

Continuum

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Change is inevitable.

Our children grow and leave home; we age, return to work, retire; we lose a spouse, a parent or other loved one; illness strikes; opportunities arise; world affairs, local politics, and family dynamics shift.

Encouragement to "embrace change" is often the mantra of well-meaning folks wanting to give support along the journey from old to new. Has kind of a cheerleader-y ring and sometimes that works. It's pretty sound advice, after all, to "make lemonade" if life hands you lemons. Change is a chance for transformation.

Author and futurist Alvin Toffler defines change as "the process by which the future invades our lives." Ready or not, future becomes present.

We can fear it, resist it, accept it, welcome it, even make it happen. But change is something we just can't stop. Probably that's a very good thing.

Major LLLI changes impact Alumnae, too

*I*ndependence is in the works for the LLLI Alumnae Association—an opportunity to restructure, reorganize, and rejuvenate.

The Alumnae Association is one of several programs that will no longer fall under the auspices of LLLI. At the LLLI Board of Directors meeting October 26 - 29, 2006, the Board approved a Strategic Plan to transform LLLI into a global organization. As a result, responsibility for each of the programs that were determined to be primarily serving the United States "will be shifted to entities served, and will be staffed and funded by those entities, if there is interest to continue that staffing and funding."

In addition to the LLLI Alumnae Association, programs that will no longer be supported by the LLLI budget include the Breastfeeding Helpline (see page 2), the Center for Breastfeeding Information, the Peer Counselor program, the Physician's Seminar, and the LLLI Conference.

According to the report from the Board, "open communications and translations will be a priority for the global organization." The Strategic Plan has set a target that the LLLI website have portals for each major language for all countries with LLL Groups.

On November 20, 2006, Barbara Emanuel, LLLI Interim Executive Director, posted a message to Leaders via the Community Network (CN) announcing the Strategic Plan Objectives. If you are a member of the CN, you can view the information Barbara shared under "New on the CN—Executive Director's Blog" at <http://community.llli.org/welcome.htm>.

So what does this mean for the Alumnae Association? Will there be big changes? That remains to be seen. The Alums have always operated on a miniscule budget, with most of the work done on a volunteer basis. That volunteer status probably won't change!

On the other hand, much Alumnae energy has gone into myriad activities at the LLLI Conference every two years (see this year's exciting list on page 6). With no conference scheduled past 2007, this energy can be redirected towards priorities that will be set in the coming months, such as stronger support to ensure that LLLI will exist for future generations, better connections with local

Alumnae, more recognition for the achievements of current and retired Leaders, and added trips or other events.

As a USA-based association, our focus also becomes narrowed and better defined. Until now, the Alum's primarily USA emphasis was really a weakness—the result of insufficient funding to act in a more global way beyond the LLLI Conference. Now this focus becomes a strength.

Since the decision was relayed to Alumnae Association Coordinator Marilyn Thompson, the Alumnae Council has formed committees to address the various hurdles that need to be jumped on the way to independence. The goals are to establish a strong foundation; to maintain the activities, services, and projects that are meaningful and working well; and to make the transition smoothly.

Workgroups are studying options on legal requirements and finances, mission and goals, membership and record-keeping, fund raising, the Web site, and Continuum for starters.

If you'd like to share your ideas or participate in any of these discussions, contact Marilyn Thompson at 763-559-2173 or e-mail to: marilyn_cinnamon@comcast.net. You can also help by filling out the enclosed survey about Continuum and returning it to Sue Christensen, 1304 Leeper Ave., South Bend IN 46617 or faxing to 574-237-1071. Thanks!

It's an opportunity to restructure, reorganize, and rejuvenate

The map has changed

"It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory." —W. Edwards Deming

When I first read about Edwards Deming, I remember thinking that his systematic approach to change through statistical assessment, evaluation, and implementation was too complicated and required too many changes all at once. Now, I find myself realizing that Deming understood what I did not. Change happens. It happens with us guiding it or it happens without our input. As for me, I think input is the better avenue to take if we are to adapt to the challenges facing LLLI.

All companies, including non-profits, are learning to change quickly and adjust to new expectations from their members and the public—expectations that include new levels of transparency and accountability, innovation and creativity, and dialogue and discourse.

While breastfeeding has not changed, nor has the need for mother-to-mother support, the truth is that the map has changed. Our challenge is to learn how to put breastfeeding on this new map so we can be there to sustain the next generation as they look for support in their breastfeeding decisions.

What moved the map? Technology did. And, with technology, the map got a lot bigger. This is good news because it means that we can reach a lot more people with a lot less cost. The *almost* good news is that it requires us to change the way we do business, the way we reach new moms, and even the way we communicate with each other.

One way we're meeting these changing needs through technology is to take our Annual Mother's Day appeal online. Moving appeals and communications on-line significantly reduces our costs. We will still send out paper appeals to those who aren't yet a

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part of the Internet community, but the fewer paper appeals we send, the lower our costs will be. The lower our costs are, the better our fundraising efficiency ratings will be. The better our efficiency ratings are, the more donors can trust that the money they give is going directly to LLLI to further the mission of helping mothers and babies rather than toward raising more funds. The move to on-line appeals also reduces the amount of paper and ink we use, making LLLI a more environmentally friendly company.

How can Alumnae help? By letting those you talk to know why we've made this decision and how it helps LLLI become more cost effective and responsible. Also, by sending your e-mail address to LLLI and encouraging others who have on-line capability to do so as well in order to include as many people as we can in our on-line appeal. To send e-mail information, go to www.llli.org/contact/contact_us (choose "General Information" in the contact drop box and list your name and email address).

I'm excited about moving more of our funding development efforts online. While the map may be bigger and our means of communication changing to make good use of the latest technology, our mission is solid and stable and our commitment to mother-to-mother support remains unchanged.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at Lindaensley@shaw.ca

Linda Ensley
LLLI Funding Development Director

Breastfeeding Helpline remains fundraising goal for Alums

When the Alumnae Association selected the LLLI 800 Breastfeeding Helpline for a major fundraising focus—featured front and center in the last issue of Continuum—little did we anticipate what was to follow.

At the LLLI Board of Directors meeting in October 2006, action to approve the LLLI Strategic Plan resulted in a dismantling of the LLLI Helpline operator system, since this program was primarily USA-based rather than international in scope.

As of January 4, 2007, calls to the 800-La-Leche number seeking helpline assistance are being forwarded to the Leader Locator Line. Callers are then instructed to enter their zip code and are referred to a local Leader's telephone number (where available).

The Helpline, however, remains a priority for LLLI in USA. In December, at a joint meeting of representatives from the two US Divisions and LLLI, plans were made to explore the options and feasibility of building a network of volunteers to provide a helpline service.

A helpline workgroup has been established on the LLLI Community Network to explore financing, acquire needed technology, and recruit volunteers to staff a helpline. If you'd like to help with any of these tasks, contact Amy Shaw: shawclan@connecttime.net or call 724-741-2147.

The Alumnae remain committed to fundraising for this important work. See the box on page three for information about where Helpline donations can be sent. You also can read about the Elena and Olivia Parry Memorial Fund which is supporting the Helpline as well.

The Elena and Olivia Parry Memorial Fund

The Saturday before Christmas, 2006 was a special day with all five of my children and all seven of my grandchildren at our house to open gifts. With seven grandchildren five and under, you can imagine the wonderful chaos of wrapping paper, books, clothes and toys.

The oldest grandchild, kindergarten Elena Lynn, loved to be rubbed and had a photographic memory. She only needed to see a video once before she could repeat it from memory and act out the scenes. Elena was adopted from Guatemala while Mommy was on bed-rest with an unexpected pregnancy.

Olivia Frances was just ten months younger than her sister. Her favorite things were talking on the phone, playing computer games, and cooking and beading with Mommy. She used to sit on my lap and go through her cookbook page by page and tell me what every item was and if she had ever made it and who ate it if she did. Olivia was a born organizer; we were sure she'd be a CEO or the first woman president.

Another surprise blessing came when their sister Ava Helene was born. The girls' parents, Pat and Paula, were thankful that they lived with both sets of grandparents within 3 blocks. We felt blessed to be involved in their lives, too, especially since our own children grew up living thousands of miles away from their grandparents.

We had gathered early to open presents since we would be celebrating our first Christmas away from home since 1968. We were taking my youngest daughter Kathy to my brother's new home for Christmas. Kathy and my brother had lived in New Orleans until Katrina. We wanted to be with his family to spend their first Christmas in a new home and a new city. It was a very special Christmas, attending midnight Mass, and seeing them happy after losing their home and jobs.

It brightens my day to think that soon any mother in the US will be able to pick up the phone and find a Leader to answer her questions.

Wednesday we arrived home to tragedy. A fire started in the car parked in the garage at my son's home and quickly engulfed the house. Paula barely got out with Ava. Elena and Olivia did not. In the course of a few minutes our world fell apart.

How does one cope? I don't have any magic answers, but we all decided the only way to survive as a family was to lean on each other and find ways to reach out to others.

Pat and Paula are working on several ways to remember the girls by helping others in our community, in their church and in Guatemala. Friends are putting on a memorial golf tournament on St. Patrick's Day.

Naturally, I turned to La Leche League. In early December I had attended meetings in Schaumburg to discuss the USA-based projects LLLI would no longer be funding. I joined a workgroup for the LLL USA Breastfeeding Helpline and found out the Alumnae Association (to which I belong) was fundraising for that very cause. Then friends in LLL started the Elena and Olivia Parry Memorial Fund to benefit the Helpline. Many, many LLL families have donated with great generosity. And a challenge was brought to match the plans of the Alums to raise \$25,000.

While nothing can bring Elena and Olivia back, it brightens my day to think that soon any mother in the US will be able to pick up the phone and find an LLL Leader to answer her questions and support her as a mother.

May I respectfully request that you hold my family in your thoughts or prayers as we try to live life without our angels, Lena and Livi. Don't wait to say I love you and give lots of hugs.

Linda Parry
North Carolina, USA

Here's how to make a Helpline contribution

Contributions for the LLL USA Breastfeeding Helpline should be made payable to "LLL USA Breastfeeding Helpline" and sent to:

USA Breastfeeding Helpline
c/o Carroll Beckham
2101 Woods End Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28312
cbeckham@nc.rr.com

Contributions to the Elena and Olivia Parry Fund should be made payable to "LLL" with "Elena and Olivia Parry Fund" in the memo and sent to:

Pam Freedman
104 Crofton Springs Place
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
pfree3@aol.com

Either fund can accept credit card donations as well as checks. For credit card donations, please include the name, address and telephone number of the person, credit card type, credit card number, expiration date, and amount of the donation.

Alum bookshelf: If I live to be 100—Lessons from the Centenarians

When my mother, who will be 85 years old this year, gave me *If I live to be 100*, by Neenah Ellis (producer of National Public Radio's One Hundred Years of Stories), I knew that I would love reading these stories. I enjoy friendships with persons older than I am and I like hearing their stories, particularly as I have grown older myself.

"With the old, process is everything. Love is paying attention and being here now. Ellis knows this. In her delicious book, she teaches us all to slow down, fall into the moment, and listen," writes Mary Pipher, author of *Another Country: Navigating the Emotional Terrain of our Elders*, in her review of Ellis' book.

Below are some snippets from these rich and wonderful centenarian stories.

❖ "I'm something, aren't I," declares Anna Wilmot, who rows a boat every day when the weather is warm from the dock at her one story cabin surrounded by pine trees on a lake in Massachusetts. Anna chose to live alone on this lake when her husband died rather than going to live with her son in California. "She knew herself well enough to know what would sustain her and give her life meaning."

❖ Margaret Rawson, born in 1899 is an expert on dyslexia and published a book at age 96, *Dyslexia over the Lifespan*, a 55-yr. study of some of her first students from the 1920s. "I was impressed with the way she dealt with her failing body. She got herself the help she needed so that she could do what she wanted. In her condition Margaret could have given up on life, but she was making plans to attend the next national conference of the American Dyslexia Association the following fall."

Slow down, fall into the moment, and listen.

❖ Ruth Ellis, the "oldest living black lesbian in America," was featured in an article in *Ms. Magazine* and in a film about her life. The year after she celebrated her 100th birthday in Detroit, Michigan, she made more than 100 appearances, then decided it was time to stop. She likes dance, bowling, and classical music. Lecturing to a class at Michigan State University, she shared, "I would like for the young people to take more interest in some older person... There are a lot of lonesome people, and I think if young people would just pick out one person they could go visit, it would mean a lot."

❖ In Schaumburg, IL, home of the LLLI office, is a senior living community, Friendship Village, where 104-year-old Helen Boardman lives with her husband Bill, 20 years younger. They met when they both were married to spouses who have since died. "The chief joy of the future," she writes of her life with Bill, "is that it stretches ahead filled with things to do together."

❖ Harry Shapiro came to Manhattan, NY, at the age of 5 from Russia. He paints, his living room his gallery, declaring Paul Cezanne to be his painter. Harry says, "To me, he was the greatest painter of the modern period. He put art on its modern course. He affected me... his color, his design, everything." Harry concludes, "You know what I think prolongs life? Art,

and music. Beyond that it is to have a heart full of love. That is the most important thing."

❖ 103-yr-old R.L. Stamper lives with his son on the Stamper Quarter Horse Ranch in Locust Grove, Oklahoma. He had been preaching over 70 years when Neenah Ellis interviewed him, and he tried to persuade her to drive him around the countryside in his old Cadillac, so that he "could save some souls at revivals." Soon after their visit, he let Neenah know that he was marrying an 80-yr. old woman, whose relationship had flourished via email. R.L. said, "If we live together six months or a day, at least we're together and not alone and that's something. I thank God that we found each other."

❖ Neenah also interviewed a husband and wife, both centenarians, Sadie and Gilbert Hill, who live in Florida, and have been married for 80 years. Researchers at the New England Centenarian Study say the odds of a married couple both making it to 100 are six million to one. Sadie and Gilbert were nonchalant about their incredible feat. "It just kind of caught us standing still," said Gilbert.

This was a delightful book to read—funny, inspiring, and wonderfully encouraging. Am I ready to live to be 100? I'll have to think about that, but I do know that I want to continue to live my life with a positive attitude, as those featured in this book, and I want to "slow down, fall into the moment, and listen."

Pam Oselka
Michigan USA

The staying power of LLL

I am a retired Leader from Annapolis, Maryland USA and I've been involved in League for about 20 years—17 as a Leader (DA and ACLA). Since retirement, I've been able to keep up with a number of my League friends, not wanting to lose that connection that comes from working and playing with like-minded people.

Recently, a League friend, Susan Herseman Leibman of Easton, Maryland, invited me to a birthday party she was having for herself. She had also invited two other League friends that we had in common.

On the day of the party, I was able to pick up one friend, Leader Carol Meredith. When we arrived at the party, I was so pleased and excited to see Leader Marie Beam, whom I hadn't seen in a couple of years. While there, I met Carol Smith, whom I had heard Susan and Carol Meredith speak of fairly

frequently, and then Jen Wagner, one of Susan's co-Leaders.

Meeting up with dear friends was a wonderful treat. Adding that to the fact that LLL is "alive and well" in the lives of excited and driven younger Leaders was music to my ears! As I spoke with Jen about their group's upcoming World Walk, it was wonderful to know that the support and information that I first heard over 20 years ago continues to be shared at meetings in the same loving way I heard it and then later shared.

It's evident that the message LLL shares still needs to be heard. So many mothers' desires to breastfeed are being thwarted by current medical practices, familial ideas, and our current culture's standards of mother/baby separation. As

we often reflected at Area Council retreats, wouldn't it be amazing if La Leche League wasn't needed! But how wonderful it is to know that there are so many who believe our work needs to be and is continued through the lives of dedicated Leaders!

You know, it's funny... looking at the picture of all of us made me nostalgic for when I first got involved with LLL and heard about all these Leaders who had stayed involved way beyond their babies' nursing days. At the time, I had to wonder "why?" Now the "why" is perfectly understandable! What an awesome group of women!

*Ellen Helms
Maryland*

A wise move

The purchase of the building at 1400 North Meacham Road in Schaumburg, Illinois twelve years ago was an investment that now provides LLLI with a base for future operations.

With program cutbacks, the building was much larger than necessary for a streamlined organization. Its sale netted a substantial profit.

The move to a new LLLI home at 957 North Plum Grove Road in Schaumburg took place in December 2006. The smaller space is bright and airy with a large open work area that most offices open onto, which leads to more staff interaction and collaboration. Plan to stop by for a visit if you are in the area.



Front row, left to right: Carol Meredith, Leader since 1976, Coordinator of Area Alumnae Representatives; Susan Leibman (birthday girl) accredited in 1998, Leader with LLL-Mid-Shore, PL Advisor for Southern and Appalachian Regions of the EUS; and Jen Wagner, Leader LLL-Mid-Shore, accredited March 2005.

Back row: Ellen Helms (author), accredited 1985, Leader with LLL-Annapolis (formerly Central Anne Arundel County), served as DA and ACLA, retired 2002; Marie Beam, accredited 1992, Leader with LLL-Bethesda/Kensington, served as co-DC, ACLA, CLA, currently serving as Associate Director for Regional Administrators of Leader Accreditation (ADRALA) for the EUS Division; and Carol Smith accredited in 1979, currently on Reserve, became IBCLC in 1993 and Coordinator of the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program for Mid-Shore WIC serving three Maryland counties in 2003.

Alumnae to celebrate the Power of Breastfeeding

The LLLI Conference is fast approaching and the Alumnae Team has been planning a variety of events and activities. We hope that you will renew and make new Alumnae connections by joining us this summer.

❖ **Cruise!** On Thursday night, July 19, kick off the Conference with an evening cruise on Lake Michigan. Visit with friends while you dine, enjoy a show, and take in breathtaking skyline views. The Spirit of Chicago departs from Navy Pier, which has more than 50 acres of parks, promenades, gardens, shops, restaurants, and entertainment. Even if you're not attending the Conference, bring an LLL friend and come aboard!

❖ **Art!** On Friday, July 20, you're invited to a private viewing and discussion of mother-baby art in the Print and Drawing Room at the Art Institute of Chicago, just a short walk from the hotel. Attendance for this adults-only Alumnae-sponsored event is limited and on a first come first served basis. Times are 10:30 - 11 or 11 - 11:30 a.m. To sign up, contact Barbara Kopec: barbarakopec@yahoo.com

❖ **Chat!** Following Friday night's opening celebration with featured speaker Michael Brandwein, join us for a late night Alumnae Chat. It's a great time to catch up with other Alums and help us consider future directions.

❖ **Great sessions!** The conference program offers a selection of stellar speakers, past favorites as well as new ones. Some of the sessions of interest to Alumnae include:

Barefoot Summers: Reflections of Home, Family, and Simple Pleasures;
Women's Health: A Wholistic Approach;
Life Conversations;
Kindred Spirits: Lifetime Friendships;

The Smartest Women in the Room: The Business History and Economic Impact of Breastfeeding;

La Leche League: The Catalyst for a Revolution in Attitudes;

Finding Your Tribe;

I Love You and the Answer is STILL No!;

You're Eating What? Stop Eating

Genetically Engineered Foods;

A Humorous Look at 50 Great Years;

and so many more!

❖ **Shop! Gather! Jam!** Saturday evening features the World's Faire, a magical LLL international marketplace where you'll love to shop. There'll also be a special gathering just for Leaders that have been active for 25 years or more. And you won't want to miss the popular Alumnae-sponsored Musical Jam Session (you're welcome to bring your favorite instrument!).

❖ **Sip, savor, and celebrate!** On Sunday, you won't want to miss our Alumnae favorite, **The Founders' Tea**. The Alumnae Association hosts this event which pays tribute to the Founders and all long-time La Leche League Leaders past and present. Following the Tea, a Gala Awards Night will honor the Second Tier of LLL Founders and feature a viewing of LLLI Board Member Cathy Liles' collection of breastfeeding artwork.

❖ **Swoon!** Monday evening the Celebration Dinner and Closing will feature singer Billy Dean. For those of you who were at the Tea in 2005, you may recall the video with Billy Dean singing the song *Let Them Be Little*. Thanks to Janet Jendron and Barbara Nicholson, who were instrumental in getting Billy Dean to come and perform for us. The Alumnae are raising funds for this opportunity and seeking donations. For information, contact Janet Jendron: jjendron@usit.net

❖ **Rejuvenate!** The Alumnae again will be hosting an Alum Fun/Rejuvenation Room throughout the conference, with a variety of pampering activities, craft sessions, and discussion topics.

❖ **Visit!** Once again, the Founders Parlor will be open daily for individuals who would like time to chat with the Founders in a small group setting.

❖ **Win!** With great gifts in the Alum Donation Drawing; a new Silent Auction; a raffle for a seat at the table with Billy Dean at the Celebration Dinner or a signed, handwritten copy of the lyrics to *Let Them Be Little*; and more, there will be countless chances to win something wonderful—like a beautiful and unique art quilt. If you have an item you'd like to donate, contact Karri Rickard: karrill@zoominternet.net or 724-553-5700.

❖ **Remember.** On the final afternoon of the conference, a special We Remember time has been set aside to honor Leaders who are deceased. If you know of a Leader who has died recently, please send her name to Nancy Franklin at: NBFL77@aol.com

❖ **Volunteer!** If you'd like to help out the Alums at the conference, contact Sue Steilen at suesteilen@comcast.net or 708-301-0890. Also, LLLI is still welcoming advertisers, exhibitors, donors, and sponsors. Contact Sue for more details and to suggest prospects.

Check the Alumnae Web site for conference updates: www.llli.org/alumnae. There is also a discussion group on the Community Network, "Alumnae at LLLI Conference," dedicated to answering your questions.

We look forward to connecting with you in Chicago at the conference this July!

Lessons learned from the past useful in the present

Last year, during my annual physical, my doctor recommended a name brand drug to bring down my cholesterol. I really struggled with this because it was a powerful drug, relatively new on the human continuum (as is artificial feeding of infants, for example). And, it had more than a few unkind side effects experienced by a relatively high percentage of users. Basically, the drug quickly brings down “numbers,” which may make busy doctors pleased (and pharmaceutical companies happy), however it is still controversial.

The more I thought about it, the more uncomfortable I began to feel. When I left her office, my doc even gave me some rather unclear handouts on nutrition put out by the company that makes the drug. It felt somewhat akin to getting breastfeeding information from a formula company.

While I’m not a food purist, I know my diet is healthier than the general population, especially in regard to cholesterol raising foods. I’m learning that both food and genetics can play a part here. My parents never visited the doctor until their 90s and they are still very much alive!

I don’t know why my life seems busier as a grandmother than when I had a young family, but it does. I really didn’t want to spend the time and energy searching for a new physician, as I did years ago when I wanted rooming in, no supplements, etc. That took a lot of work, energy, and courage!

Through the ever-present “grapevine,” I began to hear the name of a doctor who was known for his holistic approaches. I made an appointment, taking my lab tests with me, and there I met one of the most sincere, aware, caring people I have ever been in the

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presence of. He had time to look into my eyes and slow me down. There was no fear, lectures, scolding, hurriedness. Instead, he listened with focused awareness and caring attention, looked at my “numbers,” and was not that concerned.

He suggested Red Yeast Rice, garlic, Co Q 10, and policosanol supplements—all available over the counter, in pharmacies, or at vitamin shops—in addition to what I was taking. He also suggested a blood test in three months.

In three months, my “numbers” began to drop and in three more months, they plummeted! (My cholesterol went from 267 to 200 and the LDL from 175 to 108!)

I am feeling proud of my accomplishment, excited about my health, and grateful to find an alternative to harsh pharmaceuticals, as well as this special physician.

I give much credit to my LLL background, the Founders’ examples and friends... women who taught me to look mindfully into any treatments concerning my body, have as little intervention or interference with natural processes as possible (save it for when it’s really needed), to seek second (or third) opinions when in doubt, and to honor my intuition when I feel strongly about something.

The sad part is the recommended drug, which is expensive, is completely covered by our insurance and I pay out of pocket for the others, just as I did for our home birth years ago!

This article is not against pharmaceutical companies, but instead about Louise following her intuition, finding a healthy alternative, and feeling positive about the outcome!

My diet hasn’t changed. I do eat processed foods, but try to keep them at a minimum. There is nothing I don’t eat. However, I have never been a heavy meat eater, love fresh veggies, and often have them with hummus three times a day. I try to eat more fruit than Twinkies (which I am known to indulge in at times...).

I find if I have dates and figs around, that satisfies my sweet tooth just fine. I’ll often take half a dessert because these years, I don’t seem to want as many calories. I also try to get to a workout center three times a week, but do the exercising my way, often once around rather than twice. I listen to my body and I try to walk four to five times a week. I’m not a jock by any means, just see women in my age bracket at a crossroads if they don’t exercise and keep moving.

I am a work in process and do respect modern medicine—when it is needed.

Louise Cox
Connecticut USA

Ed note—This article is one woman’s experience. If you have high cholesterol, work with your doctor to find the most suitable treatment for you.

All roads lead the Alumnae to San Antonio

The latest LLL Alumnae trip to San Antonio, Texas, took place November 9-13, 2006. Thirty-four women traveled the skyways and highways from 11 states, representing all ages of life and various stages of mothering and grandmothering. Alumnae Coordinator Marilyn Thompson's mother was the oldest, celebrating her 91st birthday a few days after the trip.

Imagine the warm fuzzy feeling of being in an LLL atmosphere back when your children were young. Fast forward to today and you will have an idea of the fun we had as we talked about those times and caught up with our families and what we do now.

The town of San Antonio is like a history museum. During our stay, we learned about the city's heritage and traditions, culture, cuisine, and architecture. We travelled by bus, trolley,

river barge, and on foot. The tour guides at the cultural museum, art gallery, and Steves Homestead brought to life the stories of San Antonio's past. A cordial bus driver sprinkled humor through his narrated tour of the city and two missions. During our visit, we also saw the creative altars commemorating the "Day of the Dead," a local Mexican cultural tradition to welcome back memories of departed loved ones.

At the Botanical Gardens, our guide brought us back to nature with information and stories about the

garden's interesting trees, shrubs and flowers, as well as offering time for us to amble through the lovely rose garden and other areas on the grounds.

Lunchtimes, we delighted in the atmosphere of the roof garden at the Guenther House, the Carriage House Kitchen (site of the picture below), and Mi Tierra's Mexican restaurant, which was followed by an afternoon of browsing the shops and vendors at the nearby market place. Evening cuisine included the unique ambiance of the Iron Cactus and Little Red Barn Steakhouse, as well as the hospitable Texas-style buffet presented at the hotel on our first night.

Our hotel was located on the 2-1/2 mile stretch of the San Antonio River. From the hotel patio, we could take the steps down to the riverbank and catch a river taxi to the restaurants and shops. Many of us enjoyed long or short strolls on the flagstone paths punctuated with picturesque trees leading up to the River Walk Mall. After our full days, the hotel lounge was a gathering place to savor the moment, nibble snacks, and talk late into the evening.

Trip coordinator Phoebe Kerness, with the help of San Antonio area residents Nancy Franklin and Amy Zingery, planned this great itinerary that introduced us to the city's vibrant culture, friendly atmosphere, and rich history. The words of Ginny Wilkerson from Pennsylvania speak for many: "Traveling around San Antonio with the best friends one could have, La Leche League sisters, was a wonderful and affirming experience."

Your ideas are welcome for the next Alumnae adventure in 2008! Send them to Coordinator Marilyn Thompson (see p. 12). Hope to see you then!

Fran Dereszynski
California

*I'll go anywhere
with this crowd.*

—Susan Switzer, Georgia



This LLL Alumnae group photo was taken after the tour of the Steves Family Homestead. Almost all attendees were in this picture.

In remembrance...

Several people very special to La Leche League have died in the past months. We remember them with with honor and affection, including...

☞ **Mary Carson**

Mary Carson was a brilliant and talented editor who served as an editorial consultant to LLLI for many years. She passed away in December 2006 at the age of 96. Mary worked very closely with the Founders editing the 1963 edition of *THE WOMANLY ART OF BREASTFEEDING*. She and her husband, Gordon, did independent publishing, so they acted as consultants as the Founders worked on the book. The Founders agreed they could not have put the book together without Mary Carson's expertise.

Mary's editing background was phenomenal. As LLLI Publications Director, she set high standards. She was on the LLLI staff for 10 years, retiring in 1981. She loved to read passages aloud from books like *The Chicago Manual of Style* on correct usage of prepositions and words like "that" and "which." She edited *LLL NEWS* and *LEAVEN*, put together the "reprints," and worked with Roberta Johnson on *MOTHER'S IN THE KITCHEN*, Faye Young on *Gerald the Third*, and Kaye Lowman on the original *LLLove Story*. She was the Publications Director when I started working in the department in 1976, and she taught me so much. She lived just a few blocks from the LLLI office in Franklin Park. I remember her walking to and from work every day.

Although Mary breastfed her two children, she was active in LLL long before there were Leadership applications. Mary Carson contributed immensely to La Leche League's development and credibility as well as its reputation for excellence.

Judy Torgus, Illinois

☞ **JoAnne Scott**

On September 18, 2006, La Leche League and the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) lost a strong ambassador of breastfeeding—JoAnne Scott. A Leader of 31 years and the founding Executive Director of the IBLCE for over 20 years, JoAnne Scott, 63 years old, died after a valiant fight with breast cancer. Her family was by her side as she passed from this life.

JoAnne was accredited as a Leader in 1975 and we started the first Annandale, Virginia, LLL Group the following year. In 1978, JoAnne and I began teaching breastfeeding classes at Fairfax Hospital, where the birth rate was over 6,000 a year. Each month, 100 to 150 couples would attend our classes. JoAnne became Virginia's Area Coordinator of Leaders in 1980.

By 1982, as an increasing number of individuals were taking their mother support skills into the professional arena to work as lactation specialists, there was concern that there was no quality assurance for mothers. Judy Good, with strong support from Jan Riordan and Chele Marmet, encouraged the LLLI Board of Directors to establish a "Lactation Consultant Department" with JoAnne as Director. JoAnne, working with breastfeeding advocates from around the world, strived to address this issue and to develop competency standards for this newly emerging health field. Over the next few years, she researched exams, credentialing, educational programs, and professional regulation. At a June 1984 meeting of the LLLI Lactation Consultant Department, it was decided that an independent examining body—separate from LLLI—should be set up to administer a certification program. Certification was proposed as the way to ensure these standards and to enable

consumers to identify experts in the art and science of lactation management. In 1985, after three years of intensive work, the first International Board Certified Lactation Consultant exam was offered at two sites—Washington DC, USA and Melbourne, Australia. Under JoAnne's guidance, the IBLCE is the world's first truly international certification program in the health field. Today there are approximately 16,000 International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs) in 69 countries across five continents.

Pam Dunne, Virginia

☞ **Judy Good**

Longtime La Leche League Leader, Judy Good, died in November 2006. Judy was a Leader in Ohio for many years, was the Area Coordinator of Ohio, became the first Director of the Eastern Division, and later served as an LLLI Board member. Judy was the wife of the late Dr. James Good, a member of the LLLI Professional Advisory Board. Judy had been living in Melbourne, Florida.

☞ **Dr. Carolyn Rawlins**

Dr. Carolyn Rawlins, 98, passed away in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where she had been living in NC for a number of years since her retirement. Dr. Rawlins began her OB practice in 1949. At that time mothers were anesthetized during childbirth. When one of her early patients requested a natural childbirth, the birth changed Dr. Rawlins life. She became a pioneer in natural childbirth and family centered maternal care, delivering more than 16,000 babies, most of them at St. Margaret's Hospital in Hammond, Indiana. She helped found the International Childbirth Education Association and served for more than 30 years as a member of the LLLI Professional Advisory Board.

Greetings from "found" retired Leaders

The Alumnae Association has been searching for retired Leaders whose addresses were no longer current at LLLI and it's been such a pleasure to hear from them. Kudos especially to Kathy Hays and Brenda Glover, who have dedicated countless hours to this project. Here are some of the responses (many edited for length).

❖ My first group experience was in North Platte, Nebraska in 1965 with my firstborn. My husband was in the service at the time and when we moved home to the family farm, I became a Leader in the Council Bluffs, Iowa Group and went on to start a Group in Oakland, Iowa. In reflection, I have realized many times over the impact the LLL organization has had on my life and those of my children. I will be forever grateful.
Joette (Grobe) Beck

❖ I was a Leader in Platteville, Wisconsin beginning in 1977 and finished up in 1986 in Boise, Idaho. I also became the first IBCLC in Idaho in 1985. After a move to Kirkland, Washington, I returned to school and became a Certified Medical Assistant. Over the past 13 years I've continued to help moms and babies get off to a good start with breastfeeding... LLL has made a huge impact, but there's still a long way to go. I still find that many doctors and women are poorly informed about even the basics of breastfeeding.

My daughter is now in the process of becoming a Leader in Gresham, Oregon [and she] has suggested that perhaps she, my young granddaughter, and I could attend the Chicago Conference together.
Linda Zielinski

❖ Greetings! I was a Leader of an LLL Group in the Midway Airport area of Chicago for several years starting in 1962. My co-Leader was Rose Mary

Fahey. We had been members of one of the early groups led by Mary White in River Forest, Illinois. Now, one of my daughters, Katie McGee, is a Leader in the LaGrange, Illinois Group.
Alice Dillon

❖ I started an LLL Group in Maquoketa, Iowa when our youngest came along and there wasn't a Group in the little town we moved to. Then we moved to east Texas and I became a District Leader. Now my husband and I live in north Texas and we're blessed to live close to our middle daughter, her husband, and their two girls. Sarah, our daughter, didn't hesitate to breastfeed and join an LLL Group. Our oldest daughter, who lives in Philadelphia, just had her first child. She recently returned to work and is pumping to keep her son on breast milk. She wouldn't have it any other way. Happy 50th!
Louise Griffith

❖ I am a former LLL Leader from the 70s and early 80s, first in Houston, Texas, then in Louisville, Kentucky, where I was a co-Leader of two Groups... I retired in 1989 and now live in the Greater Chicago Area-Elgin. I have been using my knowledge through the years to help my three daughters and now my daughter-in-law with breastfeeding. For nine years LLL was a huge part of my life... They were the years that I began to grow and become a woman in my own right, not just a mother, nor a copy of my own mother. I like to think I became a better mother because of the reading and support of La Leche League.
Connie Sue Novotny (formerly Rucker)

❖ I was a Leader of an LLL Group in St. Paul, Minnesota 1986-96. I received your flyer about the 50th anniversary, and will be with you "in spirit." I

continue to encourage pregnant and new moms to seek out LLL, and speak highly of it, of course. Thank you, and all the best for the 50th!
Christine Kosowski

❖ I am a retired Leader from Utah. I started out in LLL in 1972 with my first child in Germany (my husband was in the Army). THE WOMANLY ART OF BREASTFEEDING was the only information and support I had through two babies. I started attending meetings when we moved to Cedar City and I became pregnant with my third child in 1978. I grew in LLL from there on, adding two more babies [and becoming] a Leader in 1980. In 1985 we moved to American Fork, Utah and I started a new Group there with Lila Steele. I also served as Area Treasurer and Coordinator of Leader Applicants. After a divorce and remarriage, I moved back to Cedar City, but circumstances were such that I had to retire. I still miss LLL... All my best to you with the 50th Celebration.
Beverly Robbins (formerly Vogan)

❖ It is with great pride I inform you that I started an LLL Group in Indiana County, Pennsylvania around 1976. I breastfed my son "on my own" and, although I was successful, felt the need for additional support. I attended an LLL meeting in Kittanning and bonded with mothers there, then expanded into my own Group. Arlene Schweitzer was my co-Leader. I eventually became a District Advisor and started a statewide newsletter called PennsyLLL Points. I moved to DuBois when my daughter was three and worked with an already existing group for another few years. I have to say my years as a Leader were productive and beautiful; now I am the grandmother of two breastfed grandchildren. What more could I ask for?
Linda Bryan

It's Grand!

You may have recently found a copy of GRAND Magazine in your mailbox. This complimentary gift is a one-time mailing to you as part of an exciting advertising trade between La Leche League International and GRAND Magazine. If you find that you enjoy this magazine and would like to receive a free one-year subscription, just go to www.grandmagazine.com/llli to sign up. You can also refer friends and relatives to the site to take advantage of this special offer. I understand that not all of you are currently grandparents; if you find that you do not have a use for your free issue, do consider passing it along. Please note that this is a one-time mailing only; no further issues will be sent to you unless you sign up.

As part of this advertising trade, GRAND will print three full-color, full-

page LLLI ads in their magazine (check your complimentary issue for our ad!). They will also feature an article on breastfeeding, submitted by LLLI, in an upcoming issue. In turn, LLLI will run ads for GRAND in future issues of NEW BEGINNINGS, LEAVEN, and CONTINUUM.

Advertising trades such as this are an important part of achieving LLLI's Strategic Plan through objectives such as "Building LLL awareness among mothers, mothers-to-be and the general public." Reaching this demographic is critical since the information and support mothers receive from parents and/or grandparents can significantly impact breastfeeding relationships.

Select rental of LLLI's membership mailing list to carefully screened organizations and/or businesses also provides LLLI with welcomed revenue

to continue our mission of helping mothers and babies.

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If you have any questions or comments regarding this, or any other advertising matter, please feel free to contact me at dsmithgivens@llli.org or call me at 1-847-285-0191.

Dena Smith Givens
LLLI Advertising Manager

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR! SEE YOU THERE!

LLLI and Alumnae Update

❖ Get well wishes.

Many of you may already have heard that **Betty Wagner Spandikow**, one of the LLLI Founders, is currently recovering from a hemorrhagic stroke that she suffered in mid-January. She was in very serious condition at first, but now the doctors are amazed that she is doing so well. At this point, physical therapy is helping to restore her strength and movement. Betty also has some degree of confusion and memory loss due to Alzheimer's. Her family reports that she enjoys receiving cards and letters. She can be reached at the following address:

Sunrise Assisted Living of Glen Ellyn
Attn: Betty Spandikow, Room 14B
95 Carleton Avenue
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137 USA

❖ Founders awarded.

The Founders of La Leche League received an award from Health for Humanity, an international health related not-for-profit organization based in Wilmette, Illinois, USA. The award was presented to the seven Founders for their demonstration of commitment to the principles of the unity and nobility of humanity and the equality of men and women.

The Founders received this prestigious award on March 31, 2007 at the Opera Gala, an annual black-tie-optional event sponsored by Health for Humanity. Marian Tompson, Edwina Froelich, and Vi Lennon attended the event and accepted the award on behalf of all the Founders. They were joined for the evening by several family members, friends, and LLLI staff.