

# CIRCLE OF GRANDMOTHERS

Volume 3 Number 3

June 1996



*from Mary Diamond*  
**THIRTEEN  
GRANDMOTHERS/CLAN  
MOTHERS**

The Council of Grandmothers began as a vision of Mary Diamond in 1993. Seventeen Grandmothers, keepers of wisdom, gathered at her retreat center, Cielo en Tierra, in 1994 to speak their truth and set out to make a difference in the world. The following year the group had quadrupled in size and 70 women gathered at Biosphere II in Oracle, AZ for a remarkable 4 days of ceremony, net-working and sharing. At that time, a woman who had traveled from Louisiana, Mary McClellan, spoke of a vision she had to connect and travel with thirteen grandmothers around the U. S. to speak and inspire other women of wisdom to form circles in their communities. It was decided to meet during the Spring Equinox of 1996 in Sedona with any women who could commit to traveling together at least once for a specific length of time. Women ranging from 43 to 77 joined in the giant tipi at Paradise Ranch, the beautiful retreat center and home of Malka Golden-Wolfe. Sacred space was created and the Equinox observed with meditation, a shamanic drumming, led by Penobscot Grandmother Eunice Baumann Nelson and a traditional sweat

lodge ceremony followed by a turkey and trimmings feast.

Two days were spent in council circles with all 20 women participating, some of which was captured on video film. The focus became, first, how to find the expenses for the Grandmothers and what the purpose would be reaching out to other communities.

Author Lynne Namka of Tucson had offered, at the '95 gathering to compile articles, art and stories by Grandmothers, then find a publisher for a book that would be sold as a fund-raiser. She presented the first draft of the edited book in Sedona and sent forth three copies to be proof read. Lynne is still needing contributions of poetry, photography, art and stories. Please contact her at: Lynne Namka, 6812 N. Oracle road, Tucson Arizona 85704. Telephone (520) 797-0102.

A new woman in our circle from Louisiana, Maya Levy, offered to help apply for grants specifically for women's projects, including the Thanks Be to Grandmother Winifred Foundation. She will be spending part of the summer at Cielo en Tierra's straw bale house writing her long awaited book on sacred theater.

The last task of the group was to choose a name for the thirteen Grandmothers. Many themes were considered and finally the "Clan Mothers" felt good with respect paid to Grandmother Twylah Nitsch, the Seneca Clan mother who inspired Jamie Sams to write her book: *The Thirteen Original Clan Mothers*. Malka Golden-Wolfe led a naming ceremony to proclaim that we are Clan Mothers by receiving an Aapche-tear stone and accepting our role. Looking forward to seeing you at the 1996 gathering of the Council of Grandmothers.





## 1996 COUNCIL OF GRANDMOTHERS

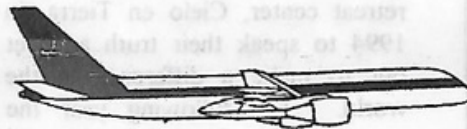
We invite you to join us for the Third annual Gathering of the Council of Grandmothers October 24-28 in Oracle, Arizona. According to the vision given to Grandmother Mary Diamond in 1993, all gatherings of Council for mending the sacred hoop of life will be held under the Full Moon in October.

This limited attendance gathering of Wise Grandmothers, not necessarily biological, have all made the passage of at least 50 winters. We are all incredibly creative women from many diverse cultures. Our talents can contribute to fulfilling the Native American prophecy that *"When the Grandmothers Speak, the Earth will heal."* We believe that bringing councils of women elders back into tradition, will encourage and inspire Grandmothers and the next seven generations to protect Mother Earth and all her children. Sigrid Settle and Vivien Mayer are co-coordinating the 1996 activities. Mary Diamond, assisted by Willow Elliott, will again attend and oversee this event.

The first available spaces will be reserved for those over 50 and any helpers they need to bring. We will keep a waiting list for women under 50. Coming together this year, we'll be at the TRIANGLE

"Y" CAMP in Oracle, located one hour from central Tucson and 2 1/2 hours from central Phoenix. Our 5 day, 4 night accommodations include unheated rustic cabins with community showers and toilets, space for teepees, tents, and R. V.'s (though no hook-ups) and all healthful meals from Thursday dinner through Monday breakfast. No open fires are allowed and linens and towels required. More information will follow upon receipt of your reservation and payment.

This Third Annual Gathering of the Grandmothers needs much help and we will welcome, with bountiful blessings to you, any and all given, whether in time, energy, scholarship, prayers, or spirit. Many worthy Grandmothers will not be able to attend without your financial aid, and our many tasks need many hands. A few hours of Volunteer Service will be appreciated.



### RETREAT WITH AMMA "HOLY MOTHER", IN SANTA FE

What does India have to do with Grandmothers in Arizona? Apparently Grandmother Mary Diamond needed to find out and so she hopped a plane and made a solo trip to Southern India. This was after she observed what a life changing experience it was for a dear friend just to meet and be in the presence of a certain woman, Amma Mata Amritanandamayi who

has built a beautiful temple in the state of Kevala and established an ashram there, where she attracts thousands of people who come to sit at her feet and experience her healing unconditional love at Darshan. Mary spent three weeks on her ashram and learned to love her very much. Mary will be attending a 4 day retreat in Santa Fe with Amma from June 26-28 . . . a stop on Amma's annual world tour, and will share her experience when she returns. For information on this and other events contact the MA. Center, P. O. Box 613, San Ramon, CA 94583. Telephone (415) 537-9417 or Fax 510 882-8585.

### MORE NEWS FROM MARY

Expanding globally from our circle, we are announcing a pilgrimage of women to the sacred sites of Scotland and England from September 15-30, 1996. Datta Lange, a grandmother in Devon, England has attended our previous two gatherings and will lead the group. This fascinating trip will experience the powerful sites of ancient ceremonies where women feel connected to the ancestors. For information on location and cost, contact: Datta Lange, 5A South Street, Totness, Devon, TQ9 5DZ, England

The First Council of Grandmothers of India for 1996 is also in the works and information will be provided upon request.

The International Council of Crones and Grandmothers is hosting *HEALING OURSELVES - HEALING THE PLANET*, scheduled for December 6-10,

from Ruth, Typist/Mailer

The logo on the masthead is by Virginia Hall of Tucson, AZ. The triangle represents the trine 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.



1996 in Sedona, Arizona. Contact ICGG, 135 Kachina Drive, Sedona Arizona 86336. Telephone (520) 282-9769

*from Crone Chronicles, Summer Solstice 1996, article by Karen Sands*

Marion Woodsman, now age 63, is a woman of great knowing and passionately committed to "recognizing the soul in each of us." . . . Woodman looks at aging as a process which elevates the shadow, that which we have not as yet lived. . . . "Emergence of the Conscious Feminine in women is what it means to be living the crone. If a woman is going to blossom into the fullness of her personality and if she is going to live her passions through to her death, she must allow this energy to birth forth." . . . "As a collective of women we are at another turn of the spiral." . . . "I think that the person who goes inside trying to find soul is going to connect with the Goddess. The Goddess in me connects with the Goddess in you, connects with the Goddess in the tulip, with Goddess in our husbands and sons. . . The feminine is matter. The soul that which permeates matter. Thus the wisdom is coming from inside. It is a deep feeling, knowing, being. I don't have to justify my existence. I am, that I am. . . in here."



**from redmoonsong  
RE: SUMMIT TO CLOSE  
NEVADA TEST SITE (Nuclear  
Weapons)**

. . . The summit was good - bringing together a lot of different folks from the U. S., Japan, Native reservations, Europe and the

Philippines. What I'm seeing is the turn around time between radical action and mainstream movement is getting shorter and shorter as things speed up. . . "Grandmother Moon shine down on me, Your child I will always Be, Grandmother Moon, shine down on me, until we are free". There were sweat lodges, nonviolence workshops, testimony by the survivors of Hiroshima - I cried a lot. I occasionally realize what a different world this is and wish a lot of you were here to be amazed as I am by these connections. This is the kind of continuity which Starhawk reveals in her writings - from sunrise ceremony in intentional community to nonviolence training to the cattle guard which demarcates the Nevada Test site - faith in action. I love the vast silence which lives here!! Corbin Harney, a western Shoshone medicine man . . . tells us that all beings - the plants, the rocks, the waters - are happy when we pray, when we acknowledge their worth and presence in our lives. I'm beginning to see "prayer" more as acknowledgment in a grateful way. And I do feel grateful a lot but rarely "voice" it.

**BLESSED CHILD**

I shall be coming back to you from seas, rivers, sunny meadows, glens that hold secrets:  
I shall come back with my hands full of light and flowers.

Brooks braided in with sunbeams will hang from my fingers.  
My heart will be awake...  
All my thoughts and joys will go to you.

I shall bring back things I have picked up traveling this road or the other.  
Things found by the sea or in the pine-wood.  
There will be a pine-wood.  
There will be a pine-cone in my pocket

Grains of pink sand between my fingers.

I shall tell you of a golden pheasant's feather:  
I shall tell you of stars like seaweed.  
Moons will glitter in y hair...  
Will you know me?

I shall come back when the sunset has turned away and gone,  
and you will untangle the moons and make me drowse and put me to sleep.  
Hilda, 10 years old.

*from Connie and Malka*  
**CRONE COUNSEL III VIDEO  
AVAILABLE**

The new documentary "Crone Counsel III, Celebrating Our Lives", is now available from Connie Spittler or Malka Golden-Wolfe. The video is 80 minutes long and captures the spirit and stories of women who attended the conference in Scottsdale, AZ.



A video sometimes happy . . . sometimes, sad, but always inspirational and uplifting as 300 women joined together to share their lives and connect in special ways. Entertainment, included the Berkeley Crone Circle, dancer and performer Mary St. Marie from Mt. Shasta, CA, the La Loba Troop from Silver City, NM, author Kate Millett, and Navajo messenger Rain Parrish. Artists, workshops, drumming and croning all wove the women together into a beautiful, entertaining tapestry. Stars you may recognize in the tape are Cora Miller, gael Mustapha, Lois Lockhart, Jana Stewart, and Ruth Gardner. The video costs \$35 plus shipping and handling from Connie Spittler, 5405 N.Estelle Drive.



After July, Connie's address is 5525 N. Via Entrada, Tucson, AZ 85718. Telephone 520 299-2404. The video can also be ordered from Malka at The Sedona Children's and Elder's Project, 135 Kachina Drive, Sedona, AZ 86636.



from Ruth

As I mentioned in the last issue, it is approaching two years of my typing and mailing this epistle. I asked for another Grandmother to volunteer to take it over and of course, one responded. Kit Wilson of Phoenix will be your typist/mailer after the August issue.

Gardner  
1238 S. Seejay  
85713-1155

The October 1996 issue will commence the third year since that first gathering at Cielo en Tierra, and the subsequent publishing of this newsletter.

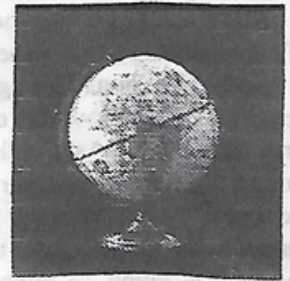
I'll remind you again but new money will be due in order for you to receive that copy. Kit tells me she figures \$10.00 will be enough for her to continue mailing it to each of you. For your information, *The Circle of Grandmothers* publication has come out approximately every other month for a total of six editions a year which will be twelve by the time I turn it over to Kit.

I still would appreciate stories, any kind of articles or input for the August issues. As far as I know, none of the Grandmothers who were new subscribers in 1995 have sent anything to be published. Please do so. Your articles etc. are as important or perhaps more important than any from the original sixteen. And it would break my heart to have only a blank page to

send out my last issue. Thank you very much, in advance.

from Ruth and Connie

Ruth Gardner and Connie Spittler have been asked to teach a course centered around "The Crone" at the University of Arizona Extended University. They have planned the class to last six weeks, two hours a week. They look forward to having a Croning ceremony during the final session. The Crone (and Grandmother) movement is spreading!



Kit Wilson  
3907 E Campbell  
Phoenix, AZ 85018

