Bare Facts

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Official Publication of the Lake Edun Foundation, Inc.

February 1, 2009

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Memo From The Board

If the excitement we have had during our board meetings is a measure of the coming year, it should be wonderful! Each member of the board has been responding with ideas and programs that should make our time together more enjoyable.

We used much of the last meeting reviewing the calendar for the coming year. We are planning several new events this summer. As these plans become more solid we will expand on each so you can make plans on to participate in each.

Last month we reported a policy change for first time visitors to the lake. These changes were the result of comments received from a visitor to the lake. We always appreciate comments from our friends and members. During this past board session, we discussed an issue brought to us by another friend of LEF. This comment suggested making our newsletter, *Bare Facts*, available as an e-zine. On the face of it, it would appear this is a simple matter. Send the newsletter over the Internet and save on postage and paper! It's not quite that easy as we discovered. We derive certain benefits from hard copy not available with electronic delivery.

After an extended discussion several ideas seem to surface. One idea being that some of us are in a position at home where the others we live with do not want to see the newsletter on the coffee table or anywhere else. Electronic distribution would remove this impediment. We are also aware that some who are interested in the naturist lifestyle would like very much to receive the information in the newsletter to help them decide whether they would like to come visit with us or not, but are unsure if they want a printed item sent to them. Lastly we realize many of us will download items of interest and keep them on the computer longer than we will keep a printed item on our desk!

Yet traditional delivery has served us well and allows us to more accurately track how many actually receive the items we publish. We also know if many receive *Bare Facts* electronically, it becomes impractical to print. That would be a disservice to those who do not have computers or do not wish to use computer delivered services.

Since no clear consensus was reached, we opted for a trial period of 90 days in which any who would rather receive the newsletter by email can contact Maxine at the LakeEdun.com and request that service. After this period we will reevaluate this policy.

So again a change is in the works because one of you let us know what you really wanted! As an additional note to all of you who are members of LEF or friends, you may also visit with the board at any board meeting. Just contact Maxine or call and leave at message on the phone and we will let you know when the next meeting will be held.

We are happy to serve you our loyal members and friends. Stay in touch!

Auditions Announced For Naked Plays

Posters are up and actors are learning about our second production of the LEF Naked Plays. Dana McCoy, our director, will conduct auditions in both Topeka and Lawrence. There are parts for ten actors, five male and five female plus some potential extras.

Altogether, we will be staging four original one-act plays. Each deals with issues of body acceptance from a different aspect. As a group, they will make a wonderful evening of entertainment and, like the last production, should do well to promote our message of body acceptance.

If you have an interest in theater or an interest in helping to promote our message, you should plan to attend one of the auditions on either Tuesday, Feb. 10 from 6-8 or Sunday, Feb. 15 from 2-4. Auditions will be held in the National Electronic Type building at 2320 S. Kansas Ave. in Topeka. Or, you may email Maxine to arrange a reading in Lawrence. In addition to on-stage talent, there are many opportunities to assist with technical, publicity, and other areas.

Long time LEF supporters and anyone involved in theater will realize the tremendous effort any theatrical presentation can be. If you are able, we hope you will volunteer to assist with this important effort. It is our effort to reach others in the community with our message of body acceptance.

Winter Will Probably End

We have it on good authority that Winter will eventually end and the temperatures in July will be more to our liking. In the meantime, we hope all Eduners will spread the word about our special place and invite others to join us. If they are reluctant to make a full-body commitment, at least they can visit during an Open House.

We all have friends and acquaintances curious about the truths we have learned. If you know someone interested, send us their name & address. We will send them a welcome brochure and a few newsletters. Best of all, its FREE!

DON'T FORGET

Activities designated HN are sponsored by Heartland Naturists

Feb 7; Sat; 8-10; Sauna

Feb 10; Tues; 6-8; Auditions for naked plays-Topeka

Feb 13; Fri; 8-10; HN Swim

Feb 14; Sat; 3-5; Board of Directors

Feb 15; Sun; 2-4; Auditions for naked plays-Topeka

Feb 21; Sat; 8-10; Sauna

Mar 14; Sat; 12-4; Work Day

Mar 14; Sat; 5-7; Board of Directors

Mar 14: Sat: 8-10: Sauna

Mar 20; Fri; 8-10; HN Swim

Mar 28; Sat; 12-4; Work Day

Mar 28; Sat; 8-10; Sauna

Words of Wisdom

I think we all know people with these negative agendas:

"Clothes are used continuously in this process; the weak person uses powerful or aggressive clothing. The 'naughty' person wears clothing designed to give them acceptance and make them appear 'good.' . . . The 'guilty' person portrays themselves in pious and 'pure' attire with the 'holier than thou' attitude. "

"People who don't approve of themselves deep down also cover up by becoming judgmental of others. They feel that by pulling someone else down, they are bringing that individual down to their lower level. They ensure they always wear the 'right' clothing for each occasion so they won't be judged badly. People who hate being judged are the very people who tend to be judgmental themselves."

"This whole process is unfortunate because the inner low self image people think they are hiding is not the true self. It is simply another mask at a deep level. The true self lies below that set of belief systems they are taught as a child. In situations where people are able to 'peel off' the outer masks and expose the true self, they always find someone they love and feel good about."

"We are born pure, loving and innocent. The sooner we can get back in touch with that, the sooner we get in touch with experiencing the joy of life. The only reason we are not experiencing total abundance of joy, peace, love and financial security is because we are actively resisting those things which are our birth right. We resist them by creating the masks which act to separate us from our true inner selves and block us off from that abundance." – John Veltheim

Teen Breast Enlargement Surgeries

Before she underwent breast augmentation surgery last summer, a local teen said she felt self-conscious about her body – especially at the beach. The 19 year old said, "I wasn't as developed as some of my friends, who were filling out their bathing suits. I guess I felt like I didn't fit in."

She is among an increasing number of young women looking to plastic surgery for a boost in confidence as well as cup size.

Last year's death of Stephanie Kuleba, 18, of South Florida, during breast augmentation surgery has drawn attention to what some describe as a growing trend. Kuleba died Saturday of what may have been a rare genetic reaction to general anesthesia.

According to the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, the number of women 18 and younger who have had breast enlargements has risen nearly 500 percent over the past decade – a sharper climb than the 300 percent increase in breast augmentations among all age groups.

A plastic surgeon in Woodbury, N.Y., said an increasing number of girls will come in with their parents, who are buying her a breast augmentation as a birthday or high school graduation gift.

He added, "There are girls and women who are devastated by the fact that they don't have breasts and their friends do. They don't play gymnastics and they don't go on dates or they can't wear certain clothing, and I hear these things every day."

Greenberg attributed the trend in part to young women who see their parents undergoing cosmetic procedures, or relate closely to the celebrities who have them.

However, another plastic surgeon said he has not seen a trend in graduation and birthday gift breast jobs among his patients. He added that there is a growing perception that it's a common procedure. This is spurred on by the bombardment of women with advertisements for plastic surgery which may be contributing to its popularity.

Questioning the images and pressures for plastic surgery one professor of women's studies stated, "To say that you need to have a very expensive surgical procedure with real health risks in order to be considered beautiful, I think, is a problematic image."

An issue such as breast augmentation surgery and a variety of other elective plastic surgeries pose a dilemma for naturists. On the one hand we stand for body acceptance as a fundamental belief. On the other hand, we recognize the right of each individual to choose for their selves whether to undergo plastic surgery. Holding these seemingly opposite views may at first seem contradictory. Fortunately, as naturists, we don't have to simplistically formulate all problems in either/or terms, rigidly insisting on whatever is natural is what is the good.

We can have sympathy with young women who turn to surgery to gain breasts that in their minds allows them to, "...fit in," as the first woman in the story put it. We can appreciate the insecurity that many feel about the acceptability of their bodies. Certainly, alleviating their pain is understandable. However, we cannot stand by while crass interests manipulate people into feeling badly about themselves for their financial gain.

The cult of celebrity along with commercial interests drives far too many to choose for surgery rather than true medical need. Unfortunately, humans are far too like sheep in our herd instinct. Once a trend starts, it's hard to end it. Cosmetic surgery has more to do with conferring increased status and sexual desirability than it does with correcting a true deformity. However, both commercial interests and plastic surgeons collude to heighten our sense of "lack," so that we will cut on ourselves to achieve a "look" that sells, or promises acceptability.

It seems to me that naturists need to more meaningfully focus our energy in speaking out against unrealistic and arbitrary standards of physical acceptability. These are promoted by unrestrained and predatory societal forces that do damage to females and males alike. We can applaud a company such as Dove in its campaign for "Real Beauty," but naturists need to be in the forefront of efforts to challenge the superficial commercial images of acceptable bodies. Sadly, whatever our protest is, it is so anemic that none but other naturists are aware of it. Why is this so? [Ed.]

The waves most washed me off the raft sometimes, but I hadn't any clothes on, and didn't mind.

- Mark Twain (Huckelberry Finn)

Nudity is the Natural State of Man

Until the invention of loom technology about 6,000 years ago, everyone in all climates, (hot, moderate, or temperate) went naked or wore animal skins. Spanish conquistadors in the 16th century reported naked Indians living in freezing temperatures in Tierra del Fuego, (very southern Argentina). Fur was the only clothing available and was only used in the coldest of cold climates. Even in more historic periods of ancient Greece, Rome, Persia, India, and Japan, people only wore clothes as an optional necessity. (Note: If the phrase "optional necessity" appears contradictory, think of tipping in a restaurant or giving Christmas presents to close relatives). As a general rule, bathing and sports were done naked. Later, theocratic fundamentalist religions seized control of these regions. For political and social control they introduced concepts of body shame and sinfulness of sensuality.

Even in modern times when secular states with socialist governments came into power, they found that continuing the practice of body shame and suppressing natural instincts to be a good way to maintain social and political control. A new twist in social control in modern consumer societies is the use of sex, advertising, and pornography to create unreal and unsatisfying needs and wants. Instead of shame, nudity is made to equal a special Hollywood body-image sexuality that can be used to sell things and manipulate behavior.

Interesting thought from a Nude Yoga website. Clothes used for purpose of control? This could be an interesting discussion around the sauna or campfire!

Silliness As Far As The Eye Can See

Today class our geography class will take us to the warm lands of far away South America – Uruguay to be precise. Precision is essential as you might mistakenly be confused and end up in Paraguay. Never mind.

The point of this story is twofold. Politicians everywhere can't be taken too seriously, and gymnophobia can be found anywhere.

Our story begins with the Interior Minister of Uruguay Daisy Tourne posting a picture of herself on her Facebook page. The catch is, it is of her taking a shower. The caption she gave it is, "There's nothing more natural than a woman in the shower."

I know what you are thinking. What would possess a politician to post a picture of herself taking a shower on the internet? No doubt you are forming a mental image of someone nude in their shower. Isn't that how you take your shower?? The good Minister's picture only showed her laughing face and hands beneath running water. Shame on you for jumping to a conclusion!

However, an opposition party leader, a former Vice President of Uruguay voiced the opinion, "I think it's in very bad taste that she exposes herself so intimately." So intimately? I didn't know the burka was standard Uruguayan dress for women? The former Vice President went on to add, "Ministers have to be more austere, modest, above all the minister of the interior, who commands the police force." Another politician called the photo, "Frivolous." Now if that isn't a damning indictment, I don't know what is.

Ms Tourne, age 57, responded on her page saying the photo was not available publicly or intended to be erotic. She stated that it was taken in a shower used to rinse off sand after a visit to the beach. Backing up Ms Tourne was a ruling party lawmaker who commented, "I'm thinking about taking a photo of myself in the shower, but a full body shot." Yeah. Some people actually thought she was sharing her morning rituals with her Facebook friends.

Just to be clear. No nudity was on display. Merely, the possibility of nudity in the imagination of some was what fueled this controversy. So potent is the impact, (and implied shame) of the merely imagined nude body that it can be used in an attempt to undermine and damage the reputation of an opponent.

Just goes to show there are anxiety prone body phobic freaks everywhere. It could be added that there are Grinch's everywhere that want to spoil other people's harmless fun. Of course, Topekans wouldn't know anything about that.

Speaking Up For Naturism

Judy Williams is the government affairs officer of the Federation of Canadian Naturists and chairwomen of the Wreck Beach Preservation Society, and an outspoken advocate for naturism. Here she is expressing her opinion in reaction to a decision by the Vancouver board of education against any exposure of school children to nudity by school staff. She correctly puts her finger on the nub of the problem. She accuses the school board of exclusively viewing simple nudity as harmful, even abusive with no allowance for positive values such as body acceptance. Such is the climate in which we operate. [Ed.]

By dictating that school employees should not "expose students to nudity through activities such as skinny-dipping (and art!)," the Vancouver board of education has skated beyond its mandate and onto naked ice (School employee code of conduct termed absurd overkill, Westcoast News, April 4).

It has erroneously equated mere nudity with sexual abuse, instead of with body acceptance. The 35,000 members of the Federation of Canadian Naturists condemn this misguided strike at skinny-dippers' rights.

More than 6.1 million Canadians have either skinny-dipped or are interested in doing so, according to a recent Market Facts poll commissioned by the Naturists. Pope Paul II believed that "the naked human body is not in itself shameful." Naturist children reflect worldwide naturist philosophy by respecting themselves, others and the environment.

With the world-acclaimed Wreck Beach being North America's largest clothing-optional beach, the Vancouver school board's anti-nudity code enters the Theatre of the Absurd. Wreck's 500,000 annual visitors generate millions of tourist dollars for the area.

The FCN has been joined in its condemnation of the school board's punitive and discriminatory code by other naturist organizations such as The Naturist Society and the Naturist Action Committee.

The body says what words cannot.

– Martha Graham

Japan's Penis Festival

It is always interesting to observe how the human body is regarded around the world. It's a great way to check our attitudes and marvel at the diversity of human sensibilities. We are so accustomed to thinking in terms of our own culture that we are "shocked" by what is considered appropriate elsewhere in the world.

Western culture has progressively required almost total body coverage by clothing over the last 1500 years. However, we can't ignore the fact that in classical Greek times nudity, especially male nudity, was commonly accepted. Even in Roman times attendance at the public baths was normal practice for pagans and Christians alike.

Somehow, while our ancestors while not naturists, certainly they were not prudish about the body. Anyone who travels to Europe today can see statutes both modern and those dating from antiquity displaying the nude human body, both male and female. Strangely, most Americans seem to be able to cope with this without undue alarm and view it as part of the local color. Back at home however, it's a different story.

European works of are one thing, but a Japanese fertility festival featuring the public display of oversized male genitalia, that's another. Horror of horrors, everyone knows the most obscene object in the world is the penis! All the outcry about the public display of female breasts pales in comparison to the outrage seeing a penis will engender. Yet, the Japanese make its display the central feature of a holiday! It's a strange world.

Just so you will get a better sense of what this Japanese are up to, the following is an explanation of an annual fertility ritual that goes back over 1000 years.

The Hounen festival at Tagata shrine is one of the most famous (or infamous?) festivals in Japan. Amongst foreigners it is frequently referred to as the "penis shrine", or "Japanese penis festival", primarily due to the ancient **Hounen Matsuri** (a festival celebrating fertility and renewal), which is held here every March 15th.

Every year on March 15 a huge two and a half meter wooden phallus is carried the short distance between two shrines attracting visitors from all over Japan and international media attention. The festival is fun with a lot of sake drinking, however the background of the festival is rather more serious. A shrine is a place of worship. It houses divine spirits and preserves the memory and practice of many aspects of Japanese culture.

Enshrined as *Tamahime-no-mikoto*, she is worshipped in the main sanctuary of the building called the honden. This is the main shrine building. Behind and to the left of this structure, you can find another building called the *Shinmeisha* which contains a large number of natural and man-made objects, almost all of which are either shaped like a penis or have some phallic theme. It is important to understand that the worship is not of the phalli, but instead a worship of the earth, of the power that nature has through renewal and regeneration. It is this context that provides the phallus with its significance.

Fertility: With everything from penis shaped candy to suck on, phallus keychains, azuki filled dumplings in the shape of the male member, and small wooden objects to take home as souvenirs, it is easy to think that it is the phallus that is being worshipped. This is not the case. Each of the hundreds of objects in the shrine buildings are essentially offerings to the enshrined deity, and are venerated as such. However what the veneration is about though is the worship of a feminine deity. The kami is female and embodies fertility and fecundity. Not far from Tagata shrine there is another place of worship called Ogata (Oogata) Jinja, where the objects are representative of female genitalia. In an agricultural community, the sacred feminine was worshipped, and the rituals that have survived to this day at the Tagata shrine were celebrations of this, conducted in order to ensure bountiful agricultural harvests, regeneration and renewal as well as human birth.

March

Each year, a new giant wooden phallus is carved from a large hinoki (cypress) tree. In Japan newly made objects are thought to express more purity and vitality. The tree is brought to the shrine for purification rituals during the coldest part of the winter, before a master craftsman begins to shape it. It is this phallus that will be the central focus of the procession, and then be placed into the Shinmeisha shrine as the principal phallus after the festival.

To have a better sense of what happens at the Hounen fertility festival simply do a Google search and view the pictures.

While the Japanese festival is now more lighthearted then in generations past, it does show that parts of the body, both male and female that we consider taboo are honorable and to be treated with respect. While we don't need a festival honoring our reproductive body parts, we as naturists live the belief that they are as respectable as the rest of the body and no shame need be attached to them. [Ed.]

Clothing Is Immoral

"Complete nudity in itself is not erotic. It becomes so only when preceded by or contrasted to a state of dress. In this limited context then, all clothes become somewhat immoral, if we define immorality as inciting sexual interest. Habitual nakedness may indeed be capable of elevating man to a higher mental plane..."

— Dr. Marilyn J. Horn, *The Second Skin: An Interdisciplinary Study of Clothing*

Items We Need

See our website at lakeedun.com for more details.

- Non-motorized boats
- Metal Barrels
- Lawn or Lounge Chairs
- Wooden Cable Spools
- Aluminum cans, etc.

Men are even lazier than they are timorous, and what they fear most is the troubles with which any unconditional honesty and nudity would burden them.

- Friedrich Nietzsche

Dialogue On Body Acceptance

A critical issue

ripe for

discussion by

Naturists

everywhere.

What is your

opinion?

The following extended dialogue is presented regarding a critical issue for naturists. There is the collision of two naturist values – health vs. body acceptance. How do we resolve this tension between values? Is this an all or nothing issue, or possibly a both/and situation that is win/win for all concerned? Feedback welcome.

I am pleased to belong to both AANR and to NAAFA, the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance. I see both groups as promoting being at peace and joy in one's body.

NAAFA does a lot of political work (just as AANR does for nudists) to promote basic civil rights and fair treatment for fat people.

The reason that I am writing is that in nearly every Bulletin, you have articles about health that have damaging misconceptions and stereotypes and stigmatizing assertions so consistently, I feel that I must say something.

Studies have shown repeatedly that fat people on average eat the same as our thinner counterparts. Studies have also shown that dieting leads to weight gain. I would suggest that it is highly probable that the reason that Americans are getting fatter is that we've been dieting.

As for promoting exercise as a way to be healthy and to avoid obesity which the latest article in The Bulletin, "Jour-

ney to Health, I Remember When" does, I would like to point out that if one looks around without prejudiced eyes, one will see that there are a variety of people of all sizes being active and a variety of people of all sizes being inactive. Exercising and being active are no guarantee of a slender or even "normal" weight body. While studies have shown exercise to have some benefits in terms of health and longevity at any weight, I also look to my paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother, both of who lived to be 89 and who never exercised. I wonder about the validity of the big emphasis on exercise.

I enjoy being active and have been an athlete my whole life. I continue to be active and strong and healthy even though my weight has been close to 250 pounds for most of the past 15 years. I'm active because I like to be and because I personally feel good when I am, not for potential health benefits, and certainly not to lose weight. Not everybody enjoys being active, and not everybody benefits from it either. Exercise is actually harmful for some people. Everybody has to choose for themselves what makes them happy and healthy and how to define "happy" and "healthy," for that matter. We need to respect everyone's choices and not shame people either for their choices or for the bodies that nature has given them. We should all be able to celebrate our bodies and enjoy them – no matter what size, shape, color, ability or other variation we are.

- Kathy Barron

Dear Editor:

Although a new subscriber to The Bulletin, as a lifelong nudist of almost 60 years who has enjoyed nudism as a healthy lifestyle, I am finding a growing trend a bit perplexing. A letter in the August edition needs an honest response. In no way does society have to accept everyone's choices – nor should we.

At no time in human history has obesity been healthy,

attractive, or necessary. The human body is a thing of great beauty. Human body fat is not. After sharing the August Bulletin, particularly the Letter to the Editor from Ms. Kathy Barron, with the team of doctors who refer patients to me — a clinical hypnotherapist and crisis counselor—their response was unanimous. Obesity is a choice not to be respected at all. To advocate overweight and obesity is patently absurd.

From the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) and the World Health Organization (WHO): "Obesity and overweight are defined as an accumulation of excess body fat, to an extent that may impair health. WHO defines overweight as a BMI of 25 or more, and obesity as a BMI of 30 or more. These cut-off points can provide

a reference for individual assessment. There is also evidence that, on a population level, the risk of disease increases progressively as average BMI increases above 21. A high body mass index is a major risk factor for a number of chronic diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes."

The medical costs of our ever-fatter society are staggering. The doctors reminded me most frequently overweight and obese people are taking at least one medication, more often 3-8, for disease(s) that are caused by, or exacerbated by, their weight, and might even be eliminated by getting their weight down to the proper BMI. So much for the healthy and happy myth.

Although BMI can be skewed by high muscle mass, as mine is, that is not part of the obesity discussion here. The idea that people can all eat the same amount, as Ms. Barron suggests, is also patently absurd. As a 6'6" athlete I am confident my body needs far more calories than the average man or woman. By choice, my BMI remains the same 22 it has been since I was 25 years old. Unless being held down and force fed, nothing is easier to control than what we put into our mouth. Weight is a choice – overweight is a very poor choice indeed.

As we continue to wonder why there are fewer younger people enjoying nudism, just take a look at many of our fellow nudists. Nudists, and those who would consider nudism that I work with, particularly those in their teens, 20s, and 30s are not as concerned with others' ages as with their being overweight. Obesity shows such an unhealthy, unattractive and poor choice being made; the younger set has no reason to want to join in. Appearance matters to all of us, and regarding weight, for very valid reasons.

- The Reverend Dr. G. Norton-Brown

Dear Editor.

I had to respond to Reverend Dr. G. Newton-Brown's [sic] letter that was in the October 2007 Bulletin.

I do agree being obese is unhealthy, and I believe most people believe that. I am 6' and I weigh 195 lbs. I have weighed as much as 220 lbs. I want to weigh 165-175 lbs. I have been trying to get to that weight for many years. A few years back I did the Body for Life competition and got down to 185 lbs. I am 58 years old and I am retired. I live in Florida. I bicycle almost everywhere I go, which is over 100 miles per week. I play volleyball four times a week which totals 10-14 hours. I kayak 10-20 miles a week and I tow my kayak behind my bicycle when I go kayaking which totals 12-24 miles. Even with that amount of activity I still struggle with my weight. I fully understand why people are overweight.

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I encourage everyone to be as active as they can and as healthy as they can. At the same time I am not going to judge people. Each of us has our own issues. The mind is a very complex thing and we each have our own unique mind which makes us different from everyone else. It affects our likes and dislikes. My favorite color is red but yours may be blue. I like strawberries but you may not. I struggle with depression but you may be happy most of the time. I may have to read something many times to understand it or I may never understand it. You may read it once and completely comprehend it. A soldier may do something so heroic that he receives the Medal of Honor. Someone else may only get on an elevator, but the level of courage may be greater for the person that got on the elevator.

We need to be as compassionate as we can be to all people. You may not understand why they do what they do, but do you understand everything that you do? I know I do things I don't like, and I don't do things I wish I would do.

With all of that said I do believe we can all do most anything we set our minds to if we can get past the obstacles that our mind puts before us. Sometimes an obstacle may go away if you hear an encouraging word from another. So encourage people; you may help them get past an obstacle.

Delbert Voss

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