



Corn Mother News

*Women Who Desire to Grow into Wise
Old Woman Become Empowered!*

New Years, 2009
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Happy New Year to All... Welcome to...

The Corn Mother News

I hope this New Years edition finds you all feeling good about your life and hopeful when you look towards 2009. I for one am blessing 2008 with all the chaos and confusion that has come to a head at the end of this cycle and am turning my focus to embrace all the incredible possibilities that lie ahead.

Yes, it's time to celebrate the continuation of life with all it's fertile possibility. Our traditional way of honoring the old year and welcoming in the new is through laughter, dancing and making merry. And at its core, what better way. We've given thanks and now it's time to celebrate this sacred life we've been given. It's time to join with others and, as Jean Houston says, get "cooking on more burners." It's time to shout it out, to dance it out, to sing it out, to talk it out, even drum it out...to get all that positive energy full of possibilities bubbling and popping, propelling us into the new year of 2009.

The end of one cycle and the beginning of another IS the very essence of the Corn Mother herself. I have been looking forward to sharing with you my review of the *Return of the Corn Mothers* photo exhibit which fits here beautifully. And for those of you who live in or around The University of Colorado in Boulder the exhibit is on display until the end of January at the Museum of Natural History.

Also, as promised **Lessons from Elizabeth** returns with a story of a Christmas Eve's preparation. I've told this story over the years and I hope you enjoy it and that it's meaningful for you.

And at the very, very end I have an **Exciting Announcement of good things to come** for you and for me in 2009. Check it out. Oh, and a little New Years gift you'll find towards the end.





The *Return of the Corn Mothers* Review

Let me begin by a shout out to my comadrecita, curandera and affiliate professor of Chicana/o studies, Christina Sigala. Although not featured in this Corn Mother exhibit, I consider Christina a Corn Mother in her own right. She has quietly been working behind the scenes to bring the *Return of the Corn Mothers* to life. Muchas gracias mi amiga for emailing me information about this inspiring exhibit and making sure I attended the opening ceremony this past October.

Also a hug to my old friend with whom, due to this exhibit, I have been reunited. Concha Garcia Allen is one of the eighteen modern day, living, loving, embracing Corn Mothers, who exemplify the vibrant soul of the women of the Southwest featured in this photo exhibit.

Concha and I share a Corn Mother who has deeply influenced both our lives, dona Guadalupe de la Cruz Rios. I refer to dona Guadalupe frequently on my website <http://cornmother.com>, as she was physically my guide for many years and now is an ever present guide from the spirit world. The column entitled *Guadalupe's Wisdom* which appears on occasion in this newsletter refers to the teachings of Guadalupe de la Cruz Rios.

When viewing the *Return of the Corn Mothers* you will first see the photographs of each of these 18 wonderfully warm women accompanied by a brief video where some of them visually come to life and you hear their voices. And if you were lucky enough, as I was on this past Oct.30th you were able to meet some of these women and feel their nurturing energy. In addition, there is a colorful *Return of the Corn Mothers* book where you can read about these women; women of the Southwest telling their stories of the Corn Mothers who fertilized their own lives and feed their souls.

These women represent The Corn Mother known by the Pueblo Indians of this country and many cultures around the world as “she who keeps the circle of life spinning.” The spiraling in and the spiraling out of this life cycle over and over and over again in a never ending process of fertility and renewal IS the dance of The Great Mother...The Corn Mother...Mother Earth.

Everyone of these contemporary Corn Mothers, who range in age from 29 to 89, has reached out to her community in ways that help to keep her circle of life, and thus the whole, strong and healthy.

Who are the Corn Mothers in your part of the World?

Lessons from Elizabeth: The elegant simplicity of survival or How to stay in your own home and avoid the nursing home conveyor belt.

Elizabeth at 85 years of age lived simply. She had grown up in a well-to-do professional family and knew the finer points of life, yet she was content to hold on to the essence of elegance and no longer needed all the trimmings. She had a small artificial Christmas tree decorated modestly, she sent out a few Christmas cards and that was about it, except for a touch of festivity she wanted to share with her friends who were sure to visit during the holidays.

And so it was that Elizabeth asked me to take her to the Liquor Mart on the afternoon of Christmas Eve. At the time, in the mid-eighties, the Liquor Mart in Boulder, Colorado was quite a phenomenon, known for its enormous size and variety of alcoholic beverages. It was where everyone shopped for their libations. I think it wise to add here that Elizabeth seldom, if ever, with the exception of the Holidays, drank alcohol and then just a few sips at a time. Nonetheless, her way of celebrating the festiveness of the season was to offer her friends a little glass of wine when they stopped by.





We entered the Liquor Mart, this Christmas Eve day, with Elizabeth holding onto my arm for stability. Once inside, I located a shopping cart, one of those full sized metal wire carts, you know the kind. Elizabeth could hold onto to the cart and thereby maintain a sense of independence as we maneuvered the aisles. She knew just where to go and I followed her to the Gallo wine section where I was instructed to select a half gallon of Gallo's Hearty Burgundy, which I immediately placed in the otherwise empty cart. That was it. We were done.

As we turned and headed towards the check out lanes we both stared dumbfounded as our mouths dropped open in disbelief at the scene being played out before us. All 12 check-out lanes were jammed with lines of people and carts snaking into the interior of the store. It was a zoo with cart after shopping cart filled to the brim with every kind of alcohol you could imagine.

Now picture this short, white haired, little old lady, stooped over leaning on her cart for support while she inches her way ever so slowly forward..one small step at a time. As she rolls her large cart with her one bottle of wine to the end on one of the lines, she looks up at me and says chuckling , "Gallo Hearty Burgundy is the only booze I need."

I tell this story in an attempt to illustrate for you what I saw as this elder woman's solid sense of self and I think also of mission. Equipped with a strong, rooted core and a lightness of heart, she ventured out of her little house into what some would describe as a hectic, crazy, pre-Christmas shopping nightmare. She could have very easily asked me to pick up the wine for her, but no... Elizabeth wanted to be involved, to be engaged. Maybe she wanted a little taste of the Christmas crazies herself. Maybe she wanted to be around others with a like mission and this little snippet of holiday shopping was just enough. Whatever the reason, she didn't care if she was old, moved really slowly compared to everyone else, and needed help walking. She wanted to make the effort, if only a small one.

During the week between Christmas and New Years the bottle of Gallo Hearty Burgundy sat on a shelf ready to be offered to all who stopped by to wish Elizabeth a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. In this way, she kept her dignity by remaining a part of societies seasonal rituals. She was still a participant in the giving and receiving, living in her own home where she could stay connected easily to a few special friends. And with the help of her friends she could also remain connected, in relatively small ways, to the larger community.

Here's my New Years gift for you. A free article I think you'll enjoy. *The # 1 Single Biggest Mistake People makd on January 1st*. [Http://www.constructivescience.com](http://www.constructivescience.com)

ANNOUNCEMENT: Coming this January, a new service I will be offering. If you've ever thought you'd like to talk to someone for support or you could sure use some guidance with this aging game check out my website <http://cornmother.com> and click on the new **guidance and support** button.

"I want to be an old woman when I grow up."

From a CD by Michelle Shocked, *When I Grow Up*.

Your input is important. Send your comments and suggestions to:
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I am available for presentations, speaking engagements and workshops. 303-258-0660

The Corn Mother News is dedicated to *Las Tres Viejas*
Frances Grace Higgins, my mother.
Guadalupe de la Cruz Rios, my spiritual guide and healer,
and Elizabeth G., my mentor.

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