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SUPPLEMENT TO NAAFA NEWSLETTER, VOLUME XII, ISSUE NO. 5, OCTOBER 1986

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1986 NATIONAL CONVENTION CONVENES

Over 150 NAAFans from around the country gathered at the Beachwood Marriott in Cleveland, Ohio for the 18th annual NAAFA Convention on August 22-25, 1986. A well-rounded and comprehensive four day schedule of events was presented by Co-Chairpersons Barbara Colgin, Jerry Hoxworth and Mary Jo Hoxworth.

The luncheon programs covered many different aspects of NAAFA. Fashion was the feature on Friday. June Bailey produced a fashion show that included clothing from many stores and designers, many of the garments modeled on NAAFA members.

Awards was the focus of the Saturday brunch. Distinguished Achievements awards were presented (see page 3), and several speakers were featured. The keynote speaker was Dr. O. Wayne Wooley. Dr. Wooley, along with his wife Susan C. Wooley, serve on NAAFA's Advisory Board and are co-directors of the Clinic for Eating Disorders at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. Dr. Wooley's topic was "Obesity as a Culture-Bound Syndrome." (The text of his speech is slated for an upcoming Newsletter.)

Another guest speaker on Saturday was Harry Gossett, the author of Fat Chance (reviewed in our last issue) who spoke on the topic "Taking Charge of Your Life". Chairman and Founder William J. Fabrey also addressed the group during the brunch.

NAAFA's chapters were the focus of Sunday's program. Chapter chairpersons (or their representatives) from around the country, told us about their local group activities. The NAAFA individual was the topic on Monday. After the Presidential address by Eileen M. Lefebure, members were invited to share their personal thoughts on how NAAFA has changed their lives. Over 20 NAAFans took the microphone and told their personal stories.

Another important feature of NAAFA conventions is workshops and rap sessions. While the convention is designed to be fun, there is also a focus on the event as a learning experience and a chance for NAAFans to share ideas on their own personal growth and on the growth of the movement.

An impressive workshop lineup was presented that included the following:

- The Value of Being Different -- Dr. Harvey Hilbert
- Job Discrimination -- Carrie Hemenway, M.A., Career Counselor
- Fat Person and Family -- Shirley Hofstaeder, M.A., Social Work
- How to Deal with Anger and Criticism -- Dr. Alvin Sutker, clinical psychologist
- Sexuality -- Vicky Reed, RN
- Activism -- two workshops: one by David Whiteis and another by Russell F. Williams, M.A., Activism Co-Chairman
- Exercise -- Karen Flowers
- Self-Esteem -- Elizabeth Gillen and Vicky Reed
- Role Playing -- by the Psycho-social drama group "Reach Out"
- Make-overs -- Avon representatives
- Fat Poetry -- Geneva Chapman
- Special Interest Group meetings: the F.A. SIG, the Fat Men's Forum, the Feminist Caucus, the SuperSIG, the Couples SIG, the Singles SIG, and the Leadership SIG.

Evening events were designed for fun and entertainment. On Friday the theme was Country: a country dinner and a professional caller and dance team who led us in square dancing. Saturday night was the semiformal dinner dance. Our D.J. for the evening and the entire weekend was Chuck Bailey.

Sunday night was Mardi Gras and the Marriott decorated the room with balloons and streamers to reflect the spirit of such an event. Cajun and creole dishes were served. After dinner the talent show began. We were entertained by ragtime piano music played by Eugene Rowland (IL), blues guitar and singing by David Whiteis (IL), a dramatic reading by Ann Postich (OH), a song by Ernest Schraeter (NY),

comedy by Paula Dachis (MD) and David Whiteis, and classical music by concert pianist Aglaia Koras-Bain (NJ). But there was more--a production of Geneva Chapman's ALL FAT LADIES AIN'T IN THE CIRCUS was presented. (June Bailey reviews the play below.)

On Monday night cool weather prohibited a poolside luau, so we dined indoors on a south seas menu and swam later in the indoor pool. This was the third pool party of the weekend. A scheduled swim was also held on Sunday night, and on Friday night, an impromptu pool party was organized for everyone by some of the Michigan members.

But there was more: a wedding of two NAAFA members (see story elsewhere in this issue), a video showcase of television shows of interest to NAAFAnS, a trip to Sea World, a pizza party, and a host party sponsored by the members of the Northern Ohio Chapter in the hospitality suite.

But equally important as any of the official events was a feeling of community, our community, that develops during the course of the convention. It's an opportunity, for those four to six days, for NAAFA members to live in an atmosphere of acceptance.

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GENEVA IS...ALL THE FAT LADIES - a play review by June Bailey (OH)*

This is the first time we have seen the complete play ALL FAT LADIES AIN'T IN THE CIRCUS by Ohio playwright/composer actress/singer Geneva Chapman. (Excerpts of the play have been performed in NAAFA settings before.--Ed.) I was impressed by the quality of the writing. The original music was well-written and carried messages we could all understand. Of course, having the play performed in a NAAFA setting, in this case, the national convention, really helped because most of us could understand the message. Knowing that play was "on my side" I could relax and enjoy the content and performances of the individual actors and actresses. All of them were our very own NAAFAnS.

Big and blonde and in her usual magnificent voice, Barbara Colgin cut a fine figure as the "Circus Fat Lady". Dressed in a fire-engine red gown, Barbara quipped, "It's from Beachwood to Broadway!". She could be right!

Although rehearsal time was short because the players came from all over the country, the reading was enhanced by the clever use of props and was paced fast enough to hold interest. Great performances were given by Nancy Summer (NY), Chris Mohan (PA), Jeri Carmichael (OH), Peggy Williams (MD), Paula Dachis (MD), Amy Feinberg (PA), Elisabeth Williams (NY), and Marilyn Sherman (OH). As the circus barkers, Bob Hartenstine (NY) and Jerry Lamb (MI) were terrific. Both were in good voice but Bob topped his performance in the dual role of the "Drill Sergeant". Bob said later that he called on his experiences at boot camp for the Sergeant's role-model. It worked. His animated performance was outstandingly funny.

Geneva Chapman accompanied herself on the piano as she sang the very special songs she wrote for the play. An outstanding performance by Linda Gehres (OH) as the "Gospel Singer" was wonderful. Linda's magnificent voice is always a welcome addition to any performance.

All in all, the play was well received, although we heard some comments that there was "name calling" as the characters were named "Chubby", "Full-Figured", "Big-Boned", etc. Just goes to show that there is still a great deal of hurt among us. Perhaps the play helped to get rid of some of the hurt. After all, we did laugh and I loved it.

*Reprinted from the Bountiful Buckeye Bulletin with the permission of Editor June Bailey.

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MARY-JANE GRACE AND JIM BROWN WED AT CONVENTION

Mary-Jane Grace and Jim Brown, both of New Jersey, were wed on August 22, 1986 at a special ceremony held at the 1986 Convention. With over 100 NAAFAnS in attendance, Beachwood Mayor Harvey Friedman led the bride and groom in their vows after some opening remarks by June Bailey. Linda Gehres played the piano and sang several songs selected by the bride and groom.

The bride was beautiful in an ivory satin brocade gown. She was attended by maid-of-honor Barbara Colgin and bridesmaids Eileen M. Lefebure and Nancy Summer. William J. Fabrey gave the bride away and also served as Jim's best man. Conrad Blickenstorfer and Wayne Gehres were groomsmen.

Jim and Mary-Jane are the Co-Chairpersons of the New Jersey Chapter and Mary-Jane holds the office of Secretary to the Board of Directors. The couple will continue to live in New Jersey.

DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS OF 1986 PRESENTED AT CONVENTION

Distinguished Achievement Awards presented for 1986 were:

JUST MY SIZE PANTYHOSE--L'EGGS PRODUCTS, "for the wonderful positive portrayal of fat people in their commercials and still ads." L'EGGS responded by writing that "we look forward to receiving the NAAFA certificate and will display it in our main conference room."

EARLE PALMER BROWN ASSOCIATES, INC. and ROY ROGERS, MARRIOTT CORP., "for their recent advertising campaign which featured a large woman in a positive non-guilt-oriented manner." Marriott wrote and thanked NAAFA and said "the advertisement shows that there is something for everyone at Roy Rogers and we welcome people of all ages and all sizes." The ad agency told Awards Chairman Paula Dachis that the Roy Rogers management was concerned that this ad concept might be offensive to large people. It was only after they viewed a tape of the featured large actress that they agreed to the campaign. The ad agency was delighted by our award and the actress in the commercial was also thrilled to have been accepted so positively.

STEPHANIE SHAPIRO, Baltimore Sunpapers, "for her column 'Insensitive Jokes About Levitts are a Light-weight Issue'". Ms. Shapiro's column discussed the Levitts (a fat husband and wife) who were involved in the Maryland Savings and Loan crisis. In her acceptance letter she said, "a feeling of vulnerability led to a multitude of jokes, many focusing unfairly on the weights of the Levitts." She thanked us for her award.

NANCY ROBERTS, "for her positive self-image which has been seen in her book Breaking All The Rules and in her television appearances nationwide." Ms. Roberts was enthusiastic about her award and may be accepting it in person at a later date.

CHRYSLER CORP., "for the production of ample seat belts in their late model cars and the statement in the owner's manual which recognizes the need to supply all passengers with the proper safety equipment and providing the means by which an extension can be obtain if needed." Chrysler Chairman of the Board Lee Iacocca wrote his thanks for the award.

The WEATHER GIRLS (Martha Wash and Izora Armstead), "for their positive self-image as entertainers." The Weather Girls could not be reached for a response.

ALFRED LUBRANO and KAREN R. LONG, "for their series of articles--'Fat: An American Obsession', published in the Cleveland Plain Dealer in recognition of the contribution these articles have made in the area of general understanding of the weight obsession which plagues our country." Karen Long accepted the award for herself and Mr. Lubrano at the Awards brunch. She told the NAAFA group that her eyes were opened while doing the research on the series, and that she would never look at a fat person in the same way again.

MERLE POLLIS and JOHN McCULLOCH--WWWE RADIO "for their considerable air time devoted to NAAFA and fat-related issues." Mr. McCulloch accepted the award in person and told the NAAFA group that his association with June Bailey and other NAAFAs has led him to do an expose of diet mail fraud that will be aired in 48 states. He also credits June Bailey for changing his attitude about fat people.

OPRAH WINFREY--"for her contributions in The Color Purple and her work on The Oprah Winfrey Show." Ms. Winfrey's production assistant expressed her thanks in a verbal message to NAAFA. (Some controversy about her attitude is discussed in the October Newsletter, included with this Supplement.)

WILLIAM J. FABREY--"for leadership, creativity, compassion, and perseverance in the past 17 years, during which time NAAFA went from his idea to our reality." Mr. Fabrey accepted his award in person and expressed his heartfelt appreciation.

With the exception of the award presented to Bill Fabrey (who was not consulted about his own award), the above Distinguished Achievement awards were determined by a vote of the members of the Board of Directors.

MARVIN GROSSWIRTH MEMORIAL AWARD

The Marvin Grosswirth Memorial Distinguished Achievement Award (for creative writing) this year was presented to JUNE BAILEY of Ohio for her continued excellence in writing in national and local publications. □

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NAAFA MEMBERS RECEIVE SERVICE AWARDS

SERVICE AWARDS:

At the awards brunch, a number of NAAFA's received special service awards for various contributions for assisting with NAAFA's workload.

Service awards, are issued to those who, in the opinion of the Awards Committee, donated hundreds of hours of volunteer time (or equivalent) during the past year.

Conrad H. Blickenstorfer (NY), Information Systems and Grants Committees, data processing and publicity;
Lisbeth Fisher Burns (NY), for her continued service as Membership Committee Chairperson;
Paul Ernsberger (NY), for continued writing in the health field; and for publicity;
William J. Fabrey (NY), for continued service on the Publicity Committee;
Ruby Greenwald (NY), Chair of the Local Chapters Committee;
Noel Nyman (WA), for his continued service as NAAFA-Date Committee Chair, and for data-processing for the Membership Committee;
Bunny Peckham (NY), for her ongoing efforts as chair of the Fundraising Committee, holding national fundraising events and creating special mailings;
Flo Beth Peek (WA), for her continued service on the NAAFA-Date Committee;
Nancy Summer (NY), for continued service as **Newsletter** Editor.

HONORABLE MENTION:

These awards are given to recognize substantial service to NAAFA that helps keep the wheels turning. They are issued to those who, in the opinion of the Awards Committee, donated less than one hundred hours of volunteer time in the field mentioned during the past year.

Rene Andersen (MA), Barbara Colgin (OH), Carrie Hemenway (MA) for coordinating the Think Tank Weekend for NAAFA leaders.
Robert Bain (NJ), Aqlaia Koras-Bain (NJ), Kimm Bonner (NJ), Paula Dachis (MD), for publicity;
Mary-Jane Grace (NJ), Secretary of NAAFA's Board of Directors;
Neil Dachis (MD), Legislative Committee and Minimum Standards Committee, publicity;
Nellie Hensley (MD), Committee Coordinator;
Eileen M. Lefebure (NY), Publicity Committee and SIG Coordinator;
Russell F. Williams (MD) and Louise Wolfe (CA), Activism Committee;

HONORABLE MENTIONS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE:

Bountiful Buckeye Bulletin, Ohio and Northern Ohio Chapters; June Bailey, Editor;
FA SIG, Fat Admirers Special Interest Group; Conrad H. Blickenstorfer, Editor;
Fat-tastic, New Jersey Chapter; Jim Brown, Editor;
Midriff Messenger, Mid-Michigan Chapter; Jerry Lamb, Editor.

HONORABLE MENTION FOR ARTICLE CLIPPING

Articles are used by the **Newsletter** Committee and are donated to the Dr. Ethel Weiss-Shed Memorial Library. If it wasn't for members mailing in article of interest, NAAFA would have to hire a clipping service at an expensive fee.

Amy Berk (NY), Nancy Bierlin (PA), Ira Cohen (NY), Carol Dunlap (OH), Elizabeth Gillen (PA), Robbie Kassell (NY), Marie Limmer (MD), Chris Mohan (PA), Cheryl Norman (TN), Barbara Novack (MD), Janice Potter (OR), Robin Savage (MI), Susan Tenzer (PA).

According to Paula Dachis, Chairperson of the Awards Committee, "The danger in giving service awards is that in recognizing the work of some, we might fail to recognize the work of others who, on the national or local level, are loyal volunteers, plugging away at committee or chapter work, helping the movement in hundreds of ways. To those we fail to recognize with an award, please know that your efforts are appreciated just the same..." □