



**national association  
to advance  
fat acceptance**

## NAAFA Newsletter

**Official Publication of  
the National  
Association to  
Advance Fat  
Acceptance**  
June 2010

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### Large and In Charge of America's Health



Surgeon General Dr Regina Benjamin & NAAFA Board Member Lisa M. Tealer

*by Lisa M. Tealer  
NAAFA Board Member & Director of Programs*

Recently I had an opportunity to meet our new surgeon general, Dr. Regina Benjamin. Since we were both at the BIO Diversity Summit, I knew there was a chance I would meet her; however, as I was speaking with Dr. Louis Sullivan, former US Secretary of Health and Human Services, little did I know that he was one of her mentors. When I told him I would be honored to meet her, he took my hand, like any grandfather taking the hand of a child, leading me toward her.

It was indeed an honor to meet her. I told her that despite the reports of what America's Doctor should look like, she was perfect for the job. She is a

### Body Talk 3 Trailer

June Video of the Month:  
Children talk about coping with  
teasing, eating intuitively and  
moving joyfully:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s1WqK4md9Dg>

### About NAAFA

Founded in 1969, NAAFA is a non-profit human rights organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for fat people. NAAFA works to eliminate discrimination based on body size and provide fat people with the tools for self-empowerment through public education, advocacy, and member support.

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seasoned physician with significant and relevant experience providing healthcare to America's underserved. She was gracious, kind, and I saw a quiet passion as she spoke about the many struggles her patients faced in her Alabama practice while reminding herself that despite those challenges we must ensure people's dignity remains intact.

I plan to follow up with a note and this photo, reminding her of our brief encounter and that Americans regardless of the size of their bodies not only need healthcare, they need their dignity intact too. We don't need a "War on Obesity", especially if it becomes a war on fat people. I find poetic justice that, in the midst of this misdirected war, President Obama looked beyond Dr. Benjamin's appearance and selected her based on her skills, experience, talent and leadership; and it so happens that she is large and now in charge of America's health!

## The Summit is coming!



**Keynote  
Speaker Glenn  
Gaesser, PhD**

*by Lisa M. Tealer  
NAAFA Board Member & Summit Co-Chair*

NAAFA, in partnership with leading experts and volunteers, announces its first Health At Every Size Summit (HAES), to be held on Monday, August 9th at the Westin San Francisco Airport Hotel, following the NAAFA convention at the same location.

The Summit's keynote speaker is Dr. Glenn Gaesser, Professor and Director of the Exercise and Wellness Program and Director of the Healthy Lifestyles Research Center at the College of Nursing and Health Innovation located at Arizona State University. Dr. Gaesser is the author of many publications including his groundbreaking book *Big Fat Lies: The Truth about*

*Your Weight and Your Health.*

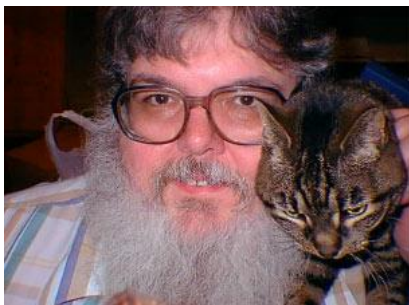
The moderated summit sessions will cover a plethora of topics, such as a critical review of obesity research, including an ex-US perspective; highlighting the Health in HAES, with therapists, fitness and public health professionals; highlighting our next generation of HAES warriors, including the 2010 NAAFA HAES Scholar; and going beyond the HAES definition into action from a Fat Studies perspective. The Summit will conclude with an open forum to comment on the day, announcements of upcoming events, and strategies to move the HAES perspective forward. Following the conclusion of the summit, attendees are invited to an informal reception and poster session.

If you are interested in attending the summit, please register early as space is limited. For more information, please go to:

<http://www.naafaonline.com/dev2/community/summit.html>

The poster session will be a broad and informal venue for your research or highlighting your community and/or educational projects, books and organizations that use the HAES tenets. Interested? Please click on the link (the deadline has been extended to July 5th): [outdated link removed] Join us and let your voice be heard!

## Charles Van Dyke Remembered



**Charles Van Dyke**

*by Frances White*

A gentle giant has fallen. Charlie Van Dyke died May 12, 2010 and his funeral was May 14. It was a Hindu service in keeping with Charlie's beliefs. Several members of NAAFA's Los Angeles chapter, Ronda Wood, Linda Ramos, Judith Richardson and Dale Littlefield, attended his services and found them quite moving. It was his strong faith that sustained him when a devastating fire swept

through his home and destroyed all of the Van Dykes' possessions. Many NAAFAans stepped forward with donations for the Van Dykes.

Long-time NAAFA members may remember Charlie as an integral part of the Los Angeles NAAFA chapter. There is talk about having a gathering to remember Charlie and celebrate his life since his death came so suddenly. Personally, I remember Charlie for the years he diligently served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors, 1995-98. His sweet nature made Board meetings a real pleasure to attend.

For a number of years, Charlie also moderated the Fat Acceptance List. He was strong in his belief that NAAFA should not use a web service, like Yahoo, which carried diet ads. I remember his being kind and persistent about keeping the list messages civil. It was always a wonder to me that, as busy as he was, he would read every single posting and deliberate about forwarding it to the list when there was a hot issue that had subscribers riled up.

Charlie was a vegetarian, which surprised many people because of his size. When he was interviewed for an article that appeared in the summer of 1995 in GQ, the author made much of Charlie's height and girth and marveled that he was a practicing vegetarian. I wonder how many NAAFA members also knew he taught Yoga Asanas for beginners. He helped many who had difficulties with some of yoga's more strenuous postures. Truly, Charlie was a Renaissance man.

Charlie is survived by his wife Kathy and various cat children. His legion of friends will truly miss him. Friends may wish to share their thoughts on the Charlie Van Dyke Memorial Page on Facebook.

The following poem was written by Kathy's sister, Gabrielle, to honor Charlie:

#### CHARLIE

I'd heard your voice  
 I'd seen your scribe.  
 at least etched on e-mail.  
 had I seen you in person?  
 No - not for a long time,  
 for a very, very long time.  
 Maybe, maybe the last time  
 you teetered  
 on the edge of the door sill  
 balancing carefully  
 on the balls of your feet

the door sill cracking  
 under your weight  
 barely able to walk  
 to transport your frame  
 from door to piano bench  
 sitting almost unmoving  
 but in your stance,  
 in your stance with your arm stretched out  
 the twinkle of your dark eyes  
 your face wreathed in beard  
 looking more like a Roman God  
 ready for a toga

yes, and you did wear a toga  
 you wore a toga after you ran from the flames  
 faster than you had ever run  
 what effort it took to escape that inferno  
 and now, by God committed to one  
 which allows you to fly free

yes, none of us can escape  
 the inferno of death - ever  
 but on the other side  
 life  
 freedom  
 from the body  
 that has held you down  
 and held you back, kept you captive

for so, so many years  
 cloaking that powerful personality  
 the sense of humor  
 the aptitude, the talent, the ability, the mind

all that was you and remains yet  
ever  
in memory

- gabrielle

## Media and Research Roundup

[Editor's Note: As we continue catching up, go to the NAAFA News RSS Feed at <http://naafa.org> for the latest news.]

January 2010: In the journal *Frontiers in Bioscience*, researchers from the University of Houston hypothesize that fat contributes to heart disease and diabetes through inflammation. The authors point out that dieting and weight cycling increase inflammation, thus possibly increasing the risk of disease.

<http://www.bioscience.org/2010/v2e/af/70/list.htm>

January 20, 2010: Want a happy read? Check out the supportive letters sent to Dear Abby in response to a letter from a young fat woman whose mother told her she was undesirable.

<http://www.reporternews.com/news/2010/jan/20/abby>

January 20, 2010: Using data-mining, Dr. Laura Vandenberg's study says babies are fatter because of exposure to BPA (Bisphenol-A) a chemical that is used to line food cans and baby bottles, among other things - lots of other things. BPA has been in use for over 50 years and has become ubiquitous in the environment worldwide, but the study's authors give no explanation of why fat babies are just now being noticed. (Might it be the availability of grant money?)

<http://www.kktv.com/home/headlines/8252232.html>

<http://edrv.endojournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/30/1/75>

January 21, 2010: Despite reports that Air France would make fat people buy a second seat, Air France announces that the only change to their 25-year-old policy is that if a flight is not full, the passenger would be issued a full refund. Air France states it will not force fat people to buy a second seat but may "suggest" one be purchased (at a 25% discount).

[http://aerospaceplanes.suite101.com/article.cfm/air\\_france\\_clarifies\\_policy\\_on\\_obese\\_passengers](http://aerospaceplanes.suite101.com/article.cfm/air_france_clarifies_policy_on_obese_passengers)

January 21, 2010: A review and update of the Yale study on weight bias shows that being fat is unhealthy in large part due to bias of healthcare physicians, as well as some difficulty in testing and diagnoses because of intervening fat.

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/01/21/obesity.discrimination>

<http://www.yaleruddcenter.org/resources/upload/docs/what/bias/WeightBiasStudy.pdf>

January 22, 2010: A healthy 19 year old Australian girl died due to the weight-loss drug she was taking, a drug that has numerous adverse effects according to its clinical trials. On January 21, 2010 the drug Meridia (also marketed as Reductil and Ectiva) was banned in Europe; but not elsewhere - including the United States, where the FDA decided a stronger warning on the label was sufficient.

<http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/stories/s2798683.htm>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/23/business/23diet.html>

January 24, 2010: And around and around we go. Society's bias toward fat people can leave you depressed and anxious. The drugs used to treat anxiety and depression often have the side effect of making you fatter, which means more bias, which means . . . well, you get the idea. In the end, this *Boston Globe* opinion piece misses the mark by suggesting that the solution is to stop or change the drugs, rather than working on bias against fat people.

[http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/magazine/articles/2010/01/24/fattened\\_by\\_pills](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/magazine/articles/2010/01/24/fattened_by_pills)

January 27, 2010: A study in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* once again shows that as you get older being fat can reduce mortality risks, and suggests that weight guidelines for the elderly should be revised.

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/123265340/abstract>

January 27, 2010: Hearings continue on H 1850, Massachusetts's proposed

height/weight anti-discrimination law. At press time, the bill is still current in the state's House of Representatives.

<http://www.mass.gov/legis/bills/house/186/ht01/ht01850.htm>

January 27, 2010: Katherine M Flegal (affiliated with the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) has estimated obesity-related deaths for the year 2000 to be about 100,000 fewer than previously estimated by Ali H. Mokdad (affiliated with the Division of Adult and Community Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Flegal explains that this is probably because Mokdad used incorrect data on smoking-related deaths.

<http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/abstract/ajcn.2009.28222v1>

January 29, 2010: In response to First Lady Michelle Obama's new campaign against childhood "obesity", NAAFA refers to numerous scientific studies, pointing out that her program may do more harm than good. (See the February 2010 issue for the full story.) Also, in *The New Republic*, NAAFA Board of Advisors member Paul Campos shows how the best scientific information is in conflict with the claims of this campaign, and appears on CNN as well. And psychologist and NAAFA/ASDAH member Deb Burgard presents the HAES approach on NPR.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/naafanews/message/463>

<http://www.tnr.com/article/politics/childhood-shmomesity>

<http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/bestoftv/2010/02/13/childhood.obesity.debate.cnn>

<http://thedianerehmshow.org/shows/2010-02-11>

January 30, 2010: NAAFA urges everyone to think hard before shopping at either Safeway or Whole Foods, both of which have discriminatory health incentive plans that penalize employees with high BMIs. (We had a full article in the February 2010 newsletter.) Also, NAAFA Advisor Paul Campos shows how irrational the policy is, while NAAFA's Peggy Howell is quoted in *The New York Post*, and NAAFA itself is mentioned in several articles.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/naafanews/message/465>

[http://lefarkins.blogspot.com/2010/01/whole-foods-junk-science-healthism-and\\_26.html](http://lefarkins.blogspot.com/2010/01/whole-foods-junk-science-healthism-and_26.html)

[http://www.nypost.com/p/news/national/the\\_thin\\_win\\_fat\\_discount\\_s1H2GHq2Hbc9e3S85sIe5K](http://www.nypost.com/p/news/national/the_thin_win_fat_discount_s1H2GHq2Hbc9e3S85sIe5K)

February 2010: A *Reader's Digest* global poll claims that fatness is now a global problem, worse than hunger. But the real tragedy is that the US, which wants to be number 1 in everything, leads in only two of 15 categories of fat anxiety.

<http://www.rd.com/health/global-poll-a-look-at-weight-around-the-world>

February 2010: "The obesity paradox" is the scientifically-established fact that fat people are more likely to survive heart disease and many types of cancer than thinner people. A team led by Paul A. McAuley, PhD, of Winston-Salem State University find that fat survivors score well on exercise tests, proving that you can be fit and fat.

<http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.com/content/85/2/115.abstract>

February 1, 2010: Hannah Sutter tells us why the advice from Britain's government is making people fatter. She makes many interesting arguments about the nutritional content of food eaten by modern people; unfortunately, she does it all on the basis that being fat is bad.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-1247216/The-Big-Fat-Lies-Britains-obesity-epidemic.html>

February 1, 2010: A healthy and active teen who has been put on a program to prevent her from becoming fat ends up fatter than when she began the program. Why is this a surprise to anyone?

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/weightloss/2010-01-31-teen-obesity\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/weightloss/2010-01-31-teen-obesity_N.htm)

February 11, 2010: ASDAH member Judith Matz is featured in a story on HAES on NBC's Chicago affiliate, which features fat women moving their bodies and having fun. Wonderful fat-positive content!

[http://www.nbccchicago.com/news/health/Fat\\_Can\\_Mean\\_Fit\\_Experts\\_Say\\_Chicago.html](http://www.nbccchicago.com/news/health/Fat_Can_Mean_Fit_Experts_Say_Chicago.html)

February 14, 2010: *Clerks* and *Cop Out* director Kevin Smith, returning home from the San Francisco Bear Nation Convention, is removed from a Southwest Airlines flight for "safety concerns" that are somehow related to their policy on fat people (Southwest changed their version of the incident a



couple of times). As with the Whole Foods and Michelle Obama flaps, NAAFA's February newsletter has a full story, but here are some extra links, along with two more separate entries below.

Kevin's side: <http://silentbobspeaks.com/?p=393>

Southwest's changing story: <http://blogsouthwest.com/blog/not-so-silent-bob>

<http://blogsouthwest.com/blog/my-conversation-with-kevin-smith-0>

The media tags Smith "too fat to fly", and mentions NAAFA:

<http://consumerist.com/2010/02/director-kevin-smith-kicked-off-southwest-flight-for-being-too-fat.html>

<http://abcnews.go.com/WN/kevin-smith-fat-fly/story?id=9837268>

<http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/entertainment&id=7277627>

<http://www.prokerala.com/news/articles/a115205.html>

[http://www.nydailynews.com/gossip/2010/02/15/2010-02-15\\_southwest\\_airlines\\_fires\\_back\\_in\\_fat\\_fight\\_with\\_director\\_kevin\\_smith.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/gossip/2010/02/15/2010-02-15_southwest_airlines_fires_back_in_fat_fight_with_director_kevin_smith.html)

<http://www.fool.com/investing/general/2010/02/16/southwest-non-stop-dumbness.aspx>

February 16, 2010: Commenting on the Southwest debacle, David Stempler, President of the Air Travelers Association, says "[fat people] get stuck. They can't get out. If they're in an aisle seat, people can't get past them." Mr. Stempler failed to offer any actual instances of a fat person stuck in a seat that prevented "people" from exiting a plane. (Note: some have questioned whether the ATA truly represents air travelers.)

<http://www.wusa9.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=97174>

<http://www.elliott.org/blog/who-does-the-air-travelers-association-really-represent>

February 17, 2010: Paul Campos hopes that the Kevin Smith saga will yield a "Stonewall moment" for fat people, with fat people rejecting the shame and abuse heaped on them by a thin-obsessed society; and suggests this be the topic of Kevin's next film.

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2010-02-17/leave-fat-people-alone>

February 23, 2010: ABC's *Nightline* asks the question "Is it OK to Be Fat?" (Can you imagine asking if it's OK to be any other group?) On the pro-acceptance are blogger Marianne Kirby and model Crystal Renn. NYC NAAFA members can be seen and heard in the audience. A teaser on *Good Morning America* that morning features HAES researcher Dr. Linda Bacon.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/video/nightline-022310-9927444>

<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/FaceOff/weight-debate-fat/story?id=9911743>

February 23, 2010: Life expectancy at birth in Canada reaches 80.7 years for the three-year period between 2005 and 2007, up from 78.4 a decade earlier. Again: we're living longer than ever, and are fatter than ever.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/100223/dq100223a-eng.htm>

February 2010: International Size Acceptance Association UK president Fatima Parker appears on LBC Radio in London and MBC TV in Dubai, talking about the good that HAES and size acceptance can do, and the harm that size discrimination does.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HH-B5xoJI8>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJEbuymTGbA>

February 28, 2010: In the *Boston Globe*, freelance writer Jennifer Graham shares her anxiety over how "the obesity police" are intruding into her child's school life. As Graham puts it, "Apologies to Tolstoy, but every fat person is fat in his or her own way."

[http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/magazine/articles/2010/02/28/the\\_heaviest\\_hand](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/magazine/articles/2010/02/28/the_heaviest_hand)

February 28, 2010: Long after the fact, *The New York Times* chimes in on Southwest with an article about the "horrors" of being seated next to a fat person. The writer quotes without challenge Southwest's claim that a safe evacuation "might be compromised if we allow a cramped, restricted seating arrangement." Are they kidding? All SWA *has* is cramped, restricted seating.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/travel/prac28fat.html>

