

NAAFA Newsletter

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CONVENTION PHOTO SPECIAL

NAAFA IN LOS ANGELES:

WE LOVED IT!

If you ask the attendees of the 1985 national convention what they remember best, most everyone will sooner or later mention the wonderful times had in the pool. The Los Angeles Airport Marriott is, in fact, a hotel built around a mini tropical paradise, complete with pool, hot tub, palm trees and a swim-up bar. There were a lot of skinny people around the pool when we got there. But the NAAFans changed that as more and more of us arrived at the hotel.

Irene Hallam, Eileen Perez and their fellow Los Angeles Chapter members were the perfect hosts, and the weekend they planned for us was spectacular!

A reception opened the festivities on Friday night. Saturday morning was the start of the workshop schedule (which ran throughout the weekend) and the annual Awards Brunch followed. The brunch included the announcements of the 1985 Distinguished Achievements and Pence Service Awards (see details elsewhere in this issue), and speeches by NAAFA Founder and Chairman William J. Fabrey; fashion model Cindy Michaels; and Louise Wolfe, California fat activist, and member of both NAAFA and Fat Lip Readers Theater. A gala dinner dance concluded Saturday's schedule.

Sunday brought the long-awaited fashion show (our NAAFA models rehearsed for weeks!). Produced by fashion model (and BBW cover girl) Cindy Michaels, the fashion show was a professional presentation of large-sized fashions for both men and women.

Soon it was time to don bathing suits and Hawaiian dress for the poolside luau where we dined under chinese lanterns and swam in the Marriott's fabulous pool. But Sunday wasn't over yet. A cabaret followed, featuring talented NAAFA members who sang, danced, played instruments, and delighted us with comedy. (And even though the pool was "officially" closed, many NAAFans headed back for an informal after-hours pool party!)

Monday's schedule included the testimonial luncheon where NAAFans were invited to come up to the podium and share their personal thoughts of how NAAFA changed their lives. Almost 30 members responded, sharing widely diverse comments about the positive effects NAAFA has had on them.

The many workshops that were held during the weekend included such topics as job discrimination, health fraud, sexuality, emotional support, leadership training, and a special workshop by fat activist Judy Freespirit. The workshop schedule concluded on Monday afternoon. Then it was square dance time. We put on our western clothes and danced the Virginia Reel and other dances under the direction of a professional (and very witty) caller. Even the waiters wore jeans and checkered shirts. And finally, as the convention came to an end, the Marriott treated us to a cheese and fruit buffet party in the hospitality suite. (Of course, many of us just had to have another midnight swim or dip in the hot tub!)

For most people, the convention was over. But for 20 or 30 NAAFans it was time for sightseeing on Tuesday...or more fun in the pool. By Tuesday night, the magic was over: The thin people took over the hotel and pool again. But we'll be back...someday.

Editor's note: We can't go to print on this issue without including NAAFA's written thanks to all the wonderful people in Los Angeles (and some from elsewhere) who worked so hard to make the 1985 convention a big success...and a very big, special thank you to Co-Chairpersons Eileen Perez and Irene Hallam, for their hard work, time, and organizational skills that were so important to this event.



← Los Angeles Airport Marriott

pool area outside the hospitality suite →



Olaf Jorgensen (Barbados) dances with Irene Hallam (CA)



Bill and Susan Blowers (CA) Co-founders of NAAFA



Louise Wolfe (CA) speaks at Awards brunch - Saturday



Christine Applegate (CA)



Eileen Lemke-Meconi (WA)

1985 CONVENTION -SCRAPBOOK-

Saturday night dance

Midwesterners Jeri Carmichael (OH) Jerry Lamb (MI) and Becky Haas (IL)
left → right



↗ Carolyn Owens (CA)

left → right
Sue Nyman (WA) and Peggy Williams (MD)





Debbie Brunson (CA)



Cindy Michaels (CA)



Eileen Perez (CA)



hats were popular accessories with fashion show attendees

Fashion Show



left → right

Ronda Wood, Sheri Fram and Charleen Bero at the cabaret (all CA)



Paula Dachis (MD) entertained with comedy



Randy Applegate (CA)



Doug Zimmer (WA) ←



↑ Rik Simmons (CA)



Deb Albright (OR) and Guy Russo (CA)



← Ray Simpson (CA) addresses the luncheon

Bill Fabrey and Ronda Wood square dance



Co-Chairpersons Irene Hallam and Eileen Perez accept service awards.



DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS GIVEN AT CONVENTION

In a ceremony at the awards luncheon, a total of four Distinguished Achievement awards were presented at the convention last year. A number of the awards are given each year to recognize those who have made an "outstanding contribution to the advancement of self-respect, dignity, and a better life for fat people."

An award was presented to actor John Candy, for his performances and the positive images he has often presented, demonstrating that an ample figure, coupled with personality, warmth, intelligence, good looks, and even sexuality, are not mutually incompatible qualities. A similar award was given to actress Conchata Ferrell, for the same reasons. (Neither was able to attend the ceremonies.)

An award was given to TV journalist Colin Siedor, of the Gannett Documentary Unit based in Atlanta, Georgia, for his documentary production The Waist Land in America: Our Obsession to be Thin. The documentary, seen on a number of Gannett-affiliated TV broadcast stations around the country, is being considered for possible PBS airing, and is also available for sale or rental as an educational video. Mr. Siedor, in accepting his award by mail, stated his view that NAAFA members, and others in the movement, are the ones who really deserve an award...

Finally, a special Distinguished Achievement award, designated the "Marvin Grosswirth Memorial Award" for excellence in creative writing--in his columns in the NAAFA **Newsletter**, in health-related special mailings like the Report on Weight-Loss Surgery, in his prolific writing for NAAFA chapter and special interest group publications, in letters and articles published in the popular press, and, finally, in professional journals, was given to Dr. Paul Ernsberger.

"PENCE" SERVICE AWARDS

Pence awards are issued to those who donate hundreds of hours of volunteer time (or equivalent).

First-time awardees:

Flo Beth Peek (WA), for her service on the NAAFA-Date Committee;

Paula Dachis (MD), for her cumulative service through the years as a member of the Board of Directors, as NAAFA President, and Chair of the Awards Committee, and other service not previously recognized; (This award was authorized by a consensus of the Board of Directors except for Dachis herself);

Those who previously received Pence awards, and earned "endorsements" for continued service:

Conrad Blickenstorfer (NY), for his donation of computer equipment and software, and his providing continued training in its use;

June Bailey (OH), for continued writings in NAAFA publications, and for public relations;

Elisabeth Williams (NY), for continued service as Chair of the Pen Pal and Volunteer Service Committees;

Noel Nyman (WA), for continued service as Chair of the NAAFA-Date committee, and for performing data processing (membership labels, printouts, etc.) for the Newsletter and Membership Committees);

Bunny Peckham (NY), for her on-going efforts as chair of the Fundraising Committee, holding national fundraising events and creating special mailings;

Russell F. Williams (MD), for continued work as Co-Chair of the Activism Committee;

Nancy Summer (NY), for continued excellence in **Newsletter** production, and other mailings.

Special awards were given to Irene Hallam and Eileen Perez (both CA), for being Co-Chairpersons of the 1985 Convention Committee, for the hundreds of hours of work that the jobs entailed.

HONORABLE MENTION - given to recognize service that helps keep the wheels turning...

Anna Cannizzaro (NY), Ira Cohen (NY), and Wayne Heinmiller (OH) for excellent photography;

Ruby Greenwald (NY), Local Chapters Committee Chair; Lynn Meletiche (NY), NY Area Events Coordinator;

Carol Sternhell (NY), for her article in Ms. magazine, May, 1985;

Joanne Preissler (NY), (Fully Feminine, Farmingdale, NY) for running convention fashion shows;

Sue Waller (MD), for health activism in the State of Maryland (with the NIH and other institutions);

Dorothy Williams, Annette Paffen, Robbie Kassel, Carol Corwin, and Amy Berk (all NY), for their efforts on the Volunteer Service Committee, helping with national mailings;

Ira Cohen (NY), Carol Dunlap (OH), Janice Potter (OR), Amy Berk (NY), Robbie Kassel (NY), Cheryl Norman

(TN), Barbara Novack (MD), Lloyd Ingram (NY), Susan Tenzer (PA), and many others, for their newspaper and magazine clippings for the Dr. Ethel Weiss-Shed memorial library.