



NAAFA Newsletter

Official Publication of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance

Summer 2009

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NAAFA Goes Green!

You can help NAAFA reduce the production of plastics and save our organization some money as well. Just bring a badge pack from a previous convention to use this year, and you'll receive a special thank you gift upon registration!

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Forty Years and Going Strong

 Washington Dulles Airport Marriott

NAAFA Is Turning 40 and we are having a convention celebration that you won't want to miss! Make plans now to join us for our annual fund-raising Convention being held July 31 thru August 3, 2009 at the Dulles Airport Marriott in Washington D.C. You may register to join us through our website at www.naafa.org. We are forty years old and going strong with the strength we need to build the future.

The 2009 NAAFA convention will be packed with learning, networking, community building, swimming, dancing and more. Friday night's 2009 NAAFA Fashion Show is promising to be the country's premier plus size fashion show with dinner and fashion plus our well-known Not-So-Silent Auction.

Saturday's workshops will afford us the opportunity to learn about the newest Health at Every Size (HAES) developments as well as follow up on our NAAFA Size Diversity Toolkit and learn where we're going from here. Don't forget your best party clothes for Saturday Night's Awards Dinner and Masquerade Gala as we honor leaders and pioneers in size diversity, share a sumptuous meal and dance the night away.

Sunday we will learn from experts the most effective ways of working to change our laws; then on Monday August 3rd, Size Diversity Awareness Day, we will visit key representatives and organizations to present our case for changing this country's anti-discrimination laws. You won't want to miss this opportunity to be involved.

We have worked hard to keep the cost of this convention down and have made it easy for you to register for the convention as well as the hotel at www.naafa.org. We encourage you to register for the full package today and to fully participate in this exciting, life-changing event.

Yes, You Can Help!

People helping people is a cornerstone of NAAFA. We are a volunteer organization and without volunteers, NAAFA would not exist. Our 2009 Convention is no exception. The members of NAAFA's Board of Directors and several others volunteer their time all year long to keep us moving forward. All of our convention organizers, speakers, workshop presenters, and entertainers are volunteering their services.

Volunteers make a difference by contributing their time, energy, and talents to the causes they hold dear. This is where you come in. The Convention organizers can't do all of the work that needs to be done at the Convention. We will need people for tasks like fashion show modeling, convention bag stuffing, registration, hospitality hosting, ticket taking, wristband checking, workshop room checking, and running errands.

We appreciate the support you've shown by attending this annual fund raising event, but if you can, please also volunteer a couple of hours out of your convention time to help with some of these tasks that help things run smoothly. We don't want anyone to miss out on workshops or the full convention experience, so we will make every effort to keep from taxing anyone too much.

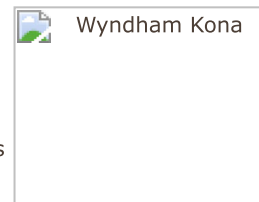
Please contact Board Member Phyllis Warr at PWarr1995@aol.com and tell

her what you are interested in doing or what your special skills are and when you are available to help. We'll all be glad you did!

Win a Fabulous Week in Hawaii!

Only \$25.00 buys you a chance to win a week in a bungalow at a fabulous Wyndham Resort in Hawaii, and raises much needed funds for the work NAAFA is doing to end discrimination against people of size.

Long time NAAFA Board Member Carole Cullum has generously donated a one week stay for the 2009 Thanksgiving holiday week in her Hawaiian timeshare as a raffle prize to raise funds for NAAFA.



Unwind during your island retreat at Wyndham Kona Hawaiian Resort, designed in the style of an 1880's Hawaiian village. Palm thatched roofs, rustic bungalows and paths lie amidst flower and fruit bearing trees, palms and tropical vegetation. The resort lies on 30 acres overlooking Kahului Bay and is two blocks from the beaches of the Pacific Ocean.

The two-bedroom bungalow features a king size bed in each bedroom, sleeper sofa in the living room, two private baths, whirlpool tub in the master bath, full kitchen, washer/dryer and lanai. Maximum occupancy is 6. Private sleeping area sleeps 4. Wyndham will provide our winner with a ground level, accessible bungalow.

Other amenities include ceiling fans, two cable TVs, VCRs, CD players, two outdoor pools, two outdoor hot tubs (with steps entering pools and hot tubs), a fitness center, tennis and volleyball courts, a putting green, and a children's activities program.

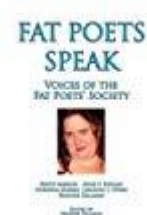
It's an easy walk or drive to Kailua-Kona Village, with ocean activities and exciting night life. Also minutes away are Hulihee Palace, University of Hawaii, Onizuka Space Center and Pu'uuhonua O Honaunau National Park. Fly into Kona International Airport, approximately 15 minutes away.

This vacation package is scheduled for Thanksgiving week 2009, with check in at 4 PM, November 22, 2009 and check out at 10 AM, November 29, 2009. Any request for change in date or location would be subject to charges by Wyndham Resorts of approximately \$200.00. Daily housekeeping is available by special request only and additional charges apply. This vacation raffle does not include airfare.

Tickets may be purchased through the NAAFA website and will also be available for sale at the 2009 Convention. Each chance to win this one week island getaway valued at over \$3000 will cost you only \$25.00 per chance and best of all, you need not be present to win! These are much better odds than any lottery, and a much better cause! Buy your tickets today!

Fat Poets Speak

The 2006 NAAFA Convention in Boston was the birthplace of our very own Fat Poets' Society. In just three short years, our fabulous fat poets have not only written and performed pieces that will move your soul, but they have published *Fat Poets Speak: Voices of the Fat Poets' Society*. This inspiring book was officially released on International No Diet Day this year.



The five fantastic NAAFA members who have co-authored this are graciously donating the proceeds from the sale of their book to NAAFA to further our work and end discrimination against people of size.

"Fat Poets Speak: Voices of the Fat Poets' Society" is available through Amazon.com at: <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1597190160>

Interested to know more about these poets? You can enjoy interviews with all five authors at the More Of Me To Love website:

<http://www.moreofmetolove.com/blogs/entry/fat-poets-society-interviews>

You can also check out the May 25, 2009 installment of the *Health at Every Size* radio show and podcast (by the book's publisher, Dr. Peggy Elam of PearlSong Press), which features the book and includes excerpts from each poet: <http://www.healthateverysize.info>

Opinion: Fat Rights and the Environment

by Marilyn Wann



Marilyn Wann-
credit L.
Garber

Do plastics make people fat? I don't know, but the very act of asking the question interests me.

When researchers ask, "Why are fat people fat?" I find they are primarily looking for some sort of pathology, either located in the fat person's body or in the environment, looking to lay blame and hoping to find some "cure" that will make fatness go away.

I don't oppose expansion of basic scientific understanding of bodily mechanisms (even those related to weight). I do oppose the urge to eradicate a naturally-occurring characteristic like fatness. And I oppose the belief that the only helpful approach to fat people involves trying to make us lose weight.

If some HAES advocates choose to work on other social justice issues, like environmental concerns, or animal wellbeing, or anti-racism, or anti-homophobia, or anti-sexism, I can't argue with that. I may or may not be able to fight all these fights, but I generally support the notion that none of us are free until all of us are free. And those who cross-pollinate may be able to raise consciousness about weight diversity in those communities, which I would love.

Regardless of what I weigh, I imagine that if plastic messes with my hormonal balance, I'd rather it not. Nonetheless, in advocating for the full personhood and civil rights and support for good health of fat people, I don't feel any need to defend plastic bottles. Or to condemn them.

In raising any alleged explanation for why people weigh what we weigh, it's useful to be aware of what Katie LeBesco calls the "will to innocence." For example, if I can claim that my genes make me fat, or that off-gassing plastics make me fat, or the industrial revolution makes me fat, then I take the blame away from gluttony or laziness or whatever other pathology may be popular to ascribe to fat people and I imply that fatness is inevitable.

But I'd much rather avoid the slippery slope of trying to justify the existence of fat people on any one factor or list of factors. Because that inevitably (even in the case of genetics) leaves room for an attempt for a cure. I'd rather argue from human dignity, recognizing that there are certainly reasons why people weigh whatever we weigh. That weight diversity exists is a given in my view. So fat people's existence is non-negotiable. Regardless of why we are fat, regardless of why thin people are thin. "We're here, we're spheres; get used to it!"

Size Positive Book Reviews

Suspense

Author: Charlie Lovett

Charlie is a writer, teacher and playwright who lives and works in Winston-Salem, NC. Charlie's plays for children have been performed in over 1000 productions in all 50 states and 5 foreign countries. They are filled with humor and cultural allusions that provide learning opportunities for the students and fun for all.

The Program - Karen Sumner, a curvy, round, fledgling journalist is on the trail of the hottest story of her career. There's a new weight-loss clinic in New York which for \$5,000 will make you as thin as a supermodel, for life. You can eat whatever you want and never gain an ounce. But, is The Program doing something even worse than creating an army of unnaturally thin women? You'll have to read it for yourself to find out!

Romance

Author: Judy Bagshaw

Judy is a retired elementary school teacher and writer in Southern Ontario, Canada. Her fat characters are interesting lively women leading full lives,

much like you and me. Each abundant heroine meets a love interest who accepts and loves her just the way she is.

At Long Last, Love - This collection of romantic short stories by Judy Bagshaw features big beautiful - and in some cases slightly more mature - heroines leading rich and active lives and finding romance when they least expect it. At the end of each of these short stories I found myself wanting more!

Author: Pat Ballard

Pat's romance novels all have a fat heroine, some further along the road to self and size acceptance than others, but all positive and empowering. For those of you who like a little mystery and adventure along with your romance, these books hit the mark!

A Worthy Heir - Pamela Spencer is determined to help get her brother's life back on track after a job related injury has left him confined to a wheelchair. A very unusual ad in the newspaper leads Pamela and her brother into a life full of adventure, wealth and ultimately love!

Wanted: ONE GROOM - Hanna Rockwell must be married by her 30th birthday or she, her mother and her brother could end up homeless and penniless. So what is a girl to do? Throw down the gauntlet, of course thinking it will never work! Mother is to plan the wedding and brother is to find a groom. Would you marry a stranger to save your fortune, even if he was your teen-age rock star idol, now a has-been looking for a way back to the top? But what about love?

His Brother's Child - What were the odds that one wild night in her entire life would leave Faith Carr pregnant by a handsome stranger who really wants nothing more to do with her after their "night of fun"? Just because she was pregnant with his brother's child didn't obligate Edward Brenner to marry her and give her child a name. But Edward knew the first time he saw her that he would love Faith Carr in spite of the obstacles they'd have to overcome.

Abigail's REVENGE - Abigail Avery has good reason for wanting revenge against the "good ole boys" who stole 10 years of her life. She was framed for the murder of her own father and sent to prison when she was just 18 years old. Now she's free, back home in Leaky Springs, Mississippi and finding out why the crooked judge wants her to sell her family farm. Not only is Abigail finding answers, she's finding love as well.

The Best Man - Lana Clarke's sister is getting married and Lana is her maid of honor. The bride and her mother do not think this is the right time for curvaceous Lana to decide she's not going to diet anymore. Who wants a fat maid of honor? How about the devastatingly handsome best man? Sparks turn into flames, but could this mean trouble for Lana? It seems that Tony's first wife died a mysterious death.

Self Help

Author: Pat Ballard (see above)

10 Steps to Loving Your Body (No Matter What Size You Are) - The title of this book just about says it all. Pat outlines practical steps drawn from her own experience that help us learn to love our body! Full of supportive quotes and uplifting dialogue, this book is perfect for the newcomer to size acceptance as well as a good reminder to those of us who have been on this road of self discovery and self acceptance for some time. We can all use the encouragement as we work to end the war on fat people!

Media and Research Roundup

[Editor's Note: You'll find the latest size acceptance news, good and bad, at the NAAFA News RSS Feed at www.naafa.org]

April 2008: The Year 4 Evaluation of Arkansas Act 1220 of 2003 to Combat Childhood Obesity is released. While it appears that school children in Arkansas now have access to healthier snacks (at school and at home), the program's weight assessments of the children has led to an increase in teasing about weight and embarrassment about having measurements taken. Interestingly, weight trends of the children are not reported. <http://www.uams.edu/coph/reports/Act1220/COPH%202007%20Obesity%20>

[Evaluation%20Report.pdf](#)

May 8, 2008: While there is an ongoing push for restaurants to post calorie information; Harvard University Dining Services removes the index cards detailing nutritional information from dining halls after students and parents raised concerns about displayed calorie counts leading to or worsening eating disorders.

<http://www.thecrimson.com/article.aspx?ref=528233>
<http://eatingdisorders.about.com/od/riskfactors/i/nutritionalvalues.htm>

June 30, 2008: Research conducted by the Peninsula Medical School in Plymouth, UK, and published in the *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, concludes that the recommended one hour of moderate exercise per day for children may not cause weight loss in fat children; however, children who met the recommended activity levels fared better for blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides and insulin resistance. In other words, exercise makes you healthier, just not thinner.

<http://adc.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/93/9/772>

September 2008: According to news reports, British schools begin weighing Kindergartners and children in their last year of primary school. Notes will be sent home regarding the child's weight.

http://archives.chicagotribune.com/2008/aug/07/nation/chi-london-dispatch_woraug07

September 2008: A study by Dr. Bliss E. Kaneshiro of the University of Hawaii finds no significant differences among weight groups in sexual orientation, frequency of sexual intercourse, the number of current partners, age at first intercourse, the number of lifetime male partners, or the number of male partners in the previous year. Surprise, surprise.

http://journals.lww.com/greenjournal/Abstract/2008/09000/Body_Mass_Index_and_Sexual_Behavior.13.aspx

September 1, 2008: A recent study led by Craig Gundersen of the University of Illinois (published in the September 2008 issue of *Pediatrics*) indicates that poor children in the United States may be getting fat from eating in reaction to their mother's stress due to issues rooted in poverty. The data show how fatness can appear to be correlated with poor health when it's just as likely that the poverty, stress, and poor nutrition are causing the poor health.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSN2710888520080902>
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/122/3/e529>

September 4, 2008: In an attempt to dismiss a lawsuit brought by five Detroit area residents with physical disabilities, Northwest Airlines had argued the Americans with Disabilities Act does not apply to services at airports. But US District Judge George Caram Steeh says in a 13-page opinion that to conclude the ADA did not apply to airports "would leave the door open for acts of discrimination that could not be remedied."

http://www.boston.com/business/articles/2008/09/04/judge_wont_quash_disability_lawsuit_against_nwa

September 6, 2008: In a three part interview with Radio Netherlands, fat rights activist Marilyn Wann talks about HAES and fat discrimination, and responds to a medical doctor on his perceptions of fat health risks and Marilyn responded. We love you, Marilyn!

<http://www.radionetherlands.nl/thestatewerein/otherstates/tswi-080906-fat-pandemic>

September 8, 2008: HAES experts Linda Bacon and Dana Shuster (plus many others in the size acceptance community) let Kaiser Permanente know that their billboards depicting celery with the words "Beat Obesity With A Stick" (part of their often-good Thrive campaign) were offensive and inappropriate. Kaiser's reaction is sympathetic, and the ads are eventually discontinued.

September 8, 2008: The Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, are the focus of a new study (published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*) on a common genetic variation that makes people more likely to gain weight. The variant's effects can be blocked with physical activity: three to four *hours* a day. And after all that exercise, you'll be a whopping 15 pounds lighter than those who get the least activity.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/26611180>
<http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/168/16/1791>

September 16, 2008: In an article about the trend of "positive eating"

(focusing on healthy choices, and not deprivation) the *New York Times* reports that fewer people are dieting (down to 29% in 2007 from 33% in 2004), probably due to the repeated failure of diets, based on research by the Calorie Control Council. A study by the NPD Groups shows a similar decline. Even so, the article still holds out weight loss as a desirable and attainable goal, despite the evidence. (A related story in the *Boston Globe* also reports on the NPD Group report.)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/17/dining/17diet.html>
http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2008/09/21/interest_in_dieting_slims_down

October 1, 2008: A new study by Anna Maria Siega-Riz, PhD, RD, and colleagues at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, shows women who have a history of dieting are more likely to experience excessive weight gain during pregnancy, regardless of their pre-pregnancy weight.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=93139>
[http://www.adajournal.org/article/S0002-8223\(08\)01413-2/abstract](http://www.adajournal.org/article/S0002-8223(08)01413-2/abstract)

October 1, 2008: Matt Palmquist's article "Calorie Restricted Diets Only Work for Rodents" explores the concept that while rodent lifespans appear to be extended by a basic calorie restriction diet, the same is not true of humans. As the fat community has known for some time, the human body's reaction to calorie restriction is much more complicated.

<http://www.miller-mccune.com/mice/calorie-restricted-diets-only-work-for-rodents-733>
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/121398450/abstract>

October 3, 2008: Merck & Co. halts development of Taranabant, a drug that was supposed to help people lose weight, when it was also associated with increased risk of psychiatric events. The company was unable to find a dose level that adequately minimizes risk while helping people lose weight to a significant degree.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122297743887899291.html>

October 3, 2008: The *New York Times* publishes an excellent article by Robin Marantz Henig providing statistics debunking some fat myths, and exploring the issue of HAES and fat acceptance; making specific reference to Linda Bacon and her book *Health at Every Size*.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/05/magazine/05wwln-idealab-t.html>

October 15, 2008: The *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine* publishes a study by the Sleep Division of Harvard Medical School shows that, unrelated to fatness, people with severe sleep disordered breathing (SDB) consume larger amounts of cholesterol, fat and saturated fatty acids (but not carbohydrates, sucrose or dietary fiber).

<http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=2576325>

October 23, 2008 - Sanofi-Aventis SA's weight loss drug Acomplia suffers a knockout blow as European regulators recommended pulling it from the market because of side effects including suicide and depression. The drug was never approved in America because of concerns over the side effects. [See related October 3 story above.]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/3248310/Obesity-drug-linked-to-suicides-taken-off-the-market.html>

October 24, 2008: *Healthday* reporter Karen Pallerito reports how studies have linked weight cycling to high blood pressure, high cholesterol, depression; cardiovascular disease and death. And yet, in the face of this evidence, some experts still recommend that fat people never give up trying to lose weight. Huh?

<http://health.usnews.com/articles/health/healthday/2008/10/24/the-ups-and-downs-of-yo-yo-dieting.html>

October 29, 2008: Kim Severson writing for the *New York Times* notes that calorie counting is coming back into fashion. Nearly three dozen states, cities and counties have passed or introduced laws that would require calorie posting in some form. More are in the works, despite concerns that this can do more harm than good. [See related May 8 story above.]

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/29/dining/29calories.html>

November 6, 2008: A new study published in *BMC Medicine* shows clear evidence for an association between the duration of exposure to fenfluramines (fen/phen) and prevalence of damage to heart valves, even for patients who stopped taking the drug years ago.

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1741-7015/6/34/abstract>

November 9, 2008: The *New York Times* reports that almost all school districts now regulate the food and drink sold to students, including the elimination of bake sales. According to Jamie Chriqui (University of Illinois), the idea is that policy interventions "will do for junk food what smoking bans . . . did for tobacco."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/10/us/10bake.html>

November 11, 2008: A study published in the journal *Circulation* and led by Dr. Geetha Raghuvver (University of Missouri) finds evidence that children who are fat or have high cholesterol show early warning signs of heart disease, because of the thickness of their artery walls (CIMT). Dr. Raghuvver stated of the 70 children participating, "These kids are more similar to middle-aged adults." However, there was no control group; that is, CIMT was not measured in "normal" weight children; in fact, there is no standard CIMT chart for children.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/12/health/12heart.html>

http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/meeting_abstract/118/18_MeetingAbstracts/S_1173-c

November 13, 2008: *New England Journal of Medicine's* article, "General and Abdominal Adiposity and Risk of Death in Europe" summarizes a study that suggests that belly fat ("apple shape") may be a better indicator of risk for certain health problems than fat deposited below the waist ("pear shape") than BMI. <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/359/20/2105>

November 16, 2008: Comedian and former health writer Tom Naughton's movie *Fat Head* purports to demonstrate that nearly everything we've been told about fatness and healthy eating is wrong. The website for the movie includes a recommended reading list and his list of experts.

http://www.fathead-movie.com/?page_id=2

November 17, 2008: AP health writer Mike Stobbe's writes about Huntington, West Virginia, which has been designated by the CDC as being the "unhealthiest" city in the US. Stobbe focuses on the fact that nearly half the adults are fat, failing to make a connection between the area's health problems and the fact that Huntington's poverty level is one of the highest in the nation.

http://www.newsvine.com/_news/2008/11/16/2117666-w-virginia-town-shrugs-at-poorest-health-ranking_

November 19, 2008: Research by Phillippa Diedrichs (under the supervision of Professor Christina Lee, Health Psychology Research Unit, University of Queensland) investigating the use of average-sized models to sell products, and what impact this will have on promoting positive body image, indicates that average-size models may be just as effective in advertisements and that many consumers actually want to see more realistic models.

<http://www.uq.edu.au/news/?article=16639>

November 20, 2008: The Supreme Court of Canada upholds the Canadian Transportation Agency's order last January that airlines adopt a policy of "one person, one fare," forcing major airlines to provide free extra seats to disabled or fat passengers who need them.

<http://www.thestar.com/article/540345>

November 24, 2008: Christine B. Whelan (University of Iowa) writes of the growing presence of faith-based weight loss groups, rightly pointing out how fat people have been made to feel bad enough without adding religion into the mix. She notes that there seems to be a trend in these types of groups toward encouraging mindful eating and moderation.

<http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2008/11/pass-on-the-pie.html>

November 30, 2008: Richard Knox reports that for the first time, rate of new cancer is down among all Americans. But as our own Kelly Bliss points out, Americans are bigger than ever, so why are we being told that fatness is causing cancer to rise?

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97463849>

