



from Beacon

While visiting the Southwest, I saw a bumper sticker which read: "Bring back the bison, sing back the swan" I was captivated by the imagery which this evoked that I wanted it to go further and say more. Hence the following, which may be sung to the melody of "On Top of Old Smoky".

Dream back the bison, sing back the swan  
Reforest the planet, let salmon still spawn,  
Drum back the eagle, chant back the hawk  
Clean up earth's waters, now walk we our talk.  
Dance clear the rivers, sing clean the stream  
To earth be a lover, recapture the dream.  
Create we the dreamtime, enter it now  
By means of our High Mind, we need not know how.  
Crystalline landscapes rise far and near  
Beauty surrounds us, gone is our fear.  
All live in the love space, abundance doth reign  
All help out each other, thus gone is our pain.

**Reflections on the Gathering of a Sacred Circle of Grandmothers by Beacon**

My Expectation (Largely Feminine)

That the Grandmothers who gathered at Cielo en Tierra would sit in circle and council together in a deep way. Through this sharing, our ancient wisdom would surface to culminate in a perfect expression from this group at this time.

My Experience (Largely Masculine)

That a specific outcome had been predetermined (the Sunday program) and much planning, energy and facilitation focused on achieving this outcome. Gathering together within these circumstances resulted in a different level of functioning and at the same time also produced the perfect expression from this group at this time.

from Ruth, Typist/Mailer

Lots of input this issue! When you send printed, long articles which many of you did, I use my judgment about how much to include. Since I may disappoint some of you by shortening the message too much, it would be easier if you underline facts that are important to include or write a synopsis for me to type in.

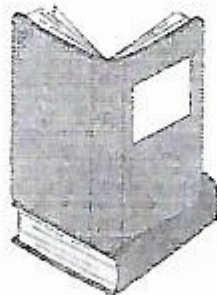
from Beacon in Silver City

A few pertinent lines from Deepak Chopra's book, Ageless Body Timeless Mind.

"Our cells are constantly eavesdropping on our thoughts and being changed by them. . . A remembered stress, which is only a wisp of thought, releases the same flood of destructive hormones as the stress itself.

"Because the mind influences every cell in the body, human aging is fluid and changeable; it can speed up, slow down, stop for a time, and even reverse itself. . . aging is much more dependent on the individual than was ever dreamed of in the past.

"To challenge aging at its core, this entire world view must be challenged first, for nothing holds more power over the body than beliefs of the mind."



# GRANDMOTHERS OF CIELO



### My commentary

I see this gathering as both a powerful expression of how far we've come and also of how far we have yet to go. I also see each of us as a seed of light returning to our communities to share that light with others.



In Silver City, NM, our Women of Wisdom group, (about 12 of us) consisting of women who have journeyed round the sun at least 50 times, has been meeting every Wednesday at 1 p.m. in a public meeting room for over a year and a half. Here we share concerns, joys and triumphs, our sadness, fears and doubts. Using a talking stick, each person receives undivided focused attention while speaking and feedback if desired. Our discussions have covered such things as family concerns (husbands, children, grandchildren), our own journeys, sharing of books, environmental, social, economic concerns, spiritual understandings etc. Many needs, both expressed, and discerned though unexpressed are met; growth and healing occur.

After living 34 years in Charlotte, NC, two years ago I moved to Silver City, NM with a vision of Silver City's becoming a light node in a planetary network much like one dewdrop on a diamond spangled spiderweb. Many wonderful people are being drawn, not knowing why they are moving here.

My sense is that we are all part of a planetary, possibly even galactic, metamorphosis of which we are but dimly aware. I believe that the felt planetary transformation is of such magnitude that our present day "vital institutions" will be unrecognizably transformed, as a caterpillar is, into a butterfly. There are forces at work beyond my comprehension, thus I find myself trusting more and more in things felt but not seen. For me, living in this mode results in feeling free; living by a Euro-American,

industrialized society's world view results in my feeling imprisoned, constricted.

Many of these thoughts have accumulated over the last two months and some of them no longer seem timely. However, I include them as part of my expression.

Beth's proposal is clearly stated and seems quite possible of implementation. However this pattern of organization is not my path and even the time I have spent in an attempt to honor Mary's request for a reply to her letter by a specific date is contrary to my mode of going by "Indian Time" and operating in an open-ended way.

I believe that the task of spreading the grandmothers' message and wisdom can be done only by Grandmothers of Wisdom. I think that this is not something which can be delegated to a non-Grandmother. The true message, the basic essence of being, is received before the first word is spoken. And that basic grandmother essence is embodied within the Grandmothers.



Within our Cielo Grandmothers Circle itself, both levels of trust and levels of control existed interestingly side by side. To the extent that fear and control are an operant dynamic, to that extent the doors to our own deeper wisdom may remain closed. These doors open under the warming rays of trust; trust in the process, trust that all is unfolding in divine order, trust in each Grandmother to share her deepest wisdom, trust that the wisdom is there and will surface, trust that there is time for the wisdom to emerge, trust that our wisdom is rich, wise and juicy, a distilled essence of our lives, held within the context of all other lives.

The snake sheds its skin as fast as it sheds its skin. Can we regain our snakehood, our earth power, shed some of our outgrown belief/habit pattern-skins and trust our processes as we move into unknown deeps and uncertain outcomes?

As we heal ourselves, the earth heals herself; as earth heals, we heal, a reciprocal, integrated dynamic. I hear a call to attend to earth's needs, to work on two levels concurrently. One level is that of small group work; those who gather to do specific focused work on the inner planes; the other is doing concrete work on the level of ordinary reality, to alter external conditions. (Thank you, Janet for your wisdom). This is just a tiny seed beginning to sprout, more later.

Some of the grandmothers discussed briefly a desire for community, a continuation/expansion of the richness we experienced together while at Cielo. After returning to Silver City, I learned of a resource publication called Growing Community: A Newsletter on Creating New Community in Colorado and the West. It is published four times a year, is loaded with pertinent information, costs \$18 for a year of \$32 for two years. Back issues are available. Address: Growing Community, 1118 Round Butte Drive, Ft. Collins, CO 808524.

May we surf through the changes coming in the second half of the 90's decade.

Mitakuye Oyasim All My Relations  
Beacon



from Oregon

Fern Cleghorn writes about a Senior Peer Counseling Program which is a free counseling service for people over 60 coping with problems such as death of a loved one, declining health and loss of independence. The program is funded by state and federal grants and coordinated by mental health professionals.

Clients in the program are matched with a volunteer counselor of about the same



age who provides emotional support in confidential, one-on-one sessions.

And to quote Florence Douglas:

"This Grandmother has operated as an individual and I've not attempted to form any circles, yet in working with others I feel that my crone influence is subtly felt, and I receive lots of credit for being "such an active elder". Soon after returning to Eugene after the stimulating experience of the Grandmother's Circle at Cielo and the following fine visit in Houston with my son and family, I became involved in working on the problem of homelessness, or the "Houseless situation", which is a bit more accurate title. This I see as one of the basic tragic imbalances of our current American society, one of the most glaring evidences of the growing gap between the "haves" and the less fortunate. Two groups offer me the opportunity to help work on this problem: the League of Women Voters, and the Homeless Action Coalition. The latter is a local organization, unique nationally in that its membership is comprised of people who are currently, or have been, homeless, and those who, like me, are trying to help find solutions.

"One of the small ways in which I have been helpful in HAC (Homeless action Coalition) has been to make a handsome, if amateurish, red felt banner, 5 feet by 3, to be carried in parades, of which there are many in Eugene. I've attended neighborhood meetings to speak out, as a "solid citizen", avocation the civil rights of the homeless, which are being violated in many ways; and it has been possible for me to arrange for representatives of HAC to speak to small groups, presenting the problem as one of urgency. In the LWV, I am on a committee that has just completed a two-year study on homelessness and is now ready to move into action as a group of organized and determined women is able to do.

"This Grandmother is also an officer in the local chapter of the United Nations Association, for which I was happily able to persuade a dynamic, spirited woman to serve as president, and to recommend that she be appointed to the state board, from which I have just retired. These are not examples of how productive I see myself, but only as a small way in which I've been

encouraged to regard myself as useful after the inspiration of the Grandmothers' Circle.

"My greetings to all the wonderful women of our Circle, and the hope that we will keep in touch."



*from Totnes*

A letter from Detta Lange shares ". . . Spring issue of Caduceus Magazine is on Aging and Sageing . . . for which I wrote an article." Also, "This autumn I plan to hold a workshop in London: Education toward Elderhood. I have not decided on the time because I want to be in Arizona for Mary's gathering, at October full moon."

Detta also enclosed a flyer describing a Program of Personal Development that she and Carlos, "a drum-dancer and student of the medicine wheel" will conduct this month,

*from Tucson*

Ruth Gardner and Connie Spittler's crone video, "Celebration of Age" is gathering elder women together in several areas. It is being shown in community centers, libraries, and churches in the Tucson area. Projected showings are with support groups, cancer patients and homeless women. It will also be used in a program called "Passages" in Washington, D. C. A program called, "Birthing the Crone" will display it at California State University, San Marcos. This has all happened prior to any formalized marketing program. It is being passed along from woman to woman. An, as yet unknown number of crones, are struggling to create several different geographic small Conversation Groups in Tucson.

Connie applied for a grant from Tucson

Cable Corporation to help with completing the video footage taken at the Grandmother's Council. She recently received word that her application was denied.

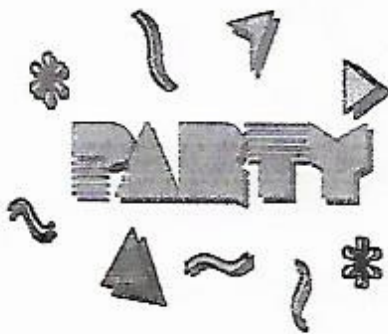
She would be interested in any other suggestions for grant sources available to fund finishing the documentary. Call with any ideas. (602) 888-4292.

Nancy Masland reports that grandparents are meeting at St. Francis of the Foothills for the purpose of mentoring children. Recently, a St. Francis in the Foothills ritual group offered a ritual honoring the spirit of the Crone.

Tommie Thomas has been undergoing a number of health reversals since the Council and might enjoy hearing from other Grandmothers. Be well, Tommie!

*from Dragoon*

Shirley Tassencourt and her domed, dirt homes were the subject of an article in the Tucson Citizen in November and another long piece on Channel 4 in Tucson.



Shirley writes, "I would like to invite the Grandmothers of Cielo to "Come On Out" to Whirling Yellow Sprout, the land of the sacred medicine circle on March 1st. It is a 15 acre happening on the land with rock constellations straddling the cardinal directions.

"Cora Miller will be dancing on the rocks with a friend or friends and anyone who wants to join them may do so. We'll have open house and you all bring picnic food to share. There will be dome inspections, drumming the sun down, and grandmother fun and games (to be proposed by the Grandmothers)."