



NAAFA Newsletter

Official Publication of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance

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Fat Girl Clothing Swap (benefits FLARE), Sunday, November 11, 2007, www.fabandfat.com

Carson's Ribs Restaurant Social Luncheon, Chicago NAAFA, Sunday, November 18, 2007, groups.yahoo.com/group/TheChicagoChapterofNAAFA

Chapter Meeting, NAAFA Los Angeles, Sunday, November 25, 2007, groups.yahoo.com/group/naafala, 1-888-NAAFALA

'50s and '60s Oldies Sock Hop Dance, Chicago NAAFA, Sunday, December 2, 2007, groups.yahoo.com/group/TheChicagoChapterofNAAFA

Pajama Holiday Dance, Capital NAAFA, Saturday, December 8, 2007, www.capitalnaafa.org

Holiday Party and 2008 Election, Chicago NAAFA, Saturday, December 15, 2007, groups.yahoo.com/group/TheChicagoChapterofNAAFA

New Years Eve Dance, Capital NAAFA, Monday, December 31, 2007, www.capitalnaafa.org

Chapter Meeting, Rocky Mountain NAAFA, Date TBA, groups.yahoo.com/group/rmnaafa

Chapter Meeting, New York City NAAFA, Date TBA,

Fat Hatred Is Contagious

by Deb Lemire, Member of the Association of Size Diversity and Health, www.sizediversityandhealth.org

[Author's Note: Tremendous thanks go to Linda Bacon and Lily O'Hara and their work as I shamelessly stole from it to make my point!]

A report on the study that appeared in the *New England Journal of Medicine* this July draws the conclusion that "obesity appears to spread through social ties." (NEJM Volume 357:370-379, July 26, 2007, Number 4.) The recommended remedy is to avoid having fat friends.

Up until now as a collective community we have ignored the fact that over the recent decades the average increase in weight has only been about 6-11 pounds. Hardly epidemic proportions.

We have ignored the fact that according to the World Health Organization, the U.S. is not even in the top 10 fattest populations in the world (U.S. ranks 20th)

We have ignored the fact that overweight people live as long as "normal" weight people and some studies suggest longer than thinner people.

We have ignored the fact that the majority of those that diet regain the lost weight and often more.

We have ignored the fact that science has never shown that losing weight prolongs life, although some studies show intentional weight loss increases risk of dying early from certain diseases-not to mention high risk surgeries.

We have ignored the fact that health indicators, such as insulin sensitivity and cholesterol levels can be improved through changing health behaviors regardless of whether weight changes.

We have ignored the fact that if we truly cared about the health of fat people we would make sure they had equal access to health coverage so they could obtain affordable, appropriate health care instead of denying them based on their weight.

But, we can *no longer ignore* that the escalation of obesity hysteria now infringes on the human rights that all people can and should expect according to The International Bill of Human Rights.

People are being denied healthcare, housing, employment, personal safety and dignity, and now, apparently, the right to personal relationships based on their BMI.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states (parenthesis and emphasis are added):



groups.yahoo.com/group/NYC-NAAFA

Chapter Meeting, SF Bay Area
NAAFA, Date TBA,
groups.yahoo.com/group/sfba-fat-hub

National NAAFA Convention, July
9-13, 2008, Los Angeles,
www.naafa.org (details to come)

Quick Links Our Website

:: 916-558-6880

Article 1: All human beings (including fat human beings) are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and *should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.*

Article 2: Everyone (including fat ones) is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, *without distinction of any kind*, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 3: All people (including fat people) have the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 5: No one (including fat patients and fat children) shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 12: No one (including fat public figures) shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation.

Article 17: (1) Everyone (every fat one) has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one (fat person) shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 23: Everyone (including fat employees) has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to *just and favorable conditions* of work and to protection against unemployment. Everyone (including fat employees) *without any discrimination*, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

Discrimination is wrong, period. Maybe you are not a fat person or you don't have any fat people in your life you care about, so you figure you don't need to do anything about this. But if pseudoscience can be used to justify shunning fat people, who's next?

R.I.P. Rob "Noodles" Johnson

by Peggy Howell, NAAFA Public Relations Chair

It is with a very sad heart that I have to share with you the loss of a dear friend, Rob "Noodles" Johnson. Noodles died following a motorcycle accident in Florida in August 2007.



If you attended the 2005 NAAFA convention in San Mateo, you will remember Noodles because he was our "knight in shining armor" that entire week. He was an avid supporter of size acceptance and selflessly volunteered his time to assist us, acting as part of the security team for our convention. He was there to offer a warm smile, a kind word or a helping hand to every one of us.

Noodles left behind a young daughter, a loving mother, several siblings, an extended family and multitude of friends who will feel the loss of his love and kindness in their lives. He was a fun-loving guy who loved riding his motorcycle, always had a mischievous smile, laughed easily and heartily and would give you the shirt off his back.

A memorial page has been created in his honor. It just so happens I took that picture of him with his camera on the "Early Bird Tour" in San Francisco. If you would like to honor Noodles' life and love for our community through a contribution to help his family with expenses, you may do so from this memorial page, <http://www.superbbw.com/ripnoodles/> I will miss my friend!

Like a Volcano

by Kathy Barron, NAAFA Member
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[Author's Note: This poem is dedicated to the little girl in New Mexico who was kidnapped by our government on July 11, 2007, for being fat,

and to her mother and family. My heart aches for all of them.]

Dare I
let my lava rage flow?
They took her child!

The molten liquid
frenzies inside of me.
They TOOK her child!

My heart felt
her primal scream . . .
they took her CHILD!

My eyes sting
with the tears
she can't stop crying since
they TOOK HER CHILD!

An ocean of tears
could not calm
the volcanic rage
swirling
where our hearts are
ripped out
when our children are hurt.

Beloved, young, innocent,
torn from our arms,
kidnapped by our government
for being fat.
Something like this has happened before.
Our basic human rights
already being stripped.
How long till death camps follow?

How do you breathe
when they take your child?
How can we breathe
when our children aren't safe?

Our children are NOT safe!
Our children go hungry.
Our children sleep on crowded floors
without beds.
Our children walk through violence and drugs
on their way to school.
Our children die - DIE!
from violence and abuse.

And rather than
feeding our children
providing proper shelter
stopping the violence
and creating a safe world
for our children -
rather than doing anything that makes sense -
our government
our media
our society
choose to bully fat kids
for their own "good"
as if that would
make the world a better place.
Since when,
please tell me,
since when did kidnapping our children
hurting our children
scaring our children
humiliating our children
ever make the world a better place?

Who shall defend the innocent?
Who shall put the child back in her mother's arms?
Who shall make it so that

she can feel safe there?
Knowing she won't be torn away
AGAIN?

No more! No more! No more!
Give her back! Leave her BE!
Stop bullying fat children!
Stop bullying fat people!
Stop the bullying and the hate!
Stop hating us for our own good!

Does the volcano become
still
like our
caught breath
before its lava explodes forth
pouring everywhere
like our molten rage
incited to violence
out of control
rage beyond words
when they attack our children?

Dare we
let our lava rage flow?

Air Travel: Three Fat Perspectives

1. Don't Single Out Fat People

by Peggy Howell, NAAFA Public Relations Chair

I was recently contacted by a producer of a television news show in NY who had received a complaint from "a viewer who claims she took a very uncomfortable flight back to New York because an overweight passenger was leaning into her seat. She apparently complained to Continental Airlines but the flight was full." This producer was looking to see "if your organization could provide some perspective and voice of reason to this story . . ."



After thinking about it, I found that I have more to say about flying in general than about just this instance. Flying isn't fun anymore! Since 9/11 everyone who chooses to fly is inconvenienced. We are requested to be at the airport 2 hours prior to our departure time. There's a long list of things we can and cannot bring on board. We have to limit our liquid and paste personal care items in carry-on to 3 oz. bottles that will fit in plastic bags. We're forced to pay exorbitant airport prices for water or other drinks because we can't even carry a bottle of water past security. We're forced to take our shoes off and walk on the nasty, filthy carpet in the security check-in lines. All this in the name of national security. Do we complain? Maybe a little, but we shut up and do it!

So we get on the plane and we end up sitting next to someone who personally offends us. Do people complain because the very tall man next to them can't keep his knees together and his leg is crossing the invisible line into their space? How about the person with such poor personal hygiene that their body odor and bad breath makes us nauseous? Do we complain about the person who is sick yet still chooses to fly and spends the entire time coughing on us? How about the party with the screaming infant in the next seat? All of these situations are inconvenient, and yet the only thing that seems to be newsworthy is that someone was inconvenienced by a fat person invading their space.

"So make her buy two seats" some people will say. What if I can't afford to buy two seats? Then take the bus! Okay, what if I'm a single fat woman, just barely getting by. Why? Well, we all know that as a woman I make at least 20% less than my male counterpart. Add being fat to the equation and it gets even worse since people of size are often overlooked for raises and promotions and continually being blamed for increased

costs. So I don't have a lot of extra money and I get a call that my beloved mother, 3000 miles away is on her death bed. Time is crucial so the bus is out. I can only afford to buy a coach seat because not many airlines have bereavement fares anymore. Should I be denied the choice of flying home to be with my dying mother because I'm fat? Doesn't this sound like discrimination to you? Last I heard, discrimination is wrong!

Now let's examine flying from the fat person's perspective. Most airline seats these days are 17 or 17 1/4" wide. More than 60% of our population is considered overweight so it's likely that their behinds are wider than the airline seats. So we know that we're going to be uncomfortable because even if we buy two seats, there's going to be that hump in the middle of one of our hips.

We run the risk of being called out of line at the airport and told we have to buy two seats or we will not be allowed to travel. Most reports to NAAFA have been that the agents have been loud, obnoxious and have intentionally embarrassed and belittled fat passengers when calling them out of line "for the safety of all the passengers".

We often have to ask a flight attendant for a seat belt extender and many people are embarrassed to have to do so. Some flight attendants are discreet but some are not. The aisles on the plane are so narrow that you have to walk sideways and know that you are still going to bump people along the way. You don't do this on purpose but people often glare at you as though you did. Then there is the person sitting next to you who is personally offended by your size and thinks nothing of being extremely outspoken and rude. They would never think of saying anything about the body odor or the bad breath or the constant coughing, but for some reason it's okay to insult and berate a fat person.

That is flying from the perspective of this fat woman! Sound like fun to you?

2. Fatties Are the Best!

*by Lesleigh Owen, NAAFA Los Angeles Chapter
Activism Goddess*

Have you ever noticed how many of us fat folks seemingly defy the laws of physics and scrunch ourselves into a tiny knot of personhood while flying? If you wanna talk politeness and a willingness to accommodate our seatmates, it seems to me as though fatties are often the best seatmates! I know I often attempt to compact myself into a human roly-poly, squishing myself as far away as possible from the person at my side. During a long flight to Boston last year, I was so tightly packed into my seat, I literally did not have the room to open my book and read. Sadly, I was forced to watch the in-flight entertainment.



I think there are few more conscientious flyers than us fatties. Sure, we may be "cheek to cheek" with our seatmates, but through contortions that would inflame Houdini with envy, many of us make that the only point of contact. And yes, it's disgusting that we should have to worry about the fears and prejudices of others and minimize our glorious bulk, but many of us can't deny that we do.

Anyway, as a frequent flyer, I have a few tips for folks who don't often fly:

1. We often have no say about when we fly, but if you do, try never to fly during holidays, spring break, or high summer (ick!). Off-season travel is the best travel.
2. Always try to fly on the following days: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. These are the least traveled days. If you have to travel on a weekend, choose Saturday above Friday or Sunday.
3. If you have the time and patience, check out the type of plane on which you're flying (our LA chapter site has some good links at http://www.naafala.org/resources_other.html). Some of them have smaller seats than others and some seats don't have movable armrests (ouch!). I've found that it's wisest to avoid the very last and very first seats on any flight, since their arms often don't move.

4. When you check-in at the airport, look at the seating chart on the electronic check-in machine thingie (forgive my technical lingo). Look for an entirely free row or at least a seat with no one seated next to it. Reseat yourself to one of those options. Believe it or not, this works for me over half the time; it's my personal favorite flying tip. :)

5. If you're not electronically savvy, approach the airline check-in person or the boarding person before you get on the flight and have them do the above step for you.

6. If you feel like you need space to maneuver, use the preboarding time to board yourself.

7. Some people disagree with this, but I find the aisle seat the most fat-friendly. In some planes, the outside arm even folds up -- heaven! If not, you still have tons of room to toss half your torso into the aisle. The only time this really sucks is when the flight attendants are doing their beverage service and rattling that huge metal cart down the aisle. Some fat folks prefer the window seat because they can slam half their buttocks up the airplane wall. I find this intensely uncomfy, but if it works for you, go for it. However, it should be obvious that in a three-seating arrangement, you should never, ever choose the center seat.

8. People with lots of money can fly first-class, but then again, how many of us really have that kind of money? Also, some folks with money buy an extra seat or split an extra seat with a friend. I'm severely poor, though, so none of these are true options for me.

9. Don't be afraid to ask for the seatbelt extender. You, like me, may think the idea of having seatbelts on an airplane is blatantly foolish -- after all, you're not driving a country road in Nebraska -- but the flight attendants get cranky if you try to bypass that step. It's easier to simply ask for the extender once you board rather than have them approach you and suspiciously eye your belly to determine whether your girth has eaten the entire seatbelt system.

10. Never, ever, ever, ever fly Southwest. They're evil. Boycott them. If you're over 275 pounds, there's a good chance they'll single you out to buy an extra ticket.

My biggest piece of advice, though, is not to let the small-mindedness and prejudice of others stop you from going places you want or need to visit. Yes, the airplane seats suck and yes, the person next to you may be contemplating your messy demise. Unless you're headed overseas, though, the plane trip will soon end and you will never again see the annoying person seated next to you. Also, and I speak from experience (on my trip to Boston, my seatmate refused to allow me to put up the armrest; the thing dug into my thigh for five solid hours), the pain shall pass.

In the long run, we obviously need to push for changes in air travel. For the short run, though, I urge you not to give up and not to let insultingly small spaces and disgustingly small minds keep you from traveling.

3. In Defense of Southwest Airlines

by a NAAFA member

I am about to say something that I have refrained from saying, for fear that people will get angry with me.

I **love** SWA's policy. For me it works brilliantly.

Let me explain --

I am 5'5", almost 400 compact pounds. There is *no way* I can fit in one economy class seat. Forget it. My hips definitely spill over, and I need a good extra 4 to 5" of seat (about a quarter of another seat). When I fly, it would be hugely uncomfortable for me to have to sit with someone immediately next to me, and it would be *impossible* for me to fit in the seat with the arm rests down.

So why do I like SWA? For this reason: if I fly SWA, and I buy two seats,

and the plane is full -- then I get an empty seat next to me (which I need). If the plane is not full, then I get a refund. Either way, I'm guaranteed an empty seat and have to pay for it only if the flight is otherwise full.

By contrast, I have tried doing this on other airlines, and the answer is "No." If you buy two seats, you *cannot* refund one should the plane be empty. You are "SOL" (S!@# out of luck). If I want to have a *refundable* ticket on another airline, I have to pay the full price, without any discount, to keep it refundable. If I'm lucky and the plane is not full, I get that very very expensive ticket refunded. If I'm not lucky, and the plane is full, I have to use that ticket, making my trip cost 2-3 times more than if I had to just purchase two discount price economy tickets. This requires me to do a lot of gaming that is hard to manage.

If I could sit in an economy seat just barely and were made to buy another seat on SWA, then I would be pissed off and fly a different airline. But for people like me, SWA's policy is terrific.

I did a survey on a fat group website, and I asked which they would prefer: an airline that made them buy two tickets, guaranteeing a refund of one if plane not full and also guaranteeing an extra seat if the plane is full, or an airline that allowed them to use only one seat, but if another seat were desired, the passenger had to pay for that whether the plane was full or not (i.e., no refund). Almost universally, people selected the first option (SWA).

It would be *far* preferable if there were a row of seats that were 1.5 times the size of the economy seats. These seats would be reserved for larger individuals. However, that is not the case now. To make that happen, we would need to lobby legislators. So while this option does not exist, I appreciate the SWA policy.

The Super Sized Cyclist

by Darlitia Carlo, NAAFA Member

[Editor's Note: At NAAFA, we use the word "fat" rather than "overweight" or "obese" because we view the "O" words as part of the medicalization of fatness, and fatness is just part of the normal spectrum of body size. But I wanted to let Darlitia tell her story in her words, recognizing that we're all at different stages in this struggle that has both personal and political consequences.]

I am obese. I have been battling with this state of being for a long time. I am also a cyclist. I have been enjoying all the vibrancy this sport can offer for a long time, too. Whether it is cheering Lance through the mountains of France or enjoying the trails on an exhilarating storm drenched ride, I am there.

It is hard, though. For a super sized person to get "out there," we have had to overcome many internal and external obstacles. We have to overcome our own self-consciousness, to get out of our own way, a sense of being exposed and open for ridicule to see our large, large bodies on those tiny, tiny seats. To always be slower than the sweep. To sometimes get left behind. To always bike alone, for all are faster than us. Sometimes even children. But we carry on. Why? We cycle for the love of it, for the sheer pleasure of it, definitely for the endorphins, and because for me cycling offers a chance to live life at a more vibrant and accelerated pace.

In one short bike ride, just the other day, I experienced friendliness, cruelty, distress, kindness, and compassion surrounded by all the loveliness that nature has to offer. This is experiencing life, the good and the bad and everything in between. This is enjoying life. This is living life as it was meant to be for me. Instead of existing as a couch potato bemoaning my fate, I am doing something about it.

It is my hope that more local bike clubs will offer more bike tours geared to our size. For a leisurely pace for them is fast, fast, fast for us.



So, when you see a super sized cyclist out there keep in mind that we are overcoming so much to be on that bike. We are fighting with our own selves just to get out of our "comfort zone" and do more. We are fighting with our constant sense of self-consciousness. We are fighting the cruelty of strangers. We are fighting the constant worry that we are slowing other cyclists down. We are fighting other peoples' judgments and preconceptions about us. We are so cumbersome. We are not the spandex clad weekend warriors, but we are fighting for every inch of our health. Cheer us on!

When She Threw the Fat on the Table

by Russell Williams, NAAFA Member

When she threw the fat on the table I knew I had my work cut out for me.

This past March I was invited to help give a presentation for something called Leadership of Howard County. The purpose of the morning was to provide tools for the leaders of Howard County to anticipate and take responsibility for the present and future health care needs of their community. I was invited to give a presentation during the segment titled Impact of Obesity. My co-presenters were the manager of the Bariatric Program at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center in Baltimore, and the chair of something called the Nutrition and Fitness Coalition.

When I was first invited to the presentation I e-mailed the Declaration of Fat Independence, the Anthropology Lesson, the Battle of Hagerstown, and the story of the LA dance that occurred simultaneously with the Miss Teen California contest. Much to my surprise all of these items had been included in a handout that was given to all the participants in the meeting.

The Nutrition and Fitness Coalition person gave the first presentation. She started by taking a 10 pound bag of fat out of her handbag and flopping it on the table in front of her and next to me. She then quickly went through a slide show demonstrating that the average American was getting fatter.

The bariatric center manager focused on how much effort their center had expended on trying to make sure that all of the equipment was fat friendly, that all of the staff had been trained in moving and physically and emotionally supporting fat people and that, where needed, surgical instruments were acquired that could better deal with very large bodies.

Now it was my turn. If I were to say that fat can be healthy I would've lost the audience. If I were to criticize bariatric surgery I would be considered a fool for not wanting to help give these poor desperate fat people this marvelous life-saving surgery. Since the first presenter had talked a lot about exercise I decided to start with that. Next to the 10 pounds of fat I put my visual aid, a tricycle crash helmet. I asked the group how many people had ridden bicycles to the meeting. No hands went up. I asked the group how many of them regularly rode bicycles to their work. No hands went up. I asked the group how many regularly walk to work. No hands went up.

As I gave my presentation I was standing, I was looking at various people in the room, and I was working with no notes. I told of how people talk about children needing more exercise and of how I have encouraged the local educational leadership to ride bicycles and tricycles to the nearby schools and of how nobody takes me seriously. While holding the crash helmet I told them that I had ridden my tricycle about 1000 miles in the last 12 months. I talked of how the average American is getting fatter and at the same time spending more and more money on exercise and dieting. I pointed out that the only logical explanation is that no diets work.

I talked about the need for adequate seating for fat people in school auditoriums. I told of how Washington County handles this need. As best I remember I also talked about how employees should be evaluated on competency factors and not weight. I explained that fat is not a four letter word and that my wife is a fat, white, woman. I explained that she is not ashamed of being a woman, white, or fat. I added that some of

her best friends were women, and/or fat, and/or white. I mentioned that she also had friends who were none of those things. By that time my six allocated minutes were up.

In the questioning period, the moderator asked me if employers should be required to hire fat people when they knew that the hiring of fat people would add to their health care costs. I pointed out that their are health care costs associated with being black and, pointing to a black man in the audience, asked him if he would have any objection to employers refusing to hire black people because of their potential additional health risks. With power in his voice he stated that he would find such a situation very objectionable.

Someone stated that this will be the first generation of children that grow up living with a shorter life expectancy than their parents. I pointed out that if that was true then Social Security was saved. I pointed out that if I live to be a hundred I will collect about \$1,500,000 in pensions and Social Security. I asked why dying early would be more expensive than living to be 96, collecting well over \$1 million, and dying slowly in a series of nursing homes as my father did.

I was allowed to give the last word. "Before exercise becomes popular a whole change in social norms will have to take place. For instance, saying to someone, 'You look all hot and sweaty,' will have to be a complement, and that will be a long time coming." I left them laughing.

Call for Papers on Fat Studies

Proposals in the area of Fat Studies are being accepted for the 2008 PCA /ACA (Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association) National Conference in San Francisco, CA (March 19-22 2008; San Francisco Marriott). We welcome papers and performances from academics, researchers, intellectuals, activists, and artists, in any field of study, and at any stage in their career.

Please send an abstract by November 30 to Fat Studies area co-chairs, Julia McCrossin (jmccross@gwu.edu) and Lesleigh Owen (goddess_les@yahoo.com).

Call for NAAFAs to Write to Sherry Collins-Eckert

Due to poor health, NAAFA member Sherry Collins-Eckert is living in a nursing home. Life is lonely there, as her husband Don cannot spend as much time with her as he would like. Please consider sending her a card or letter at:

Sherry Collins-Eckert
Oak Forest Skilled Care
1441 Charic Drive
Ballwin, MO 63021

Media and Research Roundup

November 26, 2006: In her well-researched and sympathetic NY Times article, journalist Abby Ellin interviews and quotes from many movers and shakers in the fat rights movements as she addresses the history and social need for the academic discipline of fat studies. Long-time fat activists Marilyn Wann (NAAFA Board of Directors member), Sondra Solovay (leader of NAAFA's FLARE legal project), Esther Rothblum, Susan Koppelman, and others are mentioned. <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/26/fashion/26fat.html?pagewanted=1&ei=5070&en=f85bae45c6a8e321&ex=1165122000>

November 14, 2006: In a YouTube music video set ironically to Lo-Rider's "Skinny," multiple, lingerie-clad, voluptuous women dance, shake, and gyrate while suggestively performing household cleaning rituals. As member Peggy Elam notes, "Almost makes me want to do housework. Almost." [Editor's Note: Some of the images are sexually suggestive.] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKUGItGwN3U>

November 27, 2006: A study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine concludes that, regardless of weight or BMI, men who weight cycle may put themselves at greater risk of gallstone disease. As NAAFA Advisory Board member Glenn Gaesser, Ph.D., professor of exercise physiology at the University of Virginia, notes, "This [gallstone disease] is yet another example of a health problem frequently attributed to obesity that may instead be due to efforts to do something about it."

<http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/166/21/2369>
<http://www.f1000medicine.com/article/id/1054011>

December 2006: A British study, conducted by researchers from Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of Hull, found that women who exercised without dieting did not lose a substantial amount of weight but instead significantly improved their health and well-being. Participants' blood pressures, heart rates, and cholesterol all improved, as did their feelings of confidence and positive body image. This study reinforces the benefits of a strong, HAES-centered approach to health and fitness.

http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/carnegie/Shortterm_effects_abstract.pdf
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/6206572.stm>

December 9, 2006: The Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale launched its "Champions for Change" program, which "celebrate[s] ordinary people who improve the food environment in their own communities." At the same time, it also issued Golden Apple Awards to the winners of its "Seeds of Healthy Change" Contest, which solicits creative approaches to battling fatness of a global scale. The first winner mentioned on their website wrote a song entitled "Obesity," which laments the pain fat persons experience as a result of stigmatization. As Health at Every Size advocate Jon Robison, Ph.D., comments, "There is such terrible stigma about obesity - let's get everybody thin! Analogy: Racism is a terrible thing! Let's get a whole bunch of white paint!"

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/58411.php>

December 11, 2006: The good news: Researchers used data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey on 15,000 persons to determine that Americans are controlling their high blood pressure better than ever before. The percentage of those who control their hypertension has risen by eight percent, up to 37% in 2004 from 29% in 2000. Even better news: The report notes that fat persons with hypertension are among those who most successfully control their hypertension. As NAAFA Advisory Board Chairperson Paul Ernsberger, Ph.D. (associate professor of nutrition at Case Western Reserve University), notes, "This could be fat people demanding better treatment and getting prescriptions instead of just being told 'lose weight and your blood pressure will go down.'"

<http://kidneydiseases.about.com/b/a/007158.htm>
<http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=78064>

December 2006: Researchers of a study published in The North American Association for the Study of Obesity noted that, in spite of their expectations, the "metabolic situations" of "very severely obese" persons do not differ from those who are "severely obese." In other words, after testing the fat and sugars in the blood of very fat people, these researchers found virtually no difference between fat and very fat persons; when a difference did occur, it tended to favor the very fat.

<http://www.obesityresearch.org/cgi/content/abstract/14/12/2177>
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=17189544&dopt=AbstractPlus

January 2007: "Nation of Size" at <http://www.nationofsize.com>, a "YouTube" specifically for large-sized people, is launched. It provides an antidote to the nearly total exclusion of fat folks from TV and movies. [Thanks to Peggy E for the heads up!]

January 2, 2007: Barry Glassner, author of *The Culture of Fear*, has a new book out called *The Gospel of Food*. It debunks various nutritional myths, as well as the current obesity hysteria. Here's a link to an op-ed he published in the *Los Angeles Times*:

http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/asection/la-oe-glassner2jan02,1,3250753.story?coll=la-news-a_section

January 2, 2007: New UK advertising rules that would label cheese as junk food are criticized as "dietary nannying gone mad", according to an article in *The Scotsman*. NAAFA Board of Directors member Jeanne Toombs found this choice quote on the article's comments page: "Woots all this, then? Inspector Snuggles of the Cheese Police here, asking you to be on the lookout for any cheesy substances what been sneaking around and inserting itself into the diets of right-thinking peoples like yourselves."

<http://news.scotsman.com/uk.cfm?id=7312007>

January 4, 2007: According to the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority, an average of 395 subway disruptions occur a month as a result of sick customers. The most frequent offenders? Fainting dieters. NAAFA member Lisa DuBreuil notes, "Darn those dieters - costing us more tax [dollars]!"

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/fainting-dieters-often-stop-subway-in-its-tracks/2007/01/03/1167777156016.html>

January 4, 2007: Bayer and other drug companies hand over \$26 million in fines to the U.S. government in order to "settle allegations of false weight-loss

advertising claims" concerning the following weight-loss drugs: Bayer's One-A-Day WeightSmart multi-vitamin as well as the diet pills CortiSlim, TrimSpa and Xenadrine EFX. The companies agreed to settle after studies proved their drugs had no effect on weight loss. The FTC also slapped their collective, corporate wrists for paying celebrities, who had already lost weight by other means, to endorse their weight loss products. (In other, disillusioning words, Anna Nicole did not actually lose the weight via TrimSpa.)

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/550296>
<http://today.reuters.com/news/articlebusiness.aspx?type=health&storyID=nN04183737&from=business>

January 5, 2007: Those concerned about their dog's poundage can rest assured in the knowledge that the FDA just approved Slentrol, a liquid drug designed to prevent dogs from absorbing the fat in their dog food. The drug features a few unfortunate side-effects (e.g., "loose stools, diarrhea, vomiting, lethargy and loss of appetite"), but after all, isn't all fair in the "War on Obesity"?

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16486821/from/ET/>

January 10, 2007: Contrary to most people's expectations, fatness is protective for heart failure patients. Every five-unit increase in body mass index (BMI) decreased the likelihood of in-hospital death by 10%, reported Gregg C. Fonarow, M.D., of the University of California Los Angeles, and colleagues, in the January issue of the American Heart Journal.

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/Cardiology/CHF/dh/4837>

January 2007: The media tout a study (*American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Vol. 85, No. 1, 201-208, January 2007) by University of North Carolina researchers that supports a connection between fat food and fatness. The only problem? It's only a one pound (0.16 BMI) difference in weight! (Quote from the paper: ". . . higher consumption of fast food at year 7 was associated with a 0.16-unit higher BMI at year 10.")

<http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/abstract/85/1/201>

January 21, 2007: Richard Brown, a dying hepatitis C patient, nearly dies thanks to a Southwest Airlines ticket agent's behavior. When he went to board in Scottsdale for California, the ticket agent refused to let Richard fly unless he bought another ticket, due to his weight. The weight gain is due to water retention because of his failing liver. Richard lives on California Disability Pay and had no funds to pay for the extra ticket. The flight was not sold out. [Thanks to Big Fat Blog for the heads up.]

<http://consumerist.com/consumer/complaints/southwest-nearly-lets-liver-transplant-patient-die-because-he-wouldnt-buy-2nd-ticket-231104.php>

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