



AIMS pays tribute to Stephen Gaskin & Mary Ann Cahill

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Stephen Gaskin

AIMS was saddened to hear of the death of Stephen Gaskin (16 February 1935 – 1 July 2014) in July. Stephen was the husband of our sister, long-term AIMS supporter and protector of women's birthing rights, Ina May Gaskin.

Together with a small group of like-minded activists in 1970, Stephen and Ina May founded The Farm, a spiritual intentional community in Summertown, Tennessee with an international reputation for spiritual, woman-centred midwifery with unrivalled outcomes.

Stephen was a prominent American counterculture icon and self-labelled professional Hippie. He was a freethinker, author of over a dozen books, a political activist and a philanthropic organiser. He was also an acclaimed speaker on magic, energy, life in community and service to humanity.

On his leadership of The Farm, he famously said: *'I'm a teacher, not a leader. If you lose your leader, you're leaderless and lost, but if you lose your teacher there's a chance that he taught you something and you can navigate on your own.'*

He was possibly most well known in the UK as US Green Party presidential primary candidate in 2000, with a manifesto including campaign finance reform, universal healthcare, and decriminalisation of marijuana.

AIMS sends our condolences to Ina May and to the rest of Stephen's family, friends and community.

Mary Ann Cahill

AIMS also pays tribute to Mary Ann Cahill (10 June 1927 – 26 October 2014), one of the seven founders of La Leche League.

Giving birth, breastfeeding and mothering became the foundation of La Leche League, an organisation that spread, from a small group of mothers offering grass-roots support in 1956, to become an international organisation at the forefront of breastfeeding promotion, support and education.

LLL describe Mary Ann's talent for connecting people and quote her as saying: *'My first love was always with the group, meeting with other mothers, sharing the wonders of babies and breastfeeding.'*

Mary Ann was a true pioneer in the field of peer support, that vitally important network of women

simply supporting other women. The power of such a gift should not be underestimated, nor should the difference that simple act of reaching out can make. Mary Ann understood, and it may well be one of the reasons that LLL has reached so many women and made a difference to so many mothers and babies over the years.