weather Service tsunami advisory, springing on the heels of the major earthquake and aftershocks in Japan. Such an advisory is less urgent than an official tsunami warning to evacuate to higher elevations.

Huntington Beach went through previous tsunami advisories in January 2009 and February 2010 without harm to people or property. Local beaches, the pier, and the harbor marina were closed as officials watched the coastline. Large waves were not anticipated; yet throughout the weekend, there were unusual currents and mini-whirlpools that could pose dangers to swimmers and boaters in the beaches and harbors. The tsunami effect had water levels rising and falling for several hours, from heights from 1 to 3 feet. It was not life threatening, yet there could be potential damages. The local pier and beaches reopened in the late afternoon. No damage was reported. The next day, one local resident sailed out of the local bay and noticed that "most of the channel buoys were not in their normal locations, some as much as 200 yards from before." We all kept vigil to the news reports on television sets and the Internet as the devastation in Japan played out before our eyes. Japan's damage was truly much more than the benign wake up call I received for the coastal areas far from the source.

This experience reminds me of the unpredictability of nature and the power of water. After more rain than usual this spring, the flowers in my front yard overwhelm me with the spirit of rebirth, renewal, and hope that can motivate people to rebuild flattened cities in New Zealand and Japan.



This is a photo of my front yard. Near the birdbath and boulders are rising white roses, orange California poppies, tall purple agapanthus, and a few weeds. The colors and rising blooms show what can happen with new seeds and residuals of last year's perennials. The future will bring hope for new homes to rise up for the families affected by these disasters. It has been inspiring to hear from LLL Leaders in New Zealand and Japan and to share their experiences with you in this issue. Hope can guide the human spirit to rebuild new lives and cities.

**Health update from Sue Christensen:** "I wanted to let you know that the cancer is gone! I can start growing my hair back. Thanks for all your caring, prayers and support. Hugs, Sue." (February 2011)

**Correction for last issue:** Several readers noticed font incompatibility on p. 1. It should be Alumnae Association "...a resource, a community, a network, an opportunity" and p. 9 should be "In the coldest February, as in every other month in every other year, the best thing to celebrate in the world is each other."

**Several of my friends are reading this book and recommend it to their friends and family members:** *Still Alice* (2007) by Lisa Genova. "Most of what is written is by clinicians and caregivers. We never get to sit in the seat of someone with Alzheimer's disease. It tells the story from Alice's point of view. It's a story about so much more," reports Genova. This book captures the details as Alice experiences episodes of forgetting that don't seem quite normal as she begins the descent into dementia at a young age.

**Your stories and thoughts needed for next issue:** Got a burning idea to share with the Alums? Summer may be the time to write it up and send to me. There is lots of white space reserved just for your contribution. Surprise me with your comments, thoughts, or articles!

**Send articles to [dereszyn@verizon.net](mailto:dereszyn@verizon.net) by August 15, 2011.** Articles selected for publication may be edited for length, clarity, and adherence to LLL journalistic guidelines.

Until next time,

*Fran*

Published May 12, 2011



LLL Alumnae Association Newsletter  
Fran Dereszynski, Editor  
5502 Maryport Drive  
Huntington Beach, CA 92649



*We all have our own life to pursue, our own kind of dream to be weaving, and we all have the power to make wishes come true, as long as we keep believing.*  
—Louisa May Alcott  
(1832-1888); novelist

## Leader Service Pins Available from Alums



Pins for years of service in LLL can be ordered from the Alums! Prices start at \$5 per pin with reduced prices for bulk orders. Available are 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35-year pins as well as a basic LLL Leader pin. Contact Susan Geil [srgeil@yahoo.com](mailto:srgeil@yahoo.com) to place an order or download the order form available at: <http://alumnae.llli.org> ☞

## Join the Alumnae!

Yes, I want to keep in touch and support the LLL Alumnae Association. Dues are \$20/year. Make checks payable to "LLL Alumnae Association." You may renew for more than one year at a time. Send checks to:

Susan Geil, LLL Alumnae Treasurer  
4868 N. Hermitage Ave., Chicago, IL 60640

Questions? Contact Susan at: [srgeil@yahoo.com](mailto:srgeil@yahoo.com)

- To pay by credit card log on to: <http://alumnae.llli.org/Alumnae/Join.html>
- To pay by check, use this form:

Enclosed is:

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ membership for \_\_ years(s)
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ donation
- Check to *LLL Alumnae Association*

Current LLL status:

- Active Leader                       Retired Leader
- Current LLL member               Former LLL member

List Skill/Talent/Resource to share with Alumnae

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP+4 Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_