



**national association  
to advance  
fat acceptance**

## NAAFA Newsletter

**Official Publication of  
the National  
Association to  
Advance Fat  
Acceptance**  
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### Register before June 1 for our Early Bird Special!

NAAFA is returning to the San Francisco Bay Area for our 2010 fund-raising convention. Make plans now to join us at the Westin San Francisco Airport Hotel. Our \$225.00 EARLY BIRD SPECIAL is available through May 31, 2010 so get your registration in today! Beginning June 1, 2010, the full convention price will be \$265.00.

We have made it easy for you to register for the convention as well as the hotel through our website at [www.naafa.org](http://www.naafa.org). We encourage you to register for the NAAFA convention package today and to fully participate in this life-changing event. Watch our website for more exciting details as they become available.

Room rates are \$89 per night and can be booked for August 5 - 9, 2010! The Westin is prepared to receive your NAAFA convention reservations today at: [outdated link removed]

### A Message for People Considering Their Next Diet



*by Dr. Linda Bacon*

This is for you if you are contemplating your next weight loss attempt. Maybe you're making a list of the foods you plan to give up, the food journal you plan to keep, the calorie counting you'll do.

You're picturing the deprivation and the forced exercise, resenting it but feeling that there's no other way to get the body you want, the *smaller* body you crave. You're also thinking about all the wonderful rewards that come with a thinner you, such as attention, admiration, and respect.

The possibility of thinness is stronger than any concern about how hard and uncomfortable it will be to get there. You're motivated and ready!

### Beauty is Not How Skinny You Can Be!

Our Video of the Month for May is "Beauty is Not How Skinny You Can Be". Out of the mouths of babes!

[youtube.com/watch?v=fULTU2NFPQA](http://youtube.com/watch?v=fULTU2NFPQA)

### 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.

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Before you jump on the diet bandwagon yet again, however, I'd like to encourage you to think farther into the future--*after* you lose weight. Think two years from now, when it's quite likely that you'll have returned to your starting weight, maybe even higher. I understand that you don't want to consider this. You're probably tempted to stop reading now and are angry at the spoilsport "friend" who slipped you this paper.

Indulge me for just a few more paragraphs. I don't intend to take away your hope, but, instead, to help you reframe your thoughts so you can actually achieve what you're looking for.

It's way too easy to believe that a thin body will right everything wrong in your world. That your life will automatically improve once you're thin enough to take the steps you feel your weight prevents you from taking today. But it won't. The reality is that this fantasy of weight loss is what's stopping you from achieving your dreams--not your weight itself. The pursuit of weight loss rarely produces the thin, happy life many people dream of.

It's also way too easy to believe that you can control your weight through disciplined diet and exercise. The science just doesn't support that myth. The reality is that biologic safeguards underlie your body's resistance to maintaining weight loss. Research demonstrates that most people, regardless of willpower or diet or exercise, regain the weight they lose. In fact, research shows that dieting is a strong predictor of weight gain! *It's not your fault* that you are among the majority who hasn't been able to keep off the weight thus far.

I'm not asking you to give up on your dreams. What I am suggesting is that you move on. When you stop trying to control your weight, you allow your body to do the job for you--naturally and much more effectively. If you stop fighting yourself, achieving and maintaining a weight that is healthy for your body becomes effortless.

Just think how much fun it would be if you didn't have to worry about your weight!

Curious about the science that supports this? Want strategies and support for getting in tune with your body? Check out *Health at Every Size: The Surprising Truth About Your Weight* ([www.HAESbook.com](http://www.HAESbook.com)).

Health at Every Size has been evaluated in several research studies, the results published in top scientific journals. Adopting a Health at Every Size lifestyle can give you what you want much more effectively than a diet ever will. You have nothing to lose by trying.

And be nice to the friend who gave you this! He or she is trying to support you in achieving *your* goals.

**Excerpt from *Health at Every Size: The Surprising Truth About Your Weight* copyright 2010 by Linda Bacon. May be freely distributed, provided that it remains in its entirety and this copyright message appears. More info at [www.HAESbook.com](http://www.HAESbook.com)**

[Editors Note: Dr. Bacon has written a series of letters to help you when you just don't know what to say to a friend or colleague about their next diet or when they're considering weight loss surgery or to help educate that doctor who's giving you a bad time and so much more. They are available for your use. Check them out at <http://www.haesbook.com/excerpts.html>]

## In Memoriam: Paula M. Dachis



Photo circa 1997 by Randi Hertz Suriano

by Bill Fabrey, NAAFA founder (1969)

Longtime NAAFA member Paula M. Dachis died on March 24. She is mourned by her devoted husband Neil, her teenage daughter Emily, her father, sister, and nephew as well as her business partner and many friends inside and outside of NAAFA.

NAAFA's past Executive Director Sally E. Smith, one of her friends, said, "I loved her passion, her black-and-white sense of justice, and her wicked sense of humor. I will truly miss her." The cause of Paula's death was an MRSA infection which unfortunately had reactivated after being

dormant for about four years. Where she originally contracted the MRSA from is not certain, but it is believed she became infected when she cut herself on a piece of construction debris at home during some remodeling of the house.

Paula (nee Johnson) was very active in NAAFA starting in the mid-1970's. Some people remember her as the first brave NAAFAn to don a bathing suit and dive, publicly, into the hotel swimming pool at the convention inn Crystal City, VA in 1978, setting a precedent that firmly established pool parties at every convention since that time. In 1979, she was present for the filming of Mike Wallace and CBS-TV's show *60 Minutes*.

Paula met her husband-to-be Neil Dachis at a NAAFA event, and they were married in 1982; many NAAFAns attended the ceremony.

In later years, Paula was elected to NAAFA's board of directors, serving as Vice-President from 1987-1990. In 1991, while maintaining her NAAFA membership, she became one of seven co-founders of the Council on Size and Weight Discrimination (CSWD), and served on its Media Project for 19 years until her death.

Neil Dachis said that Paula had many nice clothes she had purchased from Myles Ahead (a frequent vendor at NAAFA trunk sales) and that he will be seeking a way of distributing them to those women who can wear them. He also said that if any NAAFAns would like to honor Paula's memory, one way might be to make a donation to an organization that was especially helpful to her during her illnesses: Beth Shalom Congregation, 8070 Harriet Tubman Lane, Columbia, MD 21044.

Another recipient worthy of consideration might be NAAFA itself. Having known her for at least 33 years, I will be splitting my donation between Beth Shalom and NAAFA.

## Just Say No to Dieting!



by Peggy Howell

I am one of those women who has been fat all her life. I was an adorable chubby baby, taller and bigger than my peers through all my years in school, and only continued to get bigger as I went through the weight cycling of trying every conceivable diet known to man, then gaining back not only the weight I'd lost, but even more. Most of you know that today, scientific evidence tells us that this weight cycling is actually more damaging to our health than if we maintained our original weight. I believe I would not be as fat as I am today had I not ever started on that fateful road to Dietville.

Life hasn't always been easy for me as a fat person. As I was growing up, my father used to sing "The Too Fat Polka" to me. "You can have her, I don't want her, she's too fat for me." How's that for bolstering the self esteem of a young girl? I believe I exemplify the adage, "That which doesn't kill you only makes you stronger."

I was probably around thirty five years old and in my second marriage when I came to a place where I decided that I was tired of fighting my own natural body. Despite my best efforts, I couldn't seem to keep my weight down. My husband was happy with my full curvy body so I decided I would be happy with it too. That was a liberating decision, one that I will never regret!

It was several years later that I first heard the term BBW (Big Beautiful Woman) and learned there was something called the Size Acceptance Movement. A friend shared a copy of *Dimensions Magazine* with my sister and I and it was like discovering a whole new world. It was the early 1990s when we attended our first NAAFA convention in San Diego and experienced a community for people of all sizes of large.

It was a joy to meet people like myself who are through with dieting, who love and accept themselves just the way they are today regardless of what the rest of our thin obsessed world has to say about it.

It was exciting to learn that there are businesses that cater to people of size. We met designers who make beautiful, fashionable clothing for our large bodies. There are furniture manufacturers who specialize in sturdy,

comfortable, wide furniture perfectly suited for our wide bodies. There are artists who find the fat body much more interesting to draw, paint and sculpt. A growing number of authors are writing fiction with fat heroines who live lives filled with adventure, excitement and love, just like we as real people experience lives filled with adventure, excitement and love!

In 2001 I partnered with two fantastic fat women to create an on-line art gallery and gift shop dedicated to the size acceptance community. We are celebrating nine years as the premier source for art, gifts and home decorating items that are uplifting and encouraging to people of size ([www.chunkebusiness.com](http://www.chunkebusiness.com)). We are fat women who love ourselves and our bodies. We see the beauty in the curvy body and want to share that beauty with the world!

Embarking on another exciting adventure in the summer of 2004, I drove across the country attending size positive dances, bashes and conventions from coast to coast. I met with organizers and leaders in our community and have made many friendships that I know will last a lifetime.

Upon returning home that fall, I decided to volunteer my time and help NAAFA work to improve the lives of fat people. In January of 2005 I joined the NAAFA Board of Directors as the Public Relations Director for the organization which has opened many doors for me to proudly represent this community.

I have been both a runway and fit model, have appeared on television shows such as *Good Morning America*, *Anderson Cooper 360* and *Dr. Phil*. I've been interviewed on numerous radio shows and for more print media than I can recall.

So here I am, 62 years old, still a fat woman and still going strong. I have managed, in spite of the opposition I may have faced along the way, to carve out a good life for myself. It is my goal to continue to work to help you have all the opportunities you need to create the life of your dreams!

*Peggy Howell is a fat activist, artist, business owner and member of the NAAFA Board of Directors. She shares her home in Las Vegas with her sister, who is her best friend and business partner.*

## 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.]

November 17, 2009: According to research by Laval University, food may not be addictive per se, but restricting it can set off a cycle of anxiety, craving and over-consumption that for all purposes looks like addiction. Concluding that diets are not helpful, Laval thinks the HAES concept should be used provided HAES is used as a weight loss tool. So close and yet so far.

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-science-willpower/200911/the-problem-dieting-0>  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19857626>

December 7, 2009: A new study shows that very fat children sometimes lack portions of DNA. Children with the missing DNA are very hungry to the point where overeating is uncontrollable. The best news is the researchers have used their findings to intervene in four cases where fat children were removed from their homes and their parents charged with child abuse.

<http://www.cbc.ca/health/story/2009/12/07/child-obesity-gene.html>  
<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v463/n7281/full/nature08689.html>

December 11, 2009: The fat community gains allies as eating-disorder organizations join forces urging focus on health and lifestyle rather than weight as a measurement of well-being; hoping to create an environment where people of all sizes are given the opportunity to lead healthy and productive lives.

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/173723.php>

December 14, 2009: The "Healthy Moms" study is following fat pregnant women with the purpose of having them gain no weight during pregnancy. This may or may not be "healthy" for the moms, but more concerning to doctors is that it may definitely be unhealthy for the fetuses, resulting in infants with lower IQ scores.

<http://www.bcbs.com/news/wellness/new-goal-for-the-obese-zero-gain-in-pregnancy.html>

December 14, 2009: According to research from the MacArthur Research Network, current government projections may significantly underestimate the future life expectancy of Americans. MRN does not appear to be concerned about us fatties, but rather thinks we should start worrying about higher costs for government programs that serve older citizens.

<http://www.agingsocietynetwork.org/node/156>

[http://www.rand.org/cgi-bin/health/showab.cgi?key=2009\\_423&year=2009](http://www.rand.org/cgi-bin/health/showab.cgi?key=2009_423&year=2009)

December 16, 2009: Time for our annual "do the math" request, as the CDC announces Americans are living longer than ever (even though we are allegedly fatter than ever), and even though this upward trend in life expectancy and weight have been going on for quite awhile, some health experts are still warning that fatties are going to undermine the life expectancy trend.

[http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/booster\\_shots/2009/12/life-expectancy-death.html](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/booster_shots/2009/12/life-expectancy-death.html)

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db26.pdf>

December 17, 2009: The stories circulating about people being killed for their fat is finally exposed as a hoax based on an ancient Andean myth of vampires who suck fat instead of blood.

<http://www.slate.com/id/2239003>

December 30, 2009: *The New England Journal of Medicine* gives an insightful look at the pitfalls and possible inequities of "wellness" incentives, especially as are being proposed in connection with healthcare reform.

<http://healthcarereform.nejm.org/?p=2630&query=TOC>

January 2010: The Yay! Scale, conceived by size rights agitator Marilyn Wann and sold by Nomi Dekel, is an ordinary scale modified to display compliments when you step on it. Target liked them so much that they sold the scales in their online boutique, Red Hot Shop, in January. They're no longer at Target, but the teen model is currently available at VoluptuArt.

<http://voluptuart.com/riot-frri-yay-scale-teen-p-343.html>

January 5, 2010: *The Huffington Post* previews photos from a forthcoming *V Magazine* featuring "plus-sized" models Candice Huffine, Marquita Pring, Michelle Olson, Tara Lynn, and Kasia P. As a move toward greater body diversity in media, it's a positive (if small) step.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/01/05/nude-and-clothed-plus-siz\\_n\\_411604.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/01/05/nude-and-clothed-plus-siz_n_411604.html)

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/SHOWBIZ/01/14/plus.size.models/index.html>

<http://www.thefrisky.com/post/246-frisky-exclusive-interview-v-size-issue-chanel-dirty-martini-lagerfeld>

January 6, 2010: In an article picked up by *CNN* online, *Health.com* takes a swipe at NAAFA, the Association for Size Diversity and Health (ASDAH), and others promoting Health at Every Size (HAES). It seems that experts are worried that self acceptance leads to complacency. Their answer? Ignore the scientific arguments of the HAES advocates and continue the current fear-mongering. (Anna North posted a great response to the article at Jezebel.)

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/01/06/fat.acceptance/index.html>

<http://jezebel.com/5441471/whose-health-is-it-anyway-fat-bone-density-and-why-we-should-all-just-fcking-relax>

January 6, 2010: Meanwhile, *NBC Nightly News* embraces HAES, ending a news story with "healthy and fit can come in many sizes."

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3032619/#34736243>

January 7, 2010: In the journal *Circulation*, Finnish researchers report that physical activity reduces the risk of heart failure for people of all sizes. They also report that being fatter increases the risk, although they don't seem to have corrected for a history of weight cycling, which itself is correlated with both fatness and heart disease.

<http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/short/121/2/237>

January 12, 2010: *AlterNet* reports that a loophole in the healthcare reform bill allows insurers to charge extra to their fat subscribers. As of press time, it seems that a version of this loophole still exists.

<http://www.alternet.org/politics/145038>

January 12, 2010: Oxford University's Konstantinos Manolopoulos and colleagues report in the *International Journal of Obesity* that fat on the thighs, hips, and bottom is protective against heart and metabolic problems. Abdominal fat does not appear to provide this protection.

<http://www.nature.com/ijo/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/ijo2009286a.html>

January 16, 2010: Two early release articles in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* show that fatness in the US has not been increasing in

either kids or adults in the past few years. Fatness rates for women and kids have been stable since 1999; for men since 2003.

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/2009.2014>

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/303/3/242>

January 19, 2010: HAES advocate Dr. Jon Robison's piece "10 Things You Can Do Right Now to Ease Concerns About Your Weight And Improve Your Health", bringing a size-neutral approach to the mainstream.

<http://welcoa.org/freeresources/pdf/10thingsyoucandoandrightnow.pdf>

January 19, 2010: In the pot calls the kettle black category, Weight Watchers sues Jenny Craig for misleading advertising. The ads claimed in a "major clinical trial" Jenny Craig works better than Weight Watchers --- only there was no major clinical trial. Jenny Craig used two separate studies conducted 10 years apart for entirely different purposes to "prove" it was better. The truth neither is admitting, however, is that 95% of the time, no diet program works.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601103&sid=annH1rEEv0Tk>