

# NAAFA Newsletter

VOLUME IX

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## f.a. focus

### NEW NAAFA LITERATURE DEBUTS!

Do you remember when you joined NAAFA? If you were one of the many people who requested information about NAAFA in the last few years, you probably received three pieces of NAAFA literature: the WHAT IS NAAFA? brochure, a cover letter (including a check list of experiences common to most fat people) and an application. Beginning November 1982, a fourth brochure has been added to the NAAFA literature packet. Entitled PREFERENCES, it deals with the problems and questions of fat admirers.

Approximately 40% of NAAFA's membership are fat admirers and we have been asked many times for literature geared to their special questions. A Fat Admirer Program Study Committee was formed in May 1982, proposed by Elisabeth Williams and Nancy Summer. The third member of the committee is Dr. Erich Goode, who acts as advisor. The PREFERENCES brochure is the first product of the committee.

PREFERENCES has been designed to be informative and useful for fat admirers and fat people alike. Here's the content of PREFERENCES.

## Preferences...

People vary in their definition of beauty. We all have our preferences in what we find attractive. Yet, today in our society, there has been a trend towards slimmness as an ideal. Some admirers of the fatter figure feel that their preference is socially unacceptable. NAAFA is on the front lines of the fat liberation movement that will not only help liberate the attitudes of millions of fat people, but will also liberate the many people who find the larger-than-average figure beautiful to behold.

Q. WHY ARE SOME PEOPLE ATTRACTED TO THE LARGER FIGURE?

A. There are as many reasons as there are individuals. For example, why would someone be more attracted to a taller than to a shorter person, or to a blond, brunette or redhead? Why would a man prefer a busty or leggy woman, or a woman prefer a bearded or broad-shouldered man? No one can explain the reasons for

the physical preferences we have. Certainly, a preference for a fat woman or man isn't any less valid than one for a tall redheaded person!

Q. ARE THERE MANY PEOPLE WHO SHARE THIS PREFERENCE?

A. According to recent estimates, perhaps 5% of American and Canadian men prefer larger women. NAAFA's membership includes men from this group as well as men for whom the weight of their date is simply not an issue. And while there are no statistical studies of women who prefer larger men, such women do exist.

Q. HAVE STANDARDS OF BEAUTY ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME? ARE THEY THE SAME ALL OVER THE WORLD?

A. Of course not! Standards of beauty are always changing and vary greatly from place to place.

In many other cultures, the fatter figure is accepted and admired. Fat American women, who are put down at home for their size, often find themselves the center of attention in European, Asian or South American countries.

Just 100 years ago in our western culture, the ideal figure was larger than it is today. A study of art and sculpture throughout history will reveal many larger attractive subjects. Photographs of affluent people of the last century show that largeness was associated with wealth and power.

Through the years the weight of the "ideal" woman has fluctuated. Since the 1920's the female ideal has been growing thinner each year. We believe that we are at a turning point and that larger figures will again become more popular in the near future.

Q. HOW DOES SOCIETY'S SLIM IDEAL AFFECT PREFERENCES?

A. Many people have not clearly defined their preferences. We are all influenced by the media...television, movies, advertising, magazines, etc. In the past there have been few fat attractive role models offered. Even the fashion models in large-size clothing ads have often been too slim for the clothes they model.

But the trend is reversing. There are television shows, advertising and Broadway plays that feature leading ladies and models that are fat and attractive. We believe that with more exposure to beautiful fat men and women in the media, "fat admirers" will come to accept and understand their preferences for the larger figure as an ideal.

Q. WHAT DOES NAAFA OFFER TO SOMEONE WITH THIS PREFERENCE?

A. In NAAFA there is an exchange of ideas with fellow "fat admirers", emotional support from publications and rap sessions, a chance to socialize in an atmosphere where your preference is commonplace, and the opportunity to meet many people whom you consider attractive. This all leads to increased self-esteem and confidence in your own judgement.

Equally important, "fat admirers" can become part of the fat liberation movement. NAAFA has taken a stand to change the society that has oppressed fat people and fat admirers alike. We welcome people of all sizes in our struggle.★

# activism

## A MAJOR PROBLEM FOR A MAJORETTE

### FACTS

Peggy Ward, a student at Ringgold High School in Finleyville, Pa., was denied the right to march with her majorette squad last September because she was "overweight." The weight limits were set by the school's band instructor Joseph Cersosimo in an attempt to end jeering and rude remarks from the stands. "The girls were taking a lot of abuse from the people on the sidelines. An awful lot of them were overweight," Cersosimo told reporters.

He set the weight limits in May 1982 saying that girls standing 5 foot tall should weigh 100 lbs. He added 5 lbs. for each extra inch of height. Ms. Ward at 5'4" was permitted a maximum weight of 126 lbs. for the 1982 season. There were no restrictions in the previous year, Ms. Ward's first on the squad.

Eleven majorettes were effected by the ruling, but only two girls failed to lose the weight before the opening game in September. One girl quit. The other, Ms. Ward, was banned from the first two games as she had only managed by skipping meals and taking diuretics to lose 8 of the 12 lbs. Cersosimo ordered her to shed. She was allowed to march in the third game on the condition that she continue to lose.

On September 29th, however, Ms. Ward weighed in at 127½ lbs. (just 1½ lbs. from her "goal") and was again benched. Her benching attracted national attention.

Before the October 1st game, Ms. Ward presented a doctor's note verifying that her proper weight should have been between 128 and 130 lbs.

According to United Press International, it was only at the very last moment that Cersosimo reluctantly allowed her on the field as she cried from the tension caused by the situation. This prompted resentment on the part of some of her fellow majorettes who had also been dieting and taking diuretics to meet the requirements.

Marjorie Ward, Peggy's mother, told reporters that the dieting made her daughter sick and that Peggy was under great emotional stress, often tearfully leaving school early. The parents filed a complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission charging school officials with the violation of their daughter's civil rights. Mr. Ward said, "So many children have been discriminated against for stupid things like being too tall, too fat, too short--thousands of reasons. I hope this is publicized so that other kids won't have to go through this situation."

On January 22, 1983, it was announced that the investigators for the Human Relations Commission found the school officials guilty of discrimination against Peggy Ward on the basis of sex. The school is planning to appeal.

The Wards are pleased by the finding but Peggy has lost interest in the majorette squad and plans to go for volleyball next season. The grueling task of maintaining her weight and the resentment of her fellow classmates have prompted the decision.

The weight limits are still in effect for the other 22 girls on the majorette squad.

### COMMENT:

Does this story make you angry? Do you feel sympathy for Peggy Ward? Maybe you're in full approval of Mr. Cersosimo's motives and actions...or perhaps you can't wait for the Human Relations Commission to end the restrictions.

If this story has touched you in any way...if you care about what is happening at Ringgold High School (and perhaps in other schools across the country)...then WRITE. Do something about it. Add your voice to others that have already written school officials, and newspaper editors. Your pen or typewriter can be one

of your most effective tools for changing society.

Some members have said that they would write, but they don't know what to say. Read on. We have two examples of good letters on the subject of Peggy Ward's situation. The first is from Doug Zimmer of the State of Washington. Doug chose to write directly to the school's principal. The second is from June Bailey of Ohio. June took a different course of action. She wrote to the editor of her local paper in hopes that her letter would be published. They both sent copies to the NAAFA office for our files.

Sir/Gentlemen:

I am writing as a result of a news service story regarding band instructor Joseph Cersosimo and student Peggy Ward. Normally I don't get upset about strange stories from across the country but the preposterousness of this one made me angry. The tolerance, even complicity of school officials has made it difficult for me to write civilly to you.

Apparently Cersosimo has "decided" on some height and weight "rules" for girls. Where did he find these "rules," from a fashion magazine, a diet clinic or empty air? I don't believe band instructors take health care training, so how does he justify his determinations and how does the school board justify their support of him?

The news item indicates Cersosimo is motivated by a desire to somehow protect the girls from hecklers. I suspect the girls could starve to death before the heckling stopped. Is there a high school that doesn't have teenagers who try to raise their self-confidence by dumping on their peers? If Cersosimo is giving into the opinion of the crowd, doesn't that encourage it to be even more cynical?

130 lbs. at 5'4" hardly indicates fat and Peggy Ward does not appear overweight in the AP photo I've seen. Yet she is skipping meals and taking diuretics to meet Cersosimo's ridiculous standards, meanwhile wishing she could go on a binge. I'm not predicting dire medical consequences for Miss Ward but her behavior sounds positively anorexic.

Peggy Ward doesn't enjoy her course of action. It upsets her mother. Responsible doctors condemn it. School board members are fighting Cersosimo's policy, but it's still in effect. How many other girls has he got playing his stupid game? If they can't do the drills or they don't keep clean and well groomed I can understand their rejection but Cersosimo is indulging a personal whim. What is a cheerleading team for, anyway?

I strongly urge the immediate suspension of Cersosimo's capricious weight rule. He should stick to music and stop harassing cheerleaders. I am sending a copy of this letter to the National Association to Aid Fat Americans in Bellerose, NY. They may be interested in Mr. Cersosimo's antics.

Most Sincerely,  
Douglas J. Zimmer

Attention: Letters To The Editor

Sir,

I would like to offer a suggestion to majorette Peggy Ward who had to sit out a football game because the instructor thought she was too fat to twirl her baton.

She should march instructor Cersosimo into the high school cafeteria to the tune of SHE'S TOO FAT FOR ME and stuff a TUBA hot fudge down his throat until he comes to his senses. Anybody who would impose such a unrealistic weight standard on another human being should be benched for the rest of his career.

Surely she can fast again and lose that restrictive 1½ pounds so she can participate in the next

game. Maybe she can develop anorexia or bulimia. Instead of estimating how much she should weigh he should spend some time contemplating the suffering of thousands of people who have been manipulated into these eating disorders. The stress caused by the inability of individuals to cope with situations like this are the direct cause of eating disorders.

As far as name-calling from the sidelines goes, is Cersosimo afraid that sticks and stones will break his trombones? If he is going to be an instructor he could try instructing his students to be tolerant of people of all sizes. Pardon me, maybe that is too much like education. We certainly would not want our children to learn that all people should be able to have the basic human rights of pride and dignity regardless of size, now would we?

We fat people are making some new rules and calling our own plays now. We're calling TIME OUT from this kind of stupidity and ignorance of the issues concerning people who are bigger, smaller, shorter or taller. Beauty is a matter of personal preference so Cersosimo should keep his to himself. He is out of tune on this one. No wonder some of us march to a different drummer.

I wonder what he would do if Ward was 1½ inches "too" tall? Shorten her?

Sincerely,  
June M. Bailey

If you are planning to write, do it now, while your ideas are fresh. Remember, even a short note can make your point. Write either to the School Board or the Principal, Ringgold High School, Finleyville, PA 15332.

Some members have expressed the fact that letter writing is very difficult for them. Christine Kaye of West Virginia has an interesting alternative. You'll be hearing more about it in our next regular issue.★

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## health

### THE IDLE ON YOUR METABOLIC ENGINE



BY PAUL ERNSBERGER  
CHAIRPERSON  
HEALTH COMMITTEE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

You've heard it a million times. Losing weight is simple arithmetic: take in less calories than you burn as fuel, and you'll become slender. To make an analogy,

if you don't put any more gas in your car than it uses to run, you won't have to build a bigger gas tank. What makes things more complicated, though, is that everyone doesn't burn the same amount of fuel, despite that handy chart in the back of every diet book that supposedly allows you to calculate exactly how many calories you've burned today. If those charts were accurate, there'd be no thin compulsive eaters and no fat light eaters. You and I know better.

By the same token, those little charts that tell you that you'll burn 44.7 calories every time you walk 1.3 miles are sheer fantasy. They may apply to Mr. or Ms. Average American on a thoroughly average day, but probably not to you or me. (Incidentally, those estimates of "calories burned during exercise" are almost always low: they fail to take into account the fact that metabolic rate remains elevated after the exercising has ended.)

Metabolic rate is not the unvarying, carved-in-stone, immutable entity it was once thought to be. In addition to such factors as muscular development and the actions

of several hormones, food intake affects how many calories we burn. A large meal, or a series of large meals, speeds up your metabolism, especially if you're thin. Reducing your food intake slows down your metabolism, especially if you're fat. This would be like an unusual car that lowers its idling speed when it's low on gas, and then "revs up" when you fill the tank.

How do doctors and scientists measure metabolic rate? One way is to measure how much oxygen you use. This gives some idea as to the rate at which your body is burning fuel. Another way is to measure the number of calories of heat your body throws off. There are a number of complicating factors for each of these methods. There is another method, which is the main subject of this article. Red blood cells (or other body tissue) can be taken from a patient, and the metabolic rate of these cells can be measured under very precise conditions in the test tube. The amount of fuel the red blood cells burn probably indicates how fast fuel is being burned in the body as a whole.

About half the usable energy produced by the body is consumed by something known as the "sodium pump," which is found in nearly every cell of the body. Sodium is the most abundant mineral in living creatures. Table salt is about half sodium. The cells in your body are leaky boats, always in danger of drowning in a sea of sodium. The sodium pump is constantly at work bailing out cells by pumping sodium out of them. This chore is endless because sodium is always leaking back in. Although the sodium pump is necessary for life, some of its activity is apparently superfluous, and is used by the body as a way of burning up surplus energy.

Using radioactive "tags," scientists are able to count up the number of these energy-wasting pumps in blood cells. Dr. Mario DeLuise was the first to report that fat patients have a decreased number of sodium pumps in their red blood cells.<sup>1</sup> This would make them more metabolically efficient; since less energy is used up by the sodium pump, more is left over to be stored as fat. Furthermore, there was a close relationship between the number of sodium pumps found and how fat the person was: the fatter the person, the fewer the sodium pumps. Other scientists went on to show that in blood cells from fat people, less energy was burned by sodium pumps, and less sodium got pumped.<sup>2,3</sup>

In thin people, then, the sodium pump can act to burn off excess calories, tirelessly pumping out sodium only to have it leak back in again. The bodies of fat people, however, are not so wasteful. The net result is that more calories are available for storage as fat. The surplus sodium pumps in the average thin person can probably explain the results of Dr. E.A.H. Sims and others. Dr. Sims took slim prison inmates, and asked them to overeat and gain weight. The prisoners had great difficulty gaining weight, despite intakes of over 7,000 calories a day.<sup>4</sup>

It should be noted that not all fat people have underactive sodium pumps. As with most things, there are exceptions. The small minority of fat people with "normally" active sodium pumps may be "true overeaters." It is possible that their obesity is solely the result of "excessive" caloric intake, without the help of an extra-efficient metabolism. On the other hand, people with an inherited or acquired tendency toward fatness probably have a shortage of those energy spendthrifts, the sodium pumps. Many of the Pima Indians of Arizona are fat, probably due to hereditary factors. All of these fat Indians had very low sodium pump activity.<sup>3</sup>

Mice with hereditary obesity have decreased sodium pump activity in many parts of the body.<sup>5</sup> This probably explains why these fat mice can gain weight while eating the exact same number of calories that will make an ordinary mouse lose weight. Perhaps some of you readers are in a situation similar to that of these fat mice. Rats that have had the "appetite control center" of the brain surgically removed become very fat, even when food intake is kept low. These rats have low sodium pump activity.<sup>6</sup> Since these animals are fat for the same reasons that many people are fat, laboratory studies of these fat animals may provide information relevant for fat humans.

# c.o.b.'s corner

## WAS LOUDERBACK RIGHT?

by William J. Fabrey  
Chairman of the Board



Llewellyn Louderback got to become a Co-Founder of NAAFA by writing an outrageous article for the old Saturday Evening Post (November, 1967) titled "More People Should Be Fat!" It upset a lot of applecarts at the Post; the Science Editor threatened to resign, and demanded a chance to write a rebuttal, which appeared six months later.

I wrote to Mr. Louderback in February, 1968, outlining my concept of forming an organization for fat people, proposing basic goals that have endured in NAAFA more or less intact to this day in various stages of fulfillment.

Without Louderback's encouragement, I doubt that I could have done what was necessary in the months to follow, to get what was then considered a radical, hare-brained scheme (NAAFA) "off the ground". But what did Louderback say in his Post article that was so upsetting to so many people?

What Louderback said, sixteen years ago, was this: Most fat people, rather than accepting themselves as normal human beings, were being brainwashed by society to loathe and despise themselves, to feel subhuman, and to go to any extent, including potentially suicidal methods, to lose weight. The small minority who succeeded in losing weight for any length of time frequently paid a very high price for it: An ongoing semi-starvation diet that would cause such medical discomfort that the personality and sense of well-being of the formerly fat person would undergo severe changes.

Not only would such "thin fat people" make their own lives miserable, but those around them as well. Often, they were among the worst critics of their still-fat friends, since their own misery and sacrifices made them feel virtuous by comparison. And, while some would, in time, be able to live with their smaller bodies and caloric intake with no apparent ill effects (no doubt due to a readjustment of their metabolism), such cases were in the great minority, according to Louderback,

He also went so far as to suggest that fat people were treated as unjustly as certain other minority groups, and that many fat people might actually be better off in adapting to themselves, rather than endlessly striving to be thin. It was specifically with reference to "thin fat people" who were making themselves and everybody else miserable that Louderback's title -- "More People Should be Fat"--was used.

At the time, of course, Louderback's article was regarded by many as the rantings of a demented scoundrel--as if he were recommending that everyone should try to be fat. If it were published again today, I'm sure that it would be accorded a much better reception. You see, time has proven Louderback to have been pretty much "on the mark" with his ideas. Not everyone has yet been convinced, but at least his concepts are now taken seriously.

Today, we talk about how to balance the apparent need of many individuals to remain fat, with the desirable goals of health and physical fitness. And, Mr. Louderback, now an Honorary Trustee of NAAFA, has been able to see the ideas in his original Post article receive increasing acceptance by the medical profession, especially those active in research. His book, Fat Power (Hawthorn Books, 1970) is still regarded as the "bible"

of fat activism by many. Read it, if you can find a library that has it. Borrow a copy from another fat activist. If all else fails, you can order a xerox copy of the book from NAAFA for the cost of copying it. Whatever you do, read it!

[A xerox copy of the book Fat Power (214 pages) is available from NAAFA for the price of \$26.00, which includes postage. --Ed.]★

## advice

### NAAFADVICE

by June Bailey  
Ohio

Dear NAAFAdvice,

I have a large family and a terrific husband who are always generous in their gift-giving for my birthday and Christmas. It's great to get gifts and I appreciate their kind thoughts, but it seems that nothing ever fits, not even the jewelry my husband loves to give me. I don't want to hurt their feelings by taking things back or by asking them to exchange everything. I would like to know a diplomatic way I can handle this. I just seem to be too fat for everything they buy.

Signed,  
NEVER THE RIGHT SIZE

Dear NEVER,

Never say never. You aren't too fat, they just see you as smaller than you really are, and it will take some courage to say, "Hey, I'm fatter than you think I am."

It does hurt a little when one is told that a gift doesn't meet the requirements, but if you can tell the giver, you can have the gift--and in the right size too. It's much better to tell them now, before the next round of gift-giving.

Start dropping hints like, "I would just love one of those chains they sell by the inch," and mention how many inches you need. As far as clothing gifts are concerned, you will have to make your sizes known.

If this is difficult for you, why not take the opportunity to go shopping with your husband and point out all the things you would like to have in the correct sizes and let him take it from there. Stop and have dinner and make a "date" out of it. Any husband who loves to give his wife jewelry will understand.



Do you need some advice? Do you have a question about personal relationships or emotional issues? You can write Ann or Abby...but June knows that "Fat Is Where It's At" and will use her experiences as a fat person to answer your questions. Mail your questions to NAAFAdvice, c/o NAAFA, P.O. Box 43, Bellerose, NY 11426. Letters will be forwarded to June and will be held in the strictest of confidence. Be sure to enclose a self-addressed envelope if you want a personal reply from June.★

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# feature

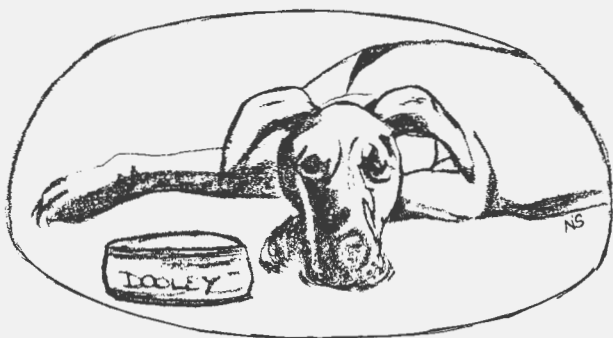
## DOOLEY'S DIET

by Nancy Summer  
Long Island, NY

LaDessi Medusa MsPuppup, better known as Dooley, is a short, fat Great Dane. She was the runt of the litter and in her early puppyhood she was pronounced a Not-so-great Dane.

While Dooley never grew as tall as other Danes, over the years she has grown out quite a bit. She now weighs about 150-160 pounds (though we're not sure, as she wisely refuses to get on a scale), and certainly deserves the title "great".

Besides, she's one of the few dogs I know of who smiles. She's a super watch dog--barking only at the "enemy" and strangers (until they are properly introduced) and is a sweetheart to her friends. She responds to 26 commands--all the usual ones and special ones like "excuse me."



No one ever cared about Dooley's girth until one day.....

Dooley needed grooming, so I took her to the veterinarian. After a brief examination, the vet instructed his assistant (a petite young girl) to tell me that my dog was obese. The poor girl walked into the waiting room where I was sitting in all my extravagant abundance and choked on her words. She was considering backing out the door when Dooley spotted me and dragged her across the room.

"Your dog is, well..., uh..., sort of..., well...,  
she sputtered.

"Yes?" I said.

"Well, you see..., here...,  
" she pointed at Dooley's midsection. "She's, well, uh, a little solid right here."

I considered her statement for a moment or two. What exactly was she trying to tell me? Then the light bulb lit over my head.

"Are you trying to tell me that my dog is FAT!!!"  
I said loudly. Twenty-eight pairs of eyes turned towards me--only 14 pairs were human.

The assistant blushed. "Well, she could use a diet," she mumbled.

"Thank you." I smiled graciously and took Dooley's leash. We calmly walked outside.

But once in the car...panic hit!

"Dooley! What are we going to do? You're FAT! How will I ever buy you stylish clothes at Bloomingdales? The K-9 Corps will never accept you and Oral Roberts won't let you into his obedience school. And none of the male dogs will ever hang around the house when you are in heat!"

Dooley yawned and curled up in the back seat, totally unconcerned.

But a few years later, we had to face the music. Poor Dooley developed symptoms of arthritis. At an animal emergency clinic, I was confronted by a young vet who diagnosed a back problem.

"How much do we weigh?" he asked.

I looked around the room. Did he expect me to add Dooley's and my weight or did he want the total weight of everyone present? Then I realized that he was using the medical "we".

"We don't know," I replied. "We won't get on a scale."

"Well, when we have a bad back, we want to be a skinny dog," he stated.

"We do?" Then I decided that there was no use in arguing with a man with such an identity problem.

We decided to start eating "Fit and Trim", a diet dog food.

I was loading up my shopping cart a couple of months ago, preparing for holiday guests. Piled high in my cart, next to the fruitcake, pickled herring, cheese and crackers, mixed nuts, pâté and cream puffs, were four bags of "Fit and Trim". The checkout clerk looked at me with a raised eyebrow. I imagined that somewhere in her mind the words were forming, "As fat as she is...she's got her dog on a diet!!"

My friend Bunny had to put her little rotund Pepé on a diet. She decided to start it on a Monday. I was braver. Dooley's diet started on a Thursday.

Four cups of "Fit and Trim" a day is practically starvation level for a Great Dane. But I'm only following instructions. Dooley's "Aunt" Elisabeth, a F.P.A. (fat pet admirer) keeps leaving messages for me in Dooley's bowl, "Feed me, I'm starving." But we are remaining steadfast.

There's only one problem. As I'm typing, Dooley, who is usually very well-tempered, is running up and down the hall barking at grass growing in the back yard, car doors slamming on the next block, and doorbells ringing on the television. She's very jumpy and everything upsets her.

"Bitch" is an accurate word for a female dog...on a diet.

Watch this Newsletter for results of Dooley's diet. We'll be answering the questions:

- Do dogs have set points?
- Do 95% of all canine diets fail?
- Should Dooley form NAAFP (National Association to Aid Fat Pets)?
- And, is Garfield, beloved of humans, considered an insult by fat pets across the nation?★

### LIFE AND PATRON MEMBERSHIP NOTICE

NAAFA's Board of Directors has announced that, effective June 30, 1983, Life and Patron membership fees will be increased to \$1000 and \$2000, respectively.

Currently \$500 and \$1000 respectively, they offer the following benefits:

Life members will never have to pay dues again; are entitled to free admission to any national function; receive first class mailing of the Newsletter at no additional charge; and are presented with a hand written scroll attesting to life membership, (may be paid in 10 consecutive monthly installments of \$100 each.)

Patron members are entitled to all life member privileges; a special gift available only from NAAFA; and \$1000 of the fee is tax deductible, (may be paid in 10 monthly installments of \$200 each.)

Please note that these fees must be paid in full before admission to national functions is free of charge.

# convention

## CONVENTION NOTES

Convention plans are being finalized, and the 1983 Convention Committee hopes to have a spring mailing of Convention details and reservation forms.

For those members who need to schedule vacation time, the actual Convention dates are Sept. 2-5, 1983. Sightseeing tours and additional events will be scheduled for the week prior to the Convention.

The LaGuardia Marriott in Queens, NY is an elegantly appointed hotel, with an indoor pool, hydrotherapy pool, saunas, gym, game room, gift shop, 2 restaurants, piano bar, cable movies in each room, free security parking for guests, free jitney from LaGuardia Airport and room service from 6 AM til 2 AM. The room cost will be \$55 per night per room, with the special convention rate in effect for 2 weeks before and after the Convention.

The prices of functions have not yet been determined, but they are expected to be much the same as last year's rates.

The Convention Committee is planning workshops and rap sessions, a Friday cocktail dance/party, a Saturday Ball, pool parties on both Sunday and Monday night, a brunch, and 2 luncheons, one with a fashion show.

Anyone wishing to volunteer for rap sessions or workshops should write the NAAFA office, attention the Convention Committee. Please note, all convention attendees, including committee members, volunteers, and NAAFA Board members pay full rates. ★

## books

### IT COULD BE VERSE

Formerly reviewed in the Nov-Dec '77 Newsletter, this discontinued book of fat-liberation poems, both humorous and serious, is fast becoming a collector's item. Authored by the late actor, Victor Buono, it is still available in limited supply from NAAFA's Book Bazaar. A hard-cover book of some 55 pages, it carries a members-only price tag of \$4.50, which includes postage. NAAFA, P.O. Box 43, Belle-rose, NY 11426.

Reviews of new books may be resumed in future issues of this Newsletter.



## people

### COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Paula Dachis of Maryland was appointed the Chair of NAAFA's Insurance Committee. The committee is assigned the task of investigating any problems in the insurance industry that involve fat people. One possible project before the committee is to research the possibility of group insurance coverage for NAAFA members.

Louise Wolfe of California was appointed the Chair of a newly formed committee, originally suggested by Louise, to research the feasibility of the decentralization of the Board of Directors.

Sheila Goodman was selected to chair the 1983 Elections Committee by the members of the committee. The committee's function is to supervise the upcoming election of Board members in June. ★



BRUCE McELNEY  
May 16, 1944-January 17, 1983

### MEMORIES OF A FRIEND

A Eulogy  
By Russell F. Williams  
Maryland

As I write this, it feels as if a chunk has been taken out of my life and emptiness has entered a part of my existence.

There is a security in knowing that no matter what happens, there are a few people who accept me without reservation--people who accept me not because of what I have done, or they hope I will do, but because they love me. This security has been diminished by one...

In college I met a soul-mate, a fellow liberal arts major, one who unconditionally accepted me with all my foibles. Bruce McElney was the intellectual and I, the mechanic. He spoke several languages, could spell, and play several instruments. I could fix most of the many things that he broke.

We both believed that some of whatever talents we had should be used to help others. We became members of Alpha Phi Omega, the national scouting service fraternity. This, however, was not enough. We both came to passionately believe that opportunity for advancement should be based on ability and performance only, that for employment the only relevant question should be: Can you do the job better than the other applicants?

Because of this belief, we both became active in the black civil rights movement, and joined the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). After college, I married, and Bruce continued with his education. We wrote and visited over the years, and Bruce occasionally stayed with us. These times of togetherness had a special sparkle.

Finally, in the course of our separate peregrinations, we lost track of each other. However, out of our mutual admiration of fat women, and desire for equality of opportunity for all, we separately joined NAAFA, and once again were jointly involved with a civil rights struggle. The friendship did not need to be reestablished, for absence had not diminished it.

I had found happiness in marriage to a bewitching fat woman, and now, at last, Bruce found his Linda. Bruce and Linda entered the relationship carefully, each wondering, "Is it really possible that I would be able to spend the rest of my life with this superb individual who gives me such happiness?"

Finally, the self-doubts were overcome, and in joy, each gave themselves in marriage to each other. Their bliss was great, and its radiance warmed Peggy and I. Plans were made to meet and spend time together.

Such was not to be. In January, the love and compassion that I had so long known, and which had been given recently and in great quantities to Linda was suddenly taken away. Where love, security and warmth had been, grief and cold emptiness swept in. Goodbye my friend. I have known none like you, and will always miss you.

Bruce McElney of California died in his sleep on January 17, 1983. He is survived by his wife Linda and many dear friends.

# editorial

## FAT CAN BE FIT?



by Nancy Summer

It's 1983 and I think it's time for a new NAAFA motto. There's nothing wrong with "FAT CAN BE BEAUTIFUL", and I'm not suggesting that we retire it. It still has a great deal of value. But I've seen an awful lot of beautiful fat women and men, in NAAFA and out, who have come to recognize their potential as attractive human beings. The

once radical concept that FAT CAN BE BEAUTIFUL has been accepted by many, and there are voices outside of NAAFA (such as fashion magazines) that continue to stress that point. We need to break some new ground.

I propose that 1983 be the year of "FAT CAN BE FIT". That's a pretty radical statement in fitness/thinness crazed America. Almost all the fitness gurus are also promoters of weight loss, and I rarely hear anyone outside of NAAFA suggest that fat people might be healthy. In fact, there is such an emphasis on weight loss and/or thinness associated with fitness that most people simply consider thinness and fitness one and the same...and that's unfair and untrue.

Let's get one thing straight. No one, no matter what their size, will ever achieve 100% fitness (except perhaps for some professional athletes and Olympic stars). But for us average folk, all we can do is try to maximize our fitness by concentrating on those factors that are within our control.

Age and heredity are two major facets but so far they're beyond the control of everyone. Weight can be altered by some, but for many of us, permanent weight loss is not possible. That still leaves a long list of fitness factors that we CAN do something about. Nutrition, exercise, stress, salt intake, usage of drugs and alcohol, smoking, environment and medical attention all can be dealt with by us, if we so choose.

Our major obstacle is attitude. We've had it drummed into our heads that the only route to fitness is through weight loss. Many of us have developed an ALL OR NOTHING attitude. If we can't be thin, we may as well not worry about nutrition or exercise...we are going to die young anyway. I think it's time that we reject that concept. Thin people who don't exercise and follow basic rules of good nutrition are not very healthy either.

I believe FAT CAN BE FIT, no matter what Richard Simmons says. 1983 is my year for a new awareness of nutrition (something I learned little about in my years of dieting), for developing a fun exercise program and following it, and for continuing a reduction of salt in my non-reducing diet. These changes are within my reach. At the very least, they can't hurt. At best, they may add years of better health to my life.

Here in the Newsletter, we plan to continue informative health and fitness articles of opinion, fact and myth-breakers. One Texas member recently accused NAAFA of spreading "biased health information", (based on her reading the Health Committee Special 82.) It is my opinion that the world is full of health information, biased in quite the other direction. All you have to do is read a few magazines each month to be deluged with anti-fat health articles. It's time that the other side be presented. NAAFA takes no official stand for or against dieting. Dieting is a personal choice...a choice hopefully between you and your doctor. But we hope to present in the pages of the Newsletter, health information that you might not read elsewhere. What you choose to do with the information is your personal decision.

Following in the footsteps of the 1982 FATWORKS Regional Gathering in San Francisco, plans are being made for health and fitness workshops at the 1983 National Convention in New York.

In addition, I would like to bring a proposal to the Board of Directors to make 1983 the year of FAT CAN BE FIT. What's your opinion? The Newsletter staff appreciates your input about future material, and we welcome suggestions of unique or unusual ways to make 1983 a year of fitness for fat people. ★

### NAAFA NEWSLETTER

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### NAAFA FORWARDING SERVICE

Often readers of this Newsletter wish to write to NAAFA members who are featured in photos or articles. However, NAAFA's mailing list is strictly confidential. Fortunately, NAAFA's office is able to forward such mail. A \$5 fee is charged for each personal letter that is forwarded. The \$5 fee covers office expenses and includes a tax-deductible donation of \$3 to assist NAAFA in its general purposes.

Members who wish to have personal letters forwarded should seal their letters in an envelope that has the addressee's name and proper postage affixed to it. Enclose this envelope and mail it to NAAFA, PO Box 43, Bellerose, NY 11426 along with the proper fee.

Non-confidential mail to committees is, of course, forwarded free of charge. This mail should not be sealed in an inner envelope. ★

## ads

### ADVERTISING

Please see the Advertising Supplement that is being mailed with this issue of the Newsletter.