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December 2024 - Volume 37, Number 4

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Letter from the President

Well, December is here, and with that, the winter holidays! (Except for our FoLLL members in the Southern Hemisphere, where they are coming into the summer!) Speaking of the Southern Hemisphere, I write this from the shores of Papeete, Tahiti, looking across amazingly crystal-clear blue water at the mountain cliffs of Moorea, basking in warm trade winds.

I wanted to thank everyone who attended our Friends of La Leche League trip to Chicago. It would not have been possible without all who participated. I truly enjoyed being able to speak on behalf of Friends of LLL at the LLLI Gala. This was set up to honor the publication of the 9th edition of *The Art of Breastfeeding*, as well as Founder Marian Tompson's work helping Leaders assist those breastfeeding in emergencies. There was a surprise for us in the form of a video from Founder Mary Ann Kerwin that was emailed to LLLI to show at the Gala! We were so grateful to see her looking and sounding so well, since we hadn't seen or heard her speak since the Albuquerque, New Mexico trip in 2013. Children and grandchildren of Founders were also there sharing their family stories from the early days of "League."

We learned that the writers of *The Art of Breastfeeding* are called writers because the author is La Leche League International. Two of the four writers were able to attend, Anna Swisher and Jayne Joyce, and they participated in a panel led by Janet Jendron about the writing of the new edition.

The rest of the weekend was filled with old friends catching up with each other, new friends getting acquainted, discovering Chicago architecture, local foods, and celebrating LLLI history. Along the way were many activities which are covered by member correspondents in this issue of *Continuum*.

May you all have a wonderful new year, with many blessings for you and your families!

FondLLLy,
Susan Mocsny Thomas
(she/her)

A Heartfelt Reflection on a Journey with Friends of La Leche League [from a first-time Friends Trip Registrant]

by Stephanie Bodak Nicholson

Old Friends and New,

I've been trying for weeks to find the right words to share about my experience for the FoLLL *Continuum*, and honestly, it's been a challenge. Between family milestones, personal moments, and… well, menopause, I've found it hard to sit down and collect my thoughts. Anne has been so patient, gently reminding me to write, but life just kept getting in the way.

Since my trip to Chicago…... Maggie had her Senior Volleyball Banquet, Caleb got engaged and ELOPED, Maggie sang in the All-Region Choir, and we celebrated Skylar's baby shower. We moved Shay's horse to the farm, welcomed our eighth grandbaby Georgie, and Maggie performed in the fall Opera at Temple College. Not to mention the Senior class pictures, hosting Thanksgiving Dinner, Maggie's Pre-Area Choir auditions, singing at Dickens on the Strand in Galveston, and enjoying *A Christmas Carol* at the Alley Theatre. Oh, and I spent a wonderful day making Hungarian Balish with my parents and sister. My house is half decorated for Christmas, shopping is hardly done, and to top it off, the plumbing backed up today!

Looking ahead, my eldest son Gabor is leaving next week to work on the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline. I'll be hosting Christmas WEEK, and before I know it, the New Year will be here. Next April will mark two years since I lost Bobby, and I can hardly believe how much I still miss him — his place in our family and in my life. The days always feel long, but the years are so short.

So, here I am, finally sitting down to share about my trip to Chicago and my experience with the Friends of LLL. There was so much packed into those few days: visiting the LLLI Archives at DePaul University, enjoying the Architecture Center River Cruise, sightseeing around Chicago, attending *The Art of Breastfeeding* Fundraiser Gala, the book signing, a trip

to Wilder Mansion and Park, and the FoLLL Farewell Luncheon. It was all truly special, and when I returned home, my heart was full.

For me, this trip marked a beautiful time of reflection after 32 years of being involved with La Leche League. It was a culmination of my Leadership, one that started while raising six children and moving from place to place with a soldier husband. For years, I focused mostly on leading meetings and answering calls, while homeschooling and caring for my family. But this trip, at this moment in my life, felt like the perfect way to honor my many years as an LLL Leader.

I'm so grateful to have had the chance to travel to Chicago to support my friend and fellow Texas Leader, Anna Swisher, at *The Art of Breastfeeding* Gala. The trip was full of beautiful memories, and I'm still hanging on the highlights:

- The strong representation of Texas Leaders: Edna Kelly, Anne Hutton, Ellen King, Anna Swisher, and myself — with the addition of TXAN Leader and USA Board Member, Alejandra Hernando from Mexico.
- Visiting the LLLI Archives was OUTSTANDING! Not only was it organized, thoroughly planned and executed, but the information and materials available to handle, view, photograph and read was just amazing. My LLL Heart was FULL! Anna Swisher and I decided we must go back and spend a few days because a few hours was just not enough.
- Getting to know Leaders whom I've only seen as names. Leaders from other states, other groups, other Area Networks, other Countries, other DCE's and other beliefs; easily leaving the politics of LLL behind to enjoy the ties that bind. I can say my goal was to represent TXAN and the USA well!
- Chicago itself was amazing. I love Texas, but Chicago's history and architecture are truly something to behold.
- The Gala was a highlight — despite a little dress hurdle that Joan helped me with! The evening was beautiful, with heartfelt speeches from the Founders' families, the two living Founders and the writers of *The Art of Breastfeeding* book.
- To top it all off, the trip ended with a luncheon at Wilder Mansion, where it all started, the perfect way to wrap up a trip full of memories that will be hard to top.

I came home from Chicago with a heart full of gratitude — for my time in La Leche League, for the friendships I've made, and for the chance to be part of something much bigger than myself. Thank you to everyone who made this journey so special.

With DeLLLight,

Stephanie Bodak Nicholson, Temple/Belton, TXAN, USA

Texan Chicago trip registrants at the LLLI Celebration Gala. From left: Ellen Goodwin King, Anne Hutton, Stephanie Bodak Nicholson, Anna Swisher, and Edna Kelly.

Highlights from the Chicago Trip [from someone who has attended ALL the Friends Trips]

by Edna Kelly

Friends are treasures in my life. I was so happy to see familiar ones and meet new ones during the October Friends trip. Carol and I laughed about "Think. Do!" Getting to visit with Marian was extra special. Patty and I enjoy seeing one another in person on these trips and she is easy to spot, wearing a hat! Janet was her usual bubbly self, especially with her daughter's baby arriving soon. Anne and I made a date for lunch when we return to Houston. Joan and Susan are BFFs, I think. Ellen and Larry and I had fun mingling with the hip crowd on Cindy's balcony overlooking Lake Michigan. We raised the average age by a decade or two at least. I first met Patti on the San Francisco trip and then loved working with her and Sue on the Friends Board. Evy and Carroll are friends I wish lived next door! I was delighted to see Stephanie and to learn that she is still helping little Texans and their families. I got to thank Mary for her good book reviews over the years. Judy, Lupe, Susan, Alice, just a few of the people with whom I loved reconnecting. And then there were new friends, including Alison from New Zealand and Jayne from the United Kingdom!

I picked up copies of just-published *The Art of Breastfeeding*, autographed by writers Anna Swisher and Jayne Joyce. Teresa Pitman, Bibiana Moreno Carranza, and these two women did a magnificent job of compiling a "Meeting in a book." I've already given a copy to my neighbor for her grateful granddaughter who is expecting a baby soon. If you haven't gotten your new "Art" yet, I encourage you to purchase one to have ready for the next time you need a baby gift.

And what about the DePaul University Archives? I was so surprised when the staff recognized my work assembling archival materials from the LLLI office. I recently met a Texas Tech University professor who told me she spent three days researching in the archives. I felt proud to be part of her work.

A highlight for me, besides the Field Museum, the city walk, and the Chicago River Boat Architecture Tour, was a day at nearby Wilder Park. The famous picnic site was well marked with a plaque and a bench as well as trees planted by friends and family. To have lunch with my friends and Marian and her daughter (the nursing baby at that picnic) and her husband at the lovely Wilder Mansion was a wonderful way to wind up the trip. Katy, gracious as always, was a perfect hostess along with her co-Leaders. Loved the "nipple candies !"

La Leche League connections are special treasures to me. I'm so glad for the opportunities to reconnect and to make new connections with my League friends. Thank you, Friends of LLL, for making this all possible.

We hope you enjoyed reading about the experiences of first-time and long-time trip registrants. Please don't miss our next issue, which will feature the reflections of trip registrants from near and far.

Announcing Mini-Grants Program for 2025

by Anne Hutton

Friends of La Leche League is excited to announce another round of Mini-Grants to be awarded in 2025. We are looking for volunteers to help evaluate the applications and determine which projects receive funding in this Mini-Grants cycle. To date, Friends of LLL has distributed over $28,000 to 17 projects that further our mission worldwide.

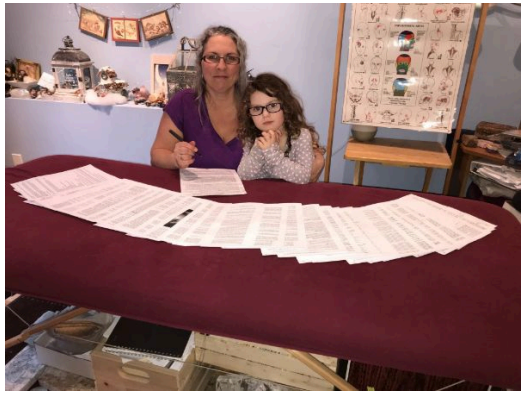
Friends of LLL first distributed Mini-Grants in 2018, awarding $6,850 to five projects in Texas, California, British Columbia Canada, Southern Italy, and South Africa. In 2020, we awarded Mini-Grants for projects in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Maine and New Hampshire, and Israel. In our most recent round of Mini-Grants in 2022, Friends of LLL distributed over $14,500 to eight projects in California, Maryland/Delaware/DC, Texas, Columbia, Austria, and Spain.

The Mini-Grants program is intended to provide funding for innovative projects that serve the Friends of La Leche League mission and are focused enough to be completed within a nine month time frame. Applications must have a letter of support from an active LLL Leader or Friends of LLL member, and applicants must agree not to source any Mini-Grant products from companies that violate the WHO Code.

Our previous Mini-Grant award projects included:
- Creation of breastfeeding support videos in various languages to run on social media platforms targeting underserved communities.
- Developing Arabic-language breastfeeding education materials.
- Incorporating a breastfeeding education program into Registered Dietitian training at

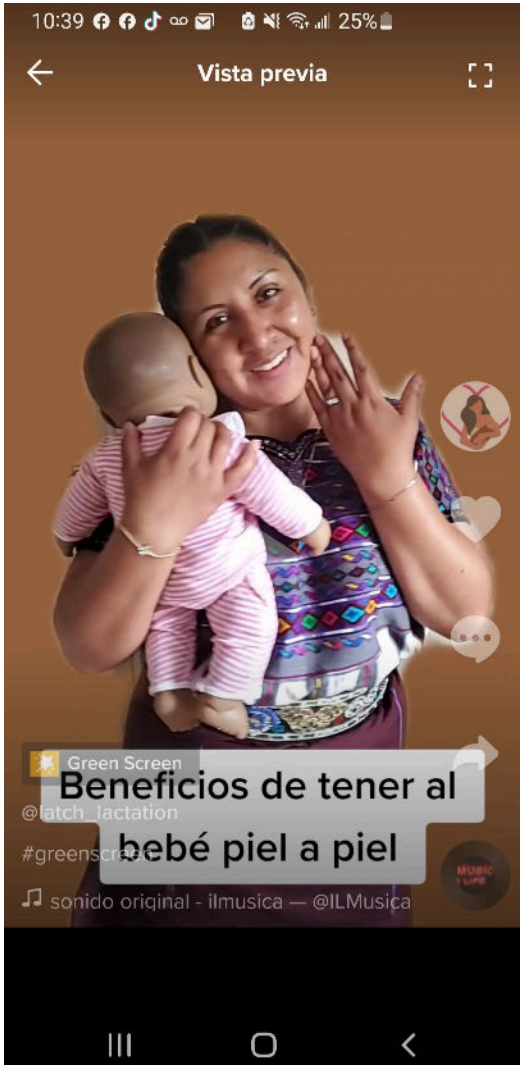
three universities.
- Funding a sign language interpreter to help with the accreditation of a LLL Leader who plans to serve the deaf and hard-of-hearing community.
- Providing breastfeeding support and information to mothers overcoming addiction.
- Preparing and executing a program to train LLL Leaders to support breastfeeding mothers of babies with Down syndrome.
- Purchasing copies of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* for public libraries throughout South Africa.

More information about previous Mini-Grants awards is available on our website **Mini-Grants page**. This year we look forward to funding another wide variety of projects. We will also give preference to projects that will distribute the new edition of *The Art of Breastfeeding* to underserved communities.



Some past Mini-Grant awardees, clockwise from upper left: delivering a copy of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* to a library in South Africa; Laura Meikie of LLL of Canada-Vernon, British Colombia (and daughter) with breastfeeding information; online Spanish-language breastfeeding support video developed by LLL Spain; paced breastmilk feeding training for Registered Dietitian education at Louisiana Tech University.

Capacity Building
Systems Theory
Lifespan Development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In 2025, Friends of La Leche League would like to make awards at or around the same amounts granted in 2022. Part of the Mini-Grants funding comes from our general operating budget, but we also accept restricted donations to fund this special program. We are now accepting donations for the 2025 Mini-Grants. We are also looking for up to four volunteers to work with Friends Board member Lupe Forsang on the 2025 Mini-Grant committee. Committee members have the very exciting job of selecting from what is certain to be a diverse and exceptional number of grant applications. Please help us make a difference.

Donate to 2025 Mini-Grants

Volunteer for the Mini-Grants Committee

Keep Your Membership Active!

This is your membership information:

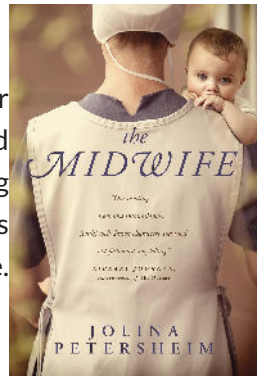
<<First Name>> <<Last Name>>, membership expiration date <<Expiration Date>>.

To renew your membership online, sign in **HERE** with your email address as the "Username or email" and your password. (If you don't remember your password, click the button to reset it.)

You Might Like to Read...

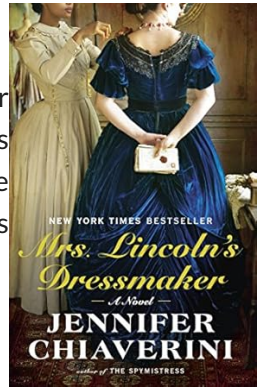
by Carroll Beckham

The Midwife, 2014, by Jolina Petersheim



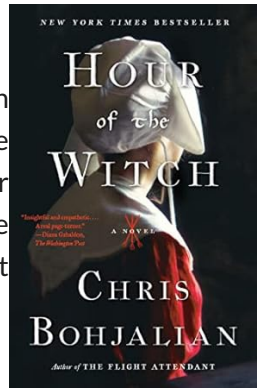
The lead midwife of an Old Order Mennonite home in Tennessee for unwed mothers has a secret. Contact with the outside world would provide medical advantages for the women in her care, but remaining secluded in the community gives her the anonymity she wants. This novel also explores surrogate pregnancy as past and present collide. The healing power of love and forgiveness wins in the end.

Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker, 2013, by Jennifer Cheaverini



This historical fiction profiles the life of Elizabeth Keckley, a former slave who becomes Mrs. Lincoln's dressmaker and friend. Keckley is largely forgotten in history, but this story of her life is fascinating. The author unveils the private lives of President Abraham Lincoln and his wife through the eyes of the First Lady's most trusted confidante.

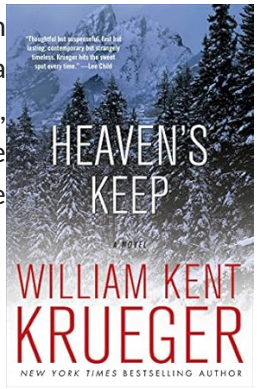
Hour of the Witch, 2022, by Chris Bohjalian



A novel of suspense, this is a terrifying story of the American witch hunt and domestic violence set in Boston in the 1600s. Mary is the young second wife of a cruel, powerful man. She plots to escape her marriage in a world where every neighbor is watching for signs of the devil. She soon becomes the object of suspicion and rumor and must escape not only her marriage but the gallows.

Heaven's Keep, 2010, by William Kent Krueger

Cork O'Conner is a retired cop who faces the most harrowing mission of his life when a charter plane carrying his wife disappears in a snowstorm over the Wyoming Rockies. Cork travels to Wyoming, where he battles the interference of local law enforcement and the open hostility of the Arapaho Indians as he unravels the mystery of the missing plane.



Beloved Holiday Traditions around the World

by Randee Kaitcer

The month of December is full of celebrations of all kinds, some of which are as unique as the region of the world where they originated. Some have been celebrated for thousands of years, others are fairly new -- but they are all meaningful to the people who hold them dear. We can celebrate the season without celebrating one religion.

A celebration is understood all over the world and across cultures and religions as an act or event that commemorates something, and in some cases it makes something, or a specific date, special. People throughout the generations have taken time during the winter months to celebrate the end of the year and the beginning of a new one. While there are many differences in the events celebrated, they also have similar themes of togetherness, reflection, and joy.

Although Christmas is the most popular celebration in most Western countries, around the world and throughout the U.S., there are many more winter celebrations. The most well-known and celebrated usually are religious in nature (Hanukkah, or the Festival of Lights); some are inspired by nature itself,

acknowledging the darkest day of the year and the inevitable return of the sun; still others honor cultural traditions of the region or country in which they are celebrated (Kwanzaa, based on African harvest, or “first fruits,” festival traditions from various parts of Africa). Here are only a few celebrations around the world, all around the month of December, but there are many more.

Argentina

Setting off fireworks on Christmas Eve is a tradition relatively unique to Argentina and a handful of other South American countries. In certain locations, fireworks might be seen and heard as late as the dawn of Christmas morning!

Iceland

Jólabókafló, or Christmas Book Flood, occurs on December 24th, Christmas Eve. It's a peaceful, cozy, and cherished part of Icelandic Christmas traditions. In Iceland, Christmas is more than just a day – it is an entire season of festivity, starting from early December and lasting until the Twelfth Night on January 6th. Jólabókafló, is pronounced: "yo-la-boke-uh-flowed." Another way to remember it is "yoh-l uh- boh-k uh-flawd, joh-." Think of the initial 'J' as more of an 'I' sound. Then, take your time with each syllable, almost as if you're saying "jolly book flood," but not quite.

This beloved tradition emerged in 1944, during World War II, when harsh restrictions on imports left the Icelandic people with few gift options come Christmastime. Because the restrictions on imported paper were more lenient, books became an accessible gift of

choice — a tradition that hasn't diminished in the 70+ years since. Today, Jólabókaflóðið is a time for connecting with loved ones and diving into some great reads.

Japan

Ōmisoka ( )—or ōtsugomori ( )—is a Japanese traditional celebration on the last day of the year. Traditionally, it was held on the final day of the 12th lunar month. With Japan's switch to using the Gregorian calendar at the beginning of the Meiji era, December 31 (New Year's Eve) is now used for the celebration.

Ceremonies for welcoming the New Year on Omisoka are held at shrines and temples. At shrines, a ceremony is held to purify all uncleanliness of the year. There are differences depending on the type of shrine or temple.

A countdown event is also held at the bustling Shibuya Scramble Crossing. Although it isn't a traditional custom, it's a new trend that has become more popular in recent years.

Traditionally, important activities for the concluding year and day were completed in order to start the new year fresh. Some of these include house cleaning, repaying debts, purification (such as driving out evil spirits and bad luck), and bathing so the final hours of the year could be spent relaxing. Recently, families and friends often gather for parties, including the viewing of the over four-hour Kōhaku Uta Gassen (, "Red/White Singing Battle") on NHK, or more recently to watch large mixed martial arts cards. This custom has its roots in the ancient Japanese culture surrounding toshigamisama ( ) or toshitokusama ( ), which revolved around the practice of showing reverence toward the gods of the current and upcoming years.

Philippines

In the diverse archipelago of the Philippines, December is a universal month of compassion, kindness, and generosity. While Muslims do not typically celebrate winter holidays, December is a time when the spirit of giving fills the air, transcending religious boundaries. The essence of "Bayanihan," the Filipino spirit of

communal unity, is amplified in December. Regardless of religious beliefs, communities come together to celebrate and share in the joy of giving, without expecting anything in return.

Although one aspect of December in the Philippines is the tradition of gift-giving, it goes beyond the material aspect – it also is about expressing love and thoughtfulness. Muslims participate in this tradition by sharing tokens of appreciation and fostering a sense of camaraderie with neighbors, friends, and family.

For Muslims, December is not just a time to exchange gifts, but also an opportunity to extend a helping hand to those in need. Charity ("zakat") holds significant importance in Islam, and December provides an opportunity to reinforce that commitment to serving the community and uplifting the less fortunate.

Muslims in the Philippines play a role in inter-religious dialogue and understanding between different faiths. Mosques often organize events that promote unity and cooperation. These gatherings create a bridge of understanding, fostering an environment where everyone can appreciate the richness of a diverse cultural tapestry.

December also serves as a reminder to reflect on gratitude, humility, and blessings received throughout the year. It is a time for Muslims to strengthen their relationship with Allah through prayers, reflection, and acts of kindness.

In the Philippines, December is not just a celebration of one religion -- it is a celebration of the shared values of compassion and charity, of humanity, that unites us all. The spirit of giving transcends cultural and religious boundaries, creating a tapestry of goodwill that enriches the fabric of Filipino society.

Ukraine

Christmas Eve in Ukraine is a family holiday when relatives gather together and set a festive table with 12 traditional dishes (like the apostles), sing songs, remember all the good things that happened in the past year, and wish each other health and happiness. This abundance of dishes is called a Rich Dinner (*Bohata Vecherya*). The meal begins with begins with *kutia*, a very special traditional Christmas wheat berry pudding. It is popular in Ukraine and various other parts of Eastern Europe. It is one of the main dishes, cooked of wheat, barley or rice sweetened with milk and honey and has a perfect balance of fruit, nuts, and poppy seeds. After Christmas Eve, the dish is left overnight on the table so the souls of the

dead ancestors could also taste the treat. The first mention of the dish was made in the beginning of the 12th century in the chronicle of the 'Tale of Past Years.'

This recipe requires some overnight prep so you definitely want to read through it before you begin.

Kutia/Kutya

1 1/2 cups wheat berries (we used Hard White Winter Wheat Berries)
4 1/2 cups of milk (or water, but milk tastes better)
3/4 cups poppy seeds
1/2 cup honey
1/2 cup raisins
2/3 cup dry apricots, chopped
2/3 cup slivered almonds (or chopped walnuts)
1/8 tsp salt

1. Rinse wheat berries in cold water until water runs clear, then transfer to a bowl and soak overnight in lukewarm water, adding enough water to cover 2-inches above the wheat berries.
2. The following day, drain wheat berries, place them in a medium-sized heavy pot, cover with 4 1/2 cups of milk and bring everything to a boil over high heat. When milk starts to boil, reduce heat to low, cover with lid and simmer until wheat berries are very tender, 3 1/2 – 4 hours, depending on the quality of the wheat, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Add more milk if needed to keep the wheat berries fully submerged (If you simmer over low heat, you won't have to add any more milk).
3. While the wheat berries are on the stove, rinse 3/4 cups of poppy seeds thoroughly in a fine mesh sieve, drain well, and transfer to a medium sauce pan and add 3 cups water. Over medium heat, bring to a simmer (Don't boil). Turn off. Cover with lid and let it sit for 30 min. Return to a simmer (don't boil). Turn off. Cover and let it sit for another 30 minutes. Drain poppy seeds well through a colander or by keeping lid on and placing several layers of cheese cloth over lid to catch stray poppy seeds. Push the poppy seeds through a food grinder, using the fine grinding plate. You also can mill the poppy seeds in batches in a clean coffee grinder.

4. Preheat the oven to 350˚F. Spread 2/3 cups of slivered almonds on a baking sheet and toast them for 5 minutes. Set them aside and reduce temperature to 325˚F.
5. When wheat berries get very tender, drain off the milk in a glass measuring cup. Keep 1/2 cup of the cooked milk and discard the rest. Combine 1/2 cup of honey with 1/2 cup of saved milk and stir until combined.
6. Place cooked wheat berries in a mixing bowl, add ground poppy seeds, 1/2 cup raisins, 2/3 cup dry chopped apricots, 2/3 cup toasted slivered almonds, honey-milk mixture and 1/8 tsp salt. Mix everything together and place in a casserole or pie dish, than bake your kutia for 20 min uncovered at 325˚F.
7. Remove kutia from the oven, cover with foil and let it rest 15 min. Enjoy warm or cold. The longer it sits, the more flavor it will have. Kutia will last in the fridge for a good 2 weeks.

Zuni and Hopi Indigenous People of New Mexico and Arizona, USA

Soyal is the winter solstice ceremony of the Zuni and Hopi people and is one of the most important ceremonies of the year. It is held December 21, the shortest day of the year and can last up to 16 days. Participants ceremonially bring the sun back from its long slumber, mark the beginning of another cycle of the Wheel of the Year, and work on purification. Pahos (prayer sticks of tied feathers and pinyon needles) are made prior to the Soyal ceremony, to bless all the community, including homes, animals, and plants. The sacred underground kiva chambers are ritually opened to mark the beginning of the Kachina season. The Katsinam or Kachinas, spirits that guard over the Hopi, dance at the winter solstice Soyal Ceremony (Soyaluna or Soyalangwul), understood to mean “Establishing Life Anew for All the World.”

Katsinam are Hopi spirit messengers who send prayers for rain, bountiful harvests and a prosperous, healthy life for humankind. They are friends and visitors who bring gifts and food, as well as messages to teach appropriate behavior and the consequences of unacceptable behavior. Katsinam, of which there are over two hundred and fifty different types, represent various beings, from animals to clouds.

The actual Soyal ceremonies are sacred and are not general public knowledge. The entire ceremony ends with a public kachina dance. The Katsinam remain with the people for the

first half of the Wheel of the Year until the summer solstice, when they return to their home in the mountains.

All these international celebrations are a reminder of the "I" in LLLI. Decorations for our Friends of La Leche League luncheon at Wilder Mansion included all the remaining dolls in the LLL Doll Collection. We also played a **slide show** with information about each doll. Here are a few dolls from the countries mentioned in the article above.

A Visit to the LLLI Archives at DePaul University

As part of our Chicago trip, Friends of La Leche League member Katy Lebbing arranged two separate group visits to the LLLI Archives at DePaul University, one on Thursday

afternoon and one on Friday morning. Between the two groups, twenty women received a tour of facilities and the chance to explore the documentation of LLLI history. For many, this visit was the highlight of the Chicago trip.

Several Archives visitors commented on their surprise at the sheer volume of materials housed in the library. Specifically, Stephanie Nicholson expressed her "realization of the extent of the archives and the work that has gone into creating a collection to preserve LLL history." Another person commented that she was surprised to find items in the archives that she thought would have been confidential and not included in the public record.

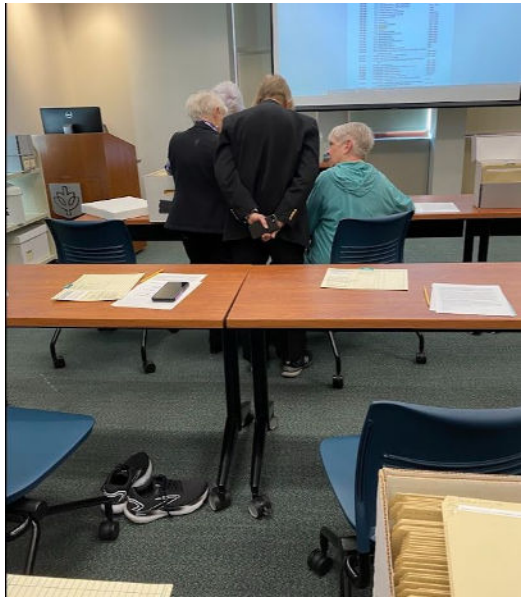
Archives visitors also learned that Friends member and former librarian Edna Kelly assisted in documenting some of the materials! The Archive is very well organized, and librarians were able to locate specific items with ease. Each box in the Archives contains a treasure-trove of documents from the very beginnings of LLL to the present.

A good summary of comments from many who visited the archives was given by Linda Strayhorn, LLL of Framingham, Massachusetts, who writes:

I had no idea that the history of LLL was being so superbly preserved. As a Leader I concerned myself with the moms and babies who needed breastfeeding knowledge. But what I realized at the Archives is that our time and efforts have been carefully preserved. What a joy to view the files which for me were a trip down memory lane! I was reminded of the many LLL ladies who helped me through the "jobs" for the MA/RI/VT area.

Ladies, I encourage you to visit the Archives, the History of LLL is overwhelming. . . what a tribute to LLL, what an over the top feeling to read about what the vision of the Founding Mothers have given to us and to the community of breastfeeding mothers around the world!!

Entrance to the Special Collections including the LLLI Archives at DePaul University.



Four trip participants looking at specific documents pulled from the Archives for their visit.

Pins to Celebrate Leaders

by Anne Hutton

The Friends of La Leche League Pin Sales Coordinator, Susan Geil, was very busy during our Chicago trip! Our non-profit status allows us to sell items without collecting sales tax two times per year, so Susan set up for sales at the Saturday night LLLI Gala and at the Friends of LLL luncheon on Sunday at Wilder Mansion.

We were happy to sell Leader recognition pins to representatives from LLL around the world. We are glad to know that Leaders in Greece, Texas, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, and other Areas will soon be recognized for supporting breastfeeding mothers and babies with beautiful pins highlighting their years of service to LLL.

Individuals and LLL Groups can also purchase Leader recognition pins 24/7 via our website store. We offer pins honoring Leaders for every 5 years of service from 5 to 50 years; there is also a Leader pin (no year specified) and a Friends of La Leche League pin. Pins are $6 each for quantities below 10, $5 each for 10-25 pins, and $4 each for 26 or more, and you can mix different pins and quantities in a single order. To order Leader recognition pins, visit our **website pins page**.

Susan Geil (on left) selling pins at the Friends of LLL luncheon at Wilder Mansion, Sunday, October 27.

Leader Recognition Service Year and No-Year Pins and our Friends of La Leche League pin.

And the Winner Is . . .

Friends of LLL held a prize drawing with an entry from each Chicago trip attendee who sumbitted an evaluation of the trip. The drawing winner was Carol Bollin. Carol's prize was

to submit a free Friends of LLL Tributes to honor someone who has been an inspiration to her. Carol's tribute:

Honoring **La Leche League Leaders**, Anywhere, Everywhere
"My tribute extends to all La Leche League Leaders, both past and present. La Leche League encompasses a unique sisterhood of service, enriching those giving as much as those receiving, with both the giver and the receiver often continuing to reap the benefits in unexpected moments decades later. Thank you."
From **Carol Bollin**, Bowen, Illinois USA
November 26 2024 – November 26 2025

We thank everyone who completed a trip evaluation and/or joined us at the trip debrief session after the Sunday Luncheon at Wilder Park. Your feedback is helpful to us as we consider options for future in-person gatherings of Friends.

Tributes Honor Those Who Inspire Us

We are honored to list the following current tributes to Leaders and friends of La Leche League. If you wish to honor someone who has inspired you, please use these **instructions and form** to submit your Tribute.

Tributes through December 2025

Honoring **La Leche League Leaders**, Anywhere, Everywhere
"My tribute extends to all La Leche League Leaders, both past and present. La Leche League encompasses a unique sisterhood of service, enriching those giving as much as those receiving, with both the giver and the receiver often continuing to reap the benefits in unexpected moments decades later. Thank you."
From **Carol Bollin**, Bowen, Illinois USA
November 26 2024 – November 26 2025

Tributes through December 2024

Honoring the **Founders of La Leche League**
"In honor of the Founders of La Leche League: Mary Ann Cahill, Edwina Froehlich, Mary Ann Kerwin, Viola Lennon, Marian Tompson, Betty Wagner, and Mary White. They started a movement in their local community that spread around the world and helped us learn to nurse our babies and know that it's okay to Follow Your Heart. With deepest appreciation."
From **Rebecca Keepers**, Yukon, Oklahoma

Honoring **Anne Hutton**, Houston, Texas USA
"Anne, your skills, attention to detail, expertise, and dedication never fail to impress me. Thank you for all you do."
From **Evy Simon**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA
November 13 2024 – November 13 2025

Honoring **Nancy Stanton**, Coral Springs, Florida USA
"My life has been deeply influenced by LLL. My mom, Nancy Stanton, was the first LLL Leader in the state of Florida and served on the LLLI Board. Her example lives in me today, and I honor her incredible example of mothering through breastfeeding."
From **Leah Aldridge**, Atlanta, Georgia USA
November 11 2024 – November 11 2025

Honoring **Nancy Thompsen Sherwood**, Aldie, Virginia USA
"For her kind and generous heart."
From **Randee Kaitcer**, Fort Worth, Texas USA
July 24 2024 – July 24 2025

In Memory Of **Mardrey Swenson**, Lebanon, New Hampshire USA
"In memory of Mardrey Swenson, retired Leader and IBCLC."
From **Carroll Beckham**, Beaufort, North Carolina USA
May 22 2024 – May 22 2025

USA
Apr 12 2024 – Apr 12 2025

In Memory Of **Mary Strack**, Tustin, California USA
"Honoring my longtime dear friend and fellow La Leche Leader who selflessly shared her warm and caring help to many breastfeeding mothers over the years. May she rest in peace."
From **Jacque Gates**, Orange, California USA
Dec 31 2023 – Dec 31 2024

Honoring **Evy Simon**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA
"Happy Birthday to Evy Simon, retired Leader."
From **Carroll Beckham**, Pine Knoll Shores, North Carolina USA
Dec 1 2023 – Dec 1 2024

Honoring **Marian Tompson**, Evanston, Illinois USA
"I honor Marian Tompson, as one of the seven Founders of LLLI, but also as a person who has always been able to see all sides of an issue."
From **Rebecca Magalhaes**, Neponset, Illinois USA
Nov 12 2023 – Nov 12 2024

In Memory Of **Mary Lofton**, Riverside, Illinois USA
"In memory of my dear friend, Mary Lofton, whose kindness, laughter, and gentle spirit

Honoring the **Leaders Who Organized and Those Who Attended the NON-Conference in New Hampshire!!! LLLOOOXOOO**

"Warm thanks to Linda and Leslie who organized the NON-Conference in Portsmouth, NH!!!! And gratitude to all those who attended!"

From **Jane Atkin**, Framingham, Massachusetts USA

May 20 2024 – May 20 2025

Honoring the **Founders of La Leche League**

"In honor if the Founders of La Leche League: Mary Ann Cahill, Edwina Froehlich, Mary Ann Kerwin, Viola Lennon, Marian Tompson, Betty Wagner, and Mary White. They started a movement in their local community that spread around the world and helped us learn to nurse our babies and know that it's okay to Follow Your Heart. With deepest appreciation."

From **Rebecca Keepers**, Yukon, Oklahoma USA

Apr 12 2024 – Apr 12 2025

will be missed."

From **Mary Gisch**, Westchester, Illinois USA

Nov 8 2023 – Nov 8 2024

In Memory Of **Gail Moak**, Oakland, California USA

"To a special friend who had such an open heart and fostered the way to moms wanting to breastfeed in a time when it was frowned upon. May her dedication and work continue on. Blessed are those who knew her, blessed are those that unknown to them she touched their lives. Gail in our hearts you are still there."

From **Yomaira and Eugene Lampi**, Portland, Oregon USA

Sep 23 2023 – Sep 23 2024

LLLI Online Conference

On October 14-15, 2024, LLLI hosted The Art of Breastfeeding online conference. This virtual conference connected people from around the world to learn about a wide variety of topics pertaining to breastfeeding.

Registrants can access conference sessions online until April 15, 2025. For more information or to register for this event, use the **LLLI Conference Link**.

We Remember: A Friends of La Leche League Tradition

"So as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us, as we remember them."

"We Remember" is a tradition started by the Friends of La Leche League in 2001, paying tribute to Leaders who have died.

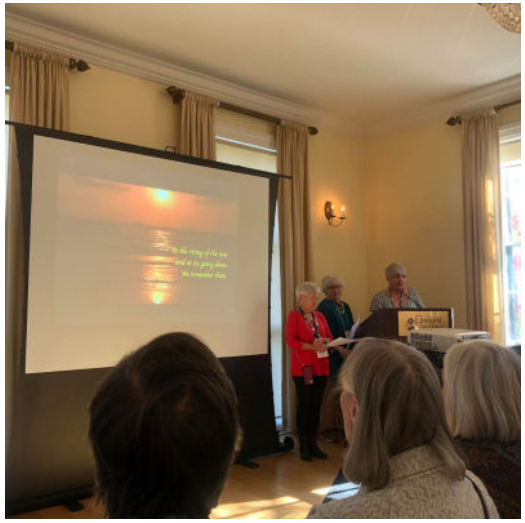
Throughout the history of La Leche League, we have connected to each other on a deep level across countries and cultures. Part of our mission as Friends of LLL is to keep connections strong as we remember and appreciate those who have died.

Leaders' names are recorded in calligraphy in the "We Remember" album by Susan Mocsny Thomas and posted on the **Friends of LLL We Remember page.** We also have a special event at each Friends of LLL trip. If a deceased Leader's name is missing from this list, please **send us the information** **here**. Include the Leader's name, year of death, and location (country, state/province) where Leader was active. If available, submit year of birth and obituary link. Or email these details to **WeRemember@friendsoflll.org.** When possible, include an obituary link.

These are the names of Leaders we have been informed of since January 2023. Names in blue are linked to their obituaries.

Anne-Marie Arsenault ~ Quebec, Canada
Kay Batt ~ Washington, United States
Kristian Billiot ~ Louisiana, United States
Mary Buchanan ~ New Zealand
Jill Burns ~ New Zealand
Chris Caldwell ~ North Carolina, United States
Ruth DeRosa ~ Maryland, United States
Catherine Anne Devereux ~ New Zealand
Kathy Zambie Doody ~ North Carolina, United States
Karen Evon ~ California, United States
Debbie Heffern ~ Missouri, United States
Elizabeth Hormann ~ Germany
Johanna Horton ~ Illinois, United States

Christine Jones ~ New Jersey, United States
Leith Kassier ~ Great Britain
Angie Lundstrum ~ Illinois, United States
Vicky Maline ~ Colorado, United States
Marijane McEwan ~ Illinois, United States
Jerry McManus ~ South Carolina, United States
Gail Susan Moak ~ California, United States
Helen Henning Palmer ~ Washington, United States
Kathleen Peace ~ New Zealand
Jane Ritchie ~ New Zealand
Norma Ritter ~ New York, United States
Rita Saltarelli ~ Michigan, United States
Helene Scheff ~ Rhode Island, United States
Kate Schmid ~ Colorado, United States
Virginia Steele ~ Kansas, United States
Mary Strack ~ California, United States
Mardrey Swenson ~ New Hampshire, United States
Melanie Kilgore Tuggle ~ North Carolina, United States
Anna Utter ~ Maryland, United States
Nancy "Nan" Vollette ~ Virginia, United States
Keitha Whitaker ~ Mississippi, United States
Dorothy Masie Wilkinson ~ New Zealand



At left, Susan Mocsny Thomas stands by the We Remember display table at the 2024 Ceremony in Wilder Mansion. Susan, Joan Crothers, and Marian Tompson (pictured on right) led the group in recitation of the "We Remember" poem and read the names of all the Leaders whom we have learned are now deceased since our last reading at the 2022 LLLI Online Conference.

Marian Tompson Honored

At the LLLI Gala, Marian Tompson was honored for her work in establishing the Marian Tompson Breastfeeding Support in Emergencies Fund. LLLI is accepting restricted donations to this fund, which seeks to raise awareness about the importance of breastfeeding during crises and to ensure that mothers have the necessary support to continue breastfeeding. Friends of La Leche League was pleased to pass along excess donations for Marian Tompson's participation in our trip to support this worthy cause.

Thank You for Our Donors

Friends of La Leche League programs and activities are primarily funded by memberships and donations. We gratefully acknowledge those who have contributed to our organization. If your name has been omitted, misspelled or listed incorrectly, please accept our sincerest apology and inform us by contacting Treasurer Anne Hutton at **Treasurer@FriendsofLLL.org**.

Unrestricted Donations from April 2024 to Present:

Anonymous
Leah Aldridge
Victoria Anzalone
Jane Atkin
Jo-Anne Elder
Suzy Graham
Anne Hutton
Rebecca Keepers
Edna Kelly

Restricted Donations for 2025 Mini-Grants Program:

Judie Ellison

In-Kind Donations from April 2024 to March 2025:

Anne Hutton
Penny Piercy

Restricted Donations to Fund Marian Tompson Chicago Trip Participation:

Carroll Beckham
Carol Bollin
Ann Calandro
Joan Crothers
Suzy Graham
Nancy Heezen
Rebecca Keepers
Edna Kelly
Ellen Goodrich King
Katy Lebbing
Barbara Mullins
Susan Oldrieve
Patricia Spanjer
Ann-Marie White

All monies collected for this restricted fund were distributed for Marian Tompson's participation and as a donation to the Marian Tompson Breastfeeding Support in Emergencies Fund.

Donate Now

Friends of LLL Slide Show

For the Chicago trip the Friends of La Leche League created a slide show highlighting some of the history of LLLI and the Alumnae Association / Friends of LLL. We played this presentation in a loop with another slide show highlighting each of the international dolls in the LLL doll collection. Our slide show is full of memorable photos of LLLI conferences and Alumnae trips, Please take the time to view the show on our **YouTube Channel** or on our website **history page** -- you might find some photos of a younger you! Enjoy!

Friends of La Leche League Mission Statement

The mission of the Friends of La Leche League is to support La Leche League as a resource and inspiration for future generations, encourage lifelong connections with the LLL community, and share the insights and wisdom that began with the breastfeeding relationship.

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