

# Bare Facts

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38° 58' 7" North; 95° 47' 56" West

## LEF Annual Survey Is On-Line

Long-time Eduners know about our annual survey. It is our way of gathering feedback from our supporters so we know what they believe we are doing right and what we should consider changing to be more responsive.

This year's survey is now available [on-line](#). We will use the results to plot our direction for the next year including how we utilize our scarce resources. As is always the case, the results are very important and every response is evaluated.

The survey is carefully constructed so input from everyone can be helpful. Those who visited this year can tell us about their experience; Those who have visited in the past but were unable to visit this year can tell us how their situation may have changed or why they were unable to visit.

Most important, those who have never visited our special place can tell us what they would like to see when and if they ever visit. All three perspectives are important; all will be considered.

To be useful, the survey is comprehensive. It permits each respondent to plenty of opportunity to comment. We hope all of our supporters will provide their feedback.

To do justice with the survey, plan to spend around 15 to 30 minutes completing it. The survey can be found [here](#):

In advance, we thank you for your assistance with this. Increasingly, the plans we make; the improvements we plan are a result of the feedback we get from our annual surveys.

## Winter Warriors Still Seeks Recruits

As our year comes to a close, we have had a number of our supporters chose to become members of LEF. We are pleased with their support. We realize they may not know about our team of Winter Warriors who do so much to make our special place truly special.

We realize Winter is a special season at our special place. Without the undergrowth, poison ivy, ticks, chiggers, we can more easily tread in areas we might not wish to venture during warmer months. These are perfect conditions to make substantial progress on new projects.

This is a corps of volunteers who can assemble on relatively short notice for various projects. When weather guessers project a relatively warm day, we notify our team by email. Our objective is two-fold: to make meaningful contributions to our special place and have meaningful fun in the process.

Projects for this year include keeping the dam clear, thinning Cedars and sprucing up the area around the barn.

No special skill or tools are required. Only a desire to help meet our two objectives. To join the Winter Warriors, just notify us. Email, phone, mail. Any will work.

## The Buff Astronomer – December, 2014

The winter sky brings quite a few old friends around for visits and places them high in the sky where local light pollution does not interfere as much. Pegasus, Cassiopeia and, between them, the Andromeda Galaxy (M31) are almost overhead at 9 pm on December 1. Coming into fuller view as the month rolls along are the V-shape of Taurus with the Seven Sisters (Pleiades) nearby and Orion following quickly. This combination of constellations and other objects make winter viewing a lot of fun.

The planets continue their paths on the great ecliptic. Mars is 20 degrees above the horizon about one hour after sunset at first and sets about 3 hours after the Sun all month. Jupiter is still a good bet to see every late evening. Even Venus comes out from behind the Sun in the early evening sky in mid- December and can be seen near Mercury just after sunset on New Year's Eve – What!! – You have something else more important to do on New Year's Eve!?!

Of the other good things to see in December, not much can be better than the Geminid Meteor Shower, peaking in the morning hours of December 14. Those that predict these things say that there could be 120 meteors an hour at the peak, about 2 a minute coming from the Twins, Castor and Pollux.

You can see lots of wonderful sights this month as you turn your gaze upward with the Buff Astronomer. Our special place is particularly well suited for viewing this astronomical spectacle. We are far enough away from the city lights that there is little light pollution and our winter skies are normally particularly clear.

## Saunas

Winter saunas are wonderful. The brisk Winter air contrasting on your skin with the hot sauna seems to stimulate our senses to a new level. If you haven't enjoyed a sauna recently, be sure to put one on your schedule. You will find dates and times in the schedule below or watch for an email from Grace.

Eduners and our friends use our saunas to talk with others about a host of topics. It is a relaxing way to get to know other Eduners better and share ideas. Be sure to include at least one sauna on your winter schedule.

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## DON'T FORGET

Dec 6; Sat; 8-10; Sauna

Dec 13; Sat; 2-4; Board of Directors

Dec 13; Sat; 8-10; Sauna

Dec 28; Sun; 7-9; Sauna

Jan 3; Sat; 8-10; Sauna

Jan 14; Wed; 7-9; Sauna

Jan 24; Sat; 2-4; Board of Directors

Jan 24; Sat; 8-10; Sauna

## Vermont Hippie Commune Research

Yes, we know government wastes money right, left, forwards, backwards, up, and down. However, not all government spending is misspent. I'm grateful for stop signs, and traffic lights, for example. Still, in many cases what is wasteful spending is in the eye of the beholder.

Just because I or anyone else sees no value in a particular government funded project doesn't mean our perspective is objectively correct. Lots of fundamental research may have no obvious payoff beyond the fact of gaining some information we previously didn't have. Numerous scientific research projects are only later found to have tremendous value.

I can't say for certain that gathering the history of 1970's era hippie communes will have a great impact on the course of civilization. The same thing could be said about the numerous 19<sup>th</sup> century utopian communes. Yet, now we look back on them with curiosity as failed social experiments. Still, would we want to be left ignorant of the Oneida Community, the Amana Colonies to name two, or Robert Owens's New Harmony Indiana cooperative?

America once was a hot bed of social experiments trying all sorts of idealistic visions, religious and non religious, for how people could better live. What makes us think that similar experiments of the 1970's had no merit and no reason to care about their existence? Simply to pan the study because the hippies used drugs and were often naked is a superficial criticism and fails to come to grips with the underlying reasons thousands of youth joined these communities and what lasting impact they have on today's world. The myopia that dismisses this piece of our history is more the product of a failure of curiosity and disapproval of divergent lifestyles than anything else. [Ed.]

Americans will soon get the full story on the hippie commune movement that invaded Vermont in the 1970s due to a federal grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The taxpayer-funded historical project earned a No. 16 ranking in the 2014 Wastebook report on wasteful government spending.

The Vermont Historical Society has begun work on "Colleges, Communes and Coops: 1970's Counterculture and Its Lasting Influence on Vermont." The two-year research project aims to provide a nostalgic insider look at the nearly 100 hippie farms that overtook Vermont following the Vietnam War youth protest movement.

Of the 50-plus oral histories being gathered for display in a future exhibit, symposium and statewide public program, many are likely to echo the personal experiences of commune members who have spoken openly about the farms in recent years.

Peter Simon, brother of singer Carly Simon during a promo session for a 2010 photography exhibit titled, "Vermont Hippies from the Seventies, and a resident of Tree Frog Farm commune recalls that, "Everything was shared. We shared food. We shared sex. We shared clothing."

The numerous communes were farms, with many scattered across Guilford and Putney with funky names such as Total Loss Farm, Toad Hall, Johnson Pasture, Red Clover Collective and Wooden Shoe. These farms became home to thousands of idealistic youth dropping out of society.

The Vermont Historical Society project aims to demonstrate the historical link between the free-love, vagabond communards of the 1970s and Vermont's progressive politics, organic farm movement and environmentalist culture today. (This rationale certainly appears a valid reason for the study. Of course, who pays for it is another matter. Ed.)

"By collecting objects, papers, and oral histories we will be creating a body of information for this pivotal period in our state history, making it available for generations to come," said Jackie Calder, curator at Vermont Historical Society.

The full story can be found [here](#).

## San Francisco Nude Olympics

After hearing about the May 31 arrest of several nude activists in Malaysia who participated in the "Penang Nude Sports Games," Bay Area nudist George Davis decided to take action here at home.

He and fellow body freedom activists gathered recently on Baker Beach in San Francisco to hold their own Nude Olympic Games to show solidarity with the Malaysian nudists who were arrested.

Events participated in included the 100 and 500-meter run, broad jump, the discus, and sumo wrestling. They concluded with volleyball.

Incidentally, Davis is a candidate for the San Francisco board of supervisors. He hopes to be the first 'out' body freedom activist elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

You may think that prudishness is rampant in the United States, but we have nothing on many other places in the world. Take Malaysia for example, after video footage of the Malaysian nude festivities were posted online, several of the participants were arrested, but later released. The videographer was arrested and received a six-month sentence for possession of pornography.

In response, friends urged Davis to resume his Olympics event which he had hosted in 2008 and 2009, but this time with a purpose. "So we decided okay, let's do it and we'll call them the Malaysian Nude Beach Games until such time as they can be held in Malaysia," said Davis.

Ironically, in San Francisco you can go to jail for a year for public nudity. Perhaps we aren't so far behind Malaysia in hostility toward nakedness.

Ever the optimist, Gypsy Taub, body freedom activist said, "We're definitely going to make sure that nudity becomes legal again in San Francisco no matter what it takes. It's gonna be legal again." Perhaps, but it's going to take a lot of grassroots politicking, and less grand standing.

We applaud our San Francisco brothers and sisters. Learn more about their efforts [here](#).

## Nudism Comes To America

I have been very fortunate to be able to acquire a few books published in the early 1930's about naturism in Europe and America. Two of these volumes were authored by Frances and Mason Merrill.

Their first work, Among the Nudists, first published in 1931, details their travels in Europe, primarily in Germany and France, investigating the new phenomenon of nudism. Unfortunately, I was only able to obtain the fifth printing from 1933. Their second volume entitled Nudism Comes to America was published in 1932. To my delight, the copy I obtained is a first edition.

Both volumes are informative about the state of nudism and its reception in the world at large. Both books convey optimism about the future of nudism and it being ever more widely practiced. Over eighty years later we have the benefit of hindsight and with regret know the dreams of the pioneer nudists are largely unfulfilled.

Nudism/naturism has never been militant. Naturists have never been ones to force nudity on anyone in a confrontational manner. It has always been about liberating people from misconceptions and prejudices about the body as an improved way of living. The forces in reaction to this positive and wholesome message have been largely unresponsive, condescending, and at times hostile.

Naturists believe in possibilities and have faith in the ability of humans to activate their better self when given the opportunity. Most in society reject this as delusional and view human nature and the body as fixedly an object of shame and source of vice. They don't trust themselves and for sure they don't trust others to rise above their low estimate.

Admittedly, humans are a perverse lot. There is plenty of evidence for that. Still, there is also a human capacity for nobility that must not be ignored. These exist in tension. Naturism is simply one call upon humanity to rise above our low expectations and become more fully human by elevating our estimate of and respect for our own body and the body of others.

At the time, the Merrill's report the oldest and largest nudist club in New York City, called the American League for Physical Culture, had almost two hundred members with a waiting list of a hundred more. So there would be no misunderstanding, the ideals and principles of the organization were clearly spelled out. This statement is as follows:

"Our goal is the healthy mind and the healthy body. Sun, light, and air are vital conditions of human well being. We believe that these elements are insufficiently used in present day life, to the detriment of physical and moral health. For the purpose of health and recreation and for the conditioning of man to his world we offer a new social practice, based on the known wholesome value of exposure to these elements and in the spirit of naturalism, cheerfulness, and cleanness of body and mind that they symbolize. We aim to make the fullest possible use of sun, light, and air by a program of exercise and life in the open in such a way as will result in the maximum physical and mental benefit.

"We believe in the essential wholesomeness of the human body and all its functions. We therefore regard the body neither as an object of shame nor as a subject for levity or erotic exploitation. Any attitude or behavior inconsistent with this view is contrary to the whole spirit of the society and has no place among us.

"The practice of our physical culture tends towards simplicity and integrity in all ways. We counsel for our members the sane and hygienic life. We reserve the right to impose abstinence from stimulants and intoxicants at our meetings and on our grounds."

Looking at this statement we are aware there are some differences in stress from the modern practice of naturism. We no longer engage in organized exercise. The then-common practice of playing games is lost save for volleyball. For most modern naturist clubs, consuming alcohol and coffee are routinely accepted. The stress on health with the belief in the healing benefits of sun and air are also largely forgotten.

Despite these differences in emphasis there remains a firm commitment to the dignity of the body and love of a good tan. There is the additional similarity in the belief naturism improves mental health due to the relaxation derived from being in a naturist setting. We also share the delight of feeling sun, air, and water on our clothes-free bodies, so much so that the saddest time of the day is when we must again encase our bodies in the bonds of clothing to keep the peace with the textile world.

Hopefully, the time will again come for optimism about the future of naturism. We are convinced of the nobility of the cause the early nudists advanced and have experienced its benefits. We keep faith with the past by maintaining and advancing the ideals they enunciated. [Ed.]

## The State Of Naturism In Germany

A couple of interesting stories about the status of public nudity in Germany have been published recently. The first is about [Berlin](#). The second, Munich. Both hold places of honor in the history of naturism and its modern acceptance.

You would expect an open attitude towards public nudity from the country where modern FKK (Free Body Culture) was created. That is exactly what you can see in Berlin. There is an area in the Tiergarten, the main park in the city center, where you can sunbathe in the nude. But this is not the only nudist area in the city.

After the fall of the Wall, Berlin now joins the best of both worlds, combined with uncountable foreign influences and a strong feeling of freedom and open-mindedness. While not as popular as twenty years ago, the number of options for public nudity is astonishing compared with other cities in Europe.

Berlin is surrounded by lakes and several places have been designated for sun bathing. In some cases it is only a meadow with access to the lake for swimming, others are equipped with sand areas, buildings and all type of facilities. Nudism is allowed in most of them, either in designated areas or shared with textiles.

Not to be outdone by Berlin, Munich, the third largest city in Germany, decided in favor of traditional nude sunbathing within the city after the recent expiration of legislation controlling nude sunbathing in Bavaria, of which Munich is the capital.

We have two articles discussing official recognition of nude sunbathing in Munich. This one from [TheAtlantic.com](#). And, another from [Forbes](#).

Historically Germany has allowed nude beaches since 1920, and in Munich the Englischer Garten has been a place for people hanging out in the buff since the 1960s.

With the approval of City authorities, people in Munich are now officially welcome to go naked provided they restrict themselves to six designated areas across the city. While these areas' locations in parkland give them a degree of seclusion, none of them are fenced off or hidden away. One location is barely ten minutes from Munich's main square, located along a stream to which tourists flock.

Of course, public nude sunbathing is nothing new in Germany. Indeed, the practice is common across Germany, where the first naturist beach was set up back in 1920. In the former East Germany, the activity is more popular still in part due to nudism being one expression of freedom insisted upon by an otherwise oppressed people.

Besides nude sunbathing, it is common in Germany to attend public saunas. This is a standard part of many people's weekly routine where generally participation is naked-only and mixed sex, (though single sex days happen once or twice a week). Should you attempt to wear something in a sauna you can actually be asked to take your bathing suit off.

While much of the world struggles with fierce nudity taboos, how does Germany manage such a radically different social practice? It isn't that Germans accept no link between sexuality and the naked body. However, what Germany does have is a strong cultural tradition that seeks to escape artifice and the pressures of city life to return to something believed to be more natural. From this perspective, stripping off in public is the voluntary removal of a heavy mask, a return to unvarnished honesty rather than to some sexually charged atmosphere. Places where this is allowed are spaces of truce, where there is a generally observed agreement that people will spare each other physical scrutiny and appraisal.

Thus, even a city with a fairly conservative reputation like Munich believes naked sunbathing is a public good. It is a reminder that even in the midst of a big city; nature and peace are still there to be enjoyed in what many like to consider a natural state.

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*How is it possible for the human body, which was created in the image of god, to be offensive to anybody? Satan would love to see God's greatest creation be considered offensive.*

## Naked Reality

We have to face facts. Reality TV programs are everywhere. It's a fad. I don't know which one was the first, but shows such as Survivor, Following the Kardashians, Jersey Shore, and Real Housewives of wherever come to mind as does The Most Dangerous Catch, to name a few. What's more, they are all low budget enterprises. [Ed.]

As the new president of AANR points out when addressing the spate of nude reality shows, "Frequently the result is even less quality TV than we were getting, which is difficult to imagine."

He adds, that he hasn't been watching the "reality" shows already on the air, now that they have started doing nude TV reality shows his interest has been peaked.

He says that nudists have a tough enough time being seen as normal without "Naked and Afraid" and "Naked Castaways."

Lots of sensationalism is attached to dumping two strangers nude, (always an attractive man and woman) in an alien environment with a challenge to "survive."

As your editor, I admit that initially I shared the above concerns about this program. The whole premise seemed contrived and hokey. However, after watching the first two seasons I've changed my mind.

I think Naked and Afraid is a cut above the other offerings both in premise and production values. I think if you want to ask, "Is this program good for naturism?" I would have to give it two thumbs up. That isn't to say I have no issues with the program.

It continually amazes me that when the whole idea of the program is to ask two people with wilderness survival skills to strip to the bare essentials and really survive on their wits and skills for 21 days, it seems for some of the participants, both male and female, making some form of dress is an immediate project. What the heck? The show is called Naked and Afraid for a reason after all.

Second, I know about the degree of prudery of American audiences, but the blurring out of the "naughty" bits is a source of annoyance. This just adds to the idea that the nudity in the end is for sensationalism or titillation.

Amazingly, this program seems to have acquired a cult following. I think this is an indication that the audience, in spite of our cultural prudishness, has bought into the story line about the rigors of survival and has moved on from nudity being the hook to get an audience.

If this is correct, then this program, that is very gritty and truly filled with suffering and life threatening danger, has unintentionally moved the audience to normalize nudity in this context as no longer thought of as an erotic, eye candy experience. I consider that a real achievement benefitting naturism however unintended by the show's producers. [Ed.]

Learn more about this form of journalism [here](#).

# Why Does It Feel So Good To Be Naked?



When we look at this picture, those old enough are reminded of a 1950's Norman Rockwell painting: a similar scene of boys joyfully playing in the swimming hole. Back then, such a scene was considered a nostalgic vision of Americana, a more innocent, totally wholesome past. It's time to recover that vision.

Skinnydipping is about good clean fun. No particular agenda beyond just having fun. The element of having fun has to always be a part of our activities as naturists. It restores the soul, revitalizes the psyche, and lifts our spirits. In other words, it's good for you. The young men pictured capture the quality of fun we all need in our lives. When you think about it, this alone is sufficient justification for nude recreation.

If we would but listen to our body, the sense of freedom that is experienced when nude tells an intuitive truth about the human body – it loves to feel the freedom of being naked. Ask any three or four year old if you doubt this. We must be adults and carefully taught to ignore our body to not know what a child knows about the feeling of simple nudity.

The blog, [The Naked Truth](#) analyzes the question why it feels so good to be naked in more detail. You are encouraged to follow this blog after reading this sample. [Ed.]

This question is difficult to answer for most people as it's different for everyone. However, the best answer is: Its natural; it's how we were created. After all, we weren't born with clothes. Getting naked is often thought of as an act that should only be reserved for sex. Some even get squeamish about it. Some believe the more clothes you are wearing the better. However, getting naked more can have great benefits for you and here are the reasons to get naked more often:

It burns more fat. Your body's main supply of brown adipose tissue, or good fat cells, are located around your shoulder blades and neck. When your body is exposed to the elements and is cooler, the BAT proliferates and essentially kills the white adipose tissue, aka bad fat cells. So, not wearing any clothes helps promote this and makes you healthier.

You'll become comfortable with who you are. Self-acceptance is hard to come by today. Ask anyone. The chances are

they will say they are too fat, not pretty, and find all of the flaws they can. In reality, others do not see this. When we begin to get naked, we learn to appreciate our body. We can, if you let ourselves, realize how beautiful we really are. We are human beings after all of all shapes and sizes not pieces of meat or specimens of stereotypical media imagery.

It saves money, too. Being naked more often saves on buying new clothing since we are wearing nothing a lot of the time. It also saves a lot on laundry as well.

Nudity increases our immune system. Being naked and getting exposure to the sun's rays actually increases our body's vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is directly related to our immune system. When we have optimal levels of vitamin D, we will be better equipped to ward off viruses, including the common cold and flu.

Being naked helps us face our fears head on. People cringe today when we mention the words "get naked." They are so afraid of it – and today's children are so ingrained with this – that they wear layer upon layer to deal with their body image. However, when we are naked, we face our fears of body image and self-acceptance, experiencing some of the best moments of our life.

It helps us feel better in our clothes. When we do wear clothes, (because not everyone has yet accepted being naked in public) we will start to choose clothing that accentuates the parts of our body we love.

We will embrace vulnerability. When we expose ourselves, it is a natural reaction to have fear and worry. However, this is an opportunity to embrace being vulnerable. It allows us to think and get down to the core of what really matters and is of importance. When we strip away the excess, we are 100% us and willing to take on anything that comes our way.

Finally we show the world our real self. Today, we have many ways of altering our appearance from our true body image when we wear clothing. Some people alter their image so much, they fear getting naked with the person they love.

It is fun! Well, this could go in all sorts of directions. But when we are comfortable with our naked body and see it as being flattering, then life is more fun. We start realizing we are beautiful and are willing to do more things we probably would not have done otherwise – with or without our clothes. Do we ever have a bad time when voluntarily nude? No. The more we are naked the more we will be comfortable with your own body. The more we will know our own body. The psychological benefits of living nude are enormous.

This might sound backwards but by increasing skin time we increase the fun of clothes time. It's not about fitting into the latest style; it's about enhancing the style unique to ourselves. We don't have to become a nudist. We don't even have to be a hippy. Nudity is not weird. Start nude at home; maybe your partner will join the fun. And, yes, it will lead to more fun.

# Repulsed, I Tell You!

An Irish TV personality has made it a point to broadcast her disgust at encountering a naked man while swimming at White Rock beach near Dublin, Ireland.

During a recent heat wave she was at the beach trying to get cool, but added saying how she “doesn’t want to step over someone’s beach balls”.

Jenny says she was taken aback when she encountered the aforementioned man upon entering the popular beach. “Just when we got to a very narrow path, there is a gentleman lying flat out, completely naked, like a starfish. That’s not attractive,” she said.

Interjecting in the story at this point the young social critic exhibits her prejudice toward the man’s body with the pejorative description that he looked “...like a starfish.” What does she have against starfish?

Next is the cliché, “I’m not a prude....” This line is a sure sign that she is indeed a prude. From there she goes on a mind reading rant about what the man’s thinking and motives are. This ended with the definitive dismissal, “You’re actually repulsive.”

“I’m not a prude and I feel like he’s there to make a point: ‘I’m naked, what are you going to do about it?’ And I thought, ‘You’re actually repulsive’.”

She told listeners to a radio show how she even took a photo of the naked man and said he was in his late 50s.

“No matter what your persuasion, it’s not an attractive thing,” she said.

Perhaps she isn’t a prude after all; she just isn’t ok seeing an older man naked. Does this imply that had he been 30 and very fit, her verdict would have been different? It sure sounds like ageism doesn’t it? I’m guessing she asked permission to take the photo, but then again, given her attitude, she probably didn’t feel he deserved this courtesy.

Isn’t it empowering to be social elite and look down on the lesser classes?

Isn’t it interesting how similar her rhetoric sounds to that used by those seeking a prohibition against nudity in much of our country today.

Read this barely believable story for yourself [here](#).

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## Our Sacred Garment

The body is a sacred garment. It’s your first and last garment; it is what you enter life in and what you depart life with, and it should be treated with honor.

– **Martha Graham**, 1895-1991

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**Lake Edun Foundation, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 1982  
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**Membership Application**  
**Change of Address Form**  
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All information provided is strictly confidential. If you are joining as a couple, include names for both people. If you are a couple not living together, make a copy of this form for the other individual. (NB: To promote gender diversity, a couple is defined as one male and one female.) Those willing to assist with upkeep a minimum of 10 hours

per year may deduct \$50. One subscription to our newsletter *Bare Facts* is included with membership. A subscription only to *Bare Facts* is available for \$20.00. New members will receive a Waiver and Release which must be completed before membership is finalized. Visitation restrictions apply to Associate Membership.

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Naturist Society Membership		60.00	_____
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