

Crone Body

by Pat Hanson



IT'S TIME FOR MY SECOND CRONING

I can hardly believe that it was a full decade ago that I held not one, but two, Croning ceremonies (aka 60th birthday parties) for dozens of my girlfriends on the East and West coasts. Back in 2005, this was my invitation:

You are on this list because we have a way more than casual connection with one another. You have contributed to my life in some way that I remember vividly. And I would like you to come share your memories and with me (and everyone else who can make the trip) visioning our futures together. Please join me in a ritual celebration of our connection. Not just yours and mine, but an acknowledgement of the cycles of our wo-man-hood, and welcoming of the many many ways we each will pass the baton to our young ones.

Those of you who made it may remember how we all wore our best goddess garb and crossed a conga line to receive a symbolic diamond studded crown, signifying that we welcomed our wrinkles and were ready to celebrate and share women's wisdom as we grew older.

Lately I've felt a burning longing to reconnect with my old girl-friends. So I am hoping to hold another croning ceremony to celebrate my 70th. I'd like to catch up, and here's some of what I know already.

In the past decade:

- Some of us have lost our mothers, while others of us are caretaking them in our homes or nearby.
- Some of us have grandchildren or great-grandchildren. I am blessed by Sierra Neva Jones (age eight months) and my second-born and his wife have one on the way.
- Some of us have become widowed or lost partners to divorce; others found love and are living it late in life; still others are fully embracing the joys of living alone which equals "All One."
- Some of us have had to move and downsize, whether by choice or by chance, hopefully delighting in letting go of "stuff."
- Some of us have survived cancer; others now live with it lurking in our bodies, whether we know it or not.

- At least one of us has had a mini-stroke, another a heart attack, another a heart valve replacement. Words like “prolapsed uterus,” “rectocele,” “basal cell carcinoma,” and “hormone antagonists” fill our vocabulary.

- Some of us have given up our use of controlled substances, while others relish in the relief that we live in one of the nineteen states that have legalized medical cannabis, or in one of the three states that have decriminalized it entirely.

- Some of us have had cornea implants for glaucoma; others (including me) have had injections for wet macular degeneration that stopped that process.

- A few of us have bionic hips or metal knees; I want to know what helps all of us move and get up from the ground easily.

- Some of us have tried and excelled at new things, like practice, practice, practice a new hobby, ending up playing saxophone in a Women’s Swing Band.

- Some of us are hard at work in careers and still doing our best work in the world: two have had their published books and/or workshops circulate globally as far as China and Europe.

- Others of us have gladly retired from the rat race of nine-to-five and twenty-four-seven. We are happy in whatever garden of our own we choose to play in.

- Some of us have lost our faith, while others have reached ever-deeper levels of spirituality or a belief in god, as we understand god.

And me? I’ve performed comedy to audiences large and small, and would love to regale the group with more, especially my routine “Glorious Women Never Age?!” It’s a different world out there now from the Sixties and Seventies that we learned to be adults in. As I look back I realize women’s

support has certainly helped me weather those changes. As I plan this next Croning par-tay, I plan to promise the invitees that it will not be focused on just my birthday ... but all of ours.

Is it time for you to plan your first (or second, or third!) Croning ceremony? We all need to salute each other, and celebrate the roles we’ve played in other’s lives. If not now, then when? ☺

PAT HANSON, 70, is a veteran health and sexuality educator, public speaker, and workshop leader. Find out more about her work at www.invisblegrandparent.com and www.agingpositively.net.

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