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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Next *Continuum* deadline:
April 1, 2016
Send articles to
dereszyn@verizon.net

Congratulations!
LLL Alumnae Association
1985 - 2015

Celebrating 30 Years

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Celebrate

Published February 24, 2016

Search "LLLI 60th Anniversary" on Facebook or go to https://www.facebook.com/groups/1675504529385749/ and select "join" for the special 60th Anniversary Facebook page.

Family Get-togethers: Plan Ahead

Once our children were adults, lived on their own, and we had grandchildren, the family was spread from coast to coast. We had to create a system for family get-togethers. It isn't perfect but it works for our family. Open communication and a willingness to be flexible will make a big difference. This is how it transpired: the adult children do the major planning. If it is not at our house, we show up ready to add names to the kitchen chore chart, etc. We have eight grandchildren. Their parents want the cousins to gather with us. We use an online vacation rental marketplace to locate houses to accommodate us during a summer week together. We have been to the Florida coast and mountains in western Maine and eastern Tennessee. Family members take turns to cook, cleanup, and arrange maintenance.

Ann Marie with her husband, her mother, two adult children with spouses, and all the grandchildren at St. Mark's National Wildlife Refuge, Florida USA, 2013

A folder with all the menus, work schedules, and landlord information is kept in the kitchen so everyone can consult it. We calculate finances—an amount per person to cover food and housing. One person manages the treasury. Obviously this depends on everybody being prompt at bill paying, the type of skill offered, and a realistic knowledge of the working style of family members. All this helps us to organize billing, food, and tasks. Don't expect people to be different from what you already know from past experience. If you look for a place to gather outside family members' homes, consider looking for activities in that neighborhood. Are there parks? Can you find activities such as kayaking or a tour of a local mine? Are there local festivals that might be fun for the family? Be sure there is adequate room for the children to run and play wherever you stay. A 2016 extended family reunion is planned. We will try to tag on to the beginning or end of that event. *(continued on p. 2)*

Family Get-togethers: Plan Ahead *(continued from p. 1)*

Advance discussion and preparation is key, both for general get-togethers and holiday times. It helps that one son's family has an established pattern of alternating Christmas and Thanksgiving between his extended families. If we are together for Christmas one year, we then plan to be with them to celebrate Thanksgiving the next year. We work with other family members to see what else might be planned. One year we hosted our son's family for Christmas since we have a bigger house. Then we drove north to Chicago where we had a late December celebration/New Year's Eve party with other family members.

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Photo: Pigeon Forge, Tennessee USA. At the end of the trip, it was time to clean out the refrigerator. My daughter-in-law prepared a "monster ice cream sundae" for nine children. Even though breakfast was barely finished, everyone including the youngest was eager to participate.

Share your story about how you get together with family and relatives throughout the year. How families celebrate is a unique way for all ages to have fun and stay connected. Next deadline is April 1, 2016. Send to *Continuum* editor at dereszyn@verizon.net

Join the 800+ members on the Alum Facebook Page at https://www.facebook.com/LLLAlumnaeAssociation to receive daily posts, breastfeeding news, and links to current LLL journals. The page is for current and former LLL Leaders, current and former LLL members, Alumnae members, and non-members to reconnect with friends. Tell friends! Help us grow to 900 members.

Constance Pond has been an active LLL Leader for 23 years and is currently a member of the LLLI Board of Directors. She and her husband Glenn have two sons: Raph (24) and Will (16). Constance wrote, "Aside from the usual love of my family, I am active in our church community. I love riding my bike along the Hudson River and taking a Pilates class. I love skiing with my family one week after Christmas each year and taking a one-week retreat in San Diego with my husband in the summer. I love enjoying the "stuff" of New York: restaurants, theatre, music, and displays over the holiday season."

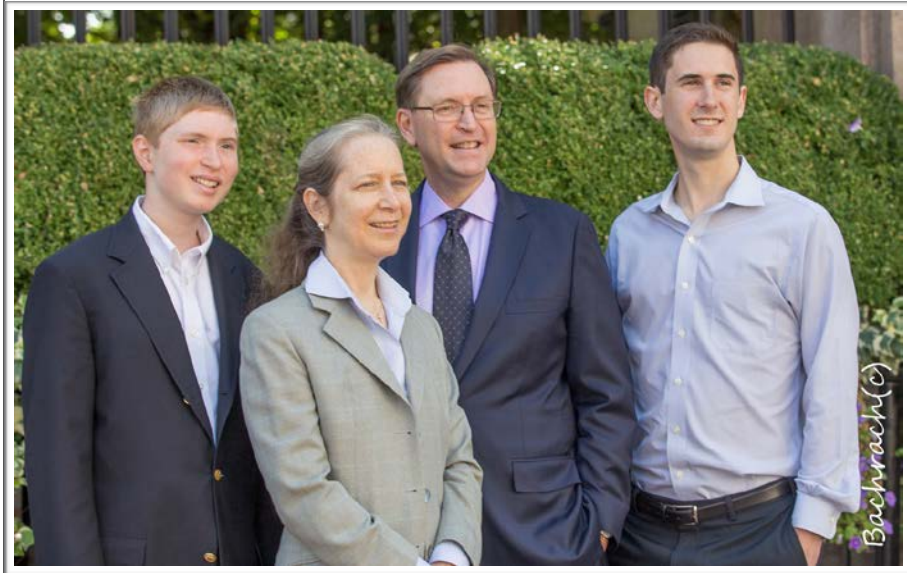
More Than Ever

More than ever, I am grateful for my connections to La Leche League. The organization and its mission are vibrant. We have an abundance of blessings and potential to create healthier living for so many families. More than ever, my husband Glenn Hubbard and I are donating to La Leche League International (LLLI). Some have quipped that breastfeeding is free, but we know that to build and maintain a strong mission-based philanthropic organization, financial support is required. We know that we can consider planned giving; we know that, along with its current use requirements, LLLI needs an endowment to reach its potential. We are honored to give generously to LLLI.

My first recollection of breastfeeding was when I was a child of fewer than five years. My dear next-door neighbor Dorothy Murphy nursed her baby. She went on to become what I consider a "pioneer" among La Leche League Leaders. Fast forward: I am 18; my sister Linda Rea gives birth and breastfeeds her first child. She, too, is in that group of women I consider to be the pioneers of La Leche League, as she became a Leader in Michigan where LLL co-Founder Mary White's family summered. Mary attended some of the LLL meetings my sister led.

I remember being fascinated when my sister told me that Princess Grace of Monaco attended and spoke at the 1971 La Leche League International Conference in Chicago, Illinois USA, advocating for LLL and our mission. Decades later, when I was pregnant, my sister asked me if I planned to breastfeed. When I responded affirmatively, she suggested I attend a series of LLL Group Meetings before I gave birth, so I could get a lay of this land before I became a mother. I did; I have been active, ever since. I became a Leader in Washington, D.C., when my first son was about 16-months-old. We moved a few times in those early years and, knowing I would be near a La Leche League Group, the moves felt manageable. During the winter we lived in Chicago. One of my best memories was going to Franklin Park with my toddler on the double decker train to volunteer weekly at the first LLLI Office. It was clear that LLL had grown and ready to have a building of its own. I can say lovingly, it was cozy. Mary Ann Cahill was the Executive Director at the time; I am grateful to have served under her. I felt joy when my family went to LLLI Conferences and I saw the co-Founders and others who represented our work so well, while inspiring us all to do our part. *(continued on p. 3)*

More Than Ever *(continued from p. 2)*



Pond Family: Will, Constance, Glenn, and Raph

As time passed, I found more ways to volunteer for La Leche League and our mission. I became responsible for a Group treasury and went on to become a Chapter treasurer. I chaired Ads and Exhibits for the LLL New York-East Area Conferences. I have mentored many women to become LLL Leaders. There were a few years when my LLL work was somewhat limited due to family obligations but, thankfully, what I did was always welcomed.

Years ago, I pitched in to help Cathy Marquis when she, Marian Tompson, and Eleanor Randall chaired the Capital Campaign to fund the first LLLI building. Cathy and I stayed in touch thereafter. A little over two years ago, Cathy, who was serving on the LLLI Board of Directors, invited me to join the LLLI Audit Committee where she served as chair. As a member of the Audit Committee, I was pleased to see how well things were moving, how the work of dedicated people who had a clear and wise vision was paying dividends for La Leche League, at all levels. Shortly after that experience, I was encouraged by several La Leche League colleagues to send in my application to become a member of the LLLI Board of Directors. I am grateful that I heeded that quiet voice within urging me to do so. I have been on the board for about a year and a half. Exciting things have transpired in that short time frame! We decided to use the services of an Association Management Company (AMC). This allows flexibility to get particular staff services, at the particular times we need them, as well as access a broader group of people to assist with the office work. Bostrom, the AMC we selected, suggested Katie Keel to serve as the Executive Director of LLLI and, when we met her, we agreed. Katie brings enthusiasm and experience to guide the LLLI Office. In turn, this gives the Board time and flexibility to focus on our mission.

The Board of LLLI is a dynamic mix of individuals who bring their personal and professional expertise as well as their passion for LLLI and for the its mission. We have the wisdom of two co-Founders who remain active on the Board. Together, we work diligently and creatively. We also have fostered connections with many other individuals who willingly share their time and talent, enhancing our reach and our capacity.

The Board of LLLI is working on its strategic plan and the goals, objectives, and action steps that come from those. We are working with Area Networks around the world, to help them do the same. The Board of LLLI is working with the Leader Applicant Department (LAD) to inspire and attract more women to become Leaders and to increase our mother-to-mother support outreach.

LLLI is in a phase of reconnecting and growing stronger connections, reaching out to other international breastfeeding groups aligned with our mission. We are seeing how we might work with organizations such as the United Nations Children's Fund and World Health Organization. We are strengthening our partnership with the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action and positioning the Peer Counseling Program (PCP) to help more women breastfeed. For many different reasons, the PCP can be helpful in many areas, including, but not limited to, Africa, China, Latin America, and the United States. Currently, we are working on developing a PCP in Africa. We have begun a conversation with Rotary International to grow PCP programs in Latin America and around the world.

In 2016, LLLI is on the cusp of a very special celebration, marking 60 years when seven women began providing mother-to-mother support —first to each other—at a church picnic in a suburb of Chicago. While I continue many grassroots LLL activities near my home in New York City, what I hope to see when my time on the Board is complete is that LLLI will have the strength to carry its signature mother-to-mother support programs into perpetuity.

I want to see that LLLI has a role to play and the resources to make a difference to refugee families that have breastfeeding babies. I want to see a strong connection among the many facets of LLL, in conversation and in providing mutual assistance. I want to see that LLLI has a strong, respected voice that will be there. I want normal to be, well, normal. I am committed to this and I believe it will be a reality, as we all step up and kindle our devoted passion together. I look forward to reconnecting with friends who are in the LLL Alumnae Association and getting acquainted with members who are new to me. I want to learn your stories, especially as we are approaching this very special anniversary. I want to hear how your precious memories mesh with the work we have ahead. I hope that you, too, will commit generously with your donations to LLLI and our mission, more than ever. ❧

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Submit Deceased Leaders' Names for Online Posting at Alum We Remember List

To view *We Remember* names, go to http://lllalumnae.org/We-Remember and if you or a friend finds an obituary mentioning a deceased LLL Leader, select "We Remember" at lllalumnae.org and choose "send us the information." Or you may contact Fran at dereszyn@verizon.net and include the obituary link, name, date of death, state/country. The name will then be added to the list.

In lieu of sending an individual note to each donor, Mary Ann and Marian requested their thank you to those who donated to their trip to Charleston be published in Continuum.

Joy Aharon
Pam Ahearn
Carroll Beckham
Carol Bollin
Charlene Burnett
Ann Calandro
Pam Sears Cooper
Joan Crothers
Fran Dereszynski
Kathy Doody
Susan Giroux
Mary Gisch
Suzy Graham
Mary Jeanne Hickey
Patti Hope
Virginia Innocenti
Diane Jeffer
Janet Jendron
Dottie Johnson
Rebecca Keepers
Edna Kelly
Phoebe Kerness
Charlotte Knopf
Kathy Lange
Katy Lebbing
Twink Lester
Marilyn Sears Lindsey
Lou-Ellen MacDonald
Rebecca Magalhaes
Sande Malinich
Gail Moak
Valerie Moses
Barbara Mullins
Pam Oselka
Cyd Reynolds
Helene Scheff
Rae Schopp
Claire Sears
Nancy Sherwood
Patty Spanjer
Sue Steilen
Mary Strack
Susan Switzer
Sue Weeldreyer
Ann Marie White
Ginny Wilkinson
Alice Ziring

For corrections or additions to this list, contact Fran at dereszyn@verizon.net

LLL Co-Founders Thank Alum Trip Donors

Dear Donors,

Thank you to all who made it possible for our participation in the Alumnae trip to Charleston, South Carolina in November of 2015. We enjoyed every minute and still feel the afterglow of those very special days we shared with those of you on the trip. For us, being in the company of the Alums is comparable to a family reunion. We want each of you to know how greatly we cherish your thoughtfulness as well as your generosity. As we have said many times, anything we might have done to help anyone through La Leche League has been returned to us a thousandfold! We will be forever grateful to you and for you!!

With much love and deep appreciation,
Mary Ann Kerwin and Marian Tompson

Mary Ann, LLLI Board Member Diane Jeffer, and Marian in Charleston, South Carolina

After the Charleston Trip: Thoughts Shared

From many attendees: I want to give a big shout-out to the Alum Council, especially Trip Chair **Pam Oselka**, for making this trip such an interesting, fun weekend. Thank you, everyone!

From Marian Tompson: How grateful I am to all the Alums who made it possible for Mary Ann and I to attend. Thank you to the Alum Council for coming up with the idea.

From Mary Ann Kerwin: The trip was *over the top* to sit across from a newly accredited Leader at the Farewell Dinner and next to LLL Charleston's founder Jerry McManus, celebrating her 89th birthday that day. It's always better than expected. The sightseeing is always interesting but it is the connections with other Alums and the conversations that make me look forward to the next trip.

From Janet Jendron: The Charleston trip was a blend of fun, surprises, deep conversations and love. Just being with everyone gave my spirit a boost. It was special to me, to "share South Carolina" with so many dear friends. I was also thrilled to make new friends. LLL folks are the best!

From Amy Shaw: Being in Charleston with everyone was time to let our hair down together. I was totally thrilled to attend an LLL event for pure pleasure and no work. Expectations were exceeded. What I will remember most is meeting lots of new friends and reconnecting with others. LLL Alums rock! Happy to be part of such a vibrant group of women! You really have a gift for bringing people together.

From Mary Strack: I appreciate all the time and effort that went into planning this great trip. With **Pam Oselka's leadership,** the Alum council worked together so seamlessly and were so loving and kind, even when things were challenging. I loved getting to know everyone better and also meeting new friends, while connecting with "old" friends. Blessings to you all.

Book Reviews YOU MIGHT LIKE TO READ……Choose one or more and enjoy!

***I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*,** (2013) by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb, is an awe inspiring biography. Malala's father felt as soon as she was born that she was special. His love for his daughter prompted him, as an educator, to start a school for girls. Life before the Taliban was hard but happy. When the Taliban took over Pakistan, schools for girls were forbidden. Malala spoke openly, even on the radio, about the rights of girls and became a target. She tells her story beautifully. Isn't it thrilling to know she not only survived but was also awarded the Nobel Peace Prize? Her co-author is one of the world's outstanding correspondents. A young reader's edition, written by Malala, is also available. Maybe a grandchild's birthday present?

The Art Forger (2012) by B.A. Shapiro takes place in Boston, Massachusetts USA. Claire, an aspiring artist, earns a meager living by copying famous paintings for legitimate reproduction companies. She is especially good with the Impressionists, such as her favorite, Degas. One of her paintings has been lauded but to her dismay, a "friend" claimed it was his. Undaunted, Claire yearns to have her paintings exhibited in an art gallery. Aiden, an art gallery owner, comes along with an original Degas that he wants copied. This novel is based on the unsolved 1990 *Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum* heist in Boston, Massachusetts USA. An art lover's mystery!

All the Light We Cannot See (2014) by Anthony Doerr takes place in France and Germany. The author has captured the lives of Marie-Laure, a young blind French girl, and Werner, a young orphaned German boy before, during, and after World War II. Marie-Laure's father makes exact miniatures of their Paris neighborhood, thereby teaching her how to find her way. Werner found a radio and was entranced! How can they send sound waves through the air? Curiosity and knowledge catapults him into the Hitler youth. Soon he is sent to do radio fieldwork. Their lives cross paths in Saint-Malo, where she and her father have sought refuge. The character development and poetic imagery are excellent.

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry (2012) by Rachel Joyce is set in modern day England. Harold is six months' retired from his job as sales representative for a brewery. He and his wife live a very staid life. One day he receives a letter from Queenie, a former fellow employee, who is dying of cancer. She helped him one time years ago. He never did thank her, so, he writes her a letter, but when he goes to post it, he changes his mind. Howard calls Queenie's nursing home and tells her to hang on for he is coming across town to see her. As he walks, he meets colorful fellow travelers, who admire him, and for their own reasons join him. This quirky, delightful story is deceptively deep.

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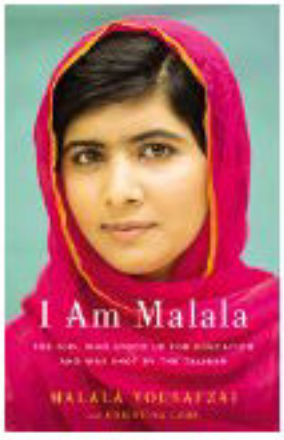

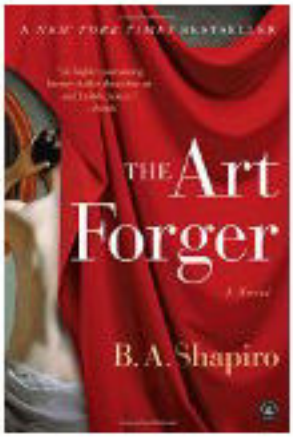

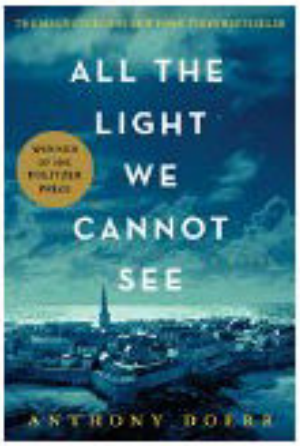

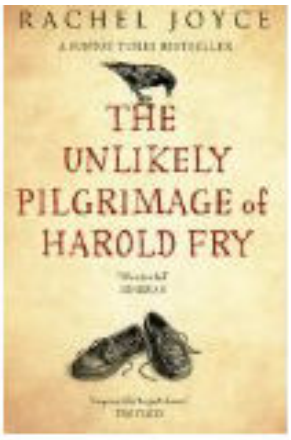

By breastfeeding our children we lay the foundations of a legacy for good health. The work we do as Leaders builds a legacy of breastfeeding knowledge in our communities and the families we work alongside. La Leche League as an organization has been building a legacy for future generations and the Founders have built La Leche League to stand as their legacy to the world.

Continuum is published three times a year. Articles selected for publication are based on space available and may be edited for grammar, length, clarity, and adherence to LLL journalistic guidelines. © LLL 2016

Trip attendees' names *(not all present for this photo at Magnolia Plantation):* Joy Aharon, Pam Ahearn, Carroll Beckham, Carol Bollin, Charlene Burnett, Ann Calandro, Pam Sears Cooper, Joan Crothers, Fran Dereszynski, Kathleen Doody, Kathy Dove, Cindy Duke, Eve Dunaway, Carol Esposito, Nancy Franklin, Jacque Gates, Judith Gilbert, Susan Giroux, Mary Gisch, Suzy Graham, Mary Jeanne Hickey, Patti Hope, Ginny Innocenti, Cathy Janoka, Diane Jeffer, Janet Jendron, Dottie Johnson. Names continued on p. 7.

LLL Alums Gather in Charleston, South Carolina

Ginny Innocenti and I flew on Wednesday, November 4, 2015 to Charleston, South Carolina to meet up with other LLL Alumnae Members, see this historic city together, and spend time with each other. Planning this wonderful gathering was Pam Oselka, Trip Chair. She was assisted by Alumnae Council Members Fran Dereszynski, Patti Hope, Janet Jendron, Edna Kelly, Gail Moak, and Sue Steilen. The Hampton Inn in Mount Pleasant was very accommodating with a great complimentary brunch each morning. Once again, greeting and meeting with friends from the past and meeting new ones was a delight.

On Thursday morning Ginny, Cathy Janoka, Leslie Ostyn, Rebecca Keepers, Suzy Graham and I met Carol Ezell Gibson in front of the Library Society on King Street for a fascinating two-hour and 15 minute *Grimke Sisters Walking Tour*. Judge Grimke, active in the early days of the United States, had seven children, including two daughters, Sarah and Angelina, who became abolitionists and eventually suffragettes. Sue Monk Kidd wrote of their fascinating lives in her historical novel, *Invention of Wings*. Thursday afternoon a pre-trip culinary tour was scheduled and enjoyed by 24 Alumnae members. That evening was the Welcome Dinner where we met all the Council Members who work behind the scenes for all of the Alum activities. Kudos!

On Friday morning we enjoyed a bus tour of historic Charleston, followed by a tour of the Manigault House, an antebellum mansion. The owners copied as much as they could from the English mansions they remembered. However, having the kitchen in the basement in Charleston's heat did not work. So, a *Kitchen House* was added on the mansion grounds. After having lunch on our own in the historic district's City Market Center, several of us visited the Charleston Museum near the Visitor's Center. I noted especially the former military uniforms from many battles there. That evening we gathered in the Liberty Tap Room and Grill for hors d'oeuvres at the *Judy Torgus Memorial Event.* Marian Tompson and Mary Ann Kerwin led a toast to Judy. Katy Lebbing narrated a touching onscreen presentation. Many Leaders and Alumnae submitted their fond memories of Judy, who did so much for breastfeeding mothers and LLL during her 50 the years as an LLL Leader and later as a Alumnae Council Member-at-Large. Judy passed away in June 2014.

Because moisture is what plagues most of Charleston's historic structures, that is one reason why preservation is such a major focus in the city. Drayton Hall is one of America's most architecturally significant early homes. Its curators have tried to conserve all the building's surviving historic fabric. Peeling interior paint has been carefully re-adhered to the walls. A new computer weather program was bought to advise when to open and close windows and doors to protect the interior from humidity swings. Spare stone columns were left on their side on the basement floor.
—Historic Charleston Foundation

On Saturday, we toured Drayton Hall, the only plantation house on the Ashley River to survive the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. We also toured the Magnolia Plantation, one of the oldest in the South. A special event was held there for us. Marian Tompson and Mary Ann Kerwin read the names of recently deceased Leaders at the *We Remember Ceremony.* On the trolley ride around the plantation, I learned to my surprise that indigo and rice were the prime products grown there and were a major supply for other countries. We saw quite a few alligators in the swampy ponds at the plantation. After dinner that evening, we gathered at the *Circular Congregational Church* in the historic district for the *Sound of Charleston Concert.* It was a musical treat, "from gospel to Gershwin, jazz to Civil War camp songs and light classics." A toe-tapping, hand clapping event! *(continued on p. 7)*

LLL Alums Gather in Charleston, South Carolina *(continued from p. 6)*

Trip attendees' names continued *(not all present for this photo at Magnolia Plantation):* Rebecca Keepers, Edna Kelly, Phoebe Kerness, Mary Ann Kerwin, Charlotte Knopf, Kathy Lange, Katy Lebbing, Marilyn Sears Lindsey, Lou-Ellen MacDonald, Sande Malinich, Teresa McCullen, Gayle McLean, Gail Moak, Valerie Moses, Barbara Mullins, Lynne Noel, Pam Oselka, Leslie Ostyn, Barbara Parker, Sandy Patton, Carolyn Miante Pepler, Charlene Phillips, Cyd Reynolds, Rae Schopp, Claire Sears, Amy Shaw, Nancy Sherwood, Evy Simon, Patty Spanjer, Sue Steilen, Mary Strack, Susan Thomas, Marian Tompson, Susan Weeldreyer, Ann White, and Ginny Wilkinson.

On Sunday several of us went to *Christ Our King Catholic Church* in Mount Pleasant and were warmly welcomed. Rae Shopp and several others went to the historic *Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church* where the recent sad shootings occurred. All were warmly welcomed. Then we boarded a shuttle bus to Patriots Point for the 30-minute scenic harbor tour to historic *Fort Sumter*. It was cold and windy, but a very moving time at the Fort. While there, we visited the museum, watched waves crashing on the rocks around the fort, and viewed the Arthur Ravelel, Jr. suspension bridge across the bay. A group lunch followed at the Charleston Harbor Fish House. In the evening we went to *Southerly*, a lovely restaurant, where 89-year-old Jerry McManus, founder LLL of South Carolina, and several local Leaders joined in the fun and conversation. The evening ended with a cake to celebrate the LLL Alumnae Association's 30th anniversary.

On Monday most of us said "au revoir" 'till we meet again! The Alumnae Council stayed on for the Annual Business Meeting. Ginny and I chatted with others who were leaving on Tuesday. That morning Fran Dereszynski, Joy Aharon, Ginny and I took a horse and buggy ride around downtown Charleston. It was fun! We ate sandwiches at a tiny restaurant run by an interesting man from Egypt. Then off Ginny and I flew to Chicago and Fran to California. We all look forward to the next Alum trip!! Won't you consider joining us the next time?

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Trip Statistics

Attendees: 63. Active Leaders: 32, includes 2 LLL co-Founders. Former Leaders: 31; First Alum trip: 21.
Attendees' age range: 50 to 80+ years.
Traveled by plane: 47. Traveled by Megabus: 1.
Drove by car: 8, for a total of 15 Alums.

Attendees traveled from 21 states: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.

2017 Alum Trip News: Stay Tuned

The Alumnae Council is exploring cities suggested on the Trip Evaluation Forms. Stay tuned for an announcement in a future issue of *Continuum*. Renew by April 30, 2016 to receive the next issue. Renew at http://lllalumnae.org/join or by mail for multiple years or anytime before your expiration date found on the back page of this issue. Tribute membership also available. Moving? Send changes to Sue Steilen, Membership Chair, at suesteilen@comcast.net

Gail Moak, Mary Strack, and Charlene Burnett enjoyed the pre-trip culinary tour in Charleston's Historic District. Thank you, Cathy Janoka, for taking pictures of those participating in the tour.

Pins for Leaders' Years of Service

Prices start at $6 per pin (plus postage) with reduced prices for bulk orders. Available: Basic Leader pin (without years) and 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, and 50-year pins. To view photos of pins or to place an order, go to lllalumnae.org/content/leader-recognition-pin For questions about an order, contact Susan Geil at susan4868@gmail.com

Reflections on Caregiving: Is Giving 'Til It Hurts a Gift?

Now is a wonderful time to reflect on the quality of the gift of self, time, and presence that we offer to others. Consider the following as you strive to balance your caregiving activities with the needs of others.

1) **Decide how much time you can give with your whole heart; then give it.** Don't be tentative—looking at your phone, making excuses about how you have lots to do—just be fully present. Even a short visit or a five-minute phone call where you are fully present makes a huge difference. You can say at the outset (if the person can comprehend), "I had ten minutes to give you a call before leaving for work and wanted to check in and see how your day is going, etc." If he/she starts off with a problem, then say, "Okay, I'm going to make a note about that and call you later after I have time to think about it." Then do that. The problem may no longer be an issue, so tread lightly when you bring it up again.

2) **Don't talk about coming or calling tomorrow or in a few days.** Older people/impaired individuals ruminate on these things. They may call several times with, "When did you say you're coming," or "I thought you were coming today," etc. Rather keep it positive and vague, "I'm so happy we got a chance to visit/touch base, whatever, today—and I'll talk to you soon." *

3) **Listen to requests and ask if they would like anything.** Then really see if you can make *any part* of that happen. "I need some lotion, lip balm, a new book." "I miss my beautiful sheets." "I never know what time it is." Then buy two lotions and two lip balms, so the next time you can ask the caregiver to bring them out of the dresser/storage area. In the note section of your smartphone or note pad, keep a list of what you have bought. Another thing, if he/she uses specific familiar lotions, e.g., a particular brand of lip balm, body lotion, or face cream, then trying something new may be confusing, not right, and a failed attempt. If a loved one is more open, perhaps something new from his/her favorite store might be a huge pleasure to receive. It is such a small thing for us to do.

4) **Are there requests that seem like they can't be fulfilled?** For example, "I can't find my car keys or my walker," or "I'd love to have a candle next to my bed," or "Can I go to the (grandchild's) graduation, birthday party, or family event?" Soft reminders, such as "Remember, you aren't driving anymore, but I can take you for a ride down to the ocean" (if you CAN and WILL). "There will be lots of children at the party and it's not at a place where there are easy restrooms for you. But I'm going to take a video (or pictures) of the party to show you next time I visit." A tablet computer or smartphone would be amazing for this and if you remember, take a video/pictures with the child or family member saying, "Hi, Grandma."

5) **Keep open and frequent communication with staff members where your loved one lives (top down, starting with a supervisor).** They can give you insights and ideas that other families have used, etc. Buy a box of candy or a treat from a local bakery. Add a thank you note from (your loved one's name) family for taking such wonderful care of our grandma, aunt, whoever) and leave it at the front desk. Simple, not over the top, but you and grandma will be on their minds. If someone was especially nice, read their name badge or ask their name and thank them. Then during the next conversation or voice mail with a head nurse, supervisor, etc., say, "I just want to tell you how amazing (caregiver's name) was with my mother, sister, or grandmother." Be specific. There may/will be a time when you have to say the opposite and you MUST. They will remember that you acknowledged good care also.

6) **Advocate for your loved one!** Are other services available to benefit your loved one? If physical therapy is available and paid by the health care coverage, ask the physician to authorize it even if it provides more time out of their room and more socialization. If hair and nail services are available, arrange an appointment. Ask caregivers to take them to music performances, onsite church or worship services. Attending may spark memories of other times. Encourage them even if they are reluctant.

Again, take a photo of the facility's weekly calendar or obtain a printed copy to put reminders in your smartphone or note pad for special activities going on. When the reminder alerts you and you are able, call your loved one and tell him/her that someone will be coming in a few minutes to attend the music performance. You may even call the front desk to remind them to get your mother, grandma, ready. She may still refuse, but maybe not. If planning a visit, do it during a special performance. She may go with you when otherwise she would not. Plan a visit at mealtime and eat with them. It is a good way to find out what the food is like, meet their friends (whom you can ask about later, by name), and sometimes an easier conversation rather than trying to think of things to say. You can talk about the food. The friends chime in. You can show photos***** or a short video of family members or grandchildren on an electronic tablet which all people love to view. Bring up things that your loved one can elaborate on, e.g., "Remember when we used to camp at Sequoia National Park. That was so much fun! I'm so glad you did that with us." *(continued on p. 9)*

*** Editorial Note:** Elders and impaired people may have a distorted sense of time. They may not remember the last time you went to see them—even if it was ten minutes ago. Leave a simple note with the date and time for them to read (or have read to them) when you depart to help bridge time between visits.

Digital picture frames can be loaded with a special event and family photos. Some have motion detectors that turn the frame on and off. Remote controls are perfect for people with mobility issues.

Reflections on Caregiving: Is Giving 'Til It Hurts a Gift? *(continued from p. 8)*

7) **Curtail your own sadness, frustration, fear, and emotional drama!** I know this is easier said than done. And it's not second nature to everyone. You might feel very irritable and want to say, "No Mom, you can't use your walker, you're going to fall again, break something, and have to go the hospital!" "Mom, you have to leave the button around your neck." Instead, try this approach. "Just push your button, anytime you need to go to the bathroom. That's the best thing. Keep your button right here; you will always find it." Don't hesitate to say, "Dr. Whoever (if they have or really like the doctor, it helps) wants you to really take care of yourself, and not use your walker right now." Or "Remember to drink water during the day, try the physical therapy, or participate in a schedule activity."

Most of what you see is a NORMAL part of the illness, aging, cognitive impairment, or physical condition taking place. Do what you can to support, comfort, respect privacy, etc., without becoming overwhelmed emotionally, putting your own spin on it, or driving it one way or the other. Do the right thing even if the patient/loved one appears to not appreciate it.

8) **Do nice things for yourself!** Pick up a cup of tea or your favorite iced or hot drink after your visit. Or stop at the store or drive-through on the way home. Drive down to the beach, by a local park, or favorite spot in your neighborhood. Take a walk, buy *yourself* something—a shower gel, lotion, home fragrance, magazine, or book. Take pride that you did something hard today, (as if it were an arduous task or running a 5K race) and put your feet up. Take a bath when you get home, take a yoga class, dance class, order dinner in, etc. Take a break for a few days without apology. You can even tell the person that you will be out of town if need be, even if you are not, technically.

Don't expect gratitude from an elder, patient, spouse, or other family members, friends you talk to, or the world in general. *It's your own journey*. Know that you are doing something good for someone and yourself, smile about it, thank God, or be grateful that you were able to handle it just for today (even a small part of it) and know that you can do it again. Even if it's easier or harder for someone else, you are doing what you can. Talk to your spouse or close friend about it but don't be critical of their way, or of your own. You can ask for ideas or their help about better ways to handle it. Caregiver support groups, friends, and professional counseling can be helpful, as well as online support and information sites. Be kind to you.

- Consider viewing www.pbs.org/wgbh/caringformomanddad/
- Or read: *A Bittersweet Season: Caring for Our Aging Parents --and Ourselves* by Jane Gross.

~ *Patience not perfection rules the day!* ~

Co-authors: Kim Moreno and Jan Ferree have been dear friends and work associates for almost 35 years. Jan attended many LLL conferences with Kim in earlier years.

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This is Kim's third article on "Caring for Loved Ones." The final one will be about grief for publication in the May-August issue.

Thank You to 2015 Judy Torgus Memorial Event Donors

On November 6, 2015 in Charleston, South Carolina, the Alumnae Association commemorated the life of Judy Torgus with a photo presentation of her life and memories from friends who knew her during her 50 years as a dedicated LLL Leader, former LLLI employee, and Alumnae Council Member. Donations covered expenses for hor d'oeuvres, a champagne toast, and dessert in Judy's honor. We are grateful to the following donors who contributed to this memorable event. Your generosity is appreciated!

Joy Aharon
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Paula Swain
Marian Tompson
Carolyn Vemulapalli
Mary Wales
Louise Wills

Judy was an incredible editor who looked out for "her" writers. I will be forever grateful for her counsel regarding *Mothering Multiples*. How lucky I was to have her help and expertise. —Karen Gromada

For corrections or additions to the donor list, contact Fran at dereszyn@verizon.net

When a Mother Gives Birth to a Baby with Special Needs

When my daughter was pregnant, prenatal testing indicated everything was in good order. Further testing was not suggested. Her baby girl was born with Down syndrome. It was apparent how little any of our family was prepared. We found vital information at our fingertips from a growing body of online research, blogs, and support groups. However, we soon learned that many friends and healthcare professionals had minimal current understanding of Down syndrome.

Photo: Three Generations

Her daughter's birth was anticipated with great excitement. With the baby's arrival and subsequent diagnosis, common practices to welcome the baby seemed minimal to absent—with little to no recognition from some friends and family members. Exclamations of her beauty were not heard as often. News of her diagnosis was met with awkward silence. People often expressed how sorry they felt. Such lack of contact and/or comments felt similar to having a disease or death in the family. Although it hurt and seemed insensitive, it was unintentional. It indicated, however, a lack of aware-ness of a special needs child. Some seemed uncomfortable; most people simply froze and forgot how to react. While my daughter struggled to learn all she could and accept the daughter that came to her—not the one she expected—her family would have appreciated customary recognition and support. At a time to seek assurance and welcome for the family, the lack of support was distressing.

Not all genetic conditions can be diagnosed prenatally. During the vulnerable postnatal period, parents may quickly be given the option to place their special needs baby up for adoption. These babies are often found at the top of an adoption list. Why might someone ask about adoption when I believe the baby brings deep rewards and joys, are equally worthy of welcome and celebration, and inclusion into their birth family. Children who have this extra chromosome have a wide spectrum of abilities. Some live close to normal happy lives with few health problems. Others have more complex health needs. It is a hidden population. Families with a special needs child carry an extra full time parenting load. The next time you see someone with a special needs child, make their life a little easier and reach out with praise and kindness. They are normal caring families who love their children like we all do. Feel free to contact me if you had a child or grandchild born with Down syndrome or another special need.

Louise Cox
Windsor Locks, Connecticut USA
davlouc@cox.net

Ten things to say when a baby is born with Down syndrome

1. How are you doing?
2. He/she has your eyes/nose/hair, etc.
3. How is her health?
4. You are going to be a great parent.
5. We brought the baby a present.
6. I am bringing you a meal on Tuesday at 6 o'clock.
7. Can I hold him/her?
8. We'd like to take the other kids out to a movie on Saturday and then have them over for pizza.
9. You make beautiful children.
10. Congratulations on the birth of your baby!

*For more details included with this list, go to http://www.gillianmarchenko.com/10-things-to-say-when-a-baby-is-born-with-down-syndrome/

Recommended reading: *Sun Shine Down: A Memoir,* by Gillian Marchenko, (T.S. Poetry Press, 2013)

Comments Shared by Alumnae Members on the LLL Alumnae Yahoo Discussion List

I suggest a short list of what you can do and what would be acceptable to the family. Although my special needs children were not special needs at birth, I often said, "No," if I was asked in a general way, e.g., "What can I do to help?" Specific offers were more welcome because I did not have to think about what would help most. I suggest housekeeping. Friends once cleaned our house before I returned home from the hospital. You might suggest a casserole or meal of their choice. Offer your available freezer space for food offers to accept without having to say, "We don't have storage space." Shopping was a big challenge for me. Nowadays, I would shop online, an option that did not exist when I had my children.
—Mary Baker, Thousand Oaks, California USA

As the mother of a child with special needs (now an adult with Down syndrome), I found the best help was from people who recognized her as a child, not a "different" one, simply a beloved child. LLL was the best place to find that. I think that early acceptance has made a difference now in her adult life. —Louise Wills, Waterbury, Connecticut USA

LLL Alumnae Association Goals

- To ensure the existence of LLL for upcoming generations of mothers, children, and grandchildren–including our own.
- To develop a network of information and support among members.
- To promote LLL's mission and philosophy in our communities.
- To locate and keep in touch with retired Leaders worldwide.
- To assist in the development of Alumnae groups in communities and Areas around the globe.
- To undertake special projects.

The **LLL Alumnae Association Council** is the decision-making body for the organization, its projects, and activities. Council members stay up-to-date via monthly conference calls and an email discussion group. Annual Council Meetings are held as needed.

Council Members' Contact Information

Alumnae Association Coordinator	**Edna Kelly** eekelly@swbell.net	*Online Communications*	**Gail Moak** gmgesley@gmail.com
Finance/Treasurer	**Patti Hope** pjbalances@bellsouth.net	*Alumnae Rep Coordinator*	**Pam Oselka** poselka1945@att.net
Continuum Editor	**Fran Dereszynski** dereszyn@verizon.net	*Member-at-Large*	**Janet Jendron** jjendron@usit.net
Membership/Secretary	**Sue Steilen** suesteilen@comcast.net		

Tribute Membership: Another Choice When Joining the LLL Alumnae Association

Tribute membership is a way to connect in a special way to **one individual**—an Alumnae member, co-Leader, former Leader, colleague, family member, or cherished friend. Tributes are published in *Continuum* and posted on the Alumnae website for one year; $5 of every Tribute Membership is donated to the LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US. Both basic and Tribute memberships keep the LLL Alumnae Association growing. Use the back page or go to http://lllalumnae.org/join and select "Add a Tribute to Your Membership." The following Tribute Membership was received during the last reporting period, 9/1/2015 to 12/31/2015:

11/30/2015 **Martha Sears**, Dana Point, California USA. One-year tribute to **Janet Jendron**, Columbia, South Carolina USA. Janet, you inspired me as a new Leader 35 years ago and you still do today.

From the Mail Bag

Did you notice the beautiful LLLI 60th Anniversary logo on the front page? The celebration will be from October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017. *Building a Legacy* is the theme. LLLI will host an online International Conference planned for April 3 - 7, 2017, available for download for a month. Sessions are to be planned around the LLL mission, the ten concepts, and Leader responsibilities, and with a wide variety of speakers and languages and LLL entities around the world. Mark your calendars! It is a global event. Let's celebrate together, bring LLL supporters closer, and spread the word. Be in touch with news and happenings at http://www.llli.org/celebrate60

After you read this issue, search Facebook for "LLLI 60th Anniversary," a closed group for LLL. Select "Join" at https://www.facebook.com/groups/1675504529385749/ and the page administrator will approve your name. LLLI Board Member Lydia de Raad invites you to "make the anniversary year special and join us on Facebook for information and updates, and to share your own plans and ideas for this celebration." I joined the group. I hope you will, too!

Mary Jeanne Hickey wrote: "In talking with a few Alums on the Charleston trip, I was surprised that no one heard about *Prime Time Health: A Scientifically Proven Plan for Feeling Young and Living Longer* by William Sears and Martha Sears. It is a wonderful book written for all of us. Perhaps someone could read it and write a review." Sounds interesting! Anyone interested?

Thank you to Alums who contributed to this issue! Taking time to write is appreciated. Readers, what articles did you like? Won't you take a few moments to share a favorite(s) with me? Or better yet, reply to an author who took time to write for your Alum newsletter. Writers love feedback! If you have ideas to share for family vacations, send them along.

The first day of spring will be here in a few weeks. That's when days become warmer in my part of the world and time to turn off the heat. Daylight hours become longer. As I walk by the front yard, the spring-inspired roses, tulips, and orange California poppies are starting to bloom—adding color to the ground soil around the bird bath.

Next deadline is April 1, 2016. Renew by April 30, 2016 to be on the mailing list for the next issue.

Until next time,
dereszyn@verizon.net
Continuum Editor

Fran

LLL ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

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Next deadline: April 1, 2016

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Send all donations to Alumnae Treasurer.

$ ____ ☐ I prefer my donation to be for the LLL Alumnae Association, unrestricted and anonymous.

$ ____ ☐ Donation to LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US, Your donation will be sent to the Helpline.
My Helpline donation is: ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $75 ☐ $100 ☐ $_____ (write in amount)

$ ____ ☐ **My Total Donation.** Check payable to *LLL Alumnae Association.* Mail to Patti Hope, Alumnae Treasurer, 2457 Vivian Circle, Decatur, GA 30030-1592. Questions? Contact Patti at: pjbalances@bellsouth.net

Membership

Yes, I want to keep in touch, support the LLL Alumnae Association, and join for $36/year US funds ($44 outside USA)

✦ My current LLL status: ☐ Active Leader ☐ Former Leader ☐ Current LLL Member ☐ Former LLL Member

✦ Gift membership for a: ☐ Friend/LLL supporter ☐ Friend of Alum

Name _____ Home phone (____) _____ Cell phone (____) _____

Address _____ City _____

Today's date _____Email _____ State/Province _____ZIP+4 _____

Email is needed for membership reminders

$ ____ ☐ **Renewal** for __ year(s) $36/year in USA. Outside USA: $44/year, US dollars*

$ ____ ☐ **New member** for __ year(s) $36/year in USA. $44/year US dollars* outside USA. You may join/renew for multiple years.

$ ____ ☐ **Gift membership** for __ year(s) $36/year in USA. $44/year US dollars* outside USA.

$ ____ ☐ **I want to join as a Tribute Member** $56 per one member ($64 US dollars* outside USA).

I join as a Tribute Member _____ (insert your name, city & state/country)

My tribute to one individual _____(insert one person's name, city/state/country)

Indicate why you wish to honor the individual. *Content subject to final review by the LLL Alumnae Association.*

Add up to 15 words for your tribute to one person: _____

$ ____ **Total Membership.** Check payable to *LLL Alumnae Association.*

☐ Mail to: Sue Steilen, LLL Alumnae Membership Chair, 13958 Grenelefe Lane, Homer Glen, IL 60491-5922.

Questions or to inquire about receipt of your check and Membership Form, contact Sue at: suesteilen@comcast.net

Send all memberships to Alumnae Membership Chair. *Form updated January 1,* 2016/ FD