

# NAAFA NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION TO AID FAT AMERICANS, INC.

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Top row from left: Delegates Roy Dyson and Ray Dypski; Irene Winters; Bill Woodcock; Peggy Fox; and unidentified boy. Bottom row from left: Benjamin Cardin, Speaker of the House; Governor Harry Hughes, and James Clark, President of the Senate.

## MARYLAND MOVES TO END DISCRIMINATION

A dream did come true! It happened in Annapolis on May 1, when Governor Harry Hughes signed a bill providing for a 5-year study of size discrimination in the State of Maryland.

The story began when State Delegate Raymond A. Dypski from Baltimore watched the NAAFA segment of "60 Minutes" aired last December. An overweight person himself, he knows from personal experience the many problems fat people endure. Rather than accept the situation, and inspired by seeing NAAFA on television, Del. Dypski set out to find a solution (and he was in an excellent position to do so!).

In February, he introduced a resolution instructing the Maryland Commission on Human Relations to study discrimination against fat people and recommend legal remedies. The resolu-

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tion urged "all Maryland citizens to work toward ending unjust discrimination practices against fat people; requesting the State Commission on Human Relations to study such discrimination; and...to make administrative and legislative proposals which are appropriate to the alleviation of discrimination against people on the grounds of their size or weight.

Despite the high percentage of fat people in the population," the document continues, "many forms of discrimination are directed at them by our society which is presently obsessed with unhealthy states of thinness. The most direct discrimination is in the job market where fully qualified fat people seem often to be passed over in favor of less qualified thin applicants. Even universities which glory in letting a hundred flowers of diverse thought bloom have been found to discriminate in their admissions practice against students whose intellects are as large as their girth."

Examples of discrimination given are: large-size clothing which "is either unavailable or priced far higher than the amounts of extra material would justify," higher insurance costs "even if the policy holder has no health problem whatsoever," and public seating "often too small to accommodate large people."

The "second-class status to which fat people have been relegated" is perpetuated also when "the rest of society is encouraged to discriminate against fat people by the media." This is accomplished in part by advertising which "tends to show thin people almost exclusively, and [when] obesity is the subject of...derogatory humor."

On February 16, House Joint Resolution No. 75, co-sponsored by Dels. Dypski, David Shapiro and Roy Dyson, was introduced and read for the first time, and assigned to the Committee on Environmental Matters. On March 21, surrounded by tv cameras and members from all forms of the press, proponents and opponents presented their arguments for and against this historical proposal to the Committee. Among those who spoke in a packed room on behalf of the resolution were the co-sponsors; Dr. Natalie Allon, member of NAAFA's Advisory Board; Dr. Maria Simonson, Director of the Health and Weight Program at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, who has referred several of her

patients to NAAFA; NAAFA's Executive Secretary Lisbeth Fisher; and Peggy Williams, Co-Chairperson of the Cumberland Valley (Md.) Chapter of NAAFA. (Her husband, Russell, and Karl Niedershuh collaborated on authoring a very moving and convincing argument to be read by Peggy.)

Among other NAAFA members present (many of whom took time off from work) were Paula Johnson, Karl Niedershuh, Deborah Schisler, Dick Schotter, Lois Timmel, Russell Williams, and Irene Winters. Lois and Irene were instrumental in drumming up attendance among local residents.

Although arguments were to be heard on many resolutions that day, the room practically emptied after ours were heard. The press and tv cameras followed us into the hallways and continued the interviews there!

The resolution was passed out of the Committee, then by the House of Delegates. Since it involved an expenditure of funds, it also had to be passed upon by the Senate. It passed both the Senate committee and the Senate. Then, on May 1, 1979, history was made that should ultimately benefit all fat Americans. Governor Harry Hughes signed the Resolution, with minor changes, and it was sent on to the Commission on Human Relations. Present at this historical occasion was NAAFA member Peggy Fox, who accepted on NAAFA's behalf the ceremonial pen used by Gov. Hughes to sign the bill. The pen was on display at our Tenth Anniversary Convention.

In July, David Tucker was named Director of the Study on Size and Weight Discrimination, to report back to the Maryland Legislature in January, 1980. Mr. Tucker addressed those present at the Convention, and spent many hours at the NAAFA office, "raiding" our files. NAAFA also sent a memo to Maryland, D. C. and Virginia members, requesting accounts of discrimination encountered by them.

David Tucker needs your help, and here is your chance to have a voice in legislation that may ultimately affect you. You will soon be receiving a complaint form, which will be used by Mr. Tucker as examples of the discrimination that exists. All complaints will be kept confidential and will be seen by no one but Mr. Tucker. He needs examples of any type of discrimination you may have encountered due to your size. Even if you are not a resident of the State of Maryland, he still wants to

hear from you. Any legislation enacted by Maryland will likely have a far-reaching effect.

Since the airing of "60 Minutes," NAAFA has been contacted by many legislators, many of whom were apparently unaware that such discrimination exists. There is currently other legislation pending and even some court cases being assisted by NAAFA, all of which will be reported on in future issues of the Newsletter. Hopefully, Maryland's success story will be repeated many times over the next few years, and someday there will be a Federal law banning size discrimination, making it possible for fat people to assume their rightful roles in society. Let's not permit our dreams to die or lose sight of our goals, because, yes, there is a Santa Claus--and Marylanders know that one of his elves is Raymond Dypski!

[Ed. Note: As most of you know, Del. Dypski received the Distinguished Achievement Award at the Convention, and it was well-deserved.

Anyone wishing to obtain the complete text of the resolution and Peggy Williams' speech may do so by sending \$1.00 and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to NAAFA.]

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#### EDITORIAL CHANGEOVER

Greetings from a new editor in a different section of the country. The NAAFA Newsletter will continue to go through its final stages of production in New York. Most of the writing and editorial decisions, however, will be coming from the North Carolina Piedmont. This decentralization is not expected to produce any major changes, but an occasional shift in emphasis or point of view may appear.

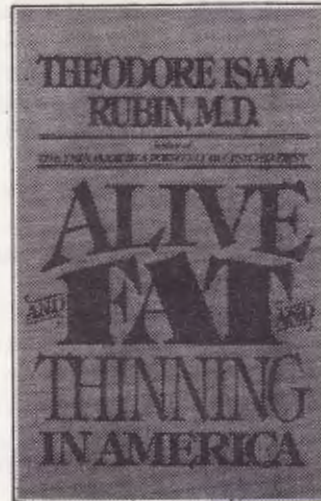
The masthead gives me full points for this issue. In reality, however, much of the credit belongs to Liz Fisher. A large percentage of copy was written previously and omitted from earlier editions for lack of space.

My new duties have been assumed with fluctuating degrees of anxiety and pleasure. I feel somewhat awed with the responsibility involved. One of the joys anticipated, nevertheless, is a sense of personal involvement with our members as each of you reads the Newsletter every

couple of months. It is the one thing all members share regardless of where we live, or whether we become involved in a local chapter or one of the other NAAFA programs. For this reason the Newsletter is the most important and powerful tool within our organization and should be used wisely and regularly. It is my hope to carry out this task to the best of my ability. May these pages record the second decade of our history as well as they have the first.

--R. I. R.

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ALIVE AND FAT AND THINNING IN AMERICA

#### BOOK REVIEW

Theodore Isaac Rubin, M.D., has added another title to his widely read collection of self-help books, ALIVE AND FAT AND THINNING IN AMERICA [Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc., 1978]. My first reaction was to check the author's picture on the back cover, as it has been nearly fifteen years since publication of THE THIN BOOK BY A FORMERLY FAT PSYCHIATRIST. Dr. Rubin has obviously grown older, but not appreciably fatter.

The book's thesis is very simple: "a compassionate approach to being fat and, if one so chooses, to getting thin." Contrary to the author's previous view, he currently does "not believe the fat half of the population is sicker than the thin half, either physically or psychologically." He does feel "the role of fatness in physical illness has been ruthlessly exaggerated," and that "doctors [have] become so obsessed with fat that they neglect and even overlook other important medical problems." Additional quotes from early pages

of this 155-page book read like NAAFA literature: "Undue stress generated by stringent pressure to diet and lose weight is often more destructive emotionally, and eventually physically, than the weight itself." "Constant fluctuation [yo-yo syndrome] is much more destructive than sustained overweight." "Prejudice against fat people virtually transcends and supersedes all other prejudices, including those against race, ethnic groups and sexual identification...there is generally more compassion for...alcoholics, drug addicts, sex offenders, and criminals than there is for fat."

Dr. Rubin believes experience has shown him that fat people with their large appetites for all areas of life "contain, represent, and express the stuff of humanity, sometimes in such abundance as to be overwhelming." They have a great capacity for joy, and despite the prejudices society inflicts, are still happier than most of their thin cohorts. Fat people feel intensely and are strongly affected by other people, which makes them capable of experiencing the whole gamut of emotion from love to rage in reaction to others. This extreme sensitivity, which may result in rapid, forceful mood swings, creates a vitality, responsiveness and zest for living which often is lacking in the self-controlled, more detached lives of thin people.

The second half of Dr. Rubin's book explains fifteen insights which he feels must be understood if one is to be a contented fat person and/or a successful thinner one. These insights range from honesty with oneself, to maintaining a fat "soul" while gaining a thin body, to realistic and shifting goals and expectations. No specific diet is given because Dr. Rubin feels "nearly all diets result in weight loss, and few doctors know more about dieting than fat people." He closes the book with his brief credo on weight: "I believe that self-acceptance is much more important than weight loss. I also believe that fat people must stand up against cultural pressures and in so doing promote acceptance of themselves. We must entitle ourselves to be fat and alive in America--either with heavy or lighter bodies--but as we choose."

In spite of the sound observations Dr. Rubin makes, his claim to personal choice does not ring quite true. I finished his book with a keen sense of betrayal, feeling I had been lulléd, possibly even conned, into better self-understanding in order that I could successfully join the

thinning game. The self-acceptance which makes me a better fat person today might eventually maneuver me towards being a thinner person sometime in the future. This theory has worked for some people, and may prove to be true for many others. Personally, I resent being manipulated by yet another who thinks he knows what's best for me.

Reviewer's Recommendation: Fans of Dr. Rubin, especially those striving towards self-acceptance may find help in this easy-to-read book. There is no question regarding his understanding of fat people and the problems of dieting and maintaining weight loss. Anyone who has already gained a fairly good understanding of self or isn't interested in losing weight, however, might better utilize his/her time by reading a good novel.

--R. I. R.

[Ed. Note: ALIVE AND FAT AND THINNING IN AMERICA retails for \$8.95. It will be available to NAAFA members through the Book Service at the discount price of \$7.75, including shipping charges.]

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#### COPY MACHINE--AT LAST!

Through the generosity of San Francisco member Wilma Kuns, NAAFA has finally been able to begin renting a badly-needed Xerox machine.

Wilma's donation of \$200 enabled NAAFA to pay some of the initial expenses of the rental. However, we must raise more money if we are to continue to keep the machine on the premises. Wilma specifically requested when she donated the money that other members be asked to donate matching funds (tax deductible, of course). If you are able to donate anything to keep the Xerox machine running, it will be greatly appreciated.

Aside from lightening the workload of the office staff, it will also help to decrease our copying costs, as well as provide our chapters and members with more service. It is also foreseen that it will eventually pay for itself when we are able to fill the many requests of students who are researching many phases of obesity and are willing to pay for the copying costs.

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**FAT**  
CAN BE  
BEAUTIFUL

HELP YOURSELF--HELP SOMEONE ELSE--  
HELP NAAFA--GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP!

#### FASHION DIRECTORY BEING FASHIONED

For many years NAAFA has wanted to publish a national directory of sources of large size clothing. However, until recently, all of its attempts to obtain the necessary information were thwarted by the scarcity of such sources and accessibility of such information.

Still, NAAFA's files on large size fashion outlets have grown through the years. Also, with the increasing number of fashion designers joining the ranks of those who have finally recognized the need for and potential financial success of creating clothing for the large person, more and more retail outlets of such clothing are popping up all over the country.

Information for the directory is currently being gathered, and a mailing will be going out to all the sources on our list, soliciting any extra information we may need. We urge each and every one of you to submit the names, addresses, phone numbers and size ranges of all the stores and catalogs with which you are familiar.

The directory will be broken down alphabetically and geographically, as well as by types of apparel. It is a major undertaking, and it is hoped that it will be completed during NAAFA's Tenth Anniversary Celebration.

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REMEMBER NAAFA WHEN YOU MOVE!  
Unless you or the post office informs us of your new address, you may lose the balance of your membership privileges. The Post Office is supposed to forward mail for a year after you move. But play it safe--send us your new address.

#### ELECTION RESULTS

The 1979 Election Committee, consisting of William Fabrey, Chairperson; Sheila Goodman, Matthew Madigan, Joyce Maloney, Michael Simpson and Kenneth Wachtel, spent several hours on June 15 counting the hundreds of ballots that were received.

The results were as follows: Lisbeth Fisher, 293 votes; Ernest Harff, 251; Dianne Rubinstein, 217; Linda Blackmon, 195; and Diane Raphael, 109. Since three Board seats were being vacated, the first three on the list (those obtaining the highest number of votes) will be serving a 3-year term on the Board of Directors. Rubinstein's term will commence at the September Board meeting, while Fisher and Harff are incumbents and will continue to serve uninterrupted terms.

The 1980 Election Committee will be activated in December. Anyone interested in running for a seat on the Board of Directors is invited to contact William Fabrey, who is Chairperson of the committee. Please write to him c/o the NAAFA office, stating your interest and qualifications.

To be eligible for the Board, one must have been a member of NAAFA for at least a year, be 21 years of age, and be able to attend 7-10 meetings a year in New York (usually Friday nights). If you would like a copy of the Election Rules and Manual, send a request with an SASE.

#### CALORIES WILL COUNT

[NEWSDAY, 9/22/78]

"The Food and Drug Administration told food producers...that beginning [in 1979] their so-called low-calorie and reduced-calorie foods are going to have to be just that. A final regulation...published... after 16 years of controversy in the industry defines a low-calorie food as one containing no more than 40 calories per serving and lower in calories than the the food is normally. For instance, the agency said, celery may not be labeled 'low-calorie celery' because all celery is low in calories. It may, however, be labeled 'celery, a low-calorie food.'"

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PERSONAL ADS

Very buxom gal sought by attractive, affectionate, gentle, imaginative, intelligent, sincere, single white male, 26, 5'10", slim, with many interests. Must be 18-45, clean, affectionate, intelligent. Box 624, Midtown Station, NY 10018.

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Reasonably good looking, 6'1", just under 200 pounds, 31-year-old male NAAFAn, professional, would like to meet a reasonably attractive female NAAFAn, single, Caucasian, age 21 to 32, 5'6" or over, 200 to about 300 pounds, college or professional education, and non-smoker. Reply to Department 114, NAAFA, P.O. Box 43, Bellerose, NY 11426.

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Handsome, educated, well employed, divorced (one son with X) Indian-born Caucasian, American citizen, Catholic background, winsome, early 40s, 5'8", 150 lbs., desires to meet warm, fair and beautiful woman to 39, around 200 lbs., 5'5" and up. Religion, distance no barrier. Send phone details to: Scaria; Apt. 1B, 114-40 38 Ave., Flushing, NY 11354. Returnable photo appreciated.

COMMERCIAL ADS

FREE MAKE-UP CATALOGUE

TODAY'S WOMAN CAN BE YOU!

FULL COLOR CATALOGUE, featuring a complete make-up kit (8 items or select your individual beauty needs) with a step-by-step illustration of make-up techniques. Awareness of your special needs has inspired this catalogue. Its aim is to help develop the personality "plus" that will achieve your individual goals and extract the forgotten woman. Anyone who desires make take advantage of this unique service and also may ask questions about the items pictured in the catalogue.

Please send all inquiries to: Dolores Hartman, FULL & FANCY, 311 East 25th St. #2B, New York, New York 10010.

CLASSIFIED AD RATES

Commercial Ads: 50 cents/word, 10-word minimum. Department number available at \$10/issue.

Non-Commercial Ads: 25 cents/word, 10-word minimum. Department number available at \$5/issue.

All ads are accepted for publication provided they are not against NAAFA's purpose. They may include personals, wanted to see or buy, employment notices, meeting announcements, and many other items.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES MENTIONED IN THE NAAFA NEWSLETTER APPEAR FOR PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY. NAAFA DOES NOT ENDORSE ANY PRODUCT OR SERVICE.

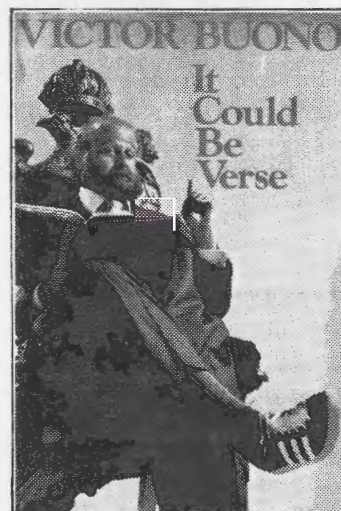
FUNNY FAT BOOK CLOSEOUT

NAAFA's been fortunate to obtain a quantity of Victor Buono's hilarious IT COULD BE VERSE [Nash Publishing, 1972] at a special closeout price.

Anyone who's had the pleasure of reading this book knows what a witty and liberated sense of humor Mr. Buono has about his own girth. Here is a man who can joke about fat without making fun of it.

"To me it's inconceivable  
That one could find believable  
The prospect one must have a shape  
Exactly like his chum.  
I simply won't apologize  
For being of a grander size--  
When everyone's a seedless grape  
It's great to be a plum...

"I'd rather be myself, my friends,  
I love to be a limousine when all the  
rest are jeeps."



Formerly reviewed by Dianne Rubinstein in the November-December 1977 Newsletter, IT COULD BE VERSE has been available from NAAFA's Book Service (several members have been buying in quantity, as it makes a marvelous gift!). Currently retailing for \$3.95, this 55-page hard-cover book has been selling at NAAFA's discount price of

\$3.35. For a limited time only, it will be sold by NAAFA for \$3. When our current supply runs low, it will become a collector's item, and will revert back to its former price.