

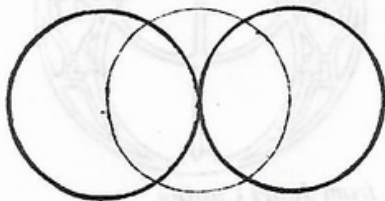




become larger than ourselves and we add to the stream of subtle energies which nourish the earth.

I was remembering our arts group in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts headed by Shirley Tassencourt and participated in by Nancy Masland. We decided on a Solstice workshop at Christmas time in Tucson. We had a few housing problems and were rescued by Nancy's friend Mary Diamond whom we quickly appreciated and loved. Mary moved down to establish Cielo Tierra which became another focal point (energy). Now we gather and expand. A pleasure for me to connect Detta with my global group of wise women and their spirit mother Elinore Detiger. Detta, in turn, carries the message to this group and they invite Mary Diamond to their annual gathering. I get frantic phone calls and faxes from Elinore--I'm out of the loop at this point, but eventually Elinore connects and rescues Mary. Viola! Our Cielo group goes international and the "Wise Women" are richer and wiser. Part of our group here in NY are doing similar junkets to Bosnia, where Christian and Moslem women are together. They are supported by two ladies in England who run supplies and rescue children. Jeanne Parr is making a film of these connections.

These circles . . . overlapping . . . connecting . . . weaving in patterns . . . weaving space for friendship and peace.



from *Connie Spittler*

### GRANDMOTHERS SPEAK: HEALING THE EARTH VIDEO HELP! HELP!

Because I need creative input and help in marketing the Video, I have decided to let the Grandmothers know the financial commitment I have made so far to this worthwhile project. The last bill I received from the professional post production house for finishing the video was \$2,405. Unfortunately the community cable facility could not meet the proper criteria of finishing the tape.

I am not asking for money. I am hoping the Grandmothers will join me in spreading the word about the video. It is a beautiful video, because the Grandmothers are beautiful. Their message is important and inspirational . . . and should be shared with others.

I can provide flyers like the one included and brochures to anyone who will take them to meetings or distribute them to others; or contact me with any ideas on marketing the tape. I don't have funds left to place ads in magazines or do any high powered advertising campaign. But I really need your advice and help in getting the video out into the world. Just know the product of the Grandmother's wisdom is worth spreading to other people . . . your library, school, nursing home, friends and family. The price of the video is \$29.95 plus \$4 Shipping & Handling. And there is the offer for each of the original Grandmothers to purchase one copy for \$20 plus \$4 S&H. Connie Spittler, ConText Productions, 5405 N. Estelle Drive,

Tucson, AZ 85718, Telephone 520 888-4292 or FAX 520 888-4291.

from *redmoonsong*

*redmoonsong* writes describing her latest walk and project

"I've been taking it easy, healing from the accident and all that entails."

### WALKING TO SPEAK WITH THE GRANDMOTHERS AND OLD WOMEN OF WISDOM

This walk around the only tropical area of the continental U. S. is to focus on the role of Grandmothers/Elders in tribal societies and to redefine those roles today. Our beauty, energy, and intelligence has been described by others for too long, both politically and personally. With the "coming of age" of millions of "boomers," we are seeing a massive redefining by women themselves of who we are and what we want. Join us! Call (305) 293-815 for details.



At Shirley Tassencourt's near Dragoon.

from *Ruth, Typist/Mailer*

The logo on the masthead is by Virginia Hall of Tubac, AZ. The triangle represents the triune of Maiden, Mother, Crone reminding us that is from whence we come. Triangles represent the female principal, particularly when depicted with the point down. Circles are also one of the primary feminine signs. They represent protected, consecrated space in matriarchal civilizations. A circle, which is without beginning or end, embodies the capacity and function of the feminine to move through cycles.

This production is typed & mailed by Ruth Gardner but the contents are from you, the readers. Send me whatever you think will be of interest to the other Grandmothers; particularly about who you are, your activities and your insights.

Send inquiries regarding subscriptions and content for the newsletter to Ruth Gardner, 1238 S. Seejay Place, Tucson, AZ 85713 or telephone me at: 520 882-0282.



# DESERT CRONES

## WHAT IS A CRONE?

*Segments taken from article by  
Dana Cummings in Crones of  
Puget Sound Publication*

The title, "Crone" hasn't always been derogatory. In pre-Christian times, very old women were particularly important members of communities. They were leaders, artists, healers, midwives, counselors. They were seen as the fulfillment of female life experience and wisdom. From the unrestrained youthfulness of the maiden, through the life-sustaining importance of the mother to the calm, evolved and confident wisdom and compassion of the old woman lie in a lifetime of commitment to caring and listening and connecting. Without these fierce and ancient commitments, human life could literally not have continued.

Those who choose the name of Crone do so deliberately, with full awareness of its current negative connotations. It is chosen to confront the issues facing aging women and to raise important questions about attitudes and feelings toward those issues. So, by bringing the term "Crone" and these concepts out of the shadows and into the light, the values can be revealed, strengths acknowledged, learning come from the insights, and experience honored.

Old Women are discovering the strength that comes with knowing who they are. They are freeing themselves from having to be something for someone else; freeing themselves to see one another just the way they are, not through the filter of other's expectations. They are sharing feelings, fears, and insights, accepting each other's changes and encouraging each other's growth. In addition to these changes they are accepting that

"old" is not a four-letter word. That "old" is not a statement of a decline but one of time.

Old is not good or bad, it is just a measurement without judgment. Crones are learning to grow and grow old together. By using the name of Crone and accepting their ages they are restoring the image of strong wise Old Women to its rightful place of honor and respect.

## WHAT IS "DESERT CRONES"?

by Ruth Gardner

Desert Crones is a very loosely organized group of women over 50 years of age who meet every month. There is no stated purpose except support of one another, although generally the Crones attending focus on a previously suggested topic or theme.

The only rules are general courtesy rules: Support and consideration for one another; respect of sharing by keeping conversations private; responsibility for oneself, which may mean to speak out when dissatisfied or uncomfortable with what is happening or what is being presented.

The gatherings seem to have developed into an excellent place to ask for help, advice (of which little is given, hopefully), share information about enjoyable or helpful books and other resources, take part in eye-opening exchanges of views and experiences and in general support one another. There is a discussion topic each month which will be published in this newsletter.

At present Desert Crones has no officers, and no constitution, by-laws or formal meeting structures. Various women take over functions that they see need to be managed. When one person who generally takes responsibility for a certain function is missing, someone else volunteers and so we progress.

### BLANK VERSE

By Lynn Guymon

I put the cranberries through the old grinder;  
Their color and tang are the same seen and tasted  
By my Puritan forefathers.

But the concoction of sugar and oranges and berries  
Comes out soupy. It never did before.

Did I use the coarse or the medium blade last year?

In an old cookbook with extra blank pages

I write down the recipe from the berry bag.

I print "COARSE BLADE" in capital letters.

But next year will I remember that a blank page was

Where I wrote the recipe? Will I remember where

I put the book--or will my memory be blank?

## JANUARY DESERT CRONES

Saturday, January 13, the Crones met with the subject matter being: "What I will be doing after death. . . ." Because of the large number attending the group broke up into smaller groups and some of the conclusions and discussions were as follows:

"Our group believes that energy is eternal, and that it changes form but persists. We visualize peace and calm at the end of a lifetime, some of us believed we come back in some form or another. We also believe in a soul pool we return to. And in the concept of oneness."

"No fear of death - Busy living in present - After death, living in a new dimension"

"Our group no longer believed in heaven or hell. Consensus seemed to be that of the continuation of energy, of rebirth, reincarnation,



recycling. Some of us expressed an active interest in the afterlife, looking forward to it as a great adventure; exciting, a time when questions about the mysteries of life would be answered and life could be seen from a distance with perspective.

"We decided our present actions effect our future. We may come back again, learn more etc."

"Reincarnation, karma, children have close connection to former lives." . . . "Like to believe in reincarnation, have been Catholic, Atheist, Agnostic Deist."

"Learning, studying in spirit world..

. . . Believe in reincarnation. Learned from children." . . . "Close to death, been through tunnel, not afraid of death." . . . "Has fleeting moments of being one with the Universe, Must continue learning in the spiritual world."



**February 10, 1996** at 1:00 PM the Crones will meet at Tucson Main Library in the Children's Meeting Room. any questions call: Grace Eggert 624-8477. The discussion topic will be: What I learned about

love, affection and touching while growing up . . . .

*Newsletter*

As the typeist\mailer of this informal page, it will please me greatly to turn these duties over to Hannah Blue Heron. She has volunteered to continue this means of communication so the Desert Crones will have their very own newsletter. Hannah and I will make a presentation at the February meeting regarding this matter.

*Futher considerations:*

It is possible because of the rapid growth in Crones attending the gatherings that all of us will want to consider changes in some of this lack of structure.

Since there are no officers or board and with the increase in numbers of possible attendees, the Founding Desert Crones: Ruth Gardner, Connie Spittler, Grace Eggert, and Lois Lockhart suggest that we function as a coordinating committee along with Hannah Blue Heron upcoming newsletter editor. Our purpose would be to present to the group options and choices of organization, as well as assisting in fulfilling the wishes of the majority. We can share with you the ways other crone groups function, ie: - geographically, interest-oriented. For example Lois Lockhart's Desert Drummers and ways other groups deal with increasing numbers of interested Crones. Please know that our wish is to help create a unique circle of old women, supporting and networking with one another in wonderful ways.

March 9, 1996 gathering is canceled because of the following scheduled function on March 17, 1996.

Edna Ward a nationally known Crone and organizer of Crones will attend and answer questions about her experience in croning. She was a professor of psychology at Emerson College and a member of

the Feminist Spiritual Community of Portland, Maine.

Planners of the day with have suggested the following:

**RETREAT - MARCH 17, 1996**  
10:30 AM to 4:00 PM

- At Walker Elementary School, 1750 Roller Coaster Drive. (Near La Cholla at River) Park in front of the school. We will assemble in the teacher's lounge. Coffee and tea will be served.
- Bring your own bag lunch
- Please pre-register by calling Marlene Thompson at 888-2692.

April 13, 1996 at 1:00 PM the Crones will meet but the meeting place has yet to be secured. Jana Stewart and gael Mustapha will present a Dream Collage workshop. They will furnish all materials.

*from Connie Spittler*

Because our monthly meeting time together is so short, I would like to suggest some ways that various political/social agendas any of us might have can be included. These are ways to enlist the help and/or interest of other Crones in order to work together on issues. . . but without absorbing the time available for our monthly theme discussions. Bring a petition about your special item of interest and make it available on a side table for signatures of interested parties. Bring flyers or other handouts on your topic of action with suggestions of how Crones can be involved. Be available to meet afterward with those Crones who are interested in your topic. I see a real advantage to using Crone-power to change things. But only for those who want to embrace each particular issue. Hope this helps.

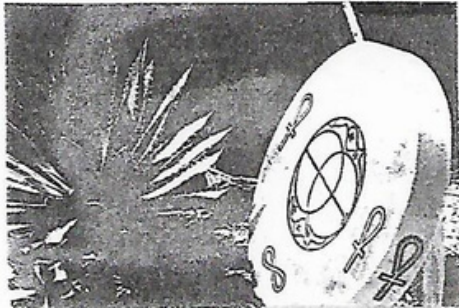


## DESERT DRUMMERS

The Desert Drummers invite all women who would like to drum and share experiences to meet at Ramada 39 in Kennedy Park on Sunday, February 18, at 9:00 AM. In addition to, or instead of a drum, bring any instrument, or your voice, or share a dance. Directions to Kennedy Park: west on Ajo Way to La Cholla Blvd., north to the 2nd entrance, and west to Ramada 39, on the left. From Starr Pass Blvd, (W 22nd St) south on LaCholla to first right entrance after 44th St.

Future dates for drummers are: February 18, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 16, and July 21, 1996.

Drumming will begin at 9 AM, but as the weather warms, we will begin an hour earlier. If it gets very warm, at 7 AM. Please pass the word to friends who might wish to join in drumming.



## SISTERSPIRIT RISING

SisterSpirit Rising is a network of women who create and celebrate ritual together on a regular basis. For information about subscriptions, contact Janet Bardwell at 795-4899. **Women's Ritual** meets the first Friday of each month at 7:30 at the Benedictine Monastery. Dawn Annette or Leonora at 325-6401. **Gathering for Rituals of Women** meets the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 at the Calvin Hall at St. Mark's Presbyterian

Church. Donna at 624-7381.  
**Tucson Wild Woman Drum Circle** call Jamie at 884-9384.

*from Norma Triplett*  
by Dawna Markova

I will not die an un-lived life.  
I will not live in fear  
Of falling or catching fire.  
I choose to inhabit my days,  
To allow my living to open me,  
To make me less afraid,  
More accessible,  
To loosen my heart  
Until it becomes a wing,  
A torch, a promise.

I choose to risk my significance;  
To live  
So that which came to me as seed  
Goes to the next as blossom  
and that which came  
To me as blossom,  
Goes on as fruit.

*from Malka Golden-Wolfe*

The new videotape "Celebrating Our Lives", featuring crone stories and highlights from Crone Counsel III, is now available from the International Council of Crones and Grandmothers, a Sedona Children's & Elder's Project. The video showcases the best of the exciting conference that was attended by over 300 women who call themselves "Crone". The women attended workshops, sang and drummed, laughed and cried together. Noted author/artist/ Kate Millett spoke to the group as did Navajo messenger/jeweler/ Rain Parrish. Theatrical events included the Berkeley Crone Circle, Peg Edmister & Company, and visual performance artist Mary Saint-Marie.

The Counsel was coordinated by Malka Golden-Wolfe, International lecturer, artist/author, healer/therapist, and Executive Director of the Sedona Children's & Elder's Project.

For a videotape of this extraordinary event, make check

payable for \$39.00 to Sedona Children's and Elder's Project and send to Sedona Children's & Elder's Project, 135 Kachina Drive, Sedona, AZ 86336. Shipping and handling is included.

## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CRONES AND GRANDMOTHERS

The International Council of Crones and Grandmothers is an organization that combines the energy of old women who call themselves Crones and those who call themselves Grandmothers. (A woman does not have to be a biological Grandmother to call herself Grandmother.)

This group was formed to network women in the aging process. We support each other as we claim our wise women selves knowing we are the role models for the younger generation of women. Through our gatherings and councils, we dream a new dream for civilization; one based on peace, respect and honoring of the Earth mother, older women and society at large. Using the spirit, the power and the wisdom of ourselves as wise women we guide and help transform the present reality of the world. Join your sisters as we dream a new dream for women. We are on the move; by joining the ICOCAG you help awaken the dream for a better tomorrow.

Your membership entitles you to notification of, and discounts at our events, a newsletter 4 times a year that networks internationally, and the knowledge that you are supporting yourself as a wise woman. Send your name, address, phone number and \$35.00 to International Council of Crones and Grandmothers (It is a Sedona Children's and Elder's project.) to Malka Golden-Wolfe, 135 Kachina Drive, Sedona, AZ 86336. Make check for \$35.00 to Sedona Children's and Elder's Project, a tax exempt organization (501-C3).

Ruth Gardner  
1238 S. Seejay Place  
Tucson, AZ 85713

**DANCE CLASS**

Cora Miller will teach a series of nine creative dance classes in the beautiful studio of the Tucson Creative Dance Center at 3131 North Cherry, (southwest corner of Ft. Lowed and Cherry). The class is scheduled on Wednesdays from 10:00 to 11:30 AM and although it begins January 24th and lasts until March 20th please call Cora for details at 881-2787 and for information for late starters. The enrollment fee is \$60.00.