



GRANDMOTHERS OF CIELO NEWSLETTER

November 1994



from Ruth,
Typist/Mailer

Although plans were to send out a newsletter before Thanksgiving, at that time I had not received any material. Present plans are to assemble and mail one when I receive information to send.

Autobiographies from each Grandmother, individual reviews of the conference, and poems titled: What are Grandmothers for? are some suggested input pieces. Also information about conferences, gatherings and events that you would like the other Grandmothers to know about are particularly welcome.

The swirl in the upper left corner of the masthead was one used, I am told, by the helpers and Grandmothers involved in the organizing of The Grandmother's Council. Any information that might be available as to the meaning of it would be received and gladly published. Any other suggestions as to format, graphics, changes or additions would be greatly appreciated by your Typist/Mailer.

FROM TUCSON

The presentation at St. Francis was warmly received with nine of the Grandmothers present. Subsequently St. Francis single parents have begun an Adopt-A-Grandmother project. St. Francis also plans to form a St. Francis Grandmother Circle after January 1.

Tucson's *Arizona Daily Star* showcased Ruth Gardner and Connie Spittler and their "Celebration of Age" video about crowning.

FROM CIELO

On Sunday, November 20, 1994 a group of women met at Cielo en Tierra to gain information about starting Grandmother circles in their areas. The women ranged in age from 26 to 75. Many of them are residents of Sierra Vista and attend spiritual groups together. Others were drawn to find out more about the grandmother energy. Of the 24 women present the majority have some connection to healing or healing professions or have a commitment to caring for Mother Earth.

Three of the original grandmothers were present to share their wisdom; Mary Diamond, Nancy Masland and Sister Virginia Barta. Virginia led us in a meditation to connect with grandmother spirits from other dimensions. The group decided to stay together as a large group for at least one more session.

The next meeting will be on December 4 with Dan and Lynn Ellis to present some tools for listening skills. Listening and speaking from the heart were common to all members and so it seemed appropriate to all to continue this theme.

Happy
Holidays!

FROM TUBAC

The previously discussed "Coyote Show" will become a reality when Virginia Hall, Allegra Ahlquist, Cora Miller and Ruth Gardner make a presentation December 1, 1994 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. along with any other Grandmothers who choose to be part of it. The place is at Virginia's studio in Tubac. Cora will dance Virginia's Crone paintings. The other Grandmothers will do their "thing" which includes poetry, music and dance.

Virginia's Art Show, After the Blood, is continuing in her studio through December 30th.

CONFERENCE ON AGING

An Associated Press clipping sent in by Fern Cleghorn is too lengthy to reprint her but further information is available at (202)245-7116.

"... adopted a proposed agenda for the May 2-5 meeting in Washington. ... The proposed agenda includes four possible themes and a lengthy list of possible issues including financial security, health, housing, personal safety, community services and quality of life in later years.

"The four proposals for the theme of the conference, ...

- Aging into the 21st Century: Generations Working Together for a Better Community.
- Investing in an Aging Society into the 21st Century; Independence Opportunity and Dignity for All Americans.
- Investing Now in America's Future: A Lifetime of Productivity and Opportunity.
- America Now and into the 21st Century: Growing Older with Independence, Opportunity and Dignity.

The proposed themes and full issues list are being published in the Federal Register and disseminated ...

In addition, the committee seeks



comment and recommendations on a wide list of proposed issues. . . Comments should be sent to Robert B. Blancato, executive director, White House Conference on Aging, 501 School Street SW, Washington, D. C. 20024."

A November 21, 1994 letter, courtesy of Mary Diamond and Lynn Ellis in the name of the Cielo en Tierra, Circle of Grandmothers went to the Executive Director of the White House Conference on Aging. The letter informed him of the Cielo gathering of Grandmothers, our goals and activities.

FROM DRAGOON

Sr. Virginia is forming a Circle with Shirley and Allegra.

"CHANNELED"

by Morgaine Avalon

Many are being born who know and have wisdom already. Masses do not know. These are the children we speak to - the ones who know. They will need the elders for strength and wisdom, for in many ways they're also among the masses. You are all teachers - you are all leaders. Guide them with reverence and bestow upon them the gifts that you have received. And their strength will be tripled - quadrupled.

Other Voices

In my experience, I have found that aging means a new series of experiences.

Old people will be valuable only if they stay involved.

The hardest thing to do is reach out and make a new life — but that's what I intend to do.

Author, Muriel Humphrey

WISDOM FROM RUTH

From the Circle of Grandmothers, September 1997, Volume 4, Number 4:

“WHEN THE GRANDMOTHERS SPEAK, THE WORLD WILL HEAL.”

An E Mail from Ruth Gardner in Tucson

This statement has been a puzzle to me for several years. I was one of six teen old women invited to Cielo in Tierra to sit in counsel. When the grandmothers speak the world will heal was repeated over and over. To my knowledge most of the grandmothers had no more idea than I did just what that meant. Am I responsible for the healing of the world? What should I be doing and how bad am I for not being able to figure it out? Recently, I attended a meeting with many of the original grandmothers present. Listening to them talk, I heard two of them, Cora and Shirley, arrive at the crux of the matter. That the grandmothers must first heal themselves had been also repeated the last several years. I knew old women loved to tell our stories and I knew that by telling our stories we heal. So that is how we heal ourselves. Heal ourselves, that is, with the help of the other grandmothers who listen to us. And I know that we must continue to heal ourselves, share our stories with one another, speaking and speaking out. Now things started getting more clear to me. If we heal ourselves and other grandmothers by listening then don't we heal others, i.e., the world, by listening to them? Maybe we heal others by listening; listening to the sore hearts, the frightened children, the abused and abusers. Listening we don't pass judgment, criticize, just listen and care.



A Tale

By Ruth Gardner in Tucson

Once upon a time in a land called Copioso in a kingdom called Amoroso lived a beneficent ruling woman whose name was Wise one. Now many women were called Wise one and it was a very common name. But this Wise one was anything but common.

She had been born on a poor farm in the kingdom of Grano Bueno where she grew and learned and loved and began to become. After many pages of hard lessons, turmoil, love, blessings and suffering she married a wonderful man. In this marriage as in most, Wise one learned more lessons than she knew existed. The most wonderful happenings during this time were the birth of her children. One son, strong and capable and three daughters, each one more lovely and intelligent than the other. The family grew in knowledge and love and the Wise one was forced to become struggling provider. Eventually the father and the husband in this family took a painful leave and so Wise one was alone with her charges. She shouldered her burdens and put one foot in front of the other, facing those things that had to be faced and loving and being loved. And so she continued.

Time passed and Wise one again fell in love. Again she married and yet again a husband took leave of her. Although many felt sorry for the struggling widow, Wise one never felt sorry for herself. She knew that these were lessons she must learn and these were the ways she had chosen to learn them and so she continued.

And then . . . This unique woman discovered ground that she knew was important. It wasn't important to only her and her family but to many others to come. She named the holdings with love and consideration, a name describing how she felt about this blessed land. And the name became known far and wide and reputation of the land grew. Folks came from far and wide to spend time with the lovely lady and experience mystical happenings in this heavenly domain. Then in a dream one night a beautiful crone came to her and said: "You must gather women, old women, together to help them learn of their duties in life. The kingdom is in a sad state and it is only the old who can save it: old women, not only from this kingdom but from far and wide. They must learn that by listening, loving and speaking they can heal this ravaged earth. It is your assignment to bring this to pass."

Now this hero was herself of considerable age, but she dug in and began the task. Again there were many disappointments and adversities but she continued. After many years of working at her assigned task she looked up one day and said to herself, "It is good. I have many followers who can now carryout the assignment. It is time for me to leave on my new assignment."

Members of her kingdom came from far and wide to say farewell to the woman who changed so many lives for the better. There was no way to say good-bye. And so her friends just sat and loved, and later, at an assigned time, the Wise one continued . . .

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WEAVER'S NOTE: IN THIS TRIBUTE TO RUTH GARDNER, I HAVE INCLUDED HER FIRST NEWSLETTER AS WELL AS A FEW ARTICLES.

From the Circle of Grandmothers September 1999, Vol 6, Num 3 – excerpts Celebrating the Crone: An Interview With Ruth Gardner By Joanne Reichlin
I first met Ruth Gardner at the fifth annual Council of Grandmother's Gathering in Oracle, Arizona in October, 1998. I was struck by her serene presence, her consistent display of the finest expressions of "Cronehood", and her infectious laughter frequently heard in spite of the fact that she was still grieving the loss of her husband. When I heard she had written a book about Crones and Croning I was so excited I asked her if I could interview her for the Circle of Grandmother's News letter. I think it will be a book of keen interest to the Newsletter readers and their friends.....

J.R. Why don't we start with the name of your book, Ruth.

R.G. The title of the book is *Celebrating the Crone*. It is being published by Llewellyn Publications, St Paul, MN.

J.R. How did you come to the decision that this book was needed?

R.G. After my own croning in 1993 so many women kept asking me about what it all meant. I believe that many of them were searching, as I was, for the Sacred Feminine. I certainly didn't and don't know how to tell anyone where to look but it seemed Croning was a good place to start. I asked Connie Spittle if we could do a video about Croning. She agreed and spent long hours researching the subject as, of course, I did. When the video was finished there were a lot more questions. The video audience seemed too limited. By then I knew this was an important message, one that women wanted to hear. And I wanted it to be available to EVERY ONE.

J.R. Why did you feel you were the one to write the book?

R.G. I don't necessarily think I was the one to write it. No one else did it. At Crones Counsel III, I met two women who said they were writing such a book. I was so relieved. I gave them the name of my publisher, the acquisitions director, and then wrote to her suggesting she carefully review the manuscript when it arrived. She later told me it never did arrive. So it seemed if I wanted it done, I had to do it.

J.R. Would you say your book is written for women over the age of 50, or older, or – what about younger?

R.G. The book is written for every woman, regardless of age. Young women in their early years need to know what they have to look forward to and how to make it a part of their lives.

J.R. Will your book assist women in their physical, mental, and emotional aging process?

R.G. I don't know if it will do that, but I sincerely hope so.

J.R. Do you feel your book will bring a sense of validation as a woman to readers who are looking for freshness in the aging process?

R.G. Again, as far as validation goes, I don't know. I would hope it will in some way be helpful and supportive to every woman who reads it.

J.R. Would you say this book is your "final say" on the subject or is there still more on this burgeoning interest among women to write about?

R.G. Final say? Of course not. I know so much more on the subject than I did when I finished it. I would add all kinds of things. Women searching for a way of exploring or finding their Sacred Feminine will continue to have material that needs to be said and read.

J.R. Thank you, Ruth, for writing the book in the first place, but also modeling for us the importance of honoring your inner voice. Some years ago you knew you needed to explore the Sacred Feminine for yourself. And you did it! And now you have shared your experiences in this book....

R.G. Thank you, Joanne. If I can add or explain in any more detail please call me. Those were good questions.



October 1994 at Cielo en Tierra