

NAAFA Newsletter

VOLUME XIII

ISSUE NO. 2

JANUARY 1987

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NEWS AND COMMENT

DOES OBESITY KILL?

PHYSICIANS' NEWSPAPER PUBLISHES POINT-COUNTERPOINT

Physician's Weekly (October 6, 1986) carried a point/counterpoint feature asking the question "Does obesity kill?" Dr. Theodore B. Van Itallie responded "YES" and Dr. Paul Ernsberger countered with "NO". This is the second time Ernsberger and Van Itallie have debated this issue in print.

Van Itallie cited studies that he said showed, among other things, that "overweight Americans from 20 to 45 are 5.6 times as likely to have high blood pressure...four times as likely to have diabetes and about twice as likely to have high cholesterol..." Noting that overweight women have a slightly lower risk of premature death than men, and that older people might be somewhat protected by extra weight, he concluded: "But we mustn't let such information permit people to become complacent and think they're safe from obesity's adverse health effects."

Ernsberger cited a number of studies that did not appear to support Van Itallie's position, such as Ancel Keyes' Seven Countries Study that led to Dr. Keyes' statement, "Underweight is a greater hazard than overweight." Ernsberger made several points, including the example that "hypertension, congestive heart failure, and sudden death--all linked with obesity--may be precipitated by increased activity of the sympathetic nervous system. The two most popular drug therapies for obesity, amphetamine-like agents and thyroid supplements, activate the sympathetic system.

Van Itallie is a Professor of Medicine at Columbia University; and Chief of Metabolism and Nutrition and Co-Director, Rockefeller-St. Luke's-Roosevelt Obesity Research Center, New York City.

Ernsberger was listed as Postdoctoral Fellow in Neurobiology, Cornell University Medical School; and Chairman, Advisory Board, National Association to Aid Fat Americans.

COMMENTARY

Is obesity a killer or not? Like other controversial subjects, what you believe may depend on whose expert testimony you accept. Unless you possess an advanced degree in the health or biological sciences, it may be hard to grasp the differences between the studies cited by Van Itallie and those mentioned by Ernsberger. If you don't have those advanced degrees, should you believe the expert who has more credentials, age, experience, and position? If so, Van Itallie's arguments may have more appeal. Do you tend to side with someone who has fewer vested interests in the clinic/funding/publications "establishment", and who seems more willing to accept newer but still unpopular evidence? Then Ernsberger may be your man.

As we see it, the weight research community seems to be increasingly receptive to the argument that fat, in itself, is not a killer--while a majority of health professionals, including practicing physicians, appear to still agree with Van Itallie.

Meanwhile, the bottom line is that, while the experts slug it out over health issues, it's important that each of us be aware of what our own bodies need, and make health-related decisions accordingly. For example: A diet, a drug, or an exercise regimen that works for one person might be dangerous for you...or just might make you fatter in the long run.

And, none of this should have anything to do with the fight against size discrimination. Both Van Itallie and Ernsberger are humane individuals who say they feel that people should feel good about themselves. Nothing in the debate about fat and health should be allowed to interfere with the pursuit of self-respect and dignity for fat people!

OHIO CURTAILS DIET PILL USE

Ohio's Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review adopted a tough new set of standards proposed by the state's medical board. The new rules prohibit doctors from prescribing certain amphetamines for weight loss. The drugs, commonly known as speed, appear on Schedule 2 of the federal government's list of controlled substances. Examples of Schedule 2 drugs are biphentamine 20, preludin and desoxyn. Doctors who prescribe those drugs for weight loss will face disciplinary charges by the Ohio State Medical Board.

Also severely restricted is the use of schedule 3 and 4 diet pills. Before a doctor is allowed to prescribe drugs like Ionamin, Fastin, Plegine, Adapex and Tenuate for weight loss, the doctor must have ruled out every other type of treatment. The rule allows a doctor to prescribe these diet pills for only a few weeks, and require that they be discontinued if the patient has not lost weight in 14 days. Doctors who violate these rules will face disciplinary action.

It is believed that the new rules will drastically decrease the abuse in diversion (to street trade) of amphetamines and amphetamine-like drugs. Federal officials had testified that in 1985, Ohio was second in the nation in the amount of amphetamine and methamphetamine sold and consumed. The Joint Committee, made up of state representatives and senators adjourned without voting on the Medical Board's proposed rule changes which had the effect of adopting them.

Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals and Pennwalt Corp., firms that manufacture some of the drugs involved, had testified and lobbied against the rule changes. The drug companies argued that those pills were not widely abused and that by restricting their application, some patients would be "doomed to lives of obesity". Medical Board officials had privately expressed fears that drug company lobbying would result in the rules being defeated or delayed. Drug company litigation is expected, one Board member said. The rules became effective in December.

COMMENTARY: SAY NO TO DIET PILLS!

Guest Commentator: June Bailey, Ohio

While the new rules in Ohio are perhaps a move in the right direction, I feel that Ohio legislators have taken a leadfooted approach to these dangerous drugs and the new rules aren't as rosy as they seem to be. I see some big loopholes in the new regulations.

Everybody knows that most people can lose some weight in two weeks, especially if they are on speed. That well-known fact gives a doctor a license to continue prescribing the pills, if they have ruled out every other type of treatment. Let's face it, we know that those "other types of treatment" are just as ineffective for long term weight loss maintenance.

A second loophole is that doctors who break the rules must be reported in order to be detected. How many people who are hell-bent on losing weight are going to report their doctors when they are 1) losing weight like they want to; and 2) stoned out of their skulls on uppers? Not many? You betcha!

You might ask: Are the pills really that dangerous? Yes, they are! They raise your blood pressure and speed you up so you not only can't eat, you can't sit, you can't keep from fidgeting and you can't sleep. There is also no doubt that they are addictive. Have you noticed how many show business personalities are coming forward with the information that their drug addiction began with diet pills prescribed by doctors? Liza Minelli recently admitted to that on national television.

While rules are a necessary part of a law-and-order society, the ultimate solution to fat people's problems isn't tougher regulations (these new rules aren't tough enough, anyway). I'm also not sure I want legislators making decisions about my body size.

In my opinion, the only solution I see is for us to rev up the frequency of saying the first word our mothers taught us...NO! When a doctor offers to prescribe amphetamines for weight loss, fat people should say NO! When fat people become educated enough, we'll be able to say NO to the ineffectual starvation diets, to the pills, and to the cutting, stapling, binding, and suctioning procedures. Then the sticky-fingered money greedies won't have fat people's pockets to pick anymore and legislators won't have to worry about getting campaign funds from drug companies.

Of course, I may come across as overzealous in my condemnation of diet pills, but that's because they murdered someone I loved. She thought she was a little "overweight" and the innocent-looking pills changed her from a beautiful woman into an anorectic caricature of herself. When she died at the age of 44, she weighed 88 pounds. She was my sister.

I'm going to continue to say NO, in her memory, for myself and for you, regardless of what legislators do! I hope you'll do the same. Then we will all be free and we won't need any legislation to protect us---we can say NO ourselves.

MEDIA AND PUBLICITY WATCH

A December rerun of the nationally-syndicated show Sally Jessy Raphael featuring three NAAFA male FA's has generated another round of mail and memberships; NAAFans Conrad Blickenstorfer and Doug Zimmer appeared on a TV talk show in December in Seattle, WA. The subject: FA's again. It was well received, and caused a number of requests for NAAFA material.

Oprah Winfrey's nationwide talk show featured NAAFans June Bailey (OH), Geneva Chapman (OH) and another woman representing the point of view that being fat can be acceptable (Nov. 25). The three women had all written to Winfrey to protest her remarks on a previous show, that she "cannot believe those who say that they are happy being fat" (Newsletter, Oct. 1986, p.3). Their position was attacked and defended by members of the studio audience and callers to the show. Nutrition writer Jane Brody of the New York Times, and Dr. Herbert, also from New York, also presented pros and cons. The studio audience included two members of the Refrigerettes, a well-known ample-sized team of cheerleaders for the Chicago Bears football team, who made some excellent points. Some members of the Chicago and Ohio chapters were present as well, and spoke during and after the show in an attempt to win "converts." Was Oprah convinced? It sounded like her attitude about her own body can stand a lot of improvement--but perhaps her public statements about the attitude of other fat people will be more enlightened.

More next issue on lots of print coverage of Michigan members...

NOW IN PREPARATION - March 24 Woman's Day, featuring a story about Ohio NAAFAn June Bailey and her husband, Don. It'll be on the stands around March 3. The article was almost a year in preparation!

OTHER MEDIA ITEMS - Churchill Films, a renowned Los-Angeles-based educational film company has completed work on "Fear of Fat", a liberated film intended to reduce the number of fat teens who are terrified of becoming or remaining fat. The producers call it a "film about eating disorders" which discourages dieting by teenagers. They have even included at least one young woman who came to terms with her genetic predisposition to weight gain, and overcame a negative attitude about her size. Screenings of the film are scheduled for March 15 in Los Angeles. NAAFans who would like to attend one of the screenings may call the producer at (213) 657-5110.

A new documentary film may be of interest to some NAAFans. "Killing Us Softly" created by Jean Kilbourne explores the image of women as portrayed by advertising and the media. The publisher (Cambridge Documentary Films, Inc., PO Box 385, Cambridge, MA 02139; 617 354-3677) says that it has been used frequently and effectively by groups dealing with eating disorders...one issue raised by the film is said to be the "tyranny of 'ideal beauty.'" We have long noted the role played by the advertising industry and the media in helping to keep fat people from acquiring any self-esteem. That is why this column uses up so much space on the subject...

Television reviewer Marvin Kitman mentioned that he likes the show "Head of the Class" which employs two fat actors--one (Daniel Schneider) playing a student in an advanced honors class in high school, and the other one (William G. Schilling) portraying the principal. Kitman even says that he identifies with the student (Newsday, Nov. 4).

COSMO AND THE VOLUPTUOUS GIRL...by Bill Fabrey

Well, well, well. A cover story in Cosmopolitan magazine for February, 1987 (p. 210-213) titled "The Voluptuous Girl. She's Bouncing Back." COSMO is edited by Helen Gurley Brown, a compulsive skinny who is such a mortal enemy of fat that, in a TV documentary about eating disorders a few months ago, she was presented as a part of the cause of the anti-fat social climate that has caused the epidemic of anorexia in the U.S.

So what does COSMO say about the "voluptuous woman?" The four-page pictorial showed some pictures of some "big, beautiful, Junoesque girls" of the past: Such well-known plus-sized women as Ann-Margret, Sophia Loren, Mae West, Ursula Andress, and Jayne Mansfield! Two fashion photos make it clear that the term "Junoesque" as used in COSMO applies to any woman whose bust measurement exceeds a button-busting 36"...or who weighs more than a floor-quaking 130 pounds! The article concludes with the advice that ladies with "Rubens-like breasts and hips must hold the line with light, constant-dieter fare...or run the risk of turning a voluptuous figure into a (gasp!) frankly fat one..."

Why did we waste three paragraphs on this drivel? Because someone, somewhere should reveal this magazine for what it is: An active promoter of the kind of self-contempt among fat women that is making all our lives more miserable. We would like to receive some letters on this subject from regular COSMO readers, please.

ADVERTISING UPDATE - The Classified Advertising section of February MS. magazine carries a two-inch display ad for NAAFA. It is now on the stands. The Spring edition of RADIANCE will have NAAFA's usual 1/3 page display ad. It's expected to be out by the end of February. Finally, the spring issue of the new quarterly magazine MAGNA (for big and tall men) includes a display ad oriented especially toward men. The Advertising Committee (W. Fabrey, Chm.; J. Brown, E. Lefebure) reports that mail generated by the MS. ad is already being received--and that other national advertising is in the planning stages. Future ads will depend partly on the response to the ones recently placed...

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1987 ELECTION NEWS - The procedure to hold NAAFA's annual election began recently. On January 2, the 1987 Election Committee met to discuss possible rules changes and to nominate candidates for three of the nine seats on NAAFA's Board of Directors. Some rules changes were subsequently approved at the January 31 Board meeting, most notably allowing for relaxation of many of the strict regulations about electioneering and the publication of creative writing by candidates. These NAAFans were nominated:

Robert Bain (NJ)	Susan Hoey (NY)	Peggy Ventura (NJ)
Conrad Blickenstorfer, Ph.D. (NY)	Lynn McAfee (PA)	Judy Weeg (NY)
Barbara Colgin (OH)	Chris Mohan (PA)	Peggy Williams (MD)
Carrie Hemerway (MA)	Nancy Summer (NY)	Louise Wolfe (CA)
		Neil J. Zimmerman (CT)

Since the 13 nominees are still in the process of being notified, it is not yet known how many candidates will actually run in the election. Also, there is a procedure for nomination by petition. Those interested in running for the Board of Directors by petition, and who have been a NAAFA member for more than one year, are advised to call the NAAFA office and to request a copy of the election rules.

According to Paula Dachis, Co-Chairperson of the 1987 Election Committee, the current rules require that such petitions show the signatures of at least 100 dues-paid NAAFA members in favor of the nomination of a candidate. Dachis also pointed out that, following publication of an election notice on the front page of the November Advertising Supplement which called for letters from those wishing to be considered for nomination, no letters of interest were received.

Others on the committee, which automatically includes those Board members whose terms are not expiring this year, are William J. Fabrey, Co-Chair; Neil Dachis (MD), Jerry Hoxworth (OH), Eileen M. Lefebure (NY), and Russell F. Williams (MD).

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTS NEW OFFICERS - At its December 8 meeting, NAAFA's Board of Directors elected officers to a new one-year term through December 1987. (Board members are elected by the membership, and the Board elects its officers.)

Conrad H. Blickenstorfer was unanimously elected to the office of Chairman of the Board. He previously had served as Vice-President during 1986.

Eileen M. Lefebure was elected President for a second term, as was Mary-Jane Grace-Brown who was elected Secretary for a second term. Paula Dachis was elected Vice-President.

The election of Treasurer was tabled until the January 31, 1987 meeting, when Nancy Summer was elected unanimously to a fourth term as Treasurer.

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AS I SEE IT . . . by William J. Fabrey, Board member and Founder of NAAFA

GIVE IT A REST! - You may have noticed that I am no longer writing a column called "COB'S CORNER". The simple fact is that in December, when the Board of Directors chose its officers for 1987, I decided that it was time to give the Chairman's job a rest--and remove my hat from the "ring" of available candidates for the position. I had chaired 160 Board meetings since June of 1969, and felt that, with some new drains on my time in 1987, it was a good time to step down and put a higher proportion of my energies into committee work and into my seat on the Board itself. Moreover, it seemed like a good plan to rotate some of the top leadership positions now and then, when talented help is available, so that NAAFA will depend less on any one individual.

Fortunately, talented help was available. Conrad H. Blickenstorfer had already served as NAAFA's Vice-President in 1986. He was elected unanimously to become Chairman. I know that under Conrad, we on the Board can look forward to inspired and impartial leadership in 1987--which translates to a better NAAFA for everyone. How well Board meetings are chaired, and the kind of leadership exercised by the Chair can have a very definite effect on the kind of organization we will have!

CAMPAIGN '86 SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER

The Campaign '86 fund drive has raised a total of \$6,252, according to Bunny Peckham, Chairperson of the Fundraising Committee, which sponsored the drive. The total included \$4,152 in immediate donations, and \$2,100 in pledges, most of which are being paid on a monthly basis. The drive was successful due to the generosity of more than 98 NAAFA's (more than double the number of donors from the previous year), who gave a total of more than three times as much money as they did in 1985.

The following list includes most of those who contributed. Nine donors who declined to receive the committee's public "thank you" are not listed, but NAAFA is grateful for their support in any case!

GOLD HONOR ROLL (\$250 or more)

Robert Bain & Aglaia Koras-Bain (NJ) Lenard Brechner (NY)	William J. Fabrey (NY) Eileen M. Lefebure (NY)	Nancy Summer (NY) Susan Tenzer (PA)
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HONOR ROLL (\$100 or more)

AMPLESTUFF, Ltd. (NY) June Bailey (OH) Madeline G. Besselsen (MA) Conrad Blickenstorfer, Ph.D. (NY) Jerilynn C. Carmichael (OH) Betty Dialynas (LA) Andrea Fuehrer (NY)	Linda Gehres (OH) Wayne Gehres (OH) John R. Heaphy (MI) Lloyd John Ingram (NY) Linda Martin Designs (CA) Maytor H. McKinley (PA) Paul Nagle (KS)	Barbara E. Novack (MD) Neil Osbourn (CT) Victoria L. Reed, R.N. (CT) Virginia Spurgeon (CA) Lois E. Tressler (FL) Linda Ward (PA) Elisabeth Williams (NY)
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BENEFACTORS (\$50 or more)

Pattie Abee (GA) Bonnie Baskin (TX) Amy Berk (NY) Marilyn Christenson (MI) Amy Feinberg (PA) Jane D. Kettell (MA)	Susan A. Koval (IL) David M. Latham (NY) Harvey Parker (NY) Rosalie I. Radcliffe (NC) Marilyn Rock (MI) Emma J. Rumsey (PA)	Saimone Shapiro (FL) Mary Wood (CA) Ronda Sue Wood (CA) Neil Zimmerman & Pauline Olszweski (CT)
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SUPPORTERS (\$25 or more)

Jeanette L. Apprill (NM) Ira Cohen (NY) Emil Dillard (NY) Carol Dunlap, M.D. (OH) Jennifer E. Frazier (CA) Elizabeth Gillen (PA) Robert Hartenstine (NY) Barbara Herten (DC)	Olaf Jorgensen (NJ) Lynn Meletiche (NY) Rita Montana (NY) Janice C. Potter (OR) Jo Powers (CA) Guy Russo (CA) A. M. Rustemeyer & D. Dias (NJ) Linda & Bernie Sherman (PA)	Loreen Smith (CA) Liz Sterling (CA) Carol Sternhell (NY) Albert J. Stunkard, M.D. John E. Vassar (CA) Peggy Ventura (NJ) Peggy Weiss (OH) Michael J. Witty (CT)
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DONORS (\$10 or more)

Rhea Bardin (NY) Ellen, Phil, & Ruby Bloom (NY) Bill & Sue Blowers (CA) Bonnie Cohen (MD) Dan Davis (CA)	Carol Folan (NY) Charlotte M. Gaugh (MD) Ellen M. Gordon (NY) Arnold Greenberg (NY) Karlene Izenhower (WA)	Estelle Margolin (NY) Mary McEnany (VT) Lillian Nielsen (IL) Cherilyn Schultz (IL) Adee Weckert (OR)
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GIFTS IN MEMORIAM - Included in the above listings were gifts that were made in memoriam for the following: Ken & Madelon Close, Harriet R. Fabrey, Wilma Kuns, Bruce McElney, Naomi Shadowitz, David Sharlow, Betty Welcome.

Articles in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official policies of NAAFA, Inc., unless specifically noted. Please contact the NAAFA office about specific NAAFA policies. Commentaries in this Newsletter, unless otherwise noted, were prepared by the Editor, and/or NAAFA's Founder.

EDITORIAL: WHY AREN'T THERE MORE FAT MEN IN NAAFA?

by Nancy Summer, Managing Editor

"Fat men just don't have it as hard as fat women. That's why they don't join NAAFA." I must have heard that comment hundreds of times in my six or seven years of NAAFA membership. But, I do not believe it's true, no matter how many times it's been said.

What is the basis of such a comment? While there have been some changes in this area, there is a major difference between how men and women are "rated" in society: Women are often judged by their appearance and men are often judged by their accomplishments (and how rich and successful they are). Proponents of the "fat men don't have troubles" school of thinking claim that women suffer more discrimination because their appearance is their only ticket to success. Fat men can work hard and be accepted no matter what their size.

Despite the fact that "fat is a feminist issue", a statement that I certainly do not challenge, I also think that fat is a humanist issue and that both fat men and women are oppressed in our society.

How can you judge that one person's pain is worse than another? Does the 17 year old fat boy, who has just asked the girl of his dreams to the prom, only to be laughed at and rejected...does he hurt more or less than the 17 year old fat girl who wasn't asked at all?

Suffering is not sexist. A fat man who just lost his wife to a thinner man, hurts just as much as the fat woman whose husband left her for a thinner woman. And it really doesn't matter whether it's a fat man or a fat woman who was overlooked when the big promotion went to a thinner, (but less qualified) co-worker. It just as painful, unfair and wrong.

Our society has put such a negative connotation on fat, that fatness can be a detriment to men and women, whether you are discussing dating, marriage, education, or career development. And even if fatness wasn't an issue for men, the recent trend of promoting fitness would still be an issue, as all too many people think thin and fit are one in the same.

So the big question is, if fat men do suffer discrimination, and I'm sure the readers of this publication will agree they do, then why don't more of them join NAAFA? I have considered, and been offered, several possibilities over the last few years:

Possibility No. 1: Men do not find NAAFA's "solution" to their problems appealing. While sexist roles are changing, women often reach out to self-help groups to solve their problems, while men more often prefer action groups that attack problems. Maybe NAAFA's "aiding", self-help image is less appealing to some fat men, who might prefer to join a 'National Coalition to Attack Size Discrimination'.

Possibility No. 2: There are less fat men than women who are potential members because:

-Women are biologically more inclined to fatness (as defined by current standards), and therefore there are more fat women than fat men.

-A man must be more "overweight" before he is considered fat, than a woman must be "overweight" before she is considered fat. A woman who is 10 or 20 pounds "overweight" is considered to be fat by society, but a man can carry more extra pounds before society starts giving him a hard time.

--That the awareness of size discrimination varies for men and women of different socioeconomic classes. Except for many poorer, lower class women (who are usually too busy with survival), most classes of women are very size conscious. Men, on the other hand, seem to be more size conscious in the upper classes, and somewhat less size conscious in the middle classes. If true, this would effect NAAFA as our membership is based in the middle classes.

Possibility No. 3: Competition with thin Fat Admirers. Many people join NAAFA for the social possibilities. People who would not join a civil rights group, often join NAAFA because they need a place to meet friends and/or lovers. Fat women find themselves competing with other fat women for male attention. Fat men, on the other hand, find themselves competing with the same thin men that they must compete with elsewhere. Maybe NAAFA isn't as safe a social scene for fat men as it is for fat women.

Possibility No. 4: Many fat men are loners. Unless they have accomplished something in their lives, they tend to stay away from groups, feeling either isolated, different or unworthy. Many F.A.'s have expressed their "loner" tendencies, but have overcome those feelings and joined NAAFA because of the chance to meet fat women. This leads to the next possibility...

Possibility No. 5: NAAFA needs more female F.A.'s. Maybe many fat men don't want to date fat women, and therefore are turned off by NAAFA's current social image. Maybe many fat women do not want to date fat men and make that preference known to fat men attending events.

I'm sure that other theories could be offered and explored by others in NAAFA. Perhaps the fat men who currently belong to NAAFA can find solutions. By identifying the problems, perhaps NAAFA can find ways of solving them and attracting more fat men (and more female F.A.'s) into membership. Male or female, size discrimination effects us all.

A CHAPTER THAT SHARES

The Los Angeles Chapter had a unique theme to their annual holiday party held on December 13, 1986. The price of admission to the party was three canned goods--one can of vegetable, one of meat, and one of fruit. Hundreds of cans and dry goods were collected for the needy at the party.

The food was donated to a charity called Hidden Treasures that gives hot meals to elderly and sick shut-ins, homeless people, and has a distribution outlet where people can get a bag of food with no questions asked.

According to Chapter Treasurer Marilyn Simpson, "We have so much. We felt it was time to do something for others."

Los Angeles is not the first chapter to offer a helping hand. Chapters in Michigan and Chicago encouraged members to participate in Hands Across America last summer. Such large fundraising and public awareness programs do much to help, but the Los Angeles Chapter's food collection program seems to be a very direct way of feeding the poor and homeless. □

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WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

KITTY L. BROWN and STEPHEN S. BELL were married in New York City on November 12, 1986. Stephen is currently a doctoral candidate in business at Columbia University. Kitty is currently employed as a registered nurse practitioner in a private clinic in Manhattan. Both are active in chapters and SIGs. Kitty served as the Editor of the Feminist SIG publication. The couple will continue to live in Manhattan. Kitty has taken her husband's name and will be known as Kitty L. Bell.

SUSAN L. MASON and JON J. HALBIG were married at the wild duck pond in Ridgewood, New Jersey on September 14, 1986. Jon is an assistant retail manager and Susan is an artist and the President of Meshugana Shirtworks, Unlimited!. Susan has contributed artwork to the SuperSIG, F.A. SIG and many other NAAFA publications. The couple resides in New Jersey and they are both active in several metro New York chapters. In fact, Susan and Jon met at a Westchester Chapter dance in August 1985.

TONI LEE McBAIN and BRIAN TIMOTHY VANEK, both of El Sobrante, California were married on September 6, 1986. The wedding was held in the Redwoods at Richardson's Grove State Park in Garberville, CA. The wedding was attended by only the immediate family and attendants. A reception was held on October 18, 1986 for other relatives and friends. The couple, who met through a mutual friend in October 1985, honeymooned in the California Redwoods. Toni has taken her husband's name and is now known as Toni Vanek.

GAYLE OLSZEWSKI and RAY TETREULT were married on September 28, 1985 in Cleveland. Gayle is a librarian in the Cleveland Public library system and Ray is a student and works in the accounting department of a national photocopy company.

They originally met at the library, and in conversation discovered that they were neighbors. Gayle reports, "One day I called him about some books he asked about that I owned. He came over to borrow the books bringing beer and pizza, and the rest is history. Oh...he never did borrow the books. They were just an excuse to meet the librarian."

Gayle is the Membership Officer for the Northern Ohio Chapter. She has taken her husband's name and is known as Gayle Tetreault.

JUDY WEEG and HELMUTH SKOWRONEK were married in Philadelphia at St. Andrews Church on November 29, 1986. Helmuth works for a German aerospace firm, and Judy is a writer. The couple has recently moved to upper New York State. Formerly a resident of Philadelphia, Judy served as a co-chair of the Philadelphia chapter. Helmuth was a resident of Long Island. Breaking with tradition, the couple has chosen to use Judy's surname: Helmuth will be known as Helmuth Weeg. □

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PLEASE NOTE! When you write that letter of praise or protest regarding fat issues to newspapers, TV shows, companies, legislators, doctors, etc., please remember to send a copy to the NAAFA office for distribution to NAAFA committees. Not only do committees such as Activism and Health want to be informed, but some letters are reprinted in this Newsletter.

IN OUR MAILBAG...

The **Newsletter** has been limited on the amount of space it can devote to Letters to the Editor, but some of the mail we have received in the last few months has been so interesting (and some so complimentary), we wanted to share excerpts with everyone.

CONCERNED ABOUT EMPLOYMENT

...I was pleased to see your recent editorial on employment discrimination. The talk shows don't want to admit this problem exists. I know because I've written to a couple shows suggesting they do a program on the subject and I've been sloughed off.

Now, I certainly don't think that every rejection I've ever gotten has been directly related to my size. I know, however, that I was ill-treated on one previous job because of it. More recently, I have been turned down for some public relations jobs for which I was extremely qualified--one was nearly a perfect match--and given the "stonewall" or the phoniest excuses imaginable when I called after the interview. Since these jobs were with health-care providers, I suspect that they couldn't handle having a fat, but very healthy woman working for them as a public relations spokesperson! Not when they're all pushing the gastric bubble and various other weight-loss and exercise programs as a means of increasing market share. So let's keep plugging away at "size-ism" in hiring. It needs to be out of the closet, just like racism and sexual preference.

--Marilyn Nenner, Oklahoma

(Convincing some people that job discrimination exists is not always easy. Several years ago USA Today was considering a story on the topic, but the editor rejected the story because he didn't believe that it was a problem.--ED.)

LIKES NUTRITION ARTICLES

I want to congratulate you on your encouraging such articles as (Dr. Paul Ernsberger's) "Resetting Your Setpoint" (a three part series, Vol XI issues 4 and 5; and Vol. XII, issue 5). I think nutrition should play as large a part in the NAAFAn's life as it does in any other person's life. I'd like to see other such constructive health oriented articles in the future.

I like the new (monthly) format of the **Newsletter** and I appreciate getting it more often! Thanks for continually being there for me!

--Sue Nyman, Washington

LIKES THE **NEWSLETTER** (The **Newsletter** just celebrated the one year anniversary of the monthly format...and from the letters we have received, it appears that the members support the new format...for example:)

I want to congratulate you on the past year of newsletters. I was disappointed when I learned that the excellent 16-page format was to be scrapped, but the monthly issues have been so professional that I'm sure they will enhance NAAFA's image and will do much to retain members from year to year.

--C.D., Ohio

A quick note to let you know how pleased I am with the new format...the monthly issues are read from cover to cover rather than being set aside (like the larger issues were) for lack of time to read and absorb. I feel more in touch with what's going on...

--B.H., Pennsylvania

Just wanted to say I enjoy reading all of the interesting material from the organization. So informative!

--B.D., New Jersey

I recently joined NAAFA and am extremely pleased with the NAAFA **Newsletter** and all the other "bonuses" that come with being a NAAFA member.

My sister-in-law is also fat and I have been encouraging her to join; hopefully she will. I do take the newsletters over for her to read and she seems to enjoy them.

This letter is mostly to express my appreciation for NAAFA. The short time I have been a member has helped my self-confidence tremendously.

--P.A., Georgia