

Continuum

THE LLLI ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

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Transitions—one of life's constants. As much as change is inevitable, it still often takes us by surprise, undoubtedly brings challenges, and catches us—at least sometimes—yearning for the past.

But transitions can also spur growth, engage hope, evoke gratitude, broaden horizons, deepen relationships, and open up opportunities.

In this issue of CONTINUUM, perhaps you, too, will be struck by the threads of transition woven through these pages: a move, a life-changing illness, a death, a beginning, an adventure, a history.

Maybe every issue tells the story of change. Indeed, does it not make up the very fabric of our lives?

Change both draws and defies labels. Whatever we may call it—welcome or unwelcome, good or bad—one thing is certain: it will come, over and over again.

Making the M.O.V.E.

Remember back... way back? You were moving from a starter apartment to your first house. Or from a smaller place to a bigger one. Or from one end of the country to the other. You gathered your tiny baby up in your arms, drove or flew or walked to your new home, and sat down amidst the boxes and settled in to nurse. She squirmed a bit, sighed, and settled in. Ah yes, you were both home again!

But now, this time, you have a pre-teen boy who refuses to pack anything, a teen-age girl whose bedroom door has been closed for days, a high schooler whose whispered phone conversations lead you to wonder if an insurrection is being planned... How do you move now? What do you do? Is there hope?

This past summer my husband and I moved from the only home my children have ever known in Mentor, Ohio to the large northern Mexican city of Torreon, Caluilla. Not only was our family going to live in a new house, we would also live in a new culture and speak a new language. There would be new schools, new foods, new friends, new routines—even new toilet paper and toothpaste!

Having been involved with La Leche League since our children were born, I knew that what I had learned in my years as a member and Leader would serve me well as I helped our entire family make this move. Evangeline, 13, and Jacob, almost 12, certainly were old enough to be well-aware of the adventures and challenges we were to face. And we all have learned that not only can we thrive as a family during these times of transition, but we can grow individually as well.

But how to do so? It's not as easy as merely bundling up that newborn infant and carefully carrying her into a new residence. An overseas

assignment of three to five years may seem short from the perspective of a 30- or 40-year-old, but to a 10- to 12-year-old, that is one third or more of a child's life! With this in mind, it helps to recognize and develop techniques to handle the variety of emotions and reactions that older children may experience.

In reflecting upon all the preparation that we have done during the last year, the acronym M.O.V.E. came to mind.

Not only was our family going to live in a new house, we would also live in a new culture and speak a new language.

—Meg Sondey

"M" is for Mourn. As many of us have discovered through the years, it is always important to acknowledge our losses. For older children and teens, the prospect of moving involves significant losses. In many cases, this may be the first or one of the most significant times that they have had to "mourn" the loss of anything or anyone. As parents, we can acknowledge these feelings and help them to develop ways to deal with their losses.

Over and over again in the past year, I have begun sentences with the words, "Wow, it's really tough when..." "That's true. You feel sad because..." Perhaps I would not have reacted with tears at the prospect of not taking my hamster to Mexico, but for my daughter, it was traumatic to leave a pet she loved.

"O" is for Organize. As daunting a challenge as it might be for you as an adult to prepare your belongings for selling, donating, storing, and moving, it is generally infinitely more difficult for pre-teens and teens.

For children who have never moved before, or perhaps never even rearranged their own possessions, the very process of packing is an unknown. As tempting as it is to rush in and do it all for them, this process can be a learning

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Making the M.O.V.E., continued

experience, as well as another one of those times to "mourn."

My daughter, who has emotional attachments to most of her belongings, had great difficulty even beginning the process. I realized that she needed me to sit in the room with her and give her guidance. At 13, she was able to sort and pack items, but she simply did not have any experience with creating a plan to do so. As I sat on her bed, we decided on areas of her room to sort things into piles ("go to Mexico," "give to a friend," "put into storage"). Not only did this effort enable her to learn a new skill, but it also gave us that necessary time together to talk more deeply about her feelings and concerns about our relocation.

"V" is for Vegetate. With all of the hub-bub of a move, particularly if the move is to a foreign country, the last thing one might think is necessary is to "vegetate." But if you remember that the pre-teen and teen years are times when intellectual and emotional development are proceeding at a pace not unlike that of the toddler years, you'll understand that time out to process all that is happening is of vital importance.

Finding ways for your child to have quiet thinking time can be a challenge during those moving days. A lunch or movie outing with an older teen or young adult, or a trip to a relative's cottage where there is "nothing to do" can provide that space and time they need to think either quietly or out loud about all that is happening in their lives. As tempting as it is to cram social events and going away parties into all of those last hours, it is vitally important to make certain that "alone" time is available so that older children and teens can make their personal good-byes to the tree they used to climb as a youngster, the backyard burial place of a

pet frog, or even the high school from which their friends will graduate.

Finally, **"E" is for Energize!** This may be, perhaps, the most difficult aspect of the move with older children. As we adults reconnect in our new home through our religious affiliations, new neighbor groups, or even La Leche League, it may be tempting to push our older children to quickly jump into activities as well. But "energizing" the older child or teen does not necessarily mean that the adults in their lives create a whirlwind of scheduled activities for them.

Finding new friends, new sports teams, and new places to "hang out" are important aspects of most older children's and teen's lives. Most youth, however, are anxious to develop these on their own, as they are becoming increasingly independent and conscious of their abilities to choose. So what is a parent to do? How do you assist the older child in becoming engaged in new activities and developing new friendships in their new home?

Just as we provided toddlers with opportunities to safely explore our homes, making sure that irreplaceable breakables and unsafe substances were well out of reach, we also provide opportunities for our older children and teens to use their skills of friendship and socialization to develop the friend and school networks they desire.

"Energizing," the older child or teen means providing them with reading material and websites about their new home, school, religious institution, or neighborhood. It means having family get-togethers, where your older children can meet the older kids of another family in your new city without pressure to do anything together. It may mean attending some sporting events or social activities, allowing your teen or older

child to get the feel for this new community so that he or she can take part in those all-important hallway or street conversations about local sports teams or happenings.

"Energizing" can mean dropping hints and suggestions about activities and then leaving it up to the older child or teen to decide whether they will participate or not. "There's a community bowling party tomorrow night and some of the other US kids will be there. Would you like to go?" "I'm going to the mall with my friend Jill. Her son is going as well. Would you like to come?" "Some other families from school are camping this weekend. Dad says he can take you, and that you can bring your telescope. What do you think?"

"Energizing" can mean working behind the scenes to create opportunities where your older children and teens can make their own decisions and take their own actions. It may mean finding out where other pre-teen girls who ride horses take their lessons, what home-schooling groups or chess clubs are near by, or even what sports are played in what months. Taking riding lessons again, participating in a chess club in their new hometown, or waiting in line for baseball league sign-up provides time and space for your teen to make the decision on his or her own to talk to another teen and begin to develop those friendships which help turn your new residence into their new home.

Yes, moving with older children is a different experience than moving with a newborn, but it can be one full of growth and opportunities. It may not be the path your children would have chosen, but as Robert Frost wrote in his poem "The Road Not Taken,"

*And I—I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

Meg Sondey, Mexico

Introducing the new Alum web pages: <http://lalecheleague.org/Alumnae.html>

It's been a long time in coming, this Alumnae home on the Web. The dream has been taking shape for a number of years, with early pages by our first Webmaster, Kathy Hayes, and other pages added with the help of Sue Ann Kendall and Janet Jendron. But all along, the pull for a more complete site has had us making lists of possibilities, dreaming of a wide array of connecting points, and figuring out ways to share our memories and our wisdom.

Now the dream is reality, and about ready for its unveiling. Not complete, not perfect (it's been a volunteer, learn-as-you-go venture), but we think you'll like what you see. And more is being added every day, so come back often.

We also welcome your feedback to help us weed out problems and inconsistencies—and to guide us in making this site work for you. Your input (quotes, stories, announcements, memories, recommendations and more) will add to the richness of the content—so share often! Here's a quick tour of the site:

❖ **Who We Are** gives an overview of Alumnae Association mission and goals, benefits of membership, Council and Committee members, and other organization information. If you need to get in touch with someone, this spot will make it easy.

❖ **News & Events** will keep you abreast of the latest Alum happenings—from local and Area Alum events to International Conference plans to upcoming Alumnae adventures. If you are planning an Alum event, you can easily submit information to be posted here.

❖ **Stay Connected!** offers a number of online discussion groups for Alumnae Members, a "bulletin board" to post messages and the Alum's Education Network. You can find out about local

Alumnae groups and contact the Alumnae Area Representative for your area (or volunteer to become one!).

❖ **Memories & Stories** is a place to remember and reflect. Add your stories about a Founder, reminisce about your first meeting, share information about your local or Area history, or wander through the Alum scrapbook. This is also the section to remember deceased Leaders and friends of LLL.

❖ **Shared Wisdom** provides the opportunity to learn from—and share—experiences and thoughts about teens, growing older, returning to work, living solo, aging parents, grandparenting, and so much more.

❖ **Kudos** recognizes 25-year Leaders and Alum accomplishments, including a growing collection of "Life After LLL" interviews. And lots of LLLove notes!

❖ **Publications** allows you to download past issues of Continuum and other LLLI Alum publications, such as the Retired Leader Report or recruitment brochures.

❖ **Alum Fun!** will entice you with favorite books, music, recipes, nursing tales, family traditions, and rejuvenation.

And finally,

❖ **Get Involved!** will tell you how to join, volunteer, donate, or lend a hand.

Alum online discussion groups

Want to connect with other Alums who may be going through challenges and experiences similar to your own? We have one established and several new online discussion groups that may meet your needs. (If not, you're invited to start one that will!) Discussions are confidential and you must be an LLLI Alumnae member to join a group.

❖ **Empty-Nesters** focuses on sharing and support as participants move into the next phases of their lives after children are gone (or even returned to the nest). It's about challenges, tolerance, and adjustments. To join, contact Kathy Parkes <Kparkes@aol.com>

❖ **Children and Challenges** is a mutual support group for times with kids, including adult "children." It's about doing the best through the good and the hard times, using the principles learned as League mothers. To join, contact Marge Yeager at <MBYeager@aol.com>

❖ **Aging Parents** deals with the issues that come with taking care of aging parents, in-laws, or others close to our families. It's about putting family-centered care principles into action. To join, contact Barbara Mullins at <arkytype@swbell.net>

❖ **Marital Changes** provides support for members in the midst of separation, divorce, or decisions about related issues. It's about self-nurturing and keeping balanced while navigating uncharted territories. To join, contact Marge Yeager at <MBYeager@aol.com>

❖ **Reality Check** offers resources, coping skills, and shared experiences for those who have a family member with a mental illness. It's about staying sane while in the maze of psychological issues, family dynamics, and health care systems. To join, contact Nancy Franklin at <Nbfl1177@aol.com>

Savannah sentiments

In June 2004, when I read CONTINUUM's brochure about the LLLI Alumnae trip to Savannah, Georgia, I recalled a quote, "To everything, there is a season." My adult children are now living on their own in chosen careers. I was no longer the caregiver for my aged parents. My husband encouraged me to seize the opportunity. He graciously agreed to care for the cat, keep up the walks twice a day with our dog, and to essentially keep the "home fires burning." Why not go? I felt a newfound freedom to join this adventure. It was finally my season to travel with women in LLLI! So I committed to go.

By November, six Alumnae members from Southern California were making the trip together! Joining me were Sharon Fairborn, Sue Garcia, Jan Hann, Sandy Patton, and Marge Yeager.

Because it takes all day to travel 2,200 miles, especially with time changes and connecting flights, we planned to arrive at the hotel a day early so we wouldn't miss the next day's registration. The Savannah airport gave us a welcome feeling. There were rocking chairs, park benches, lampposts and trees in the airport's central court area—a prelude of the historic district we would soon be touring.

Savannah is often referred to as "America's Most Haunted City." Knowing this fact, our curiosity was piqued. That first evening, we ventured forth on a trolley car tour with a costumed gravedigger as our tour guide. She shared local tales and legends as we passed by famous homes and stopped at the historical Colonial Park Cemetery. The Spanish Moss draped trolley car added to the spooky atmosphere.

The next day we shopped and did more touring to get our bearings in this beautiful city. Finally, it was time to join the Alumnae at the evening registration. Back at the hotel, we received

informative packets and schedules prepared by Phoebe Kerness, LLLI BOD Member and our trip coordinator.

Next, we were on our way to a scrumptious Southern buffet dinner for all 48 Alumnae who traveled from 14 states, ranging from Balboa Bay on the Pacific Coast to the plains of Texas to the Atlantic Ocean's Massachusetts Bay.

I truly enjoyed seeing members of the LLLI Office staff, especially Judy Torgus, Sharon Barsotti, Hedy Nuriel, Mary Hurt, Rebecca Magalhaes, and Katy Lebbing, as well as LLLI Founder, Marian Tompson. Key Alumnae Council members were introduced. We could match a face to the ladies who are the backbone of the Alumnae Association: Pam Oselka, Sue Christensen, Nancy Franklin, Janet Jendron, and Carol Meredith.



The Savannah trip was a family affair for LLLI Staff and Alumnae Member Rebecca Magalhaes (r), her sisters, Pat Yepsen (l) and Marilyn Thompson (a former LLLI Leader), and her mother, Elaine Shaner.

In addition to personal introductions, a unique "ice breaker" gave us a fun way to get to know each other. A young mother was there with her nursing child to remind us of our own days of mothering at the breast. Also joining the group were mothers, sisters, or friends of Leaders.

What a full life these Alumnae lead—some still volunteer with LLLI or other organizations in their communities. I marveled at the scope of LLLI leadership in the group, including those who became Leaders in the pioneer days of LLLI during the late 1950s.

Typical Savannah desserts of praline pecan cookies and banana pudding topped off the evening.

The next two days were filled with scheduled sightseeing in the largest landmark historic district in the United States. We found ourselves getting plenty of exercise in the crisp fall air as we sauntered in small groups to each destination. Occasionally there was a light sprinkle of rain, but there was no dampening of spirits.

Tour areas included historical homes, backyards with fountains and sculptured gardens, expansive oak trees, cotton warehouses, preserved historical buildings, shops and boutiques in the River District, an art museum and civil rights museum, and a variety of architecture, including the oldest Roman Catholic Church in Georgia and the only Gothic synagogue in the US. We even watched a tugboat guide a cargo ship along the Savannah River.

Each of Savannah's 21 squares (sections of the historic district) has its own park-like haven showing off trees and multi-colored coleus gardens. Walking on cobblestone streets was an adventure that brought us back in time to the Colonial beginnings of Savannah. One evening, we all enjoyed a visit

to the old Savannah Theatre for a live musical show with music from the 50's.

We talked and laughed and visited with each other in between our scheduled sites and events. We raved about the great food, too. Some night owls stayed up late and talked and talked about anything and everything!

Despite an unexpected cold front that suddenly changed the weather, we bundled up for a bus ride to Tybee Island. We traveled past marshlands and forests. A few brave souls walked out by the pier to catch a close view of the low-rolling waves of the Atlantic. There was a quick stop at Georgia's oldest and tallest lighthouse on the Island.

Next was a visit to Fort Pulaski Museum and Monument. When we ambled over the drawbridge to the fort, we were pleasantly surprised to meet members of a once-a-year Civil War reenactment group. We toured their barracks by candlelight just like an evening would have been back in those old days. And we happened upon the one day of the year when soldiers of the past could greet us!

As the evening became cooler, Phoebe's husband kindly brought extra coats for those who needed them.

While still on Tybee Island, the bus dropped us off at the Crab Shack for a Low country boil dinner of shrimp, crablegs, kielbasa, potatoes, and corn-on-the-cob boiled in cloves, garlic, bay leaves, and pepper and served on giant platters at each large plank table. The bus ride back to the hotel gave us a view of Savannah at night.

I was charmed by the people of Savannah and loved having the chance to visit back in time. Learning about the immigrants who settled in the area was captivating.

Needless to say, none of us passed up a chance to shop! Southern candy specialties featured pecan pralines and Savannah's gophers, made with Georgia pecans, caramel and chocolate, similar to eatable "turtles" we have on the West Coast. Of course, I couldn't pass up the sale items in gift shops, including some books and a CD with a Scottish music collection featuring instruments—harpichord, dulcimer, mandolin and violin—dating back to 1700s.

I think the Alumnae from Southern California need to plan a night to get together to watch "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil," a frequently mentioned movie filmed in Savannah. I

know we'll enjoy recognizing the places we toured.

Along with the pictures I took, the recipe books, my CD, and other souvenirs, I have lots of memories to replay in my mind of the wonderful trip spent with Alumnae friends in the fall of 2004.

My special thanks to Phoebe Kerness for the time and care she took to provide us all with varied experiences of life in Savannah. I truly appreciate the daunting task she did for the group. She made it look so easy!

Fran Dereszynski
California

SAVANNAH SQUASH

Ingredients:

5 pounds yellow squash, sliced
1 onion, cut up
1 stick butter (1/4 pound)
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup bread crumbs + 1/2 cup for topping
salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Saute onions in butter a few minutes.
Add squash and simmer about 30 minutes, until soft.
Add soup, cheese, bread crumbs, and salt & pepper.
Place in baking pan and top with more bread crumbs if desired.
Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Teri Dressel, a local caterer, prepared a delicious Savannah-style dinner for the Alumnae group, including this baked squash dish. She graciously shared her recipe.



Hedy Nuriel, LLLI's Executive Director, shares a relaxing dinner with Edna Kelly, Patty Spanjer, and Theresa Kinzly, and other Alums in one of Savannah's quaint waterfront restaurants.

Life after LLL: Meet Barbara Parker, breast cancer survivor & advocate

When Barbara Parker was pregnant with her first child in 1969, she looked up LLL and found an "interest group" of women looking for someone to be accredited so their group could become official. The woman who finally met the criteria led the group for a couple of years, until health problems forced her to retire. By then, Barbara was a Leader Applicant, but not yet ready for leadership. To provide support for local women in Raleigh, North Carolina, she and others began an independent group, Nursing Mothers of Raleigh (NMR). Meanwhile, says Barbara, she was a "true blue" LLL mother and continued her work toward leadership. In 1974, she was accredited, two other LLL Leaders moved to town, and LLL of Raleigh was reborn. Since then, the group has grown extensively and continues to coexist with NMR.

First, tell us a bit about your family.

I have been married for 38 years and George and I have three children: Elizabeth (and John) Grovenstein, the parents of our first grandchild, Michael, who lives in Raleigh; Jonathan (not married) who also lives in Raleigh; and William (a senior in college) who is in Greenville [eastern] NC for the next year. George is semi-retired from the Physics Department at NC State University. Elizabeth is a senior budget analyst in the Governor's Education section. Jonathan is a civil engineer who works for the Dept of Transportation as a transportation manager for the largest metropolitan area in NC. William is majoring in Health and Fitness and is also a certified Personal Trainer. When George retires completely I will as well and then we plan to do a lot of traveling in our RV.

What got you involved in LLL and what did you enjoy most as a Leader?

I had read Karen Pryor's *Readers Digest* article about LLL years before and had

tucked that information away in my mind for when I was expecting a baby. That's what led me to look for LLL. What I enjoyed most as a Leader was learning "stuff." I was always the local "expert" on new information. (For example, I remember being completely in awe of this fact: the mothers' milk of premies was different from the mothers' milk of full term babies in such a way as to be able to meet the unique needs of premies.) I was also very organized and conscientious in day-to-day things—traits which stood me in good stead in my various jobs. I was a capable writer, too, very handy in the ACLA, ACL, and RA jobs I held!

Back when you were diagnosed, we didn't hear much, if anything, about LLL Leaders getting breast cancer.

In fact, we tended to feel rather immune because of breastfeeding...

Was that your state of mind when this happened to you?

Absolutely! I felt protected because of my life style choices. I breastfed three children a total of 10 years, exercised, maintained a normal weight, ate a low fat diet, and drank little/no alcohol. But after I got over my shock, anger, and sense of betrayal, and started to learn more about risks, I realized that the top two risks—being female and growing older—were ones I have no control over. The other things I listed above can reduce risk, but are no guarantee. For instance, at least a year of breastfeeding can reduce risk of developing breast cancer in pre-menopausal years by about one third, but two thirds of the risk is still there! And we cannot tell any individual woman what her specific risk is, we can only give aggregate information: "Out of 100 women who have breastfed at least a year, one third of them are less likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer pre-menopausally."

...breast cancer involuntarily reorganized my life

Was it the cancer that led you to retire?

Partly, I suppose. I was a Regional Administrator for LLL when I was diagnosed and continued in that capacity for a couple of years. What happened was that breast cancer "involuntarily reorganized my life." I was faced with a life-threatening disease and it seemed more important than breastfeeding and mothering—things that had been the highest priority in my life for 20 years. I was very "pissed" that cancer had changed my life—without my consent! I imagine others who are faced with unforeseen things like accidents, natural disasters, "downsizing," etc., have the same reaction. Some people cope well from the start (probably few), some people cope poorly (probably more of these) and some people cope eventually (that was me—eventually turning lemons into lemonade!).

You've been doing wonderful advocacy work for breast cancer. How did this path evolve?

My curiosity for learning led me to what I am doing now. First I was interested in understanding the medical aspects of breast cancer. The short hand explanation is that as long as the best medical science had to offer me was an educated guess, I wanted to be one of the educated ones making the guesses about my life. I was diagnosed in 1990 about the same time the national breast cancer (NBCC) advocacy movement was born (1991) and was encouraged to go to Washington to lobby for increased breast cancer research. It was educational, exciting,

and very empowering. When we were successful, leaders of the NBCC decided we needed to have a rationale for how much money we lobbied for so they invited the leading researchers to present information on what good science there was waiting to be funded and how much it would take to get that done. That was my first introduction to scientific presentations on breast cancer and it whetted my appetite. (We lobbied for the specific \$ that was recommended and got it passed.)

In order to learn more, I began to attend research meetings when and wherever I could and realized that there is a vast difference between clinical research (medically focused on people) and basic science research (with test tubes, cell lines, genes, proteins, etc.). While I could somewhat figure out clinical research, I had no clue about *basic science*. I came to the conclusion that whatever eventually benefits patients probably passed through a lab somewhere in its journey to effectiveness and use. So I needed to understand basic science as well.

I asked a researcher if he would help me identify articles that would answer some of my questions. He and I did what amounted to a private tutorial for about a year. (I recently learned that his experience with me convinced him that untutored but interested people *could* learn to understand some basic concepts about science. He was one of several scientists who developed an intensive five day course to introduce breast cancer advocates to cancer biology, genetics, epidemiology, and research advocacy strategies which is still going after 10 years.)

As a result of all this learning, which I did out of pure personal curiosity with no expectation that it would lead to anything, I was in the right place at the right time when the research community

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medical science had to offer
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began to open up their discussions to participation by patient advocates. I began working in a breast cancer research program at Duke Medical Center in the mid 1990s, writing a newsletter for them and participating in their monthly scientific discussions. It also led to my name being passed around in the research community as someone who wasn't afraid to bring patient issues into scientific discussions, so I have done a lot on the national level as well, such as National Cancer Institute committees, grant reviews, etc.

What have you been doing most recently? And what are you looking forward to in the coming year?

Most recently I have been doing three things in research advocacy: 1) leading a working group in NC focused on educating the medical community about lymphedema, a swelling caused by a back up of lymph fluid in part of the body. For women with breast cancer, it occurs in an arm affected by removal of or radiation to lymph nodes in the arm pit. It can also affect a leg if lymph nodes in the groin are similarly treated. 2) developing and leading a patient advocate committee in a clinical trial cooperative group. The

one I am affiliated with (there are nine) is focused on developing clinical studies involving surgery. For instance, a study in head and neck cancer is looking at whether adding a lymph node dissection in the neck improves the outcome for patients (longer life or longer time before cancer returns) compared to standard surgery. 3) I am still working in the breast cancer research program at Duke where I was first paid to do what I have come to love as much as I loved LLL! (I often think of the title of a book I read twenty years ago, *Do What You Love and the Money Will Follow*.)

Right now, in addition to the newsletter and monthly scientific discussions, I sit on two Data Safety Monitoring Committees and The Executive Committees of both the research program and the Cancer Center at Duke. I also participate in a weekly cancer genomics discussion group giving my two cents worth on patient issues whenever it is relevant in the scientific discussion. I will be concentrating this year on recruiting other advocates to participate in this program so when I move on, someone else will be there to carry on.

Have you carried over any skills developed through LLL into the work you are doing now?

Oh Lord, yes! Through LLL I developed a comfort level with being assertive and communicating with members of the medical community. I learned about group dynamics, how to recruit volunteers, how to lead a group, how to delegate, how to be organized, and how to write effectively and clearly. Something perhaps more important to me than to other Leaders was my interest in and curiosity about new breastfeeding information. The way I learned in the LLL context translated easily to learning medical and scientific information.

Barbara Parker, continued

What LLL connections have you had since retirement?

A group of us retired Leaders have been meeting monthly for twenty years! First it was to provide support for each other in mothering teenagers with LLL philosophy. Inevitably, we supported each other through various other crises. Eventually our teens all grew up and the primary motivation became just enjoying the company of like-minded friends. We usually take a long weekend trip together at least once a year. I've also spoken at LLL Conferences.

As a breast cancer survivor, what is the message you would want to give to other LLL Alumnae?

Our mutual, unspoken assumption—that we won't get breast cancer because we have used our breasts the way nature intended—is, sadly, not true. At least three other Leaders in my state were diagnosed in their 30s while nursing toddlers. It can happen to you. Although about one in four women with breast cancer are diagnosed under age 50, the peak age of diagnosis for women is in their 60s. (With baby boomers approaching this decade, I expect a lot more diagnoses in the coming years.)

The risk of a breast cancer diagnosis is rare at a young age (about 1 in 25,000 for 25-year-olds), becoming more common as a woman grows older (about 1 in 50 at age 50), only reaching 1 in 9 for women in the ninth decade of life. That said, the prognosis for those who are diagnosed is getting better all the time because of earlier diagnosis and better treatments. Women are less likely to die from breast cancer today than at any previous time in history. Although breast cancer changed my life in ways that were not welcome at the time, I am alive and thriving 15 years after the diagnosis of two breast cancers in a single year. Life goes on!

Alum Fun! in Southern California/Nevada

The Southern California/Nevada Alumnae started meeting in January 1992 with multiple purposes in mind:

- ♦ fun, fellowship, nurturing, and support
- ♦ fundraising for LLLI & SC/N LLL
- ♦ a learning forum and speaker pool
- ♦ LLL involvement and news
- ♦ a professional network
- ♦ references and resources
- ♦ dates for our sons and daughters
- ♦ breastfeeding advocacy
- ♦ a safe place for grieving and growth

We have fulfilled many of these, especially the fun! The group meets for lunch twice a year. We have had several speakers—often former LLL members—on topics such as financial planning, how to care for aging parents, genealogy. We've visited museums, sipped tea at lovely Tea Houses, gone on hikes.

For the past six years, about seven to ten members have joined in a weekend getaway retreat in a Leader's

mountain cabin.

Our Alumnae group also sponsors a \$250 scholarship for continuing education that is open to any Southern CA or Nevada Leader—active, reserve, or retired—for any level of furthering education, from technical school through grad school.

Each year for our Area Conference, we sponsor two auction baskets, one adult and one child, that are filled with books and book certificates. They usually raise \$200 each for the Area.

Alums are often invited to speak at our Conference. They receive free registration and lunch for the day. Alums also can purchase a one-day registration and lunch for \$25.

At present, we have 22 dues paying Alumnae members and 40 members are sent our three times yearly newsletter.

Sharon Fairborn, California

Now (hear) this!

It's a night you won't want to miss! The Alumnae Association is once again sponsoring a kickoff event prior to this summer's LLLI Conference in Washington D.C. Join us Friday, July 1, 2005, for "Now This!" Dinner and Show, followed by a "DC Monuments Tour by Night." It promises to be a memorable evening chock-full of fun, frolic, good food, and fascinating sights.

The evening begins with an all-you-can-eat dinner buffet (meat and vegetarian entrees) and cash bar in the historic Blair Mansion, an antique-filled Victorian Inn in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Then enjoy a hilarious improvised musical show created especially for LLL. Since 1990, "Now This!" has been delighting audiences of all ages and interests with interactive, personalized, improvised musical shows, including

spoofs of every style from opera to folk ballads, Shakespeare to Soaps. The *Washington Post* says: "If you can imagine it, 'Now This!' can sing about it." Others give the award-winning improvisation troupe high marks too: "Zany ...sure mastery of song styles ...Improv to the max!" "Quick, witty, delightfully funny."

To conclude the evening, sit back, relax, and enjoy a narrated nighttime bus tour of illuminated Washington DC monuments.

The cost of \$65 per person includes motor coach to and from the Hilton Washington. (Children 3 years and under are free.) You can sign up for this fun-filled evening on your LLLI Conference Registration. If you do not receive one in the mail, you can find it on line at: <http://www.lalecheleague.org>

Thinking Conference? Think Alums!

There are at least a hundred good reasons to come to an LLLI Conference... and the Alumnae Association is adding 100 more!

REASON #101: You want to see the Founders again and again. A new feature at this year's Conference is the Founders' Parlor, a cozy section of the Alum room set aside for small group visits with a Founder. If you've never had a chance to sit and talk with one of these special women, we know you will cherish this opportunity. You can register for a visit at the Navigating Table, just outside the Alum room door.

REASON #110: You've just got to check out that world renowned Alum Fun! room. For many, it's a Conference highlight—a home away from home to meet friends, kick back, relax, rejuvenate, and reminisce.

REASON #118: You want to be asked, just ONCE more, "Are you still breastfeeding?"

REASON #123: You'd like to give back. Come and help out at the Navigating the LLLI Conference table, in the Alum room, with the Founders' Tea, or more. If you'd like to volunteer, contact Meg Sondey: <lllmeg@yahoo.com>

REASON #127: You can't wait to take your grandchildren to the Play Room.

REASON #134: You'd love to shop the world! There's no better place to find great bargains and support worthy causes than at the LLLI World Faire, filled with trinkets and treasures from LLL Groups worldwide.

REASON #135: It's past time to reconnect with old League friends and your mothering roots.

REASON #137: Alum Rejuvenation sessions are more fun than your last spa visit. From chair massage, Tai Chi, and gentle yoga to early morning walks and pool aerobics, pamper yourself.

REASON #145: You've been building up your courage to belly dance.

REASON #151: You hear there's free wine at the Alum's Late Night Chat. There's also great conversation and a chance to share your vision for Alums.

REASON #157: You have a teenager. Gather some down-to-earth teen parenting tips in sessions like *Making Sense of Adolescence*, *Today's Youth: Facing New Challenges*, and *Bullies, Victims, and Bystanders*.

REASON #158: You wouldn't dream of missing the Alum pre-conference event!

REASON #159: You finally qualify for that coveted 25-year Leader pin. Congratulations! This is your chance to be recognized.

REASON #162: You love being with kindred spirits from all over the world.

REASON #170: You've had this secret yearning to learn how to knit. Whether you're new to the old art, just need some reminders, or never go anywhere without your current project, join in a real Knitting Circle one evening.

REASON #178: This time, you get to bring your pregnant daughter.

Reason #182: You can hawk raffle tickets better than anyone you know. Conference attendees love the terrific donation drawing prizes, so come and sell your heart out! Funds collected by the Alums support the work of LLL.

REASON #183: All your friends will be at the Founders' Tea. And you can wear a fancy hat. Enjoy an elegant light meal coupled with a delightful afternoon of "Music from a Mother's Heart."

REASON #184: You're guaranteed an easy 10,000 steps each day!

REASON #187: DC is a neat place to be. Discover "Foggy Bottom," Dupont Circle, and the historical U Street Corridor on early morning guided walks; explore the magnificent museums; feast on food of every nationality; savor a quaint book shop; take in the monuments. No car needed!

REASON #196: You want another chance to see the old logo fabric.

REASON #200: There is no better place to share the 42 pictures of your newest grandchild.

Ed—See the complete list on our new Web site!

DON'T MISS
the Alumnae Association
Donation Drawing
opportunities
at the LLLI Conference
in July 2005
including:
Beaded Jewelry
Alebrijes Figurines
Art Work
and much much more!

If you have an item to donate, please contact Karri Rickard at <therickards@adelphia.net> or 301-668-8311

Love those laudible, loony, lively, light-hearted, long-winded NZ-land ladies!

Listen... you're likely to hear the lusty laughter in this lloving linguistic tribute to New Zealand's LLL Directors written by Alison Craig and recited at their recent Anniversary Conference.

Long, long, long ago, before lunar landings, liposuction and Lucy Lawless, **Lucy 1 (Yvonne Procuta Foreman)** lived near Lake Michigan at latitude 44 and learned about La Leche League. Lapping up the latest and liking League's liberating logic, she was licensed as a Leader. A little later Lucy left and landed (back) in the Land of the Long White Cloud.

The local ladies had lessons on layettes, labour and lying-in; they laundered with Lux and Lysol; and used lanolin for lacerations; but lamented their lack of lactation learning.

Lucy, larger than life, launched La Leche League in this land.

Lots of lucky lasses; the lonely, the laid-back and the lacquered, lugged their littlies to lounges to learn the lost lore. They lovingly lifted their lingerie (the lace and the lycra) and latched Lauras, Liams and Lilys.

Loud lustiness lessened, ludicrous lotions were left, leaking lapsed and lurking lumps were no longer lanced. Lactation became lengthy, long lap times were legal and the lukewarm were lured.

Lots of lasses loved the lifestyle; waxed lyrically by letter to the LAD, and leapt at Leadership. Local Leagues were listed. Long suffering lads looked after littlies while Leaders listened, learned and led. Lending libraries loaned leaflets and literature. Lucy's love and labour are not lost.

Later, **Lucy 2 (Rachel Walker)**, living near Lyttelton, and learned in labour and lying-in, became the linchpin. The list of Leaders and League Groups lengthened—Levin and Lower

Hutt were the latest. The *Leaderette* was launched and Lucy Logo legalized for LLLNZ leaflets. The League Office was located in a large labyrinthine lodge and large loads of the leading line (WAB) were lifted by loyal Leaders.

For luxury, littlies lay on lambskins. Lucy and her labourers located skins from the lushest livestock to make a living for LLLNZ. Liaising with LLLI, Lucy labelled her luggage and with a limited load of lambskins landed in the Land of Liberty. No limousine, no limelight, but a lucrative level of loot.

Lest lectures on lunches and larders receive lip service, (Mothering Time Cookbook) was the latest literary line. In lieu of lamingtons and Louise cake, lentils, legumes, lambs fry and loaves were listed.

In 1983 Lucy lifted the lid on a lot of learned luminaries with the launch of the LLLNZ Board of Consultants. Leo and his lot, from laboratory, lecture hall and consulting room and with the latest lactation learning on lactoferrin and lactose, lent League laudable leverage.

Lucy, a luminary in leaking, let-down, lumps and the Lact-aid, liaised with the likeminded and located a license for those who would make a living from their lactation learning. Lucy, from laywoman to Lactation Consultant, left this legacy to the land.

Lucy 3 (Alison Craig) lived in Wellington. Not one to loiter or lawless in lateral locutions, she looked lyrically to the long term. The lively and lithesome ladies in the Christchurch Office lent a loving and lugubrious hand and helped to load a lorry to lug League's leaflets and ledgers to Wellington where Lucy 3 relocated the lot in her laundry. Later it was liberated to Johnsonville. The new lodgings were livable but leaky, with lively lino and luxuriant lichen in the lobby and loo. Laughter and long lunches lightened

the load for Lesley and the loyal Leaders who learned about labels, legalities and layout.

Lucy liaised with LLLI by letter and landline, not laptop. Although lloving, there were lectures on levies, Leaven, lanolin and loyalty. Some leeway was allowed on lumpsums, but LLLI and LLLNZ were less than loquacious. Longing for a lull and a lifeline, Lucy learned the legal lingo and linking with Lucys from lots of lands, labouriously listed the logistics of lifting liability to LLLI and lightening the levy load. At times she felt lonely and longed for a lodestar to lend some logic and largesse, but little by little, loose ends were linked and at long last LLLNZ was a lawful Affiliate of LLLI.

Now liberated, League's leading lady was **Lucy 4 (Anne Devereux)**, living where longjohns and legwarmers lessened the likelihood of lesions. Not lured by long lie-ins or lolling in a Lazyboy, Lucy was up with the larks and the last to lie down. She was lithe in the laundry, a lover of her lexicon, legendary with leftovers, but a little loath with the lawnmower.

From the LAD and with elocution learning, she lifted the level of language to lofty limits and lovingly listened to Leaders the length of the land. With a late-model appliance, she led logging-on and was never longwinded, languid or lordly. In lieu of Leaderette, Mosaic was landed and Kaleidoscope was launched.

Lucy lovingly guided the elected Leaders, lubricating lingering liverishness with laughter, levity and lenience.

Always ladylike and lovely in lilac lipstick and linen, but never straight-laced (who saw her in leather leading the pack?), Lucy went to laudable lengths to lift League's linkage with Plunket and local lofty lots and League's lunatic fringe label was lessened.

*Look lively, lead long
and laud lactation...*

Lucy was in the loop with LLLI. Before long she had lots of landings in LA. Although loathsome, jet lag lessened and she licked the likelihood of lassitude with lots of liquor—oops liquid. Up the League ladder she leapt until she looked after Lucys from Lichtenstein to Lancashire, from Lower Hutt to Lexington. Lucy's love was the leaven in LLL.

Looming in Auckland was Lucy 5 (Anne Heritage). A latecomer to the land, she'd left a lovely life in London because Bill (legal lover-boy) lusted after a lime-green lifestyle. Located in leafy Mt. Albert, Lucy, long legged, loquacious and learned (from Leicester, no less), with illustrious lineage—but not la di da—was not one to lean on her laurels. She lapped up La Leche League lessons on lactation, gave life to a lass and a lad and lickety-split was a Leader.

Linked with the literati (those Latin-loving larrikins) she was let loose on League's literature and laid down the law. No liberty with language would she allow. 'Liaison' is l-i-a-i-s-o-n—no leniency, no leeway! She laboured for LEAVEN and *Little Treasures*, wrote leaflets and legged it to the limit, liberally letting the lethargic learn about LLL.

As League's leading light, she was legendary in her lively leadership. Her letters were legion—always lengthy, literate and luminous—they shed light on the lactiferous, the legal and the lachrymose. She lapped up the electronic linkage and located lolly for the lease on League's new lodgings on Lambton Quay. She lobbied and liaised

for legislation on lactation. The lukewarm were lambasted and lacklustre loafers were loathed.

At Huntleigh (local lodge of limited luxury), she licked the Board into line with loads of lists. Liberal at leisure and loud laughter, the lurid and the lewd were lambasted by Lucy. Luckily libel laws were long winded and illogical, liberating Lucy from ill luck.

Limitless was her love for the League. Lucy left a lasting and lactose-laden *Heritage*.

Last but not least, Lucy 6, (Rosemary Gordon), living near a large lake with landscape so lauded, lavishes League with her labour. Luckily, her liking for line-outs, locks and LBW, (lunacy, says Lucy 5), leaves her a level of leisure. Also literary, her lyrics, not like Longfellow's, but laconic and loose, leave laughter but are not lucrative for League.

With no likelihood of laurel leaves or loads of lira, Lucy leads into the millennium with all logistics in line. Lest League's lifespan lessens with a lousy level of loot, Lucy lobbies Labour (Party) and lodges applications for lucre. Lottery Welfare ladled out lots and leaflets and literature for Leaders were landed. Little by little there's a lessening in the likelihood of lolly.

League on Lambton looks to its laurels lest its level of the latest technology is lost; and leaflets are now laid out on line.

At the laptop, Lucy's a legend (does she eat lunch?) and laryngitis can't keep her from a lectern. Lest there be lethargy and League's Leaders are left liable to litigation, Lucy leaps to life. Let's not linger. Let's log our listenings, our leading and our lectures. Leader's logs are her legacy!

With LLLI she is lively. She liaises and listens. She's logical and lucid and thinks laterally about the legislation.

She sees loopholes and says, "Listen to the Leaders of all lands and learn of their latitude and longitude, the life lines they lend to local lactating ladies, their liaisons with local lawmakers and lobbies, their licenses and their lessened lien on LLLI."

For Lucy 4, she located a large livery for her lapel and the Lucys lived it up at the land's loftiest lodge.

Lest levity leave you lurching, the Lucys, lifelong lovers of La Leche League leave, saying 'look lively, lead long and laud lactation'.

Lifted lllovingly, with permission, from Kaleidoscope.

Join the Alumnae!

YES, I want to keep in touch and support LLLI. My Alumnae membership category is checked below. Enclosed is:

- \$8 for CONTINUUM (I am currently an LLL Leader or member)
- \$25 for a retired Leader/member LLLI Alumnae Membership (includes CONTINUUM)
- \$44 for CONTINUUM and an LLLI Individual Membership (includes NEW BEGINNINGS)
- \$60 for a 3-year LLLI Alumnae Membership (includes CONTINUUM)
- \$100 for a 5-year LLLI Alumnae Membership (includes CONTINUUM)

Name: _____

Address: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____

Country: _____

Current LLL status: _____

e-mail: _____

Send to: LLL International, P.O. Box 4079, Schaumburg IL 60168-4079 USA

Continuum

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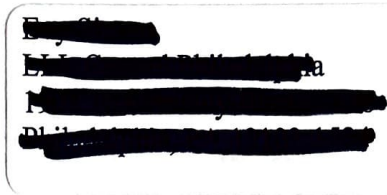
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Now This! and Alum Fun!

at the LLLI Conference
July 1~5, 2005 Washington D.C.

See you there!



In remembrance...

La Leche League International was saddened to hear about the death of long-time friend **Hugh Desaix Riordan, MD** on January 7, 2005. Dr. Riordan, a fervent breastfeeding advocate, was a former member of the LLLI Board of Directors. For over 30 years, he was a member of the LLLI Health Advisory Council and was a popular speaker at LLL Conferences. He was instrumental in launching the capital campaign which made it possible for LLLI to purchase its headquarters in Schaumburg, IL.

In 2001, Dr. Riordan was the recipient of the Founders' Award, given by the seven Founders of LLLI to an individual who has made continuous, outstanding, and exemplary contributions to breastfeeding in the world.

Dr. Riordan, a distinguished psychiatrist, was the Founding Director and President of the Center for the Improvement of Human Functioning International, the Bright Spot for Health, a nonprofit organization devoted to helping individuals develop optimal health. He was completing the third volume of his trilogy,

Medical Mavericks, when he died.

Dr. Riordan was married to LLLI Leader Jan Riordan, EdD, ARNE, FAAN, IBCLC. Dr. Jan Riordan is a member of the LLLI Health Advisory Council.

Another friend of LLL, **Mary Kroeger**, died on December 15, 2004. Mary was a midwife, a tireless advocate of breastfeeding around the globe, and the author (with Linda Smith) of the book *Impact of Birthing Practices on Breastfeeding—Protecting the Mother and Baby Continuum*.

Looking for a gift that keeps on giving?

Consider an Alumnae Membership for an LLL friend or retiring Leader.

Purchase an LLL Membership for a daughter or daughter-in-law.

Give an LLL Membership as a shower gift.

Give your doctor a subscription to *NEW BEGINNINGS* for his or her waiting room.