



theConnection

WINTER 2008

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Accredited by The Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers



HEART TO HEART *a conversation with* Anna Quindlen

To Benefit The Birth Center
Thursday, April 17, 2008 6:00 pm
The Park Hyatt at the Bellevue
Broad and Walnut Streets Philadelphia
www.parkphiladelphia.hyatt.com for directions

Join us, and be a part of this wonderful evening!

The Birth Center's first major fundraising event - a celebration of women featuring Pulitzer Prize-winning author Anna Quindlen - is drawing near. We hope you will join us and hundreds of other attendees for an inspiring, engaging and enjoyable evening. This is part of our overall plan to raise the profile of The Birth Center, and seek ongoing fundraising support from a wider audience than in the past.

In Her Own Words . . .

"I loved my whole experience at The Birth Center. All of the midwives were very caring and understanding. The time taken to hear what my concerns were, and then to teach rather than breeze over a subject, was much appreciated. I can't thank you enough for making the birth of our child so wonderful and memorable!"

- TBC Client

Enjoy a special night out with your friends, partners, sisters, mothers, or co-workers!

For 30 years Anna Quindlen's work has appeared in the country's top newspapers and magazines. A winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1992, she writes the extremely popular column "The Last Word" for *Newsweek* magazine that offers perspectives on family issues, work, education and social justice. Her bestselling novels include "Rise and Shine," "Blessings," "One True Thing," and "Black and Blue."

On this special evening, Ms. Quindlen will be interviewed by **Jane Eisner, a veteran journalist well-known to Philadelphia.** Currently the vice president of national programs and initiatives for the National Constitution Center, Eisner is the former editorial editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

The conversation between Anna Quindlen and Jane Eisner is just one part of a fantastic evening, which also includes fabulous raffles and a Chef's Showcase gourmet reception featuring women chefs and restaurateurs from throughout the Delaware Valley.

Sample gourmet creations at the Chef's Showcase!

This evening will be an opportunity to savor a variety of signature dishes from some of

the region's finest women chefs and women-owned restaurants, including -

- 12th Street Catering...** Philadelphia, PA
- Alison at Blue Bell...** Blue Bell, PA
- Bistro Cassis...** Wayne, PA
- Bredenbeck's Bakery...** Philadelphia, PA
- Cake...** Philadelphia, PA
- Cupcakes Gourmet...** Downingtown, PA
- Fork Restaurant...** Philadelphia, PA
- FruitFlowers, Incredibly Edible Delites...** Broomall, PA
- Great Harvest Bread Co....** Wayne, PA
- Margaret Kuo's Restaurants...** Wayne, PA
- Melograno...** Philadelphia, PA
- Meridith's...** Berwyn, PA
- Philadelphia Fish & Co....** Philadelphia, PA
- Ristorante San Marco...** Ambler, PA
- Sprazzo Gelato Dolci Espresso Bar...** West Chester, PA
- Susanna Foo Chinese Cuisine...** Philadelphia, PA
- Suzette's Sweet Sensations...** Sewell, NJ
- The Cake Art Studio...** Paoli, PA
- Velvet Sky Bakery...** Jenkintown, PA
- Uncommon Taste Catering...** Philadelphia, PA
- White Dog Café...** Philadelphia, PA

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The Birth Center

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Mission Statement

The Birth Center, an independent nonprofit organization, is the premier community resource whose midwives and nurses provide women's health, birthing, and related services in a nurturing, home-like, family oriented setting. Our preeminent services and educational programs strengthen women of all ages and their families, empowering them to be active participants in healthcare decision-making throughout their lives. We welcome all women who desire our model of care regardless of their ability to pay.

TBC is a non-profit corp. registered with the PA Bureau of Charitable Orgs
800-732-0999

Phone: 610-525-6086

Fax: 610-525-6631

www.thebirthcenter.org



From the Executive Director

Dear friends:

This year marks TBC's 30th birthday, and it is going to be an exciting one!

We hope to implement a computerized client management system that will help reduce redundant, manual processes, and relieve our staff of burdensome paperwork. Thanks to the generosity of TBC donors and the McLean Contributionship, we are well on our way to funding this important project.

We'll be introducing TBC to a new audience of fundraising supporters through our April event 'Heart to Heart: A Conversation with Anna Quindlen'. We are already seeing an outpouring of community support. Our Honorary Committee includes some of the most prestigious women in the Philadelphia area. Talented women chefs and restaurateurs are enthusiastic about sharing their gourmet

creations at the event's Chef's Showcase. People are learning more about the importance of donating financially to TBC, and buying tickets for themselves and their friends.

At our event on April 17th we'll be debuting our new TBC video. Featuring our own clients, speaking in their own words. This is a beautiful, moving testament to the powerful ways in which TBC impacts the lives of the people we serve. It is rewarding to hear that they are stronger, more confident, knowledgeable, empowered women, couples, and better parents as a result of their experiences here.

For that is what we strive for every day.

I hope to see you at our special event on April 17th, and as always, thank you for your continued support of TBC.

Nancy Feldman Kirsh
Executive Director



Gazelle Lange, CNM and Holly Christensen, CNM were the generous hosts of a Cuban themed dinner to benefit The Birth Center's library. More than 30 guests enjoyed this festive evening. This photo features Gazelle and her husband Quint enjoying the delicious food from this dinner. We thank them and Holly for sponsoring this wonderful evening to benefit TBC!

Board Members Sought...

TBC is seeking enthusiastic, talented individuals to join the Board of Directors. This body governs and supports TBC, ensuring that it effectively carries out its mission.

We are specifically looking for individuals with expertise in finance, investment, insurance, legal, fundraising or community organizing; however, other skills may be considered. We also seek volunteers to serve on various Board committees.

If you would like to know more – please send a letter of interest and your resume to nancy@thebirthcenter.org.

Donations-in-Kind

Thank You for Your Thoughtfulness!

Samantha Cohen....baby scale

Mary Anne Diamond....Plants for Sherley's Garden

Lizette Senatore.... toys for waiting room

Vanessa Lee..... books for TBC library

What The Birth Center Means to Me...

By: Stephanie Vincent



Being a patient at TBC is unlike being a patient of any other medical office I have ever visited. My appointments happened at the time they

were scheduled. I was given my chart; yes it was actually my chart! During the appointments the midwives took their time, reviewing not only the physical aspects of my well-being but also the emotional. The empowering feeling I felt at my office visits continued into my birthing experience.

My plans for a natural birth were released at signs of fetal distress. As I went through hours of active labor in the hospital, nurses and doctors were in and out, but my midwife barely left my side. She explained every step of the process, including the need to go ahead with a c-section. In the operating room, upon her invitation, I wrapped my arms around her as I received the spinal injection. After my daughter was born it was my midwife who at the very moment it was possible handed the baby to my husband so she could be brought to my side and while still in the recovery room she brought my daughter to hold and breastfeed for the first time. Because my legs were still numb I couldn't get into a comfortable position to make my first attempts at breastfeeding. That's when she asked if she could latch the baby to my breast for me. In my daughter's very first hours we experienced the blessing of the first of many nursing sessions. Never once in the hospital did I feel separate from TBC. I can't know what the hospital experience would have been like without TBC by my side, but I am sure that things would have been different.

I have navigated the healthcare system twice as an advocate for family members as they dealt with life threatening illnesses. Sadly it is a healthcare system that the patient is often lost in. I found out that an alternative is possible after my experiences at TBC.

TBC has given me much more than assistance in the birth of my daughter. TBC has shown me what it feels like to be empowered in healthcare and in turn, trust myself more fully. The Birth Center is a role model for not only obstetrical and gynecological care but for the entire healthcare industry. Because of The Birth Center I am now an advocate for person-centered healthcare.

Updates in Women's Health Research

By: Peggy Stone, CNM, Director of Clinical Studies

The title may sound dull, but READ ON! This summary of developments in the field of women's health may be of great interest to you as a woman interested in staying healthy and vibrant.

EVEN MORE NEWS ON HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (HRT)

Just a couple of years ago, several large studies refuted the long held thought that long term HRT had a protective effect against heart disease. The studies presented evidence to support the idea that the risks did not outweigh the benefits when it came to heart disease. As a result, most practitioners stopped prescribing HRT, except for short term use, to ease the effects of menopausal symptoms. This short term use of HRT (usually defined as less than five years, at the lowest dose that works) has continued to be supported by studies, finding it safe and effective. Short term HRT in women in their 50s does not seem to increase the risk for breast cancer or cardiovascular disease. For women who have very bothersome symptoms which are not abated by other modalities, this may be reassuring news. For women whose symptoms are primarily vaginal, short term use of vaginal estrogen creams, rings, or tablets may be the most direct and safest route.

HOW TO AVOID DIABETES AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Don't give up on those New Year's resolutions yet! As you might have suspected, eating healthfully and exercising are the answer. A recent study showed that women who ate in accordance with the USDA 2005 Dietary Guidelines (emphasizing fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts, and limiting saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars) had a lower risk of diabetes. Another study looked at women prescribed an aerobic exercise routine, and found

that even those in the lowest intensity exercise group decreased their waist circumference. Since abdominal fat is associated with an increase risk for diabetes and heart disease, this clearly supports recommendations for women to engage in regular aerobic exercise. Carbohydrates also play a role in risk for cardiovascular disease. Eating foods with a higher glycemic index (the ranking of carbohydrates from 0 to 100 based on their immediate effect on blood glucose levels) is associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease. You can learn more about the glycemic index at www.glycemicindex.com.

NEED MORE HELP FOR PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME?

If you, or your sister or daughter, suffer from premenstrual symptoms such as breast tenderness, mood swings, bloating, and headaches, and feel like nothing helps, you might be interested in extended oral contraceptive use. A recent study compared those symptoms in women on a traditional monthly OCP (21 days of hormones/7 days no hormones) vs. women who took continuous active OCPs for 8 months. The safety of a continuous regimen of OCPs has been proven in a number of studies, and the FDA has recently approved a product that is packaged for this use (previously, we only had products that offered 3 months of continuous pills at a time.) This study showed decreased PMS symptoms in women who took continuous pills. Of course, this makes sense, since if there is no *menses*, there is no *premeneses*. Since the physiological reason for premenstrual symptoms is thought to be the abrupt drop in the hormones circulating during the rest of the cycle, keeping those hormones in a steady state is one way to avoid the symptoms.

If you have questions about any of these findings, and how they might apply to you, give us a call or make an appointment to see us. We will continue to strive to keep up with the research in women's health, in order to pass the information on to you!

McLean Contributionship Awards The Birth Center a \$35,000 Grant to Assist in our Technology Project

The McLean Contributionship has generously awarded The Birth Center a \$35,000 grant to help us purchase and implement a **comprehensive, computerized client management system**. This will automate many redundant, manual, paper-based processes at TBC, and allow our staff to continue to focus on what is most important – providing exceptional care to our clients.

We are very grateful to the McLean Contributionship for their generosity. Their donation, along with contributions from our generous

donors and Board of Directors, have us well on the way toward the over \$100,000 cost of this essential project. We are continuing to seek funding from other foundations to assist us in covering the remaining costs, and to help us implement this critical system as soon as possible.

We thank all who have contributed to our technology project so far. We look forward to continue to provide our exceptional, personalized care – with improved efficiencies behind the scenes.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES AT THE BIRTH CENTER

Director of Development – Full Time

We are looking for a highly motivated, results-oriented, energetic self-starter with strong fundraising and grant writing abilities.

Experience with:

- ◇ Corporate and foundation fundraising
- ◇ Annual giving
- ◇ Major gifts
- ◇ Donor stewardship
- ◇ Special events
- ◇ Public relations

If this sounds like you – or someone you know – send resume to nancy@thebirthcenter.org

Heart-to-Heart: A Conversation with Anna Quindlen continued from page 1

Meet dynamic women community leaders who are supporting TBC on the Honorary Committee for our special event!

We are fortunate to have an Honorary Committee for the event composed of prestigious women who each make a strong impact in our community.

Sheri Cole, Executive Director, The Career Wardrobe

Diane Croce, Community Volunteer and wife of entrepreneur Pat Croce

Jane Eisner, Vice President National Programs & Initiatives, National Constitution Center

Andrea Gilbert, Chief Executive Officer, Bryn Mawr Hospital

Karen Hepp, Anchor/Reporter, Fox News

Linda McAleer, President, The Melior Group

Margaret McGoldrick – Chief Operating Officer, Abington Memorial Hospital

Elizabeth Miller, Executive Director, Community Design Collaborative

April Pettinelli, Private Client Advisor, U.S. Trust, Bank of America Private Wealth Management

Honorable Allyson Y. Schwartz, United States Representative

Melissa Weiler Gerber, Executive Director, Women's Way

Judy Wicks, Founder, The White Dog Café

Honorable Constance H. Williams, Pennsylvania State Senator

Lynn H. Yeakel, Director, Institute for Women's Health and Leadership, Drexel University College of Medicine

Sherley Young, Founder of The Birth Center

Finally, we want to thank our very generous corporate sponsors for their support.

These sponsors include:

Gold

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Ortho Women's Health & Urology,

a division of Ortho McNeil Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

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Bronze

U.S. Trust, Bank of America

Private Wealth Management

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Tickets are now available! Online www.thebirthcenter.org - Phone (484) 381-3000 - Fax (610) 525-6947 - Mail - complete the form in this newsletter. Be sure to put it on your calendar and register now!


HEART TO HEART
a conversation with
Anna Quindlen

EVENT DETAILS

Date: Thursday, April 17, 2008

Location: The Park Hyatt Philadelphia
at the Bellevue
Broad and Walnut Streets
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102
215-893-1234

www.parkphiladelphia.hyatt.com for directions



- Agenda:**
- 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm – VIP Reception with Anna Quindlen (requires special ticket)
 - 6:00 pm – 7:15 pm – Chef's Showcase Gourmet Reception
 - 7:15 pm – 8:30 pm – Presentation: A Conversation with Anna Quindlen
 - 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm – Coffee Reception
- VIP Reception:** The VIP reception with Anna Quindlen, from 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm features cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Limited tickets available. (includes Chef's Showcase, Presentation and Coffee Reception)
- Chef's Showcase:** The Chef's Showcase will be from 6:00 pm – 7:15 pm and will feature a sampling of signature dishes from talented women chefs and restaurateurs from throughout the Delaware Valley.
- Presentation:** The personal, insightful interview of bestselling author Anna Quindlen by veteran journalist Jane Eisner begins at 7:15 pm.

To Reserve Tickets: www.thebirthcenter.org call (484) 381-3000 or send attached Registration Form with payment to TBC Development Office 918 County Line Road Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

Registration Form



Purchase Tickets Now for this Wonderful Evening to Benefit The Birth Center!
Options to purchase tickets: Complete form below and mail with payment to TBC Development Office 918 County Line Road Bryn Mawr, PA 19010; register online www.thebirthcenter.org, call 484-381-3000, or fax to 610-525-6631.

Name: _____

Company Name: _____ Title _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone _____ Email: _____

TICKET LEVELS

- _____ **Host \$2,500** – 10 Tickets for the VIP Reception, Chef Showcase, Presentation & Coffee Reception
 - _____ **Sponsor \$1,500** – 6 Tickets for the VIP Reception, Chef Showcase, Presentation & Coffee Reception
 - _____ **Patron \$750** – 10 Tickets for the Chef Showcase, Presentation & Coffee Reception
- Hosts, Sponsors and Patrons** will be recognized in the Program Book. Please check the way in which you would like to be recognized
- _____ By Name _____ By Business (name): _____ Both
- _____ **VIP \$500** – 2 Tickets for the VIP Reception, Chef Showcase, Presentation & Coffee Reception
 - _____ **Individual \$75** – Ticket for the Chef Showcase and Presentation. (Please indicate the number of tickets)
 - _____ I am unable to attend, but would like to make a tax-deductible gift of \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: _____

Is billing address same as above address? _____ Yes _____ No _____ VISA _____ MASTERCARD

Name on Card _____ Card Number _____ Exp Date: _____

Authorized Signature _____

Education Programs and Support Services

Preparation For Childbirth

A four-week course for first-time mothers and their partners covering the anatomy and physiology of labor and birth, natural pain coping strategies, unexpected outcomes and birth technology, postpartum and newborn care. Classes include mindfulness exercises, focused breathing, relaxation techniques, movement for labor, and partner support skills. Birth videos will be shown. Tuesdays or Wednesdays, 7:00-9:30PM - \$220 registration fee includes *Focus on Breastfeeding* class.

Focus On Breastfeeding

A one-session class offering detailed information on breastfeeding. Proper latch, positioning, nutrition, bonding and related issues are covered. Designed for *both* mother and partner (two can remember more than one!). Class held 2 times per month on Mondays or Thursdays, 7:00-9:30 PM. \$50 per couple if not taken as part of *Preparation for Childbirth*.

Childbirth Prep. Supplement

This is a one-time class for first-time mothers and their partners who have taken childbirth preparations outside of TBC. It covers TBC protocols and policies, the roles of nurses and midwives, hospital care if needed and postpartum care. The class is scheduled on an as-needed basis on Monday or Thursday from 7-9PM. \$50 per couple.

Childbirth Refresher

A one-session class for parents who have previously given birth but want to refresh their memory and learn some new approaches. Includes an overview of labor and delivery, coping techniques, the role of nurses and midwives, TBC policies, hospital transfer if necessary, and your postpartum stay. Mondays or Thursdays, 7:00-9:30 p.m. \$50 per couple.

Prenatal Yoga

Classes combine safe and gentle yoga stretches with relaxation and bonding exercises to prepare the body, mind and spirit for childbirth. Held in Bryn Mawr

Hospital's Clothier Building Living Room Thursdays 7:00-8:15 p.m. Bring a mat or towel. The cost is \$60 for 6 week series. Call **Kim Eckler** 610-996-9178 or email to kimeckler@hotmail.com.

Pregnancy Loss Counseling

Led by **Lydia Prass, MS**. Held as needed at no charge. Call Lydia at 610-527-6116 to register.

Sibling Preparation Class (2-4 year olds)

This one-session class focuses on interaction between parent and child. Class activities lead toward discussion of what it's like being a big sister or big brother, what a new baby is like, and what happens when a new baby enters the family. Circle times reinforce these concepts. A birth video is *not* shown. (If you want video, note on the registration form.) See schedule for availability. \$50 registration fee includes activity book for first child; add \$10 for each additional child.

Sibling & Birth Preparation Class (5-11 year olds)

This one-session class includes discussion of the birth process, characteristics of and caring for babies and what happens in families when new babies join them. The discussion is augmented with pictures and activities. A birth video *will* be shown. (If you do not want this, note on the registration form.) See schedule for availability. \$50 registration fee includes activity book for first child; add \$10 for each additional child.

Teen Sibling Class

This expectant sibling class follows a discussion format, and is augmented by pictures and informational activities. More advanced discussion of birth, infant care and family dynamics is facilitated. Geared towards answering questions teens may have approaching the birth of a new sibling. A parent should attend with child. Scheduled as needed - \$50 registration fee.

Infant Massage

For infants 3 weeks to crawling. Learn step by step techniques which help infants learn to relax in response to healthy touch.

No additional charge for dads or other family members. \$50 for 3 sessions includes handouts. To register, call **Nancy Nagle, DC** at (610) 525-4204 or send email to nancy.nagle@att.net.

Lactation Consultation

TBC nurse, Patty Siegrist, is a Board Certified Lactation Consultant, available for special breastfeeding needs or problems. You can reach Patty at 610-525-6106.

TBC Breast Feeding Support Groups

Two locations... both facilitated by **Patty Siegrist, RN, IBCLC**. Bring pillows if needed.

West Philadelphia - @ University City Arts League, 4226 Spruce Street. Meets every other Wednesday at 10:00 AM from January through May.

Rosemont Plaza - - 1062 Lancaster Ave, Rosemont. Meets every other Thursday from 9:30AM- 11:00AM for babies and 11AM- 12:30PM for mobile babies.

Fourth Trimester Moms

Bring your baby (0-6 months) as well as feelings, questions and concerns about yourselves, your relationships, and your baby. Learn baby songs and games. Sessions meet Friday mornings (10:00-11:30 am) for 5 weeks. To register, call **Lydia Prass, MS, 610-527-6116**. The fee is \$60.

Effective Parenting "Parent Quest"

Take advantage of a generous grant from the Phoebe Haas Trust which covers 50% of tuition for Birth Center clients \$75 per person, \$110 per couple (including textbook). This seven week series focuses on children from 3-11 years. Learn effective methods of behavior management and how to encourage communication and cooperation. Course meets at TBC on Friday evenings from 7:30-9:30 pm. Open to the public, but at full tuition. Scholarships are available upon request. To register, please call **Family Forum, Inc. (610) 964-0004**. Instructor, Julie Kimsey-Carroll, is a Birth Center mom.

YOUR BIRTH CENTER NEWSLETTER IS HERE!!



Strategic Planning Update

Following an exciting BOD/staff retreat that looked carefully at the current organization as well as our future opportunities, the BOD and staff are excited to present TBC's new mission statement:

The Birth Center, an independent nonprofit organization, is the premier community resource whose midwives and nurses provide women's health, birthing, and related services in a nurturing, home-like, family oriented setting. Our preeminent services and educational programs strengthen women of all ages and their families, empowering them to be active participants in healthcare decision-making throughout their lives. We welcome all women who desire our model of care regardless of their ability to pay.

This new mission statement better captures the extensive array of services already provided at TBC and paves the way for

expansion of our educational, support and advocacy services to other communities.

It has never been more important to support TBC....maternity services in our area are disappearing....choices for natural birth are very limited....the Cesarean rate nationally is almost 33%....quality breastfeeding support is hard to find....women continue to be poorly informed. TBC is a home for birthing...but also a home for information and support.

The strategic planning committee is looking for new members. If you would like to be more involved, please email our Executive Director Nancy Feldman Kirsh at nancy@thebirthcenter.org.

Margot Bradley, Past President
Member: TBC Board of Directors