

NAAFA NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION TO AID FAT AMERICANS, INC.

P. O. BOX 745

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SANTA CLAUS JOINS NAAFA

Santa Claus has been awarded an Honorary Life Membership in NAAFA, an honor that most will agree that he deserves! There is no question that Santa Claus is the most famous fat man in the Western World, and has brought joy to millions of children for a long time.

The Santa Claus that NAAFA is honoring at this time is in the person of Lucky S. Squire S.C., the top professional Santa in the U.S. He lives in the metropolitan New York area, but makes appearances everywhere, and has been seen by everyone. Record album covers, Coca-Cola advertisements, United Air Lines ads, the David Frost show, Merv Griffin, and many other appearances have kept his face before the public, especially at Christmas time!

After becoming an ordained minister, Mr. Squire acquired the S.C. after his name (which is his professional name, and not the one under which he is ordained) by attending the Santa Claus college located in Albion, N.Y. He was the only graduating member of his class with a real beard, and the photograph shown is his actual appearance, both on screen and off (without the suit, of course.)

Mr. Squire originally became interested in NAAFA after visiting our booth last year at the National Health Federation convention in New York. He has long been interested in health matters, and in dietary problems, and NAAFA's approach appeals to him.

LOUDERBACK IN PAGEANT MAGAZINE

NAAFA's former Vice-President, Llewellyn Louderback, has had a chapter from his forthcoming book published in the Jan. issue of Pageant magazine. The book, entitled Fat Power, published by Hawthorn Books, will be out some-time in January.

BLOWERS ASSUMES VICE-PRESIDENCY

William L. Blowers, member of the Board of Directors, and a signer of the NAAFA Constitution in June, 1969, has been elected Vice-President by vote of the Board. He brings with him a thorough understanding of NAAFA's goals and capabilities, having been involved with our program for so long.

Mr. Blowers is employed as an Electronics Engineer in Newburgh, N.Y., and is married to Susan A. Blowers, also a Board member. They have three children.

Mr. Blowers is replacing Llewellyn Louderback, who resigned last month.

EDITOR ON LEAVE

Meg Gwynne has taken a leave of absence as Editor of the NEWSLETTER. The editorship of the NEWSLETTER continues partly under Joyce Fabrey, with Carol Piesner and Marvin Grosswirth being added. All three are Co-Editors.

OVERWEIGHT by Jean Mayer, Prentice Hall, 1968. Special Edition for Consumer Reports Readers \$2.00.

review by R. Markle

"Obesity is not a sin. At most, it is the consequence of errors of omission, the result of not having kept up the life-long battle against an inherited predisposition and against an environment which combines constant exposure to food with the removal of any need to work for it physically," notes Jean Mayer in what must rank as a highly objective work on the topic of overweight.

This dispassionate study is valuable because it provides a voice of sanity counterbalancing the shameful witchhunt carried on by so many otherwise responsible people, including some in the medical profession, against fat people in America. Jean Mayer is a nationally recognized nutritionist, who received his Ph.D at Yale University, D. Sc. at the Sorbonne, and an honorary A.M. at Harvard. Since 1950 he has been on the Harvard faculty and is now Professor of Nutrition and Lecturer in the History of Public Health there. In June, 1969, he was appointed Special Consultant to the President of the United States and put in charge of organizing the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health.

Dr. Mayer is a researcher who has devoted a considerable amount of time to the study of overweight. He clearly does not believe that, all factors considered, overweight is medically good for people. But he challenges the statistical standards for overweight typically used, and is vigorous in his condemnation of those in the medical world who see a matter of losing weight as merely an easy problem of will-power. He notes also that the record of those excessively heavy who rapidly take off weight is dismal..they usually put it back on again, with possible damage to their health.

The most telling point in Mayer's book, to this reader, at least, is his belief that persons may have a hereditary tendency towards overweight. In laboratory tests with mice, Dr. Mayer scientifically proved that a tendency towards overweight

is a characteristic that may be inherited. If it is true for animals, why not people? "Twin" studies seem to bear this out.

This leaves these overweight people with a predisposition to that condition with a lonely, lifelong battle which their more favored fellow men need not fight. Mayer makes it clear that there are other reasons for overweight, including cultural, psychological, life styles which include little exercise, and personal habits which may aggravate the condition.

He notes: "We know that obesity runs in families, involving genetic as well as environmental factors. But we don't know how much of this tendency in a particular case is due to inherited factors and how much is a result of a homely tradition of piling high the festive board and clearing it. Some of these points are particularly applicable to adolescents. Studies in Massachusetts High Schools have shown that less than 10% of the children of parents of normal weight are obese. But the proportion rises to 40% if one parent is obese, and to 80% if both parents are obese. We have indicated that studies of identical and fraternal twins, some of whom were raised in different households, have shown that food habits are not the only factors involved."

Yet, of course, weight reducing clubs and many physicians act as if heredity were not a factor. One of the values of Mayer's work is to give strong evidence from a reputable source that heredity is a factor in many cases of overweight. It can no longer be ignored.

If, as now seems clear, heredity is a factor, then to some extent it can be as much out of the individual's control as skin color or a prominent nose. Oh yes, the fat man (or woman) can constantly diet, just as the brown skinned man could use "yeller fellah" or the girl with a prominent nose could have it cosmetically adjusted (or bobbed). In all three cases, the individual has to make efforts to conform to a norm that his more fortunate fellows in society do not have to make.

(continued on page 3)

(OVERWEIGHT con't from page 2)

Now, unlike skin color, weight may contribute to medical problems. But so can other hereditary conditions. The point is, when it is recognized that overweight in some people may be inherited, some of the social stigma attached to that condition will be seen as being as arbitrary as prejudice against blacks, or browns, or other people who are "different."

Since weight can clearly be a medical problem in some cases, Dr. Mayer recommends methods of taking it off (but there are many people who from personal taste prefer the ample figure and would argue that the deficits --pardon the pun--don't outweigh the benefits of excess weight). He is equally clear in condemning rapid diet techniques, and most self-proclaimed authorities on the subject.

Finally, he notes that the social stigma today attached to overweight (thanks in part to "experts" who have denied hereditary and other factors) may cause serious psychological problems, particularly in the young (and more particularly in women).

Not all NAAFA members will agree with everything written in Overweight. However, it poses a potent rebuttal to the simplistic views on weight held within the medical profession. It should be read by every doctor, as well as every layman seriously interested in the subject.

--R. Markle

OVERWEIGHT - WF review

Mayer confirms, with this book, his reputation as one of the leading authorities in the field of overweight and weight control. His comprehensive treatment of the subject (including cultural factors) is very refreshing, especially coming from a medical researcher of his stature. You cannot truly consider yourself well-informed on the medical aspects of overweight unless you have read Mayer's book. His objectivity does not favor any particular point of view; he leaves many conclusions up to the reader, contenting himself with presenting the pertinent evidence, even when the evidence is sometimes self-contradictory. (con't. p.4)

NAAFA BOOKSTORE STARTED

"FAT POWER" AVAILABLE

This department of NAAFA has begun as a service to members who want a place to obtain "fat" books at less expense, and without the trouble (and for some, embarrassment) of getting them through a regular bookstore, a procedure which for some editions can take weeks or more. Only those books which have been favorably reviewed in the NEWSLETTER will be sold, although complete agreement with NAAFA's position is never required.

As yet, only one book has become available, although more will be added soon. LOUDERBACK'S FAT POWER can be ordered for 17% off its retail price of \$5.95 (to readers of this NEWSLETTER). Although it won't be reviewed until January, this new book, hot off the presses, looks so good that the bookstore is immediately offering it for sale. Send check or money order of \$4.95. Allow 1 - 2 weeks for delivery; we pay postage.

LOCAL CHAPTERS BEING FORMED

The Membership Committee has set up a procedure for the forming of Local Chapters, and they are now being formed. Naturally, how soon your area gets a Local Chapter depends on the number of members in the area (minimum: 3), and how much initiative is shown by one or more of those members.

NAAFA membership extends throughout the United States and Canada, and there are many areas that qualify for a Local Chapter.

Would you like to help form one? Even if you've written to NAAFA about this before, take the time to write again; we now have a special group handling these requests and your request will be answered with a kit of materials which include everything you need to know.

NEWSLETTER NOTES

This issue, the NEWSLETTER is dated as Dec. and Jan. This is just recognition of the fact that we have been printing at the end of each month. The next issue will come out at the beginning of Feb, and will be dated Feb.

Also, before March we hope to shift to a more readable type, and to an 8 page format. Please be patient with our experiments!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

William J. Fabrey

I'm glad that we are ready now for Local Chapters and Computer Dating (an experimental program, at least.) NAAFA has come a long way since it was formed in June, 1969 by a handful of people. We have progressed to a national membership of around 250, and it is continuing to increase. Of course, that is still a tiny number compared to what it can and will be.

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NAAFA is conducting programs like these for more than just social or recreational purposes. Our corporate charter makes it clear that we are devoted to solving the problems of fat people in as many ways as possible. Social activities are an important means of improving the lot of our members.

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I am reading the advance copy of Lew Louderback's fantastic book, Fat Power. I haven't finished it yet, but it is obviously the best book ever written on the subject. We will review it next month.

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Although there is nothing in this issue about clothing, there is a lot going on in that area right now. The next issue will elaborate on how we are trying to improve the clothing picture, which is, to judge by the mail that we receive, a dismal problem for many of our members!

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OVERWEIGHT (con't from p.3)

The cultural references to overweight and society are amazing; the portions of the book dealing with medical research sometimes read like a detective story. The doctor spends 5% of his time talking about bad effects of overweight, and 95% of his time challenging the old cliches and assumptions about being fat.

Perhaps the only bad thing about the book is that when it was in hard cover, it wasn't promoted, so the general public never heard much about it. Now it is available to members of Consumer's Union in paperback, but still there is no public promotion or distribution otherwise. It's a shame. --WJF

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CONSTITUTION PRINTED

After a long delay, the NAAFA Constitution has been printed for distribution to all members. If you do not receive a copy, please write for one.

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COMPUTER DATING PILOT PROGRAM NEARLY READY

The first experimental program, called "NAAFA-DATE" is almost ready to begin. According to Carole S. Lubin, Chairman of the Computer Dating Committee, the first program will be conducted in the Greater New York area, with all NAAFA members living in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut automatically receiving application material, within several weeks. All others who would like to be placed on the list to receive the material for any reason should write to NAAFA-DATE. Carole stressed that the program is experimental, but will probably be a lot of fun for the participants. Great pains are being taken to make it a worthwhile program.

Reproduced here is a copy of the application form to be used shortly.

Carole requests that anyone who would like to help run the program, at her address in the Bronx, N.Y., should contact her soon. A background in computers is not required, since the first program is a McBee-type card sort.

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NAAFA BOX 745 WESTBURY, N.Y. 11590 NAAFA-DATE QUESTIONNAIRE (NEW YORK PILOT PROGRAM) please answer all questions		
1. NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____ ZIP _____		
2. Shall we furnish _____ address only, _____ phone only, or _____ both address & phone to your matches? I agree that NAAFA-DATE merely matches registrants and supplies names and addresses and/or telephone numbers, and will not be held responsible for the character of applicants. I understand that all information will be held strictly confidential.		
_____ signature (APPLICATION NOT PROCESSED UNLESS SIGNED, AND ALL QUESTIONS ANSWERED)		
5. What is your sex? _____ MALE _____ FEMALE		for office use only _____ for office use only _____
In questions 4 thru 9 you will find columns for two sets of answers. In the first column (YOU), check the ONE box that most closely describes you. In the second column (DATE), describe your choice of dates by checking AS MANY boxes as appeal to you. If all the choices for a date appeal to you, check the line "No Pref."		
4. AGE YOU DATE 18 to 21 _____ 21 to 25 _____ 25 to 30 _____ 30 to 35 _____ 35 to 40 _____ 40 to 45 _____ 45 to 50 _____ 50 to 60 _____ 60 to 70 _____ Over 70 _____ No Pref. _____	6. WEIGHT (POUNDS) YOU DATE Under 100 _____ 100 to 125 _____ 125 to 150 _____ 150 to 175 _____ 175 to 200 _____ 200 to 250 _____ 250 to 300 _____ 300 to 400 _____ Over 400 _____ No Pref. _____	8. RELIGION YOU DATE Protestant _____ Catholic _____ Jewish _____ Other _____ None _____ No Pref. _____
5. HEIGHT YOU DATE Under 4'9" _____ 4'9" to 5'0" _____ 5'0" to 5'3" _____ 5'3" to 5'6" _____ 5'6" to 5'9" _____ 5'9" to 6'0" _____ 6'0" to 6'3" _____ 6'3" to 6'6" _____ Over 6'6" _____ No Pref. _____	7. EDUCATION-HIGHEST LEVEL COMPLETED YOU DATE Grammar School _____ High School _____ Some College, _____ Business, or _____ Technical School _____ College Graduate _____ Advanced Degree _____ No Pref. _____	9. ETHNIC BACKGROUND YOU DATE Caucasian (White) _____ Afro-American _____ Spanish-American _____ Oriental _____ Other _____ No Pref. _____
10. Do you have any physical handicaps? No _____ Yes _____		
11. Would you date a handi- capped person? No _____ Yes _____		

ISSUE DELAYED

Due to various problems and the holiday rush, this issue was delayed two weeks. Our apologies to you and to Santa Claus (see first page). HAPPY NEW YEAR!