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## Plum Bites

Fall 2011

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### Best of the Web

*This issue we bring you a new feature - some of our favourite birthy news bites from around the web.*



The harvest moon large and lovely near the horizon.  
(wikipedia)

It's that time of year again: gardens are full; farmers are bringing in their crops. The harvest is a time of feasting, of thanksgiving, of tasting the fruits of our labours. With the plentiful overlap between harvest and childbearing metaphors, it is not surprising that the harvest tends to turn our minds to childbirth.

***This month as we enjoy the harvest in our gardens and on our tables, we think also of the many ripe bellies and new babies in our midst.***

***Wishing a Happy Fall & Bountiful Harvest to our friends & clients from everyone at Plum!***

### What's New at Plum?

#### Comings...

We have a new midwife on our team!! Cat de Cent joined us at the beginning of September. You'll find her bio and photo below.

Alison Wurts returned from maternity leave to continue her work in the Plum office, including keeping you informed of Plum news through our newsletter and Facebook page.

#### ...and Goings

Our lovely midwife, Jessie Shannon has returned to school to complete her nursing degree. She left on this educational leave at the beginning of September and we all miss her dearly already.

### Meet McMaster's First Male Midwife

Otis Kryzanasuskas is all set to be the first male graduate of the Bachelor of Midwifery program at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont.

[read more...](#)

### One World Birth

Check out this great new free website - [One World Birth](#) - featuring videos with experts on normal birth including Ina May Gaskin, Michel Odent, Sheila Kitzinger and more.

### Free Webcast of Birth, the play

**BOLD** is a global movement to make maternity care mother-friendly. In honour of their 5th anniversary, they are offering free webcasts of their play *Birth* on **September 24** (multiple show times).

The documentary-style play is based on over 100 interviews with mothers across America about their birth experiences. Click [here](#) to reserve your spot to watch online.

### Plum Babies

**Do You Like Us??**

For those of you who enjoy Facebook, come over and check out our Facebook page. We will be posting Plum news, interesting articles and news stories. **We would be thrilled if you would drop us a line, share your baby photos, post questions and help us make it a vibrant space for everyone who "likes" us.**

Like us on Facebook 

**Welcome Cat**

*Midwife Cat de Cent joins Plum Midwifery this month. All of our clients will have a chance to meet her over the coming weeks. For our friends and past clients, read on to learn more about Cat.*

I was born into the hands of midwives in Penzance, England and have been interested in midwifery ever since. After apprenticing at a birthing center in El Paso, Texas, I worked as a second birth attendant in Kingston, Ontario before deciding to pursue my Bachelor in Health Sciences in Midwifery at Ryerson University. After graduation, I moved to Abbotsford, BC and practiced with the Valley Midwifery Group before relocating to Vancouver Island to spend more time with my daughter and run around in the forests.



Cat de Cent, RM.

I live in Cumberland now and am delighted to return to midwifery after taking a break and living all over this beautiful province as a tree planting cook. I am very much looking forward to meeting all of the wonderful families coming to Plum Midwives.

**Magnificent Mamas - Jesse Buchanan**

*A spotlight on some amazing women as they reflect on what they do and how midwifery care affected them.*



Visit our [website](#) for photos

**June 2011**

Elleeny, 7Lb 14.5oz  
Opal & Beckett,  
6 Lb 4 oz & 6 Lb 10 oz  
Emma Joy, 8Lb 9oz  
Kai, 8Lb 5oz  
Jessie, 6Lb 14oz  
Kohen, 9Lb 6oz

**July 2011**

Colin, 8Lb 7oz  
Baby Girl, 8Lb 7.4oz  
Liam, 7 Lb 13 oz  
Perrin, 7 Lb 13 oz  
Elyse, 7Lb 12oz

**August 2011**

Baby Boy, 8Lb 15oz  
Emma Jane, 7Lb 7oz  
Nova, 8Lb  
Koda, 7Lb 1oz  
Reef, 9Lb 14.5oz  
Bror, 6Lb 10.5oz  
Dominic, 7Lb 15oz

**We want to feature your beautiful babe!**

Click [here](#) to email us a photo of your little one!

**Prenatal Classes**

We are proud to offer prenatal classes at Plum with Catherine Quaglia.

[Sign up](#) now for Birthing From Within fall classes:

**November 4, 5 & 6  
Plum Midwifery Clinic  
Comox, BC**



I am the mother of three cute kiddos 6, 4, and 13 months. All three

of my births were attended by midwives and doulas. When I became pregnant with my first I had a friend who insisted that I look into having a midwife as my care provider. I am so grateful to her for bringing it to my attention. I am a person who likes to know exactly what is going on and the midwifery model of care was the perfect fit for me and all my questions. Now I try to 'pay it forward' by spreading the word about modern midwifery care, and also what doulas can bring to your birth. **Who I am today is the result of my experiences during my first birth and what I learned about myself that day...I did it!! Now I feel capable of doing anything I put my mind to.**

Inspired by our first Doula, I became a doula myself, and I have happily been attending births for five years now. Having my daughter six years ago showed me my dream job, gave me my voice, and clarified my passion in addition to bringing so much richness to my life through her delightful presence. I became a certified birth doula with DONA just over two years ago and am considering becoming more active as a volunteer with that organization.

I call the Comox Valley home, and was born at St. Joseph's in Comox. After a few years away, my family and I moved back here four years ago. Since then I have been an active member of the [Comox Valley Doulas](#), working very hard to raise the profile of doulas in our community: You may have seen us walking in many local parades with silly smiles on our faces. I administer the CVD webpage, and truly enjoy the camaraderie and competence of this group of caring women. I am proud of the respectful relationship we have earned within the local birthing community.

As well as working as a birth and postpartum doula I helped found the [Bellies Birth & Babies Fair](#) which was developed by the CVD four years ago. We wanted to bring together all of our community's resources, services and vendors that cater to pregnant women and families with young children. I am now the producer of this event,

which attracts well over 400 interested people, and showcases midwifery and doula services.

I am also a passionate breastfeeding advocate and am helping organize [our community's site](#) for the [Quintessence breastfeeding challenge](#) taking place on October 1st.

I love this work, and can't think of anything (aside from caring for my own children) that is more important to me. **I am doing what I can to clear away all of the negative imagery, stories, and info out there for my clients and put the focus back on birth being a normal, natural, safe and beautiful event in a family's life.** I look forward to being a part of many more births in the Comox Valley - it is such a wonderful gift to be present when a new life comes forth into this world. I think the term used for giving birth in Spanish is so appropriate : *dar un luz* - literally, to give a light.

### **Birth Stories - Nigel, Nicole and Nova Dawkins**

*Our clients share their journeys into the realm of parenthood, where they find their expectations defied and lives forever changed.*

We were blessed with our baby; Nova Irie Meadow Dawkins on August 16, 2011 at 3:11am.



On the morning of August 15 (our due date), I had some cramping while out with friends at the park. I did not want to get my hopes up, as for the past few weeks I was having Braxton hicks-- which would get me excited, but lead nowhere. However, these cramps turned out to be different!

The cramping I was having earlier on that day seemed to come and go, but did not disappear completely.. As the day went on, I started thinking that maybe this was the real thing!!

Nigel (my husband) and I were watching television, just trying to relax as we were expecting family members from out of town to arrive the next day. During a commercial I got up to get a glass of water and there was a gush of fluid that ran down my leg. I instantly was ecstatic! "..this must be my waters-and they have broken!" I cheered to Nigel. He gave me a huge smile and said, "this is it". I decided to call my midwives to tell them... thinking it would still be a long time

before they would need to come to our house. But that didn't matter, as I was thrilled and had to tell someone. Katie (the midwife on call) decided to come by to test the PH level, to ensure that in fact, it was my waters that broke.. and sure enough, it was.

We had a very straight forward home birth... but intense and fast- My waters broke at 5:30ish pm on the 15th (right on time!). Katie came over about 8pm to check on me and confirmed that my waters had broken and that I was in labour. She offered to stay, but I told her I was okay and that we would call her when the labour had progressed.

My contractions really picked up about 9pm... I spend until 10:30pm lying on the couch or on my bed, grabbing a pillow to support me through the contractions. At about 10:30 pm Nigel and I decided it was time to call Katie. She answered and said she was waiting to hear from us! She arrived promptly and began to set up her supplies and help Nigel fill the birthing tub.

During the labour I surprised myself. I thought I would be quiet, relatively calm and go inside myself. I was the opposite! It felt like a very primal experience-I was loud, groaning-howling at times. Everything felt very raw and wild. I thought I would want gentle massaging touch, the sounds of Nigel playing guitar and the two of us spiritually chanting. What I ended up wanting was; not to be massaged, I never requested Nigel to sing to me, and we did not chant together. I found my comfort in holding and squeezing Nigel's hand or fingers, gripping the handles of the birthing tub and calling out from the depth of my soul. A few times Nigel did put calming, spiritual music on the stereo, which helped-but I could not find the words to ask for it.

I found myself asking Katie for many updates and looking into Nigel's eyes for strength. The encouraging words of Katie and Nigel kept me going after each contraction as they became more intense and closer together. Plus, the endless supply of ice chips they gave me came in handy. As I asked Katie for updates, I would hope for different answers each time.. sometimes I got different answers and sometimes I got the same answer.. as I was repeatedly asking the same question - How much longer?! Tee hee...

I spent most of the labour in the birthing tub and that is where Nova was born. She was born about 3:00 am, weighing 8 lbs and with her beautiful eyes wide open.

When Nova came through the birth canal and out into the water it felt totally surreal and distant. By that point I felt like I was in a trance and was not physically or spiritually present. Then I heard Katie's words, "Nicole, pick up your baby". Minutes before, Katie had told me Nova was coming and to be ready to have her passed to me through my legs, as Katie was going to catch her in the water. However, I was not there, not right away-but when I processed Katie's words I grabbed little Nova and instantly was back in the room.

I thought I would cry as soon as I saw her... Tears of pure love.. but I was in shock.. I just held her and scanned the room to look at Nigel and our two dogs (they had come downstairs to meet the baby!). By then, the second midwife had arrived and was offering to help me

out of the pool. This, of course was after I had time with our little one on my chest, still physically connected to me (Wow, what a magical feeling that was). The tears came the second Katie gave Nova to Nigel. That was my pure love moment-seeing the man I loved holding our daughter. It was the vision of our family and that we had just gone through a profound, beautiful, intimate experience together. We were instantly connected on such a higher level of love and unity.



After Katie got us all tucked in and helped me breastfeed, we had our first sleep as a new family: Nigel, Nicole, baby Nova and our 2 doggies.

During the 9 months of carrying little Nova, we had a chance to explore our hopes and fears around her birth. I was fearful that I would end up in the hospital needing a caesarean. I was fearful that I would tear my perineum. I was fearful that I would give up on myself during the labour and lose the strength to get through it.



I couldn't feel more blessed that NONE of my fears became a reality. I couldn't have asked for a smoother birth. I also couldn't have had a better support team. I feel so thankful and blessed that Katie was on-call when I went into labour. We were thrilled that she was the

one that guided, supported and delivered our Nova to us. I believe it all unfolded as it was meant to. Our birth story was already written for us.

And so it is.. thank you universe.

**Thank you to our clients. You are why we love what we do--even at 3:00 in the morning.**

Sincerely,

Joanne, Emma, Katie & Cat.

**Plum Midwifery**

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