



# Birth Care Network Newsletter

## "BIRTH IN THE BLUEGRASS 2004" DRAWS PROFESSIONALS AND CONSUMERS STATEWIDE

By Kim Avera and Cindy Lamb

On June 5, 2004, Birth Care Network hosted the 2nd Annual "Birth In The Bluegrass, A Conference of Childbirth for the Commonwealth." It had promised to be bigger and better than its debut the year before and judging from the turnout and feedback, we succeeded. Held at Baptist Hospital East in Louisville, KY, the gathering brought together the area's doulas, childbirth educators, midwives and lactation professionals with the consumers they serve.

Many doulas returned to the same hallways where they are often seen in the wee hours of the night and morning, supporting laboring women and working alongside medical staff. However, they were there this time amidst the sun streamed windows of the Education Center on a long-planned Saturday morning and afternoon. Miraculously, no doulas were called away to births during the day-long event. It was beeperless, indeed!

Participants totaled more than 83, as well as walk-ins from Baptist East's breastfeeding class held on site. This accomplished BCN's goal of more than doubling attendance from last year. Blending consumer demand with advocate access worked in a way that is still bringing response from expectant families and birth professionals.



Quilt by Amy Larimer

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### 2004 Sessions

- Current Childbirth Initiatives - Uta Mattox
- Prenatal Visits - Robin Weiss
- VBAC - Kim Avera
- Childbirth: Nothing To Fear - Kathy Markham
- Lactation Technology - Vicki Sanders
- Normal Birth - Robin Weiss
- Chiropractic and Massage by Jason Ollis and Laura Davis
- Postpartum Mood Disorders - Deb Karsnitz
- Effects of Birth On Breastfeeding - Uta Mattox
- Postpartum Husbands by Amy White
- What is a Doula? - Bobbie Morgan
- The Real Baby Story - Panel of Louisville Mothers
- Postpartum Care Options - Angela Young
- Voice of the Midwife Panel Discussion and Documentary Video Taping (see related article in this issue).
- Birth Rites and Rituals - Lisa Bache and Donna Miles

Although this was the second annual Birth In The Bluegrass, this event brought normal birth into the community consciousness. In an area where normal birth options are not widely supported, women were finding validity in other choices for care. Many were encouraged as they mingled with other like-minded individuals with whom they could share the same values in mothering.

Simultaneous opportunities for participants on site were the tempting silent auction offerings, a bountiful exhibit hall, birth professionals interview room, documentary filming, and a lavish sandwich and sweets buffet.

Many women and couples went "shopping" for their birth experience, taking in the retail and education opportunities displayed. They also appreciated the impressive, expansive board of posted

*(Continued on page 2)*



## “Voice of the Midwife” Begins Its Story at Birth in the Bluegrass

by Cindy Lamb

Several members of Birth Care Network, along with an assortment of satisfied birth clients, sat down before a video camera to express their feelings for a documentary entitled "Voice of the Midwife." Another one of Kim Avera and Cindy Lamb's long phone conversations come to life — the concept of a feature-length documentary on the needs of women in Kentucky, our rich history of midwifery and its unfortunate current status would drive the interview oriented video presentation. It would fit all aspects of what we at BCN can offer to consumers and to educate the medical community --advocacy and activism would blend into a captivating film.

At Birth in the Bluegrass, a small hallway was set up to become our temporary studio. Between sessions and during lunch, subjects would drop by to give their two cent's worth to the project. The range of topics ran from concern for improved maternity services in the area, praise for the birth experiences they had with their doulas and midwives to outright consumer anger. Each woman in front of the camera that day had one thing in common--they wanted change.



Conversations with Ann Denner, CD, and her midwife and fellow BCN member, Juliet Dietsch, CNM, were moving and actually quite humorous. BCN President Kim Avera was our first subject to take the seat tucked away in a hall to speak to the lens. She began with a true history of women and childbirth and brought the viewer up to speed on why women care for one another. Robin Weiss brought her expertise from working within the medical community to the interview sessions. Videographer/Director Paul Carney responded to the call for a camera and operator just a few days before Birth in the Bluegrass but he soon discovered that the material he was shooting was far more fascinating than originally thought. He was amazed how so many

women, none of whom had any or perhaps a little experience on camera, were so lively and articulate in their expressions. His plans to depart at 2 pm were canceled and he remained till the last midwife spoke in the interactive panel and dramatic close to the event.

The interviews with moms, clients, doulas and midwives ran anywhere from five minutes to fifteen, each of their stories unique, powerful and entertaining. Holding her handsome little VBAC baby Moses in her lap, Susan Linville laid her story out firm and clear for anyone watching who might be expecting a baby, hoping for a VBAC or who might be in a decision making position in government. Her struggle to overcome the negative path of her first birth and the walls thrown up by the medical community in her attempts to make the second birth her own. I'll spoil the ending....she and her husband hired doula Kim Avera and along with the confidence and openness of midwife Susan Goellner, she got the birth she'd always wanted. Her delivery on video was almost as emotional. Amazingly enough, wiggly little Moses never got his hands on her clip-on microphone and every word came through loud and clear. Here's hoping this and the other footage finds its way to Frankfort, KY and beyond as the grassroots desire for midwife support moves into a fiery consumer demand with results. Footage of the event in progress was also captured on the Canon XL-1, which is a state-of-the-art Mini DV or portable digital format camera. The images it produces are broadcast quality enabling us, when we have a finished product, to air it on news programs, public television or theatrical presentations. If you have any interest in going on tape with your comments, experiences with midwifery from either side, or delivering personal messages to the medical community or local and state government, please call Cindy Lamb at 502.897.7027 or email at [CoolDoula@aol.com](mailto:CoolDoula@aol.com). A time and place will be arranged to have a very casual date with the camera.



We have a VHS copy of the raw, unedited footage if anyone would be interested in viewing it. Editing will begin as soon as we have a few more hours under our belt. Let us know if we can include you or if there's someone we need to speak with. Will midwifery and doulas hit the silver screen? Probably not but we have been blessed with a lot of interest, a ton of passion and a bit of technology in order to get this message to where it will do most good.

# Our True Calling - Birth Advocacy Rings Out on 499.4418

By Cindy Lamb

Just who *is* calling the Birth Care Network Free Referral and Information line? It's been a year since I've been monitoring 502.499.4418 and I've enjoyed this volunteer post or phone triage, if you will, for our BCN membership. As Director of Publicity and Advertising for BCN, this has been a wonderful opportunity to be on the front line in receiving requests, questions and being able to provide a shoulder or sounding board for the diverse number of women and men using our voice mail service.

With over 160 calls coming into the service, the one element that became obvious in the time between August 2003 and June 2004 is the progress of the consumers. Early on, the calls were curious and hesitant. Now, they've become direct with specific requests. For the most part, they know what we are and the services we offer. Fewer calls address general questions and more callers are becoming clients of more diverse services. Also more callers are becoming members.

Service requests for information are listed here in order of frequency:

1. Birth and Postpartum Doula and Midwife Referrals
2. Childbirth Class Referrals
3. OB recommendations
4. BCN Membership and requests for info
5. Doula Nights at Clark Memorial Hospital
6. Lactation Support or Breastfeeding Information
7. Birth in the Bluegrass
8. Scheduled Birth Doula trainings
9. Infant and Pregnancy Massage
10. Belly casting
11. Birth announcements
12. Birthing Center Locations (there aren't any)
13. Couples moving into the Louisville area



Men are doing some dialing these days, taking on the duties of locating birth and postpartum doulas for their wives. People call trying to sell us things--publications, booth space at events, used books. The news media have all used the referral line at some point to remind us of television or radio bookings. One Courier-Journal journalist read his BCN mention to me for proofreading. Nice to know you have a while to talk before that beep! We had a thrilling 3 days of blackout when the good folks at Kentuckiana Voice Mail had a power outage. Hey, this was only two weeks before Birth in the Bluegrass and our number was on hundreds of mailers....but we recovered.

Women, men and the media are Googling us online, hearing about us from satisfied customers, finding us in listings (we are early in the alphabet and have BIRTH in our title) and some of them have called not knowing what we are but had questions about birth and child development. Whether the phones ring once every 2 weeks or 4 calls per day, we have many referrals and inquiries every day throughout our group. It's a good way to check on the effectiveness of our advertising and publicity, and a "cold call" on any referral line or website shows interest from people outside of our familiar, daily paths.

Let's keep the word going out and keep that line ringing. It's our umbilical cord to the area!

**FREE REFERRAL LINE:**

**502-499-4418**

BCN Members: Please remember to call the referral line if you are going to be on leave or inactive.

## 2004 BCN Events

We are very excited about the events of the remainder of 2004. We hope that you will join us for more great times of learning together as we reach out to Louisville's birthing community.

### **August 30th**

**7- 9pm**

"Meet the Doula Night" at Clark Memorial Hospital

### **September 16th**

**Thurs. 6:30- 9pm**

Helping the High Needs Client- Sheila Ward, CNM will help us understand those who need more of our help than the average client. Join a group discussion of how to meet this challenge while maintaining your own boundaries and professionalism.

**September 17-19th** Birth Doula Training at Floyd Memorial Hospital with Vicki Sanders, Certified DONA Birth Doula Trainer. To register call BCN at 499-4418 or kentuckianadoulas@hotmail.com

### **October 16th**

**Sat. 2- 5pm**

It's All the Rave! Childbirth Rituals - BCN's own Donna Miles leads us in a fun session as she shares her rituals for expectant and new mothers. These rituals are designed to help mom relax, center her psyche, and calm her spirit. A nice way to introduce your pre and postnats to the importance of the 3 R's -- relaxation, rhythm, and ritual.

### **November 3rd**

**7- 9pm**

"Meet the Doula Night" at Clark Memorial Hospital

### **November 18th**

**Thurs. 6:30- 9pm**

Introduction to the First Steps Program We will learn how this useful program can provide resources and counseling for special needs children.

### **December 18th**

**Sat. 2- 5pm**

Baby Shower for local charity (location tba)

- Given the busy lives of our speakers, the topic and speaker is always subject to change. For current info, check our website or call the BCN phone line 499-4418.
- All meetings are held at **Commonwealth Bank in St. Matthews on Hubbards Lane** unless otherwise specified. Directions can be found on the BCN website at [www.birthcarenetwork.com](http://www.birthcarenetwork.com).
- Nursing babes welcome. Childcare is not available on-site.
- Refreshments provided by participants generosity.
- Expectant couples and former clients welcome and appreciated.

## New Mom's Support Group

BCN also hosts the New Mom's Support Group which meets on the 4th Monday of each month from 10:30-12:30 pm at the Bon Air Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library on Bardstown Rd. Call Laura Holt (ph. 243-9194) for further information and topics.

The next meeting of the New Moms' Group is Monday, September 27<sup>th</sup>. They will be meeting at 11:00am at Joe Huber's in Indiana for a day at the farm! Email [kentuckianamoms@hotmail.com](mailto:kentuckianamoms@hotmail.com) for details.

Birth Care Network  
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Louisville, KY 40207  
www.birthcarenetwork.com

### Special thanks to...

- ♥ Everyone (too many to name here!) who worked so hard to make BI TB the biggest and best Louisville area birth event ever!
- ♥ Angela Young, Cindy Lamb and Kim Avera for submitting the final report to Lamaze for the Birth Networks grant.
- ♥ Angela Young, Kim Avera, Nicole Aldridge, and Emily Healy for staffing the BCN booth at the LLL gathering in honor of World Breastfeeding Week.
- ♥ Robin Weiss, Nicole Aldridge, Angela Young and Cindy Lamb for updating the Birth Care Network website — check it out! It's really BEE-YOU-TEE-FUL!!!

### Congratulations to...

- ♥ Lisa and Daniel Bache who welcomed Laura Westray Bache on January 18, 2004, weighing in at 8 lbs, 13oz. Lisa's birth support team included Ann Denner and Carla Gelnett (doulas) and Juliet Dietsch (midwife).
- ♥ Nicole Zirnheld Aldridge, AAHCC, who received her Bradley Teacher's Certification in May!
- ♥ Kim Avera and Robin Weiss for being selected as speakers at the 2004 Lamaze Conference in Ft. Lauderdale, FL on Sept. 10-12, 2004
- ♥ Robin Weiss also spoke at the 2004 ICEA Conference in Baltimore, MD on Aug. 5-8.

### Our thoughts & prayers to...

- ♥ Darla Lindenmayer in the loss of her oldest son, Matthew, after a long fight with Fanconi Anemia.
- ♥ The family of Lisa Whizenhunt from the Louisville School of Massage who suddenly passed away on August 2nd. Lisa presented massage techniques at our April meeting.

## "BIRTH IN THE BLUEGRASS 2004" ... (cont. from page 2)

to find health care providers and resources in their communities that will promote a normal, healthy birth. We look forward to the day when birth networks are a recognized resource in the health care community." One of 3 co-authors of the grant, BCN president Kim Avera is excited about their progress in the region as well. "Birth Care Network is one of only a few birth networks in the country," she noted. "Louisville area women have a unique opportunity to take advantage of BCN's many resources. As President, I have been privileged to be a part of a group of women who are truly dedicated to improving all aspects of motherhood. I am always impressed with their sacrificial efforts as a group and with the mothers they serve. Through their efforts, Birth in the Bluegrass was made possible. I have every confidence that the community of birthing women will continue to be impacted by this event...one mother at a time."

BCN publicity director, Cindy Lamb, finds an analogy that doulas can agree upon.. "We had good planning and a strong delivery with Birth in the Bluegrass-- the joy, the tension, the great outcome... sounds kind of like a great birth experience, doesn't it?" Truly it was.

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