



CRONES COUNSEL
Celebrating Wise Women

CRONE times

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THE CRONE'S WISDOM

A Shift in Seeing: A Renaissance Period

By Wendy A. Mendenhall

"I've lived on the edge for so long, it's now become the beach-front property."



While driving along the Pacific Coast Highway, I was struck by the wonderful homes that sit on the points overseeing "the views." My thoughts were, "Were they lucky enough to inherit the property or did they 'see,' before most, that this was a place to build. Did they 'see' a view most missed or were afraid to claim? Was there always a view to take in and was it just waiting to be seen?"

There is always something that moves us to the edge before we see its beauty and the vantage point it allows: the economy, divorce, death of a loved one, loss of job, retirement, lack of resources . . . Many won't look out over the edge, because they can't see anything except endlessness, Infinity. Many are moved to the edge today and are not comfortable living there. Feeling moved to the edge by circumstances of the times and what seems beyond their control, they are looking for ways to move back to the inlands where things seemed more comfortable and secure.

There are those who are thought to be crazy to build at the edge of the cliff. They take the chance anyway and enjoy the view, while the majority only imagine or dream about how it would be to live there. Those who have the courage to recognize the view the edge presents are called dreamers, entrepre-

neurs, explorers, artists.

What can we do with the Infinity that we look upon? It is the blank canvas an artist works with. It's the horizon the explorer moves toward, the dream an entrepreneur holds in her/his heart, and the thought a creator knows because it was thought. It's time for a Renaissance: A period where all who are on the edge, whatever moved us there, will choose to turn and take in the view. A time to oversee the expanse, Infinity, and, thank God, Light, Source. We have been given a clean slate with which to create.

All I can say is, "Welcome neighbor, to what may seem to have been the most expensive property in the world. Welcome to the beach-front property, on the edge of freedom. Now that you're here, what are we going to build?"

BOOK REVIEW

The Power of the Crone **Myths and Stories of the Wise Woman Archetype**

By Clarissa Pinkola Estés, from *Sounds True*

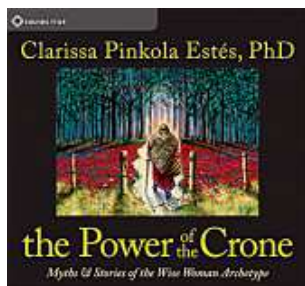
"Dear brave souls, I warmly invite you to come be at the fireside with me and the Dangerous Old Woman and the Power of the Crone. Who is the crone? She is the most dangerous, the most radical, the most revolutionary woman in existence. Whether in fairy tales or in consensual reality, the old one goes where she wants to and she acts as she wishes; she lives as she chooses. And this is all as it should be. And no one can stop her. Nor ought they try."

— Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Ph.D.

Entering the terrain of wisdom occurs at any age. We sometimes step, sometimes stumble, and other times we

THE POWER OF THE CRONE, continued on Page 2

THE POWER OF THE CRONE, continued from Page 1



are pulled into the territory of the Crone when the need for a deeper, larger understanding of our most meaningful path can no longer be denied—when the gifts hidden in our challenges must be brought forth. In *The Power of the*

Crone, we join Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés for six sessions of original stories, poems, blessings, and healing insights for the creative soul. The ways of the crone have been set down in stories, stories that our hearts and souls long to hear in order that we might fully flower in our own way.

Says Dr. Estés: “If you weep, the crone will move closer to you. Laugh, and she wants to hear the joke. Dance, and she wants to dance with you and in you ... More so, she has help for the hurt heart and for the one poisoned by bitterness, and she can pull the thorn from the breast; she can tattoo your scars with flowering boughs. This is the crone.” Join us at the fireside at this pivotal time in history when we are each invited “to fulfill the callings of the souls on this earth with verve, with style, with critical insights, with wisdom, and with love.”

Session One: *La Grandote* (The Giantess):

Called to a Wise and Wild Dance Like No Other
A Q&A session follows Dr. Estés’ teachings,

Session Two: *La Calavera’s el Rondo*:

Crone Speaks about the Night Between Two Days

Session Three: *Las Cacareas* (The Old Cacklers):

The Ribald Humor of Old Women

Session Four: *La Arbolaria* (The Spellbreaker):

Living the Inner Life on the Outer Edges

Session Five: *La Sobradiente* (Old Snag):

The Heart Broken Remains Open

Session Six: *La Misteria* (The Seer):

Pruning the Deadwood, Retrieving the Treasure

A Call for Workshop Leaders

Would you like to share your expertise with us in Portland? Our theme is “IMAGES,” so perhaps you can imagine your workshop into our gathering.

The number of workshops will be limited, due to the free time we have allowed for visiting the Portland Saturday Market. Get your application in soon. Write Annie Lehto at cronenancy@wispertel.net for an application, or by snail mail: Annie Lehto, 7220 Andrea Lane, Morrison, CO 80465.

Update on Jackie Gentry

by Sally Phillips

Background Story

Jackie has been a member of *Crones Counsel* since 1996. She has been the president of the board, and for many years directed hilarious singing at *Crone Follies*.

Jackie was involved in a terrible car accident March 3, 2009, as she was returning home after her voice lesson in the afternoon. I doubt that we will ever know what happened in that left-front impact with a pickup truck, but EMT response, removal from car, and flight to medical treatment was relatively quick. Jackie suffered severe, diffuse brain trauma and fractured bones in each her four extremities. She has been receiving excellent care.

Summer greetings!

I hope you like the picture of Jackie with her new haircut. I finally gave up on the hairdresser at Apex, and our wonderful Glendale neighbor, Sandi, cut Jackie’s hair during a visit home on June 3. In the photo album I added a very early picture of the haircut process, as well as a snapshot of the new walkway and retaining wall that I built (for the out-of-town folks who won’t get a chance to see it on July 4!).



Jackie’s visit home on June 3 was a banner day for her, as far as I am concerned. She talked about ten times (or more) that day! ... stating the names of flowers, reading “See Rock City” on the birdhouse, stating, “Don’t worry about that for now,” and “Yes, I think Jenny would really like that.” She didn’t talk much to me the next week, but I found that she had talked to some of the staff. This week she continued to talk three or four times each day, pleasantly surprising everyone. Jackie told Faye, “I am glad to see you,” and she has told several people the month and day of her birthday. She read aloud the sign on the wall in rehab, told me that a card was signed by Tom, and told the receptionist that, she “has seen deer but did not see them running or jumping.” These are just some of the examples, and of course we are all delighted with this progress and hope that it continues. We continue to work with the Eyemax tracking/speech device (which can be very frustrating), but we may not need it if her talking frequency continues to increase!

Thanks again for your visits, cards, email notes, and positive energy sent our way. All of this stimulation is very good for Jackie, and I certainly like to feel connected to all of you as this journey continues.

For the full story and many photos, go to <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/jackiegentry>.

Comments on Five Years on the CCI Board

By Sally Reed and Meera Messmer



Sally Reed: Serving on the **Crones Counsel Inc.** board was definitely a peak experience for me. The board meets twice a year, once in the spring to clear up business, set a

budget, and to observe the venue for the fall gathering. If a crone group volunteers to put on a gathering the board is able to devote time to board business such as by-laws and policy, but if the board has to determine where a gathering will be held and assign people to various tasks to host the gathering, the duties become far more complex. In my term on the board, two gatherings were put on by the board: Asilomar, California, and Albuquerque. The other three: Boulder, Seattle, and Atlanta were managed by local groups of Crones.

My first board meeting took place in

San Diego when the conference ended on Sunday morning. The next was the Spring Meeting in Boulder, Colorado, at the board President's house. As you know, the information computer age advanced very quickly, and to understand and keep current it was necessary for the board to make changes. Shortly after the Boulder gathering, a new board President was elected and the Asilomar site was selected by the board for the 2007 venue for **Crones Counsel**. Because I live near SFO, my house was the site for the Spring board meeting. Imagine eight women meeting from 9 AM to 8 or 9 PM. The furniture was pushed against the walls and a long table set up for the board books, etc. Meals were supplied from CostCo. Of course it was tiring work, but it was also a lot of fun! This team of women worked and played well together. When the weekend was over, we were exhausted but energized by the excitement of being part of, and contributing our part to this annual, beautiful **Crones Counsel** gathering.

There were frustrating times, especially when everyone was tired and cranky, and exhilarating times when a problem was discussed and a solution found, or when extremely creative ideas were explored and developed and everything would come together as if by magic. I really learned to appreciate all the women who shared this experience with me. I highly recommend a term on the **Crones Counsel** board to broaden your Crone experience, share your talents, and discover there are many ways to grow old, have fun, and contribute to changing the world.

* * *

Meera Messmer: Sally has done such an incredible job of describing our experience of being on the board of **Crones Counsel** that I will just add a few items that I remember vividly.

We both came on the board in San Diego in 2005. I remember the first board meeting we attended. There was a lot of chaos and fighting. I didn't know what the heck I was doing there.

Things did get better, as we prepared for the Boulder gathering at the Spring board meeting. It was a lot of work, as was typical of most meetings; however, the Boulder gathering was fantastic – well organized and planned by the Boulder Crones.

This was a difficult time for me as my only son died that May due to an unfortunate accident while he was on duty with the Air Force Reserves. It was wonderful to express my grief to my "sisters" at the gathering, who were so present for me.

Overall my five years on the board were wonderful, gratifying, and sometimes frustrating when we were all tired. Like Sally, I learned to appreciate the women who work so hard, and would recommend a term on the board to anyone interested in serving **Crones Counsel**.



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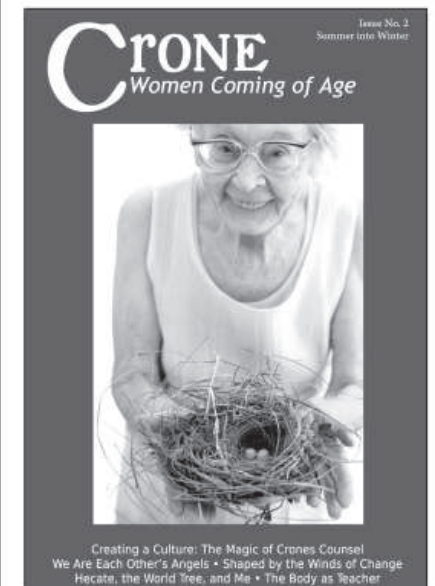
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VITA LAUMÉ

1938–2011

By Betty Brown

It saddens me greatly that **Crones Counsel** and many dear friends are forced to acknowledge the passing of Vita Laumé. Vita was one of those special ladies I got

to know at the gatherings, and I was so fortunate to travel to Lithuania with her four summers ago. When I first met her, I begged her to take me to Lithuania and told her I would carry her luggage. Being the gracious person she was, she let me accompany her on this annual trip to her home country to visit her grandmother's farm (reclaimed after Russia left the country) and buy beautiful amber to support many local families, which she then offered to us at **Crones Counsel**. Each year I so looked forward to her smiling face and endearing personality. After the Seattle **Crones Counsel** she also welcomed me and Lane Franz into her home for a few days and, as you can imagine, she and her husband were perfect hosts. I'll never forget the beautiful hand-carved box that she said would contain her ashes when she died. Any of us who wear the beautiful Lithuania amber will remember this wonderful lady who was filled with love and light and conveyed it to all she knew.

You will be missed dear Vita.

Remembering Our Amber Goddess

By Alexa Abo West

Vita Laumé, marvelous crone, superb friend, poet, storyteller, seller of amber, died in April 2011. Cancer spread from her lungs to her brain and then her bones.

In the words of her husband Dale Witherow, "She died with the spirit she lived by."

Vita made very conscious choices about dying, as she had about living. She knew that she wanted to die at home, attended by family and hospice. After death she wanted to be bathed by her daughter, her sister, and Maggie, her friend and hospice nurse. They all accepted her loving directions and, after death, bathed her and wrapped her in a linen cloth with a Lithuanian woven belt. Then, the family gathered around her and when they were content with the time they had spent with her, about thirty hours, she was cremated and put in a box that Vita had made especially for that.

Vita was a pilgrim. Her column in *Crone* magazine was called "Pilgrimages" and she opened her heart and life to the pilgrim's journey wherever it took her.

Many of you remember Vita from her booth in the vendor room at **Crones Counsels**. Her strings of amber caught the sunlight in the windows at Asilomar and her amber heart gave us all sunlight.

As Vita wrote: "Gintaras, the Lithuanian word for amber, means to protect and bless. Each year I make a pilgrimage to my native land Lithuania. Among small villages, I search for unique and rare amber. I buy directly from peasant women — my way to support their lives. From their treasured threaded beads, I create one-of-a-kind jewelry, honoring my people and the gift of amber."



VITA OFFERING HER AMBER at Crones Counsel X, Asilomar

She did much more than string beads. After fleeing Lithuania at age five, it took her 55 years to go back. At the urging of her daughter Sigita, she did go back, reclaim her grandmother's farm, and ask herself how she could give back to the country of her birth. Her solution was to buy amber, lots and lots of amber, from the women in the marketplace.

A health professional, Vita had never had aspirations to be an artisan, a maker of jewelry. But, make it she did and sell it she did, and those of us who bought it bought more than amber. We bought love and hope and became part of the larger crone necklace that stretched from Olympia, Washington, to Lithuania.

At an early **Crones Counsel**, she and a sister crone from Latvia took us into the world of Baltic grandmothers. We wore Vita's family amber, ate apples cut in the round so a star was present in each piece, and explored our own foremothers and

VITA LAUMÉ — THE AMBER LADY, con't. on Page 5

VITA LAUMÉ — THE AMBER LADY, *continued on Page 5*

their stories. Each of us left with a star shining in our ancestral sky, which hadn't been there before. Her soft voice lulled us and her stories surround us like a mother-shawl.

At Crone storytelling one year, Vita started a tradition of passing-the-shawl to a Crone in her 60s who would keep the love and the blessings contained in the shawl until it was time to pass it along. Vita knew the value of tangible and intangible objects for growth and remembrance.

Vita attended 15 out of 18 **Crones Counsels** and we celebrated many life events together: her children's marriages, her grandchildren's births, her second marriage, her mother's death, her writing successes, her poetry book, her amber busi-



CRONES COUNSEL XV — Asilomar. From left, Alexa West, Gay Medina, Vita Laumé, and Joyce Howell.

ness, her yearly travels to Lithuania. We also celebrated her superb storytelling skills, which sometimes involved tears, but often involved raucous laughter, when after a few glasses of wine, she told us of her dealings with black-market amber smugglers or her standing as godmother to a horse!

In the last few months of her life, Vita chose to produce two more books of poetry with the help of her friend, Linda Strever. The books are *Letters* and *Clasping Other Hands*. Both books are illuminated with the exquisite paintings of her husband Dale Witherow. They can be accessed by going to [www.blurb.com>bookstore>poetry>Vita Laume](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/poetry/Vita%20Laume) or by the titles. Rich and insightful, the books celebrate a life well-lived.

Vita's Celebration of Life will be held on August 6, 2011, in Morris Run, Pennsylvania.

Vita's family includes her son, Linas, her daughter, Sigita, and grandchildren, Trianno and Lavinnia, her husband Dale Witherow, her sister Ina, and the wide circle of friends she adopted as family.

Each of us will remember Vita in a different way. I will remember the gracious, generous, laughing woman who brought sunshine whenever she appeared. She was like one of her amber necklaces: timeless, natural, and glowing. She was a crone with an amber crown of kindness.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LIFE

Betty Wigington

by Sally Reed



Betty passed away in the way she did most everything, which is to say, she did it quietly, without a lot of fuss. Born on February 12, 1925, Betty graduated from nursing school in 1946. She was married in 1947 and soon had five children. After her husband passed away in 1966, Betty had a broken heart, five children to care for, and a job to hold onto. Although Betty did not travel the world as a missionary like she had longed to do as a child, she did travel extensively later in life. She visited Japan, traveled down the Amazon, rode a camel in Egypt, an elephant in Thailand, and climbed the Great Wall in China. She visited almost every state in the union.

About two weeks before she died, she called her children, her sister, and many others. She said that she wouldn't be long for this world, and if we wanted to say good-bye, we'd better get over there.

Betty loved life and we who met her at **Crones Counsel** have fond memories of our visits.



Crone Marketplace 2011

Calling all artists. Do you create wonderful things, write, sing, give massages? Do you love to hang out with other creative people? We need your energy in the **Crones Counsel Marketplace**. Let's show the Portland Saturday Market what WE have to offer!

Contact Patricia Layden in one of the following ways: email patricialayden@gmail.com, write 17341 Military Rd. S., Seattle, WA 98188, or phone 206/244-4264 for an application.



CRONES COUNSEL XIX PORTLAND, OREGON October 12-16, 2011



Portland, 2011

By Tricia Layden

*A river runs through it, lined with green grass,
And a fountain and walkers – it's a city with class!
There are parks Oriental, the Rose Garden's pretty -
This is a charming small-town city.
There's the Pearl District, downtown, Pioneer Square,
Art Museum, library – oh, this town's rare!
There's the biggest bookstore you can imagine:
Powell's, and no sales tax! I'm not just braggin'!
It's a college town too: Portland State, and as well
University of – all nearby. I'll tell you –
Free busses in town, Max, or walk everywhere.
Do the Saturday craft market too if you'd care to.
Hotel by a river lined with green grass –
Am I going to Portland this year? Bet your ... bippy!*

❖ Lan Su Chinese Garden NW 3rd and Everett streets; Washington Park, home to the Oregon Zoo, International Rose Test Garden, Hoyt Arboretum, and Portland Japanese Garden. You can get to either place on the Max...

❖ Pearl District: eat, shop, stroll. Pioneer Courthouse Square is a great place to people-watch and get an idea of what a typical Portlander looks like; also where the Visitor Center is located. The Art Museum is located on those South Park Blocks, as is the library. All are a free ride on the streetcar route or the Max...

❖ Powell's is an independent bookstore that fills a whole city block with more than a million new, used, and out-of-print books, as well as cards and other book-related items. And it is on the streetcar or Max line, too. Portland State bookstore — near the Park Blocks — another great stop...

❖ You've probably got the idea by now: the Portland Streetcar runs every 15 minutes, or you can catch the Max and get just



❖ Portland abounds in parks; the one by the hotel is the South Waterfront Park, a ribbon of plantings and

about anywhere in the city. If you want to go farther, catch the Max light rail to the Zoo or across the river. (One station is near the Saturday Market) ...

❖ Which is at the north end of the River Walk “under the Burnside Bridge” (and beyond), involving row upon row of unique items that are handcrafted by the people who sell them. Also there may be live music, and certainly will be a plethora of exotic foods. (Still, don't forget our Crone artisans who will be available in the hotel at our Marketplace!)



sculptures along the Willamette River. Within walking distance west of the hotel are the South Park Blocks that run for 12 blocks right through downtown.

*Are you coming to
Portland this year?*

CRONES COUNSEL XIX

WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12-16, 2011, PORTLAND, OREGON

REGISTRATION FORM

Please print clearly

NAME: _____

NAME YOU WANT TO BE KNOWN BY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBERS: _____

BIRTH DATE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

*We need your birthday for ceremony.
Please provide.*

*We communicate primarily by e-mail.
If you have one, please include.*

Is this your first time? Yes__ No__ How did you learn of CC? _____

Which Crones Counsels have you attended? _____

List any special needs? _____

Do you like us to help you find a roommate to share a Double Room? Yes__ No__

If you have a roommate preference, please indicate her name _____

CC FEE:	<u>2/15/11-9/1/11</u>	<u>After 9/1/11</u>	Amount
	\$195.00	\$215.00	Elder (80 & over) \$25 discount \$ _____

In addition to my registration, I wish to support my Crone Sisters with a 2011 donation to:

Outreach fund \$ _____ CC Scholarship \$ _____ Crones Counsel \$ _____ \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Please make check payable to CRONES COUNSEL, INC. and mail to:

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P.O. Box 9446, Salt Lake City, UT 84109, Phone: 801/466-3923

To pay by credit card, please register online at www.cronescounsel.org

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Scholarships are available on a limited basis. For information on scholarships and any registration questions, please contact Judy Neihart at the address or phone number above.

REFUNDS:

Cancellations up to July 31, 2011, will be given a total refund minus a \$25.00 processing fee. Cancellations between August 1 and October 1 will be given a total refund less a \$50.00 processing fee. *No refunds for registration can be given after October 1, 2011.*

On Page 8, please sign

Liability Waiver and Assumption of Risk Agreement

CRONES COUNSEL XIX

WEDNESDAY–SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12-16, 2011, PORTLAND, OREGON

ALL WORKSHOPS, PROGRAMS, CEREMONIES, AND CRONE CIRCLE LEADERSHIP ARE DONATED TO THE GATHERING BY WOMEN WILLING TO SHARE THEIR WISDOM AND CREATIVITY. OUR GATHERING RELIES ON YOU WONDERFUL WOMEN.

WORKSHOPS: *Contact:* Annie Lehto, 7220 Andrea Lane, Morrison, CO 80465, cronenancy@wispertel.net, 303/697-6016

MARKETPLACE: *Contact:* Patricia Layden, 17341 Military Road South, Seattle, WA 98188, patricialayden@gmail.com, 206/244-4264

CIRCLE LEADERS: *Contact:* Pat Casner, P.O. Box 1227, Mi Wuk Village, CA 95346, plcasner@hughes.net, 916/685-7507

PLEASE NOTE: *All contributors must be registered for the gathering. Artisans' products offered for sale must be Crone creations.*

LIABILITY WAIVER AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT

WAIVER – *Anyone attending a Crones Counsel gathering must sign a waiver of liability, just as you would when attending an Elder Hostel or other such event.*

PLEASE SIGN AND DATE THE FOLLOWING:

I have read the activity description and voluntarily enroll in the Crones Counsel gathering. I understand and realize activities involved in the program involve risks, which may result in injury to me. I knowingly and voluntarily assume all such risk, which I may sustain in connection with the above program, including but not limited to injury sustained while traveling on highways and over rough terrain, forces of nature, falling, slipping, and any accident or illness, which may occur while I am enrolled in the program.

Furthermore, in consideration of the permission granted to me to participate in the above program, on behalf of myself, my heirs, and legal representatives, I release and discharge Crones Counsel, Inc., and its officers from liability for any injuries, property loss, or damage I may sustain while participating in the above activity. I fully realize and accept the responsibility to myself and my companions to carry out all program activities according to Crones Counsel procedures and in a safe and prudent manner. This release does not apply to acts of gross negligence or wanton and reckless conduct.

I also agree I shall be responsible for any expenses incurred or damages suffered, as a consequence of my personal injury or property loss or damage; that I shall carry adequate accident and health insurance for this purpose; and that I shall not hold Crones Counsel, Inc., responsible for such expenses.

Signature

Date

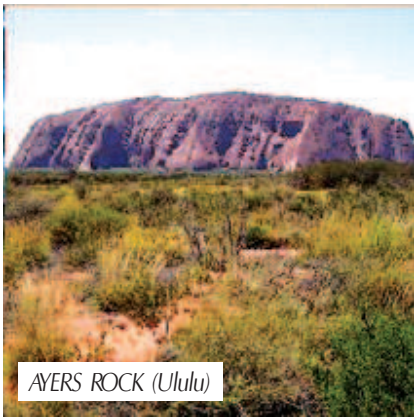


Around the World with Granny Bee

(also known as Betty Brown)

Betty's adventure of a lifetime began on January 10. She flew on Korean Air to Los Angeles, then a twelve-and-a-half-hour flight to Seoul, Korea, followed by a nine-hour flight to Sydney, Australia – 24 hours of flight time. If I related all her adventures, they would take up the whole issue of CroneTimes and then some, so I have, with great difficulty, extracted some of her narrative so you can get the flavor of this wonderful trip.

Betty spent three months in Australia. She explored Sydney, Blue Mountain, and Kootomba, and took a shaky train eleven hours to Melbourne. Later she rented a car and toured both the eastern and western coasts of lovely Tasmania. After a 24-hour train ride, she arrived at Alice Springs in the heart of the Outback where she worked with a family at a cattle station.



AYERS ROCK (Uluru)

On my USA birthday, I traveled to Ayres Rock. It was a fun day and certainly an unusual memory. Ayres Rock (Uluru) is quite an impressive structure with lots of aboriginal stories associated with it, including a warning about poisonous spiders.

Some personal points. I was in Australia three months and never read or looked at a tour guidebook. I went places and did things based on recommendations of those I met along the way. I did three help-exchange assignments, stayed with fifteen families, and stayed in sixteen youth hostels. I did not stay in a hotel/motel while here.

I spent two weeks each in the Cairns area, Tasmania area, Alice Springs, and Sydney areas and the rest in smaller towns, cities, places, and areas, and traveled by air, car, bus, train, ferry, and boat. Even with a lost train pass and some expensive car damage, I stayed within \$300 of my Australian budget.

Next came three weeks in Thailand and Cambodia. Son Jordan joined me in Bangkok and we spent a few days looking around the Royal Palace area and having a few body and foot massages before traveling north by bus to Chiang Mai. This proved to be wonderful timing, as Thailand was in the midst of celebrating its official New Year, called Songkran. This used to be a gentle



BANGKOK, THAILAND

Buddhist celebration with a ceremony of sprinkling small amounts of water over others to wash away bad luck and help bring

rains for the coming growing season. These days it is an all-out water war using buckets, bowls, super pressure water guns, and hoses. People cruised around in open trucks and things called tuk-tuks (motorbikes with a little carriage for hauling people) with large barrels of water that they used to refill buckets, etc., and, as I said, it is an all-out battle lasting three days and longer in smaller villages. Jordan and I decided it was going to be impossible to stay dry, so we joined some of the hotel staff drinking, dancing, and splashing each other and passersby outside our hotel. One barrel even had large ice chunks in it for a bracing douse. With current high temperatures it wasn't too bad.

In Kathmandu I spent a few days touring stupas, temples, and monasteries as the Tibet group start trickling in. We flew into Lhasa, Tibet. I knew the group of six plus guide from my trip there last year. It was very interesting and challenging as we landed at 12,000 feet and ascended to 17,000 feet without getting altitude sickness. I was pleased with my walking sticks and my ability to maneuver the trails this year.

Now I am in Nepal. I wanted to let everyone know where I am and plan to be until August. My school is a Tibetan Refugee Buddhist school called Srongtsen Bhrikuti. It has about 100 kindergarten day students and about 600 first through tenth-grade students who mostly board here. I have a simple but clean room in the staff quarters. I was assigned four English classes for fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh graders and will work with the grammar teachers to conduct. So far I've taught one class a couple of songs and helped all with pronunciation. I am amazed that they are learning English, Nepali, and Tibetan all at the same time with math and social studies. Anyhow, it is a bit daunting to have 700 kids say good morning or afternoon or evening every time I step out of my room, but I certainly enjoy their lovely singing-prayer-type voices morning and night.



KATHMANDU

My Years on the Crones Counsel Board

By Kianna Bader

My first **Crones Counsel** board meeting was in the spring of 2005 when Jackie Gentry was still president. Anya Silverman and Mahtowin were going off the board in the fall, and only four women were left – not enough to fill all the offices. Because I was the lone new member, they asked me if I would be secretary, replacing Anya. I was an unknown on the board, but it worked out well. I had experience being secretary of other organizations and liked to do it, so, at my first Fall board meeting, I began to take minutes. I had never done email minutes, much less all year long, so that was definitely a new learning curve. It was time-consuming, but I loved it. The gathering was at San Diego that year and Boulder the following year. Both gatherings were put on by local Crone groups.

Sharon Hoery was the next president, and we had Spring board meetings at her lovely home in Colorado for two years. At Asilomar, Nancy (annie) Lehto took over as president, so I worked with three board presidents.

The board had the task of facilitating the gathering at Asilomar, California, and I organized the workshops. This became difficult when I wasn't allowed to put any signs up to mark the rooms – nothing on the historic buildings – no tacks, no tape, etc. Finally we put signs on chairs in front of the doors to mark some of the workshops.

Many interesting things happened while I was on the board. For instance, we tried having memberships for two years but dropped that idea. Sue Chase designed our lovely official

Crones Counsel logo, and Jackie Gentry looked into getting a trademark for that, as well as pursuing grants for **CC**. We finally got a newly functioning website thanks to Suzanne Gruba.

My time on the board was both challenging and exciting. Eventually we formed a close-knit little community and I eagerly looked forward to the Spring and Fall board meetings.

When the board put on the 2007 Asilomar gathering, I had a root canal two days before, missed the Fall board meeting, and was heavily medicated during that gathering. However, it was very special because one of my daughters and one of my best friends from college both attended. It made me aware of how wonderful it is for mothers and daughters, as well as sisters, to attend together.

After the fabulous Seattle and Atlanta gatherings, again the board put on the 2010 Albuquerque gathering. I was extremely involved and worked closely with Enid Williams and Marsha Scarbrough, the only “locals,” to coordinate the opening and closing. I also organized the workshops and was responsible for the music. Once again, a group sang Jackie's songs as we had at Atlanta.

I have really enjoyed being on the board. It has been a very special part of my life for six years. I could have remained as secretary for one more year but decided it was time to make way for new members. We were fortunate in getting so many new women to carry on. I will continue to support and promote **CC**, attend the gatherings, and be the reporter who gathers stories from many interesting women for *CroneTimes*. I look forward to the Counsels in Portland and Salt Lake City.

LINKS ...

by Pat Hanson

Lions Clubs International has more volunteers in more places than any other service club organization

When it comes to meeting challenges, our response is simple: We serve. In 206 countries, hospitals and senior centers, in regions battered by natural disaster, in schools and eyeglass recycling centers, Lions are doing community volunteer work, helping, leading, planning and supporting. Because we're local, we can serve the unique needs of the communities we live in. And because we're global, we can address challenges that go beyond borders.

Lions Club International Helps with Vision Services as well as Hearing.

CRITICAL SERVICES

In Lions provide the following critical services to people with vision loss. Check out <http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/our-work/sight-programs/sight-services/index.php> for these programs:

Through corneal donation, eyeglass recycling, strategic partnerships and vision screenings for the public, Lions are illuminating the world for millions of people who are at risk of vi-

sion loss. To service those that have already lost – or never had – the ability to see, Lions services may include:

- ◆ Supporting guide-dog schools
- ◆ Providing scholarships for blind students
- ◆ Supporting vocational training programs
- ◆ Facilitating self-help groups for the blind/visually impaired
- ◆ Furnishing talking books, Braille books, or large-print books for public libraries
- ◆ Supporting recreational activities and Lions camps for the blind/visually impaired
- ◆ Providing devices such as white canes or computers

FUNDING EYE RESEARCH

Our sight programs also focus on causes of preventable blindness. We're fighting:

- ◆ Cataracts
- ◆ Glaucoma
- ◆ Age-related macular degeneration
- ◆ Diabetic eye disease
- ◆ Corneal blindness
- ◆ River Blindness (onchocerciasis) and Trachoma

Learn how you can join the battle and help Lions near you.

Notes on AGEISM

By Esta Feedora, June 16, 2011

“Beautiful young people are accidents of nature, beautiful old people are works of art.”

— ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

Ageism, the process of systematically stereotyping and discriminating against people because of their advancing years, plays a major role in depersonalizing older people. There is little evidence or truth in the three “standard” stereotypes: elders are physically incapable, mentally incapable, and intellectually frail.

The term Ageism was coined in 1968 by Robert Neil Butler, the world-famous gerontologist who used it to describe discrimination against seniors, and it was patterned on sexism and racism. Butler defined Ageism as a combination of three connected elements: prejudicial attitudes toward older people, old age, and the aging process; discriminatory practices against older people; and institutional practices and policies that perpetuate stereotypes about older people.

To quote Barbara G. Walker (*The Crone, Woman of Age, Wisdom and Power*) “... Millions of intelligent, perceptive, talented elder women remain trapped in uninteresting lives because modern society provides no useful channels for their ambition or energy.”

When I was asked to write an article for *CroneTimes*, I thought about what would be an interesting topic and decided on Ageism. I soon discovered that it is a vast subject with comparatively little research done – or books written – about it. Because I am a farmer in rural Hawaii with no University library nearby, I first looked for information in the Hawaii State Library catalog, but found there were only fourteen books on Ageism listed in the entire statewide catalog! Only two of them proved pertinent! Searching online I found, to my surprise, little information specifically about Ageism and few organizations that are dealing with discrimination of the aged, except for the Gray Panthers (which recently celebrated their fortieth anniversary of activism), the International Longevity Center (ilcusa.org) and the AARP (whose focus is care for the aged, not the stereotyping of them). There are very few Federal or State laws to protect elders in the USA, and although the situation is a little better in Europe – especially in Belgium – there is not as yet, *anywhere*, a ground swell of activity in the area of age prejudice. *And there should be!* After all, everyone is affected! The practice of Ageism is common in *all* social and economic classes, races, creeds, and political affiliations. Well, unless you die before you are old, *you shall age!*

So it seems sensible to start looking *now* at Ageism and our own ageist attitudes, especially because reputable scientists have determined that for *everyone now in their 30s or younger, a lifespan of 95 or 100 years will be common.*

(Perls et al., 1999). Enlightened self-interest dictates that young people should be made aware of *ageist* attitudes so they can avoid being subjected to them in the long future ahead! To become aware of our own internalized ageist attitudes is equally important for all adults, including the middle-aged and elders, because we are the unconscious role-models for children and the young.

Therefore, hoping to use the approach and tactics learned while helping to develop the feminist movement (an “ism” that has changed the face of the society we live in) I decided to try to prepare a longer study on this subject, first completing much more research.

Here are some interesting “notes” discovered up until now. (Because those of us Crones who have been around a l-o-n-g time already realize from experience the dangers of ageist stereotyping, my “notes” and remarks are particularly addressed to younger Crones and younger people.)

THE CRONE – Women of Power, Age and Wisdom,
by Barbara G. Walker

“We may trace to the era of persecution (the witchcraft mania in Western civilization) our society’s view of old women as ugly or obnoxious, and especially the refusal to recognize the mental capacities of elder women, to honor their life experience as enlightening.”

“... the Crone can represent precisely the kind of power women need so desperately today, and do not have: the power to force men to do what is right, for the benefit of future generations and of the earth itself. Forcing seems to be necessary. Men do not voluntarily relinquish their ego trips, war toys, and money games.”

THE VIEW FROM OVER THE HILL, by Baba Copper

“The old woman finds herself captive to stereotypes, which drain her initiative and shatter her self-respect. The mythic prototypes of the Wicked Old Witch with unnatural powers; the Old Bad Mother with neurotic power needs; and the Little Old Lady of absolute powerlessness, cloud the individuality of every old woman past sixty.”

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ABOUT CRONETIMES

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Thank you!

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GYN/ECOLOGY, by Mary Daly

“Hagiography, a term employed by Christians, is defined as the biography of saints, saints’ lives; Hagiology is a description of sacred writings or sacred persons. Both terms are from the Greek *haglios*, meaning holy.”

“‘HAG’ is from an old-English word meaning harpy: Webster’s definition is ‘... an ugly or evil-looking old woman’ ... but this, considering the source, may be considered a compliment. For the beauty of strong, creative women is ‘ugly’ by misogynistic standards of ‘beauty.’

“... As for ‘old,’ Ageism is a feature of phallic society ... a Crone is one who should be an example of strength, courage, and wisdom. Our fore-sisters were the Great Hags whom the institutionally powerful patriarchs found too threatening for coexistence, and whom the historians erase.”

THE VIEW FROM OVER THE HILL,

by Baba Copper

“Youth sees itself as immune from the threat of ageing. I can remember the day when I would use the phrase “over the hill” to describe an old woman. The implications of those words, and my complicity in those implications never crossed my mind. Now, from experience, I understand that someone “over the hill” is metaphorically out of sight ... invisible. In my youthful complacency, I was banishing old age from my awareness by that phrase. ... Now that I am old, I have become increasingly aware

why I needed to reassure myself in this way.”

“Since childhood all of us have been bombarded with systematic distortions of female ageing – in fairy tales, legends, movies, TV. Age prejudice encourages substitution of these manufactured realities for the real human being – with real personal powers – whom we encounter.”

NURTURING RESPECT: GIVING CHILDREN AN UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ELDERS,

by Gerald Larue and Rachel Seymour

“Ageism ... thrives on stereotypes expressed in language, labels, gestures, humor, practices, policies, and even advocacy. It is found in the home, the schools, the media, the marketplace, and in hospitals and nursing homes and government services. Its practitioners are children, youth (taught by adults), the middle-aged, and even some elders themselves.”

“... The effects of Ageism are toxic for the individual in particular, for elders in general, and for society as a whole inasmuch as Ageism represents a bigotry that separates elders from society’s protective norms rendering them vulnerable, and sometimes, helpless. Ageism is unethical.”

WIKIPEDIA

from their article on Ageism

“The *looking-glass self* is a social/psychological concept that states that a person’s self grows out of society’s interpersonal interactions and the perceptions of others. The term refers to people shaping themselves based on other people’s perception, and leads them to

reinforce other people’s perspectives upon themselves. People shape themselves based on what other people perceive and confirm other people’s opinion on themselves.”

Studies have also specifically shown that when older and younger people hear these stereotypes about their supposed incompetence and uselessness, they perform worse on measures of competence and memory. These stereotypes then become *self-fulfilling prophecies*.

Older and younger people may also engage in self-stereotypes, taking their culture’s age stereotypes — to which they have been exposed over the life course — and directing them inward toward themselves. Then this behavior reinforces the present stereotypes and treatment of the elderly. Many overcome these stereotypes and live the way they want, but it can be difficult to avoid deeply ingrained prejudice, especially if one has been exposed to ageist views in childhood or adolescence

Slowly we are coming to a place where old age can be perceived as “a time of continuing vitality.” About 44 percent of Americans over age 65 describe the present as “the best years of my life.” And certainly they are the best years of *my* life! My own creativity has improved with age; my sensitivity has not been dulled by age; my adventurousness has not been reined in by some disabilities that time has brought; and the return of “wonder” and the “magical” thinking that comes with old age have been for me an affirmation of life just as it is in the present. So be it!

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