
NAAFA

Newsletter

Volume XVIII
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September 1989

Dr. Dean Edell Receives Award



by Frances M. White (CA)

A Distinguished Achievement Award was given to Dr. Dean Edell at the National Convention in Los Angeles on August 12. Dr. Edell is an internationally syndicated print/television medical journalist based in San Francisco.

Dr. Edell has a question-and-answer column in the San Francisco Chronicle. His news items and weekly Medical Journal appear in 115 television markets in the U.S. and Canada. Whenever he is questioned on weight-related topics, his answers are those NAAFA has been trying to get the

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Dr. Dean Edell

SPECIAL 12-PAGE ISSUE!

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Judge Rules: Lose Weight or Go To Jail

Charles Petro, a 311 pound man from Pennsylvania, charged with failure to make child support payments because he's too 'overweight' to work, was sentenced to lose 50 pounds or go to jail for 90 days.

Judge John Lavelle called his decision "my Oprah Winfrey sentence." He sent Petro to a local medical center to be weighed and set a date three months later (September 9th) as the deadline for the ordered 50 pound loss. He also found Petro in contempt of court because Petro had gained 85 pounds in the year since he first went to court on this charge.

Judge Lavelle told reporters, "The only way this man will ever get back to being a productive worker is if he loses weight."

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Father Shoots Daughter for Being Too Fat

On August 7, Anna Kwiatkowski, 32, of Westland, Michigan was shot twice in the head by her father with a .32 caliber hand gun. The shooting was part of an alleged murder-suicide pact between Anna's father and sister Carol. When arrested, Valentine Kwiatkowski, 78, claimed that he attempted the "mercy killing" because of the mounting medical bills caused by his daughter Anna's weight (360 lbs.) and her asthmatic condition.

The shooting took place while Anna was napping on Sunday afternoon. When the two shots didn't kill her, her

family waited almost two hours before deciding to take her to a nearby hospital. She was able to walk to the car and into the emergency room. Medical and police experts attribute her amazing survival to the angle of the shots, and the fact that the ammunition may have been almost 40 years old.

Both father and sister were arrested at the hospital. They were arraigned on August 8th and are being held on \$50,000 bond each. Police are investigating several aspects of their story including the following:

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general public to accept for years:

- There is a genetic predisposition to weight retention which has been proven in studies of twins.
- It is possible to be both fat and fit through the proper selection of food groups and with the right amount of exercise.
- That fat people, as a group, eat no more than thin people, as a group.
- That fat people, as a group, have no more illness than thin people, as a group.

knowledge that size discrimination exists on many levels, the program ended on a positive note. Those interviewed had come to terms with their current body size. Some even felt that their strength came from growing up as a fat person in a thin-obsessed society. Some felt as though they were role models for fat people every time they left home.

Dr. Edell, shaking his head in disbelief at some of the stories of size discrimination, closed the show by looking into the

"...this is the kind of discrimination that kind of slipped by... And I think it's time for legislation. We protect people who have a different color of skin. In this case, it is people who have more skin."

—Dr. Dean Edell

All these issues were brought up in a four-part series he did on dieting. One episode was entitled "So What's So Bad About Being Fat, Anyway?" Background film footage was shot at Fat Fest, a seminar presented by the San Francisco-Bay Area Chapter. Dr. Edell has also been sensitive to the discrimination that F.A.'s receive. He did a 90-second segment on them which aired on Valentine's Day.

Size discrimination was the topic of one of Dr. Edell's weekly **Medical Journals**. Fat Fest footage was augmented with interviews with NAAFA Board Member Frances M. White, members of "Big Beautiful People and Their Admirers" (a San Francisco-based social club), and Pat Lyons, co-author of **Great Shape**, the first exercise book for large women. After everyone ac-

camera and saying in a heartfelt voice: "I think that this is the kind of discrimination that kind of slipped by, hasn't it? And I think it's time for legislation. We protect people who have a different color of skin. In this case, it is people who have *more* skin. And they are discriminated against in every walk of life, openly and blatantly. I think, really, we need laws and legislation and we all need to get behind it."

Is it any wonder that Dr. Edell was given a Distinguished Achievement Award? With media allies like Dr. Edell, more people outside of NAAFA will become aware of the injustices of size discrimination. When it—like racism, sexism, and ageism—becomes tabu, it will be easier to get the laws on the books we NAAFA's want to see. ◇◇

How would you answer these Questions?

1. Did you know that NAAFA's membership has almost doubled in the last eighteen months?
2. Do you want to meet new people?
3. With all the new people joining NAAFA-Date and Pen Pal, don't you think now's the time for you to join or rejoin the programs?

NAAFA-Date is a unique, national computerized dating service for fat people and their admirers. (\$35)

Pen Pal helps friends meet through the mail for a non-dating relationship. (\$10)

4. How can you join? We can answer this one...

Contact the NAAFA office for details and application forms!

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Commentary

Guest Commentator Sue Sychta (IL)

In my 16 years of working in the judicial system, I have witnessed many matters that have bordered on the incredible, but the order cited in the above-mentioned case is by far the most outrageous that I have ever come across.

I am not passing judgement on the legal question of the nonpayment of child support by a defendant. The judge heard the evidence and that matter is certainly in its proper forum. My concern is what I perceive to be a flagrant disregard for human rights and dignity.

Has our society, so obsessed with the ever sought-after ideals of beauty, thinness, and "tight abs and pecs," reached the point where a judge in an American court is able to judge human productivity based on the amount a person weighs? Can a judge go so far as to invade the essence of privacy, the human body, and dictate how much that body should weigh by ordering weight loss and even punishing weight gain by a finding of contempt of court?

This implications of this order, which attempts to assert control over the function and appearance of the human body, sets a frightening precedent. It should instill justifiable fear in all Americans since the possibility of control over *their* very bodies by a court of law has now become a reality.

I wonder whether motivation or desire to work, lack of job skills or education, depressed local economy—all of which apply not only to the "too overweight" population but to the rest of the population as well—even entered into this case at all? The judge's statement, "The only way this man will ever get back to being a productive worker is if he loses weight," makes it clear that these considerations were automatically discarded when, not just any unemployed defendant, but an unemployed FAT defendant, stepped before the bench.

If an order such as this is allowed to stand, I feel that the civil rights of all fat people are in jeopardy in this judge's court. I hope that the judiciousness of this decision will be passed on by a reviewing body, disallowing such open disregard for human rights and dignity in the future. ◇◇

Father Shoots Fat Daughter

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The day before the shooting, the two purchased a 16 cubic foot chest freezer in which they admitted they planned to hide Anna's body, (which lead police to wonder when exactly they planned on committing suicide).

There is also some doubt about their alleged concern over family finances: According to reports, "preliminary checks indicate that the problem was more an obsession than reality."

Contrary to the image family members have portrayed of a disabled woman who was a burden on the family, Anna had received an award from St. Joseph's Hospital in Ann Arbor this year for completing over 1000 hours of volunteer service. She had recently lost some weight, and was considering taking a college course in the fall. Hospital employees described her to reporters as cheery and happy, and they reported not noticing any severe health problems. On the other hand, neighbors told re-

porters that they had seen and heard Anna physically and verbally abused by her father and sister.

As of the end of August, Anna was listed in good condition. There are no immediate plans to remove the bullets from her head. She is currently receiving rehabilitation therapy at St. Joseph's Hospital in Ann Arbor.

A special fund has been set up by a local church to help with Anna's medical bills. A donation of \$100 from the NAAFA treasury had already been approved, but we would like to be able to send a packet of checks, if possible. Members who would like to contribute to this special fund are encouraged to do so. (See below.)

We also encourage people to send Anna get well cards in care of St. Joseph's Hospital, 5301 East Huron River Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. After this horrible experience, we're sure she needs to know that there are many people who care about her. ♦♦

How you can contribute to the Medical Fund for Anna Kwiatkowski...

NAAFA is collecting checks to be forwarded to the special fund set up to help Anna Kwiatkowski with her medical bills. If you would like to contribute, mail your donation to the NAAFA office. Please make your check payable to Good Shepherd Reformed Church and be sure to indicate on your check that it is for the Anna Kwiatkowski fund. (Please do not make your check payable to NAAFA.)

NAAFA Newsletter

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NAAFA: The National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt educational, human rights organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for fat people.

NAAFA is not a diet group, but seeks alternate ways to enrich the lives of its members and large people everywhere through public education, research, advocacy and support.

Regular membership in NAAFA is \$35 per year. Other membership categories are available. For more information, contact the Membership Services office:

NAAFA

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Melpomene Conference

Response to a first-of-its-kind conference, created and held by Melpomene Institute in Minneapolis, MN last March, has engendered a repeat of "The Larger Woman: Enhancing Body Image, Fitness & Health." It will be held on October 27-28 in Minneapolis.

The keynote speaker will again be Pat Lyons, R.N., M.A., health care consultant and co-author of *Great Shape: The First Exercise Guide for Large Women*.

Topics of the conference will also repeat sessions including Body Image, Fitness, discussion of discrimination, and medical information.

Melpomene Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to research and public education on the connection between health and physical activity of women and girls.

For information about this conference, call (612) 378-0545, or write 2125 E. Hennepin, Minneapolis, MN 55413. ◊◊

Community Awareness Award Presented to NAAFA Feminists

NAAFA feminists received three Community Awareness Awards for their work in bringing about passage of an anti-size discrimination resolution in The National Organization for Women (NOW). (See the August Newsletter.) The awards were presented at NAAFA's recent national convention in Los Angeles.

Louise Wolfe (CA) received an award for drafting the original resolution which was passed by California NOW last year. Louise and other members of Fat Lip Readers Theatre performed at the California conference, allowing the resolution to be considered. The state resolution called for California NOW to propose a similar resolution at the national level.

A second award was presented to Carrie Hemenway (MA), the Feminist SIG's coordinator. Carrie spearheaded the lobbying effort necessary to bring about passage of the national resolution. Besides providing California rep-

resentatives with necessary data and materials (mostly in the area of health), and speaking to various NOW Board members, she also attended the 1988 and 1989 NOW conventions, collecting signatures on petitions and spreading the message of size acceptance.

For their efforts in lobbying for passage of the national resolution, members of NAAFA's Feminist SIG received a third award. This award acknowledged the work of SIG members such as Victoria Reed (CT), Liz Sterling (CA), Lynn Meletiche (NY), and many others who participated in signature collecting, telephone lobbying, the April March on Washington, and so forth.

Community Awareness Awards are presented to acknowledge noteworthy efforts by individuals, chapters and SIGs in spreading the size acceptance message into their communities (either geographic, area of interest, other organizations, trade or professional associations, schools, etc.) ◊◊

NAAFA Advisor to Speak at Conference

David Garner, Ph.D., the newest member of NAAFA's Advisory Board, will speak at the Midwest Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan on November 4, 1989.

Dr. Garner is Professor, Department of Psychiatry, at the Michigan State University. He is a recognized authority on eating disorders, and a staunch defender of size acceptance.

For information about the Midwest Conference, please see the advertisement under "events" on page 12 of this Newsletter. ◊◊

Media Alert

Watch for a *Sally Jessy Raphael Show* during the last two weeks of September (possibly Sept. 27th), on "fat women who flaunt their bodies." Two NAAFA members are tentatively scheduled to appear. ◊◊

Recruit A Member
Share the Newsletter

Correction

In our last issue, we announced that a Community Awareness Award was presented to Warren Morrisett of New York for his article which appeared in *Physician's Assistant*. We incorrectly identified him as William Morrisett, and apologize for the error. ◊◊

State of NAAFA Address 1989

by Conrad H. Blickenstorfer, Ph. D.
Chairman of the Board



1989 marks the 20th year of NAAFA's existence. It also marks the second year of an ambitious effort to help NAAFA make the transition from a small organization to a much larger one:

the transition from being a group of volunteers to a professionally managed, nationwide network of individuals, chapters, conferences and allies at the threshold of becoming a civil rights movement.

At last year's convention, I took inventory of NAAFA's situation and described to you the formidable obstacles we were facing. I spoke about the good news and the bad news of NAAFA's first 19 years.

The good news was the fact that NAAFA had survived all those years while many other organizations had come and gone. More good news was that throughout our history, we had managed to maintain a public image and a media awareness far greater than what could be expected for an organization of NAAFA's size.

The not-so-good news was that we had simply reached the limits of what could be done with the organizational structures and mechanisms that had helped us survive all those years. We had run out of steam.

I then described the changes that were underway to help NAAFA shift gears. We had hired our first Executive Director. We had developed a Five Year Plan describing the steps necessary for us to emerge as a force to be reckoned with in the civil rights movement. We had started tapping new funding sources to help us finance new programs, new literature, and a more businesslike approach to running NAAFA.

I outlined a number of steps that had to be taken to move in that direction. Among them were full time professional administration, making better use of our frequent public exposure in syndicated national television programs, engaging in targeted advertising campaigns, reshaping the national Board into a policy making body and making Board meetings more accessible to NAAFA members who wish to attend and

become involved, and to engage in an all out campaign to increase membership.

Today I stand before you to report on the results of our efforts.

First and foremost, NAAFA now does have a small but dedicated and supremely competent management team. Sally E. Smith has done an almost superhuman job in her first year as Executive Director.

In order to make better use of the many calls and letters we receive after NAAFAs appear on TV shows or in feature articles, we designed a computerized prospects tracking system. This allows NAAFA and its chapters to systematically follow up on all leads and greatly increases our ability to recruit new members.

We successfully met our ambitious goal of raising \$25,000 in the first year of our Major Donor program. Among other things, this enabled NAAFA to embark upon its most visible advertising campaign yet. Full page ads in People Magazine spread NAAFA's message to millions of readers.

Most of NAAFA's literature, brochures and press kits were redesigned to reflect NAAFA's rapid progress in becoming a progressive, efficient, and forward-looking organization.

And most importantly, as a result of our first year efforts, NAAFA's membership has grown by 40% in the last 12 months

After delays, we made a concentrated effort and NAAFA's Workbook and updates were mailed last December. I am sure all who have read the book will agree that Carrie Hemenway has done an excellent job.

In February, NAAFA organized a much publicized protest march at a physicians' weight loss surgery conference right here in Los Angeles. In another major publicity event, NAAFA's feminist caucus participated in the march on Washington and dazzled spectators with their "Women of substance - Women of power" T-shirts.

NAAFA's Board of Directors held all of its meetings since the last convention at regional or local NAAFA affairs open to all interested members.

And most importantly, as a result of our first year efforts, NAAFA's membership has grown by 40% in the last 12 months and we now have over 2,000 members!

None of this means that we can sit back and rest on our laurels.

It is clear that in order for NAAFA to continue to move ahead and to live up to its mandate and its promise, *the organization must grow*. It is also clear that this growth must be professionally managed. It took us over 18 years to reach a membership of slightly over 1,000. After some dramatic and not always uncontroversial changes, *it took only two to reach 2,000*.

Our membership must double, *and double again, and again* if we really want to make a difference in this world of multi-billion dollar diet industry conglomerates and all the anti-fat hysteria they create.

As I stated in last year's address, such an organization cannot be managed out of a basement or a spare closet anymore. It cannot thrive without new ideas and the determination to make them work. It cannot succeed without making waves and taking chances.

Now I would like to outline the policies and the agenda which will guide us through the

second full year of our effort: Primarily, we must make sure that NAAFA can manage its next phase of growth and double the membership again during the next 18 months; we must add staff and beef up our services and programs; and we must reshape the Board from an operating to a policy-making and advisory body.

In order to do that, my agenda as Chairman is:

1. to relentlessly pursue growth to become a truly influential organization which *can* make a difference. A small organization can help *some* people, a larger one can help *many more*. There are tens of millions of fat people in the United States and Canada. They need

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State of NAAFA

continued

more from NAAFA than a P.O. box and an answering machine.

2. to run an extremely well managed, professional organization which is able to fulfill its members' expectations, to actually provide *all* the services we have been talking about for years, and which doesn't have to shy away from playing ball with the big boys.
3. to offer my complete and total faith and support to our Executive Director. And I expect everyone on the Board to continue to offer their complete support to her and her staff as well.
4. to reduce any unnecessary concentration of duties and powers detrimental to the goals of NAAFA. There is no room for factionism and discord. We have a clear mandate and we are all in this together. NAAFA is not a sandbox; it's a human rights organization.
5. to not tolerate reactionism, and to stop any attempts to return the organization to the former less ambitious mode of operation. We *must* reach for growth and excellence.
6. to gradually move away from having Board members as committee chairs and to give some of our talented volunteers and our staff a chance instead. Having too many Board members as committee chairs can create conflicts of interest, may facilitate "organizational inbreeding" and can make it harder for new people to attain leadership roles and become elected to national office.
7. to ensure that NAAFA members get an informative monthly publication of high quality.
8. to make sure that all promises are made good in a timely fashion; to make sure that we take quarterly critical success factors seriously; and to keep track of progress against our Five Year Plan.
9. to try to make NAAFA a more hospitable place for mid-size people. They constitute by far our largest target population and we have so far failed to attract them.
10. to reject our own fear of failure as a reason for not pursuing grants or corporate donations, and to reject fear of rocking the boat or losing control as reasons for stunting NAAFA's

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Presidential Address 1989

"The Family of NAAFA"

by Nancy Summer, President

This year we have heard speakers about the developmental and administrative aspects of a growing NAAFA. We've also heard about the advances in the movement. I'd like to discuss another aspect of size acceptance: the negative emotional impact of fat oppression, and the positive emotional impact of NAAFA on fat people.

When you strip away the details of any incident of discrimination, you'll always find a devastating effect on the emotional well-being of the fat person facing the bigotry. Discrimination limits our horizons, our potential, and even our health. It hampers our career development and economic outlook. But what it does consistently, no matter in which arena it takes place, is it *hurts*.

I was reminded of this clearly a few months ago on a job interview. When I spoke on the phone to the owner, she was very enthusiastic about my resume. Dressed in an expensive silk suit and armed with information from NAAFA experts on how to correctly present myself to a potential employer, I felt quite confident walking in the door. I was greeted by a mannequin in the lobby displaying a size 5 wedding gown.

The owner of the dress company shook my hand limply and passed me off to her new manager. Instead of interviewing me, the manager avoided any discussion of my value to his employer, and spoke only of himself. I had been "here" before, and I knew that I had nothing to lose; the minute

State of NAAFA...

growth, a chapter's growth, or an individual's growth. If we don't believe in ourselves we might as well forget it.

I count on everyone to join me in working towards these ambitious goals. The success or failure of NAAFA is at stake. The course of the past 18 months has been very successful but we have only just begun. Our future is bright. Membership, chapters, and programs are all up. Our efforts are paying off. What began as a dream in the minds of a few brave souls 20 years ago now truly stands at the threshold of becoming a civil rights movement. ♡



they saw me, they decided that I would not be hired. I said, "You don't seem very interested in my qualifications, and when I've run into this sort of attitude in an interview, it's usually because my weight is the issue. Is

there anything you would like to ask me about it?" Instead of responding in some appropriate manner, he began to squirm. I went on, "I mean, my weight isn't a problem for me, and it doesn't hamper my job performance. Not only am I a conscientious worker, but I also function well in a financial management and leadership position. You might note that on my resume I indicate that I was the treasurer of a national association for several years."

"Yes, I see," he finally responded. "What exactly is NAAFA?" When I explained that NAAFA was a "national civil rights organization fighting job discrimination against fat people" he looked concerned. "Why aren't you the treasurer any longer?" he finally asked.

"Because, this year I'm *President*." He was really squirming now. Then I mentioned my appearances on *Donahue* and the *Sally Jessy Raphael Show*. When I left his office with my head held high and feeling my "power" (even though I knew I wasn't going to be hired), I imagined him reaching for the phone to call his attorney.

But on my way home, I missed two turns and found myself driving around aimlessly. I pulled over and asked myself what was going on, and realized that even though I had said all the right things, and even though I had gotten appropriately angry, I was still very hurt by the treatment I had received. After 10 years of being involved in the size acceptance movement, and of knowing that my worth has nothing to do with my weight, that employer's rejection still caused me pain. And then I thought of my friends in NAAFA, of the people who support and understand me who have also felt these things, and the pain eased.

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Convention Speech Supplement

Presidential
Address 1989

continued

State of the Movement Address 1989

Fat oppression hurts, and NAAFA is about healing that pain, whether it comes from job discrimination, unsupportive family, unsympathetic medical care, or wherever. NAAFA is about the joy of discovery of our own worth, stripped clear of the negative values society tries to foist on us. NAAFA is about transcending pain and disappointment, and letting our emotions soar to new levels of self-confidence, awareness, and joy.

This organization is growing and will continue to grow. Besides the obvious challenges you and your leaders face in the upcoming years of recruiting new members, providing appropriate services, and spreading the "message," one of our biggest challenges will be finding ways to keep our one-on-one support network, and our feeling of "family" as we expand. The hotel staff has often told us that our gatherings aren't really conventions, they are *family reunions*, or as one member once called them, "gatherings of the tribe." An important question that future meeting planners must answer is: How can we keep this warm family atmos-

Besides being a human rights agency, NAAFA is a family.

phere that we create at our conventions when the day comes that our events have 1000 or 2000 people in attendance?

Besides being a human rights agency, NAAFA is a family. Our civil rights activities and our public education campaigns are our work. But we also love, we bicker, we forgive, we play, we party, we share, and we grow. We have our births, our adoptions, our graduations, our weddings, our divorces, and our deaths. We celebrate our victories together and offer support to each other in our times of pain. This to me is the definition of family.

As we continue to welcome new members into our midst, we must also remember that each one of them is more than just a name on the membership role. They are our brothers and sisters. If we never lose sight of this important part of NAAFA, this wonderful family of fat people will survive. ☺

by William J. Fabrey, Founder



I'd like to speak about the "state of the size acceptance movement." But first I would like to put the problem in historical perspective. In 1968, when I first had discussions with

the author Lewellyn Louderback about the logistics of beginning an organization like NAAFA, he expressed willingness to help, but said that he felt that anti-fat bigotry was so entrenched in the U.S. that it would be like beating our heads against a brick wall.

We quickly found that those in society that normally engaged in liberal causes seemed to feel that fat people could always exercise some will power and lose weight, taking them out of the oppressed class.

We did not receive much encouragement from friends and relatives, either. Most simply thought that we were crazy to engage in a struggle to improve the dignity and self-esteem of fat people...

I found out later that, unknown to us, there were a few people here and there who had the same aspirations and goals as did NAAFA; the trouble is, none of us knew of each other, or had budgets for advertising to learn of one another's existence.

So the dawn of the size acceptance movement was in the late Sixties; what can we say about the movement in retrospect? For one thing, NAAFA itself has not only survived a slow start, but has gone on to be an increasingly professionally-managed organization. There have been some real advances in the last 20 years in the area of health (fewer doctors are hard on their fat patients); in the world of fashion (the plus-sizes and even the super-sizes are more plentiful than they ever were); and in the social area ("large size" dating services and support groups are proliferating). NAAFA and others in the movement can take credit for these advances...

At the same time, however, eating disorders appear to be an epidemic. It's just as hard as ever to walk into the average social function if you are fat; the "singles bar" scene is practically off limits for any fat person who wishes to retain a shred of self respect! Size-

related job discrimination is just as prevalent as ever; and the medical establishment, is still fifteen years behind the times in providing quality health care with sensitivity toward fat patients.

We have been unable to rely on other agencies or entities besides ourselves to give us relief. Despite the fact that health and medical research by a few individuals has brought us a long way towards better understanding of obesity and the inherent problems with dieting, examples of misguided medicine abound.

Many people want to rely on government to make needed social changes, and to protect us. But that is the same government that is now going through a scandal of having the FDA (Food & Drug Administration) appearing to have prematurely approved generic drugs as substitutes for name brands, based on falsified or inadequate test data. This is the same FDA that approved the sale of Aspartame (NutraSweet) for general consumption by millions—over the objections of its own scientists, amid evidence of falsified or inadequate test data... In case you think that anyone is really in charge here, the national rate of breast cancer in women is inexorably rising, and especially so in younger women—and nobody seems to know why!

So I don't think that our movement can count on government to help us in any way, and in fact, it has not done so (except that the post office has occasionally cracked down on diet scams.)

How has the movement fared in reaching the public? Well, again I have to give us mixed reviews on that score. On the one hand, after 20 years NAAFA has managed to sustain a dues-paid membership of around 2,000 hardy souls. But we all wonder: Why is membership so low? We have been seen by millions on leading TV talk shows and in major newspapers and magazines. Yet the public's attention span is short, and 9 out of 10 people still think they have never heard of NAAFA, plus-size models, or the Sharon Russell case. Yet I know that our publicity is affecting people.

Another factor in the equation: There are probably millions of people that our movement will never reach directly, unless we give aid and encouragement to thousands of local groups and individuals who are not a formal part of any larger organization. We need to reach people who cannot or will not respond to NAAFA, who cannot or will not read *Radiance*, *Magna*, or *BBW* magazines;

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Convention Speech Supplement

State of the Movement Address 1989 *continued*

who just want to make a few friends or see a fat-friendly article in a mainstream publication.

Let's not underestimate the importance of forces in the movement that are not directly connected with NAAFA. Here is a partial list of them:

1. University-sponsored groups, like the Grace-Full Eater at Cornell University;
2. Eating disorders groups—many of which have come to believe that it is better to be fat than to die of an eating disorder;
3. Fat-friendly magazines;
4. Mainstream magazines that take on a large-size department or supplement; or publish diet or health information that is relatively enlightened;
5. Individual writers and personalities (like Nancy Roberts, Hillel Schwartz, Dr. William Bennett, Dr. Paul Ernsberger, etc.);
6. Dozens of local non-NAAFA support groups around the country;
7. Fitness and health associations that are beginning to recognize the value of fitness for fat people, even without pounds lost (like Melpomene Institute in Minneapolis);
8. Other NAAFA-like organizations that are just beginning in Canada, Australia, France, Great Britain, etc.);
9. Manufacturers and providers of goods and services, all the way from Fitting Pretty (panty hose) to The Larger Woman's Workout by Idrea (exercise video);
10. Size-related dating services;
11. Those initiating lawsuits to fight fat discrimination (such as Sharon Russell);
12. "Legitimate" weight-loss companies—let's not overlook the possibility of support for the movement from unlikely places.

In the course of doing some research on all the non-NAAFA elements of the size acceptance movement, I became convinced that NAAFA should adopt an official policy on the subject of non-NAAFAs in the movement (who are often NAAFA members, but also conducting their own activity as well, apart from their NAAFA involvement). The idea was to express NAAFA's support for all those in the movement. There have been times in NAAFA's past when such a proposal might have had a tough time passing. But on May 28, my proposal received overwhelming support from the Board of Directors, and has become official policy. It reads, in part, as follows:

"WHEREAS the goals and purposes of NAAFA, as defined in its Constitution are broad, and clearly reflect the purpose as summarized in its name: to advance 'fat acceptance' in as many ways as are possible; and

"WHEREAS it is possible to work for some of the same goals of NAAFA outside of the

NAAFA setting, either individually, or as a group or corporation; and many such groups are currently doing just that; and

"WHEREAS it is in the best interest of the 'size acceptance movement' for those groups that have some congruence in their interest to remain mutually supportive, communicative, and to work together whenever possible, our numbers being small relative to the total population;

"BE IT RESOLVED by NAAFA's Board of Directors to issue this statement of support for all those groups involved in the same general work as our organization; and we encourage all such groups, individuals, and corporations to adopt the same open and uncompetitive attitude toward others in the 'movement' as we pledge and affirm today..."

So it is my view that this resolution should help to unify some of the various elements in the movement. Even though each part of the movement has its own particular focus or "flavor," we should realize that all of us will be a part of a stronger movement as a result of cooperation.

*...future progress
will depend on...
a stronger NAAFA;
more grassroots
support by groups
that cooperate; and
building allies
from outside the
movement.*

Now, getting back to the subject of how we in the movement should get the message out to the public: I am convinced that there are other and better ways that we have not yet explored. Certainly, high-powered ads in leading magazines will help, but will be very costly. But beyond the usual advertising and/or public service announcement type of message, I think that making video presentations and live speakers available to groups might be effective. The use of theatrical performances (like the Fat Lip Readers Theatre) and artist's shows (like Patricia Schwarz's photos depicting fat women in beautiful and artistic settings) can communicate to people on a level that no

written words or ordinary talk show can hope to duplicate. Both of these outstanding shows have been accessible at this convention. Some women say they felt beautiful for the first time!

We need to build new allies for the movement from other outside groups that have different goals than we do. The recent size acceptance resolution that was passed by the national Board of Directors of NOW is a case in point. We need to conduct similar activities with the NAACP, and other groups that try to protect human rights. We need allies in labor unions, in fraternal organizations, in city, county, and state governments, in universities, in health organizations, and so forth. It is not necessary that each one of us agree with each and every position of our allies!

I believe that the future progress of our movement will depend on at least three major factors:

1. A stronger and professionally managed NAAFA;
2. More grassroots support and participation in the movement by groups that cooperate and do not compete with each other;
3. Building more allies from outside the movement.

How do we build a stronger NAAFA? It has been said before—more members, more leaders, more money. Actually, these conventions, in addition to providing wonderful support and information to participants, are fundraisers as well. So to those of you who came, we thank you for being here, for lending your "weight" to the movement, and for helping us financially at the same time.

Finally, I would be remiss not to mention our Major Donor program, which so far, through the outstanding efforts and help of a few individuals—some of them in this room—has been able to raise \$25,000 this year. Unlike other important fund drives in NAAFA, which are vital to offsetting NAAFA's deficit each year, the Major Donor program (with gifts typically ranging from \$250 to \$2,500 and even more) has made possible growth-oriented programs that could not have come out of the regular budget. For those of you who are able to help us with this kind of money, and who want to make a significant difference in NAAFA's commitment to its five year plan, please let either myself, Sally Smith, or a top officer of NAAFA know of your interest.

It's been an exciting year, and an exciting 20 years. I'm looking forward to the 1990's as a time when we can persuade others that our cause is just, and that we must take our rightful place in a society where one's physical size is no longer an issue! ☺

Lifestyles

It has often been said that "the only appropriate response to oppression is anger." Many people, during the process of "liberation," go through a period of being very angry. After years of reacting to discrimination with embarrassment, shame or guilt, one day they realize that discrimination is just plain wrong. They stop blaming themselves, and start blaming the bigots. Anger naturally follows. (The next

step, of course, is to find constructive ways of expressing that anger.)

The following article was submitted by Susan Tenzer (PA), who received it from a 230 pound woman who is not yet a NAAFA member. We wish the writer success in her fight for dignity, and hope that she will be able to accept the support that other liberated fat people can give her.

A Fat Manifesto

Anonymous

An acquaintance gushes, "Oh, you've lost weight!" as she surveys every inch of me feigning surprise and pleasure. A small child passes his hand over my tummy and makes a wondering remark, and another asks, "Why are you so fat?" My mother says, "You can win, Dear," as she hands me a book: "I Prayed Myself Thin." My sister gets teary as she talks of her unsuccessful battles with fat, and the cruelty she's endured due to fat prejudice. A neighbor says, "You have such a pretty face..." The "but" is unspoken, but you know it's there. A stranger in the supermarket scolds me about the candy bar I'm buying to head off an insulin reaction, and another sees me looking at the healthy snack foods and warns me they're fattening. My mother-in-law commands me to go to Weight Watchers, and says it would change my life if I got thin. Is she trying to break my heart?

The first remark on my hospital evaluation is "obese white female." That's what they see first, not that I'm human being in great pain and distress! They see an "obese white female" and nurses hurt me horribly as they move me roughly while they complain about the extra effort required by my weight. Doctors don't take my problems seriously, or see me as worthy of real help, finding it easier to assume that my illness is self-inflicted. I get the message that if I'd just get thin, they'd take more of an interest in helping me. And my husband's lawyer will probably seize upon the "obese white female" phrase to support my husband's claim that I'm not worthy of alimony; that my illness is

my own fault. Is "obese white female" my real identity? Does that make me somehow unworthy? Am I seen as a freak?

These people feel perfectly free to trample all over my dignity and self-esteem, and are really insulted if I react angrily. After all, they only have my best interests at heart! Really! Well, now I feel perfectly free to react with anger!

It wasn't always so. I used to shrink in humiliation, accepting their assumption that I deserved to be scolded and embarrassed because I didn't fit the mold. But no more! Now I tell them when I think they're rude. It's about time someone told them that they know absolutely nothing about me or my body, and that they have no right to intrude and insult me.

If I had a withered arm or a terrible scar, they'd bend over backwards to pretend not to see it, and they'd jump through hoops to spare my feelings. But fat—that makes me fair game, and I'm supposed to react with abject humility and guilt.

Well, the time has come to put all these rude and unkind people in their place. Now I'm aware that bad manners are much worse a sin than fat, and I intend to tell them so in no uncertain terms! I'm laying for these oafs, and the next one that accosts me had better look out! I have just as much right to dignity, respect and courtesy as anyone else, and if I have to demand it, isn't it about time? ♡

Check Here:

- Do I want to compare Leg & Headroom of new cars on the USA market?
- Do I want to see what's made for me in Big & Tall, not just what I have to pick from the local B & T store?
- Do I want more choice in what I wear?
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Obituary

Fred McClinton

On Friday, August 25th, Fred McClinton of California left work with his usual excitement on his way to a NAAFA pool party. He never made it. Just a mile from his work station high on Mt. Baldy, his vehicle crashed down the rugged mountain side. In a moment, Fred was no longer with us.

Fred, age 32, was a member of both the Inland Empire and Los Angeles chapters of NAAFA. Everyone who attended the Grand Ball at the recent national convention will remember him and his boundless energy on the dance floor. He lit up so many lives. He loved to shower his friends with attention, acceptance, and unconditional love.

We have lost the company of a dear friend, but maybe the NAAFA chapter in Heaven needed him more.

—Friends in Southern California

1990 Convention

Chicago, Illinois

The next National Convention will be held in Chicago, Illinois. At its recent meeting, the Board of Directors voted to accept an invitation from members of the Chicago chapter to host the event. The date has yet to be determined, but most likely a date in August 1990 will be chosen. ◇◇

Win a 1990 Convention Package!

Recruitment Contest Reminder

A three month membership recruitment contest began on September 1st. The NAAFA member who earns the most points for recruiting new members will be eligible to receive a 1990 convention package valued at almost \$300.

To enter the contest, call the NAAFA office and request the contest packet of promotional materials, including brochures and coded membership applications. The NAAFA office must receive completed membership applications (with payments) by December 15th.

A minimum of 15 points are needed in order to be eligible to win the Grand

Prize, a free 1990 Convention package (approximate value \$280 - \$300). The Grand Prize will be awarded to the member who accumulates the most points. The second place winner will have his/her 1990 Convention registration fee waived. Ten third place winners will receive a copy of *Fat Chance* by Harry Gossett. In the event of a tie, the winner will be determined by a random drawing.

The winners will be notified by mail, announced in the January, 1990 issue of the NAAFA Newsletter, and recognized with certificates at the 1990 Convention in Chicago. ◇◇

Donate to NAAFA Through United Way

If you work for a firm that has a United Way payroll deduction program, you can allocate all or part of your donation to NAAFA.

If you would like to participate, during the next month or so, fill out a United Way donor option card specifying NAAFA, Inc., Box 188620, Sacramento, CA 95818. (Do not specify a NAAFA chapter; due to its tax-exempt status, only the national association is eligible.) Your local United Way will contact NAAFA for the appropriate information.

According to Lynn McAfee (PA), who has done this through her employer, "This is an easy way to donate to NAAFA. An annual \$250 donation costs only \$5 a week in this manner. For just \$2 a week, you can donate \$100."

Lynn also advises that some employers are not aware that a specific charity or organization can be named, but this is a standard practice of United Way. If you would like more information, write to Lynn McAfee in care of the NAAFA office. ◇◇

Personal Ads Suspended

A recent Board decision to suspend the personal ad supplement of the NAAFA Newsletter will go into effect as of the October issue for a period of one year. Regular classified ads for events, products and services as found on the last page of the Newsletter will remain unaffected.

Proponents of ending personal advertising made the following points:

- The ad supplement could compromise NAAFA's credibility as a human rights organization.
- NAAFA meets the social needs of members in other ways.
- A small percentage of members advertise in the supplement.
- While we do make a small profit on personal ads, it is less than .6% of NAAFA's annual budget.

It was pointed out that there are a number of ways fat people and F.A.'s can meet one another, in and outside of the NAAFA setting. NAAFA-Date, besides matching people by computer, also allows for a message of 120 characters to be included with personal data. *Dimensions*, the publication of the FASIG is also carrying personal ads now, as are some chapter publications. *BBW Friendship Pages*, as well as some local dating services also provide such a service. ◇◇

Bring NAAFA to Your Hometown

NAAFA's chapter and area facilitator system is expanding. Qualified volunteers are needed to represent NAAFA in areas where no chapters currently exist. Area facilitators are stepping stones to chapter development. They act as NAAFA's contact person in a specific area. If you have been a member for over one year and can donate a minimum of 10 to 20 hours per month, please consider helping NAAFA grow in this way. Write the NAAFA office for an application and more details. ◇◇

Mini-Minutes

May 28, 1989 Board Meeting

The meeting was held at the English Inn in Charlottesville, VA in conjunction with the Mid-Atlantic Conference. Voting Board members present were: Neil Dachis, Paula Dachis, William J. Fabrey, Mary-Jane Grace-Brown, Jerry Hoxworth, Lynn McAfee, Nancy Summer, and Russell F. Williams. Chairman Conrad H. Blickenstorfer, who was present, votes only to break a tie or to make a 2/3 or 3/4 majority as needed. Executive Director Sally E. Smith was also present.

A number of committee reports were given and discussion was held on several topics including the financial status, the current publicity and marketing plans, the election, and the workbook. The "critical success factors" for year 1 and 2 of our Five Year Plan were reported on by the Executive Director. None of these discussions required a vote.

MOTIONS PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE

A Distinguished Achievement award for actress Ricki Lake of "Babycakes" and "Hairspray" was approved.

A proposal to create a special class of service award for people who regularly send news clippings and medical reports to the NAAFA office was approved; the award to be called the Silver Scissors Award.

A proposal from Mary-Jane Grace-Brown to list NAAFA, the local chapter contact, or the area facilitator on as many national hotlines as possible, to be done by Jim Brown and Mary-Jane at minimal cost to NAAFA, was approved.

A proposal from Neil Osbourn for a membership recruitment contest with convention packages as prizes was approved for the period of September 1 - November 30, 1989.

The draft budget for fiscal year 1990 was approved.

Lynn Meletiche was appointed chair of the Health Committee. Resignations were accepted from Victoria Reed (Health Committee), Cindy Michaels

(Fashion Committee), and Nancy Summer and William J. Fabrey (Printing and Production Committee.) A proposal to abolish the Printing and Production committee was also approved.

New chapters were approved in Washington State (Doug Zimmer, Chair) and New England (Matt Hahn, Chair). Area facilitators were approved for Saskatchewan, Canada (Ruth Wyllie-Gillingham), and New Mexico (Jeanette L. Apprill).

A proposal from Miriam Berg to form a Diabetic SIG was approved.

MOTIONS PASSED BY SPLIT VOTE

A proposal from William J. Fabrey to approve his "Statement of Support for Other Organizations in the Size Acceptance Movement" was approved. (See August 1989 Newsletter for content.) (7 yes, 1 abstention-N. Dachis)

A proposal from Nancy Summer to create two new classes of awards called the "Community Awareness Awards," to recognize special actions of individuals or chapters/SIGS who spread the message of fat rights and size acceptance into their communities (geographical or area of interest) was approved. (7 yes, 1 no-Williams)

A proposal from Carolyn Schmidt to establish a Mid-Size SIG was approved. (6 yes, 1 no-N. Dachis, 1 abstention-McAfee)

Dawn Atkins was approved as a member of the Research Committee. (7 yes, 1 abstention-Summer)

Russell Williams moved that NAAFA, Inc. will continue to issue monthly Newsletters 12 times a year; we will look for more inexpensive methods of production; and we will mail the Newsletter bulk mail; and if possible, we will have the Newsletter professionally redesigned. The motion was passed with an amendment that this shall take effect after the June issue. (4 yes, 3 no-Summer, Fabrey, McAfee, 1 abstention-P. Dachis)

A proposal that stated "Chapters are expected to follow sound financial practices, following guidelines provided to chapters by NAAFA, Inc. Each chapter shall submit confidential, semi-annual financial reports to NAAFA, Inc." was passed. (7 yes, 1 abstention-Hoxworth)

A motion that changed the policy for approving new local chapters and appointing area facilitators from being a Board decision, to being approved by the Executive Committee (Chairman, President, Vice-President) passed. (Note: this was offered as a way to speed up the process of application approval.) (5 yes, 3 no-Williams, McAfee, Summer) ◇◇

Upcoming Board Meeting

November 4, 1989
Grand Rapids, MI

All NAAFA members in good standing are invited to attend national Board of Directors meetings. The meetings are held four times per year in various parts of the country and normally last about four hours. If you would like more information, please call the NAAFA office, or write the Chairman of the Board, Conrad H. Blickenstorfer. ◇◇

Moving?

When you move, please remember to send NAAFA your change of address as soon as possible.

Please also send a change of address to any chapters or SIGs to which you may belong. ◇◇

Events

Feel Like Fun?
November 3 -5

Mid-West Conference

Guest Speaker:
David Garner, Ph.D.

Marriott Hotel
Grand Rapids, Michigan

For information, call (616) 949-8936
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West Michigan Chapter of NAAFA
2361 Woodlawn S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

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NAAFA Newsletter Advertising Policy

DEADLINES

Ads received by the following dates will be
printed in the next issue available: UPCOM-
ING DEADLINES: Oct. 1 for the November
issue, Nov. 1 for the December issue, and so forth.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Non-Member ads: \$.75/word, 20 word min.
Member ads: \$.50/word, 20 word min.
Confidential department number: \$5 per issue.
Capitalized boldface words: Count as two words
each—not available for personals.

DISPLAY ADS

Contact NAAFA office for ad rate card.

AD PAYMENTS

Discounts: Deduct 20% for identical ads in
three consecutive issues.

Payment: Must be included with order. VISA
or Mastercard okay for charges of \$15 or more.
We need card type, number, and expiration date;
amount charged; name and address of card
holder; and your signature.

Foreign members: Send U.S. funds; int'l
money order; or VISA/Mastercard.

AD ACCEPTANCE POLICY

Publication of any ad in the Newsletter,
the "Personals", and/or mailing of any
flyer by NAAFA does not imply any en-
dorsement by us. However, we will not know-

ingly publish an ad or mail any flyer that has false
information, or which appears to be a violation of
NAAFA's purposes or code of Minimum Stan-
dards. Ads or flyers for goods or services for
weight loss or gain will not be accepted.

SEPARATE MAILING OF FLYERS

NAAFA occasionally mails promotional flyers
for non-NAAFA goods or services. Such mail-
ings either take place from our office or from
Board-approved mailing services. Such mailings
are completely paid for by the promoters; we
make such mailings for informational purposes,
and to help pay for overhead expenses. Those
NAAFA's who choose not to receive such mail-
ings can request it in writing. ☐☐