# Bare Facts

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#### From The Board

Spring has come and still we have snow on the ground. As it melts, we are eagerly anticipating the good effects of coming out from under the drought. We are looking forward to good changes in the waterline, as well as to activities we have planned for the season ahead.

We are still looking for more participation in Board activities from active members. Two or three more members are sought to be on the Board of Directors. We know you have ideas and solicit your input and reactions to our changes.

At its last meeting, the board put the final touches on this season's schedule. See the accompanying article for details. Throughout this process, Board considers input from the annual survey as well as attendance at activities last year.

A 'Pack the Place' event scored extremely high in the survey and appears on the schedule June 22. We have also scheduled a few educational seminars.

Other activities include Body Painting, Tye-Dye, Massage, Wine and Cheese tasting, and the Drum Circle. Two days of Astronomy are planned including an Astronomy Campout. Telescopes and binoculars will be available.

We are still looking for an instructor for Swimming Safety class as well someone with an interest in teaching Yoga or Fitness. Interest has been generated in having a Fitness/Exercise Path that could be combined with a "Walk Around the Lake" area.

Two activities that have not been included this season are Movie Night and the Chili Cook-Off. These labor intensive events have been poorly attended and generate less interest than in other group activities.

As you can see, this coming season will be very full. However, we respect and are cognizant that a great majority of our supporters come to do absolutely nothing but relax. Thus, we have left many weekends open. With our wide open facility, even if something is planned, there is maximum opportunity to do – NOTHING (but relax).

For those who share our desire to enjoy Nature and have the possibility of Nature Fellowship, we open our arms to greet you at the first Open House, Saturday, May 18. The Board of Directors greets you and hopes you want to be a part of our fellowship. Join or renew today.

## **Spring Work Days Critical**

Our first Work Day got clobbered by Spring weather. Not that this is unexpected. We usually plan more work days than we expect to need. However, we will need lots of help at the remaining work days to get everything set up for this season.

Please check your schedule and plan to help at one of the remaining work days. There are tasks for everyone and our good fellowship makes it fun for all.

#### **Sneak-Peek At Our Schedule**

"Pack the Place" featured surprisingly high on our annual survey. Our first Pack the Place will be June 22. Conveniently this corresponds with the Summer Solstice. W we will seek to surpass previous attendance records with maximal participation from members and visitors alike. Activities will feature past proven activities available as well as some new ones. If there is something you would like to see, please let us know. Begin now to let your friends know about this very special event we have planned.

A very special event is planned for our June Open House. Frances will lead a Women's Issues group for the "fairer gender". We are told this women-only session will address concerns most common to women when considering participation in any Naturist activity. Be sure your significant other knows about this. Because it will be held during an Open House, participants may remain clothed. If there is interest, Francis and her husband offered to schedule another session for men on "How to talk to your spouse about Naturism".

Other new activities include Archery and Music Jams. Carl is planning these and hopes to generate a lot of enthusiasm to make them regular events throughout the season.

A "membership" campout is planned for July 20 and should garner interest in returning to old camping activities of cookouts, sing-a-longs, and maybe telling GHOST stories. Someone even brought up the idea of a "Liar's Contest" to see who is the best prevaricator in the group.

Annual favorites: visits by the Arborist and Dermatologist, are in the plan. These are always been well attended. There is the possibility of "Name the Tree" based on what we have and will learn about our natural flora at Lake Edun.

One of the best rated activities we had last year was the Photography Class. This is again planned with a professional teaching us about light balance, depth of field, and the fun of nature photography. More than one day of photo class are anticipated during the season.

#### **DON'T FORGET**

Apr 6; Sat; 12-4; Work Day

Apr 6; Sat; 8-10; Sauna

Apr 12; Fri; 8-10; Sauna

Apr 14; Sun; 12-4; Work Day

Apr 14; Sun; 4-6; Board of Directors

Apr 24; Wed; 7-9; Sauna

May 4; Sat; World Naked Gardening Day

May 4; Sat; 12-4; Work Day

May 8; Wed; 8-10; Sauna

May 11; Sat; 8-10; Final Sauna

May 12; Sun; 12-4; Work Day

May 18; Sat; 12-3; Open House

May 19; Sun; 12-4; Work Day

May 19; Sun; 4-6; Board of Directors

#### **First Time Report**

We all love first time reports. In this case a student from Central Michigan University writing in Grand Central Mag, an online magazine. The author once again proves your editor's hypothesis that nine times out of ten, if there is going to be a favorable news story about naturism, it will be written by a woman.

The writer doesn't explain the reason for her decision to visit the Turtle Lake naturist club whether as an assignment, curiosity, or a lark. As it turns out, we're glad she did.

Obviously she has been a textile-ist all her life, so baring all to immerse herself, (literally) for a water volleyball game presented a challenge she admirably met. Additionally, she took the time to become acquainted with and welcomed by naturists.

It is notable that the author comments on the friendliness of those she met which helped her feel at ease. I believe this is the crucial component that engages first timers so that they have the feeling that they want to come back. Certainly it appears from the author's last statement she plans to return and bring friends this summer.

Who says twenty something's are turned off by the presence of older adults or that the staple naturist activities have no appeal to them, or they are no 'joiners' anymore? I can't help but believe people have never changed. We all want to be accepted, appreciated, and integrated into a welcoming social group. Couple that with the incredibly freeing experience of social nudity and you have a formula for success.

The follow is an excerpt of the author's article. [Ed.]

When I first told some of my friends and family that I would be spending the weekend at a nudist resort, most just seemed to roll their eyes and assume that I wasn't serious. Why would a 24-year-old college student want to go to a nudist resort? Aren't they just for weird old people?

During my three days at Turtle Lake Clothing Optional Resort, I spent a lot of time both reflecting on myself and getting to know some of the people who regularly spend time at nudist resorts.

But why would I want to go in the first place? Many people are afraid that the residents at a nudist resort would be voyeuristic or overly concerned with looking at other nude people. But even though I am a single 24-year-old female, I never once felt unsafe or uncomfortable there.

The main, and arguably only, difference between nudists and people who live in the textile world, is in the idea of openness. All of the traditional resorts, vacation condos, and even family weekend getaways I have been to in the past had a different social-atmosphere than at Turtle Lake....

One activity that I found to be very popular and fun is water volleyball. I had never played water volleyball before, let alone naked, so I was nervous when I first walked into the nudity-required pool and hot tub area. But I was immediately welcomed and invited into the game. Even though it took me several attempts to hit the darn ball or even score a point, everyone was incredibly supportive and inclusive....

I plan on returning to Turtle Lake with some of my friends in the summer. We could either set up a tent in the camping areas, or rent a room. Either way, it is sure to be a wonderful time!

Read the full report here.

#### Is The Sun Good For Your Heart?

The short answer is YES!

Dr. Richard Weller of the University of Edinburgh is a research dermatologist who has released his research into nitric oxide, or NO and cardiovascular health. The crucial factor in the mechanism for releasing forms of NO in the blood is the presence of sunlight. Specifically, UVA. You may recall that UVB is the form of ultraviolet light that is essential in the formation of vitamin D in the skin.

There is a marvelous online video in which Dr. Weller describes his research and how he determined the mechanism of NO release and its relationship to cardiovascular health. The link is at the bottom of this article.

Dr. Weller addresses the conflict between the harmful effects of ultraviolet light and skin cancers and the demonstrated benefits derived from sunlight exposure. Dr. Weller notes that deaths from heart disease are 100 times those from skin cancer. Furthermore, this pattern is most evident in Northern latitudes when winter months greatly diminish the amount of sunlight people receive. He suggests we have to examine the cost/benefit ratio to determine how much sunlight exposure is safe.

For those interested in a more technical explanation, go to the website. He states that nitric oxide, (actually NO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>3</sub>) obtained from the foods we eat is then made and stored in the skin. Exposure to ultraviolet A then releases these chemicals into the blood

"Ultraviolet-A (UVA) is known to induce nitrite photolysis, forming nitric oxide. Recent studies have shown that UVA irradiation of human subjects reduces blood pressure and generates increased circulating nitrogen oxides. These may arise from nitrite/nitrate photolysis or from de novo synthesis by nitric oxide synthase enzymes. We wished to identify the source of this NO rise, and measure the extent of UVA induced vasorelaxation."

I am delighted to bring this huge added health benefit derived from the naturist lifestyle associated with whole body exposure to the sun in sensible exposure times. Obviously, avoiding sunburn is crucial to the prevention of skin cancer. Use of full spectrum sun screens is highly recommended.

Gradual sun exposure to build up a good base tan is the proper procedure. For most people of Northern European descent, starting with about 10 minutes on front and back for initial sun exposure, followed with application of sunscreen is recommended.

As the tan develops, increased exposure times can be tolerated, but continue to use sun screen until your maximum tan potential is reached. Even then, play it safe and don't allow your skin to burn. This can be involved but is important. Those wanting more information will find it <a href="here">here</a>. [Ed.]

#### **Being Body Positive**

Living in a culture in such flux as ours regarding the meaning of the body leads to confusion. The nineteenth century was dominated by Victorianism which extended far beyond the English speaking world. This sensibility held that anything pertaining to sex and the body was shameful and taboo. Not altogether new, our heritage of Puritanism preceded it.

The twentieth century was marked by an ongoing rejection of the mores of the nineteenth century and seeking to become modern and liberated. However, nothing as compelling as Victorian values has come along to supersede and unify us as a culture beyond rejecting Victorianism.

On the whole, mass culture as typified by the rise of consumerism and pop culture with one fad after the other over the course of the century set the tone. At the same time, the legacy of the nineteenth century body phobia continued to exert a powerful influence in much of society both in the legal system and in the social consciousness.

Early twentieth century naturism staked out a gymnosophy that was directly counter to the prevailing Victorianism. That is, the body is good. Simple nudity between the sexes was demonstrated not to automatically lead to sexual chaos. Quite the opposite; naturism promoted the equality of the sexes in honest appraisal of one another as persons fully regarding the body as innately wholesome.

As a corollary and essential part of early naturism there was a compelling promotion of practices designed to improve health. This involved a regimen of exposure to air and sunshine, exercise, abstinence or moderation in the consumption of meat, alcohol and tobacco.

At the same time, within naturism as it developed there has been the imperative to promote body acceptance for all, regardless of body type. However, the earliest naturists gathered to restore to health as far as possible the bodies of Germans who had been harmed by the cities and the factories in which they worked.

Today naturists don't rise at dawn for calisthenics and eat communal vegetarian meals. In fact the emphasis on health has largely faded away. However, we still believe in the value of soaking up fresh air and sunshine. As a movement we also believe in the principal of body acceptance for all. Naturists reject any compromise of the principal of body acceptance with whatever the current standards of physical beauty happen to be in society. We believe in people and their value as persons just as they are.

Naturism isn't about "sex appeal." Communal nudity isn't about "who we would want to see," as is said by some detractors. Attractiveness so called, as defined by the larger culture isn't a consideration. Naturists believe that everyone can benefit from our philosophy and lifestyle and delight in anyone who comes seeking what naturism has to offer.

Naturists seek camaraderie among all. Personal preferences of what constitutes "attractiveness" are just that, personal. What counts are inner qualities of personality, and character, with appearance being a minor consideration. In an atmosphere of acceptance, it is hoped that individuals will flourish and grow in confidence and health

Obviously naturists are human and our culture influences us powerfully. Subjective judgments of what constitutes beauty vary greatly around the world. This is a fact of life that has to be taken into account. The following observation speaks to this reality, but from a naturist perspective. [Ed.]

Being body positive doesn't mean you have to find every body type attractive. It's okay to not find thin girls attractive, or only be attracted to meaty boys. It's also okay to not find fat girls attractive, or to only be attracted to skinny boys. Or anything in between! Just as long as you recognize that it's only your personal preference and not some kind of fundamental flaw in people you don't find attractive, you're golden. Learn more about being body positive <a href="here">here</a>.

## **Advice On Becoming A Naturist**

I think a lot of people have had the fantasy at least once in their lives to want to be naked and free with no discomfort. However, they quickly give themselves a brisk mental shake and rejected doing something so silly, so outlandish, so shameless. That's too bad. They don't know what they are missing and fear the worst if they had been foolish enough to actually take off their clothes. They would feel this way even if all alone far from another human being. It just isn't done outside the confines of your own home!

Still, there are others that have a streak of daring that nudges them to give it a try. They just haven't found the right time or place. Such folks are potential naturists just waiting for the right opportunity or excuse to actually remove their clothes for a skinny dip with others.

Sadly, it's difficult to make contact with this latter group even if they are all around us. You see, they keep this wish as a deep dark secret, fearful that if others knew about their secret longing, they would be considered weird – or worse. The default decision is to maintain the taboo as the fear of being shamed is a very strong human motivation.

Those of us that have crossed the divide separating us from society's rigid body phobia and clothes freedom know almost immediately our fear had been misplaced. The fear had been unreasoning and exaggerated out of all proportion to reality. What we did discover was an experience of joyful liberation from a burden that was so natural we hadn't realized we carried it.

What was this burden? Body shame! Unclothed we finally we were able to gain new self knowledge that indeed our bodies are wholesome in all its parts and functions. This truth of and about our true self in the flesh liberates us from fear. This is the testimony of naturists.

Still, everyone is not ready for this. It's long been said that naturism isn't for everyone. It may be the fear factor, or it may be due to such a deeply ingrained linkage between nudity and sex that some simply cannot or will not break this habit of mind.

All naturists can do to assist non-naturists come to social nudity is report on the benefits they have derived and offer advice to those contemplating a first visit to a naturist park or a nude beach. The following attempts to address this real concern. It is offered here as food for thought should you try to persuade a friend to visit Lake Edun. [Ed.]

Many new to nude recreation ask how to prepare themselves to become a naturist. The usual advice is to "just do it." That's all well and good, but it doesn't address if social nudity is right for them. However, the following method may work for some to acclimate them to nude recreation.

First of all, you must realize that nudity is not sexual. This must be a conscious thought process. Being nude is not an invitation for sexual activity. You may have to keep reminding yourself about this. Think about it as a form of meditation on nudity. Yes we are all sexual beings, but mere nudity is not titillating or solely sexual.

The next step may sound crazy but it will gauge whether you should be a naturist in the first place. Get nude and look at photos of non-sexual nudity. This does not mean porn! This is **NOT** an excuse for exploitation, sexual activity, stupidity, or illegal activity. When you're nude and looking at nudity, what is your reaction? Are you turned on? Could you be nude around others and see other people nude as well? Could you interact with people on a respectful level? Question your intentions on being a naturist. Why do you want to be in social nudity?

After awhile you should start to see your nudity and the nudity of others as normal. You start to realize that people are all different, but the same. Your nudity becomes normal as does the nudity of others. However, if you cannot differentiate nudity from sexual activity, than you have no business being a naturist.

Starting off new in naturism can be difficult but rewarding if you're in it for the right reasons. If you can remember one thing about nude recreation let it be this: naturism is about respecting others, and respecting yourself. There is much more information available about becoming a naturist on the web.

#### Picasso vs. Scotland

Recently the airport at Edinburgh displayed a nude painting by Picasso in the arrival area. The print of the painting, Nude Woman in a Red Armchair, promoting a Picasso exhibit this month at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, had triggered a few complaints.

True to form, the complainers had their way and airport authorities at first had the breasts covered, then the print was removed altogether.

Once again there were complaints, this time from those supporting the display of the Picasso print. Authorities again bowed to pressure, apologized and reinstated the print.

John Leighhton, speaking for the National Galleries of Scotland noted that, "All kinds of images of women in various states of dress and undress can be used in contemporary advertising without comment. But somehow a painted nude by one of the world's most famous artists is found to be disturbing and has to be removed."

This is a rather amazing story. It illustrates how conflicted our society is when it comes to issues of body acceptance and public display of the nude form. This is a particularly enlightening article.

### **Naked Yoga: One Woman's Experience**

It seems yoga and naturism are natural partners. Yoga promotes good health, is non competitive and generally fun to do at any age. There is minimal risk to injury and doesn't require a team for its performance.

The following news story from England about nude yoga illustrates a universal experience naturists know well. First is great fear of being undressed in front of others. Second, body acceptance must be addressed. Third, after a few minutes the tension of being nude mostly fades away. Finally, there is the invigorating experience of feeling liberated and natural.

All in all, whether with a capable instructor or with a group of amateurs copying the poses in pictures, I believe nude yoga would be a great addition to the activities at Lake Edun. Anyone want to try? [Ed.]

It's not as gimmicky as it sounds: if you think about it, naturism and yoga go hand in naked hand. Apart from feeling great and being healthy for the body, yoga is, in essence, about a deep acceptance of who you are — so naked yoga furthers this by encouraging acceptance of your naked body.

...the class instructor, has been a practicing naturist for 22 years, and says: 'From the time that I was a child I was aware basically that people's bits come in two models, and once you've seen both models I really can't see what the issue is'.

Like many young women who are fed airbrushed images of perfection...I'm insecure about my body. The idea of experiencing something which encouraged body acceptance was therefore very appealing to me.

'Part of what yoga encourages is accepting yourself,' the instructor says. 'That means accepting you don't have the kind of body that will get you on to the front page of a fashion magazine. It means accepting who you are and embracing and celebrating who you are both physically and mentally'.

As I stood at the beginning of the class about to take my clothes off, this 'acceptance' of my body was about to be put to the test. My heart was in my mouth. Was I really about to take all my clothes off and spend an hour and a half contorting my body into unflattering stretches? Could I really go through with this?

 $\ldots$  as the class went on and I focused on the yoga, I almost forgot I was naked.

It's the most liberating, invigorating and yes, natural, feeling in the entire world. The feeling of being simultaneously vulnerable and empowered and of moving your body in the open air is something I'd recommend to anyone – especially those with body confidence issues.

Ultimately, naked yoga felt liberating. While it would have been better to experience it with other women – and to experience my lumps and bumps with other women in a non-judgmental setting – being free and naked in a non-sexual situation with other human beings was an extraordinary experience.

If you have always wanted to know more about yoga, particularly naked yoga, check this out.

# The People I Want To See Naked

... none of us should

and think they are

ever want to see ...

deeply unlovable, or

nothing anyone would

look at our own bodies

Reprinted here with permission, Chelsea Fagen explains her beliefs about the value of nudity in the context of the contradictory positions taken toward nudity in society. She explores the yearning we as individuals have to see nudity, but at the same time our inheritance of prudishness arouses widespread opposition within our culture toward all depictions of nudity. This unresolved tension gives rise to the unwholesome fascination and disgust dichotomy toward the human body.

We are impatient as naturists to be done with this conflict and move on to acceptance of public nudity as a non issue. The

struggle to realize this goal has been going on for over 100 years and we feel it will never end. We wish naturism had been as rapidly adopted as has some pieces of modern technology such as the digital camera or the cell phone. Still, when we compare the mores of dress in the 1890's regarding nudity to those of current times a lot of change has occurred. The current setbacks we observe such as loss of nude beaches are likely temporary, (we hope!).

The fact is society in general isn't dissatisfied with clothing. There is no clamoring for fewer clothes. Body shame continues at a very high level. Nudity people do see is "the beautiful people" which both fascinates and intimidates. Such high profile nudity sets up an impossible standard. Rather than promoting body acceptance and simple nudity, it discourages it by narrowing what is desirable rather than expanding what is normal. The "normal" body most of us have is regarded with shame and is to be hidden. Couple this with the assumption nudity is sexual and therefore immoral, and you have an enormous burden to overcome in promoting naturism.

With patience, persistence, and pluck naturists must endure until the winds of change produce a climate more receptive to naturism. Ms. Fagen's essay speaks to the age in which we live and her vision of what could be. [Ed.]

Nudity is an odd thing. It seems as though we are at once surrounded by it and shielded from it, oscillating between offended and titillated. We can't show a breast on television, nor should a mother take hers out in a public park to give her child its afternoon meal. But breasts are everywhere — on our computers, on our movie screens, in our fantasies — both in full reveal and implied under a sheer tank top. We play at prudishness, but we long for full-frontal. It's hard to understand what the real significance of nudity is anymore.

I like nudity. I don't always enjoy it in an erotic way, but I almost universally enjoy seeing it, provided that it is consensual and adult, of course. I like it because there is so often an element of liberation, a feeling of "Finally, it is all in the open." And maybe that's me projecting, because I wish that I had the courage to show myself naked with impunity. I wish that, aside from the obvious self-consciousness I hold about my body — something most of us struggle with on some level — that I hadn't internalized all the rhetoric surrounding what nakedness means. I wish I didn't feel that it would be a

judgment of my character, or a reflection of who I was as a person. Other people have learned to get past what we've been taught, and I like seeing them do it.

Even in the domains of nudity which seeks to be different and liberating, there seems to be a fairly constant theme in what is "acceptable" to show in its natural form. We like pretty people, we like young people, we like able-bodied people, we like thin people, we like white people. We may put tattoos on them and call them Suicide Girl, or allow them to roll around in their own bed sheets and call it Me in My Place, but it

remains a more digestible kind of nudity.

This is the depiction of nudity that has in some ways been spared from the shaming rhetoric that surrounds what it means to take your clothes off, especially for women. We deem it attractive (and pleasing to the male gaze) and let it slide. It is sexy where a breastfeeding mother or wheelchair-bound grandfather would be offensive.

I want to see them naked, though. And they don't need to be erotic to be enjoyed, though there is no limit to what kind of bodies can be sexy if they choose they want to be. I want to see the inherent dichotomy we make in nudity between "erotic" and "ugly" to become a spectrum which we can all make the rubric for ourselves. I want the idea that a woman choosing to take her clothes off automatically makes her less deserving of respect to be as outdated as the old cameras we used to photograph them. I want to see naked men with big beer bellies and hair in odd places and a large bald spot on the top of their heads. I want to see naked women of every color, speaking every language, at every age. I want to see people who have lost their breasts to cancer proudly showing their chests and refusing to acquiesce to a slogan as offensive as "Save the Boobies." I want to see

I want this because we have come so far from what is, at the end of the day, our most natural state. I want it because none of us should look at our own bodies and think that they are deeply unlovable, or nothing that anyone would ever want to see, or all that we are good for. I don't want some girls to feel that they are uniquely sexual while others feel that they will never be seen as erotic. I don't want us to scoff at a Playboy model's thoughts on politics simply because we have seen her vagina, because none of this matters.

people covered in wrinkles or freckles or sunspots or cellu-

lite, naked and incredibly happy to be in front of the camera.

Our bodies are a mode of transport for our personalities, our intelligence, and our collective memory. They are as malleable and as subject to change as any other physical entity in this world. They are not who we are. Being naked should be beautiful, and liberating, and a state in which we all feel represented — not something that most of us hide away because we assume that being natural is something reserved for a certain caste of beautiful people.

You can learn more <u>here</u>.

# **Proud To Have High Self-Esteem**

Project Naked is the blog brain child of two Australian women. It is generally aimed at women. They want to promote comfort with the body just the way it is. They want women to learn to love their bodies as they are and become comfortable in their own skin.

The following is one of their posts. [Ed.]

Hi, I'm 23, female and I suffer from high self-esteem. I love my body, I just can't help it.

I'm really very lucky – I have 20/20 vision, all my natural teeth, a fairly strong constitution, ten fingers and ten toes.

When women ask me, "What do you hate most about your body?" or "If you could change anything, what would it be?" I really have to think about it. After a lengthy pause I usually shrug and say, "My feet are pretty big?" Truth be told, if I could change anything it would probably be my body clock, so I could survive on 6 hours sleep and not be a moody bitch. Either that or change my digestion so I would take a dump at 7 every morning and not have to go when I'm on a bus or at a party.

But back to the body stuff: There are several things wrong with these kinds of situations. For starters, they happen waaaay too frequently for my liking, (that they happen at all

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is truly horrifying). Secondly, that most women I know are locked and loaded with their answer. As soon as the question is asked it's like a bomb goes off and body parts are suddenly flying across the room. I hate my thighs. My boobs are too small. My arse is so flat. When did hating your body become a hobby? And third, why does loving your body now equate to narcissism? This may be a cultural thing, I'm not sure – in Australia we have a national case of Tall Poppy Syndrome and if you value any of your natural assets, you are swiftly deemed "up yourself."

In any case, when will women start giving themselves and each other a break? The girl who loves how she looks is not an egocentric maniac and the girl who hates how she looks is not digging for compliments. We are not a threat to each other! We live in a hostile, media-saturated environment and are constantly told we're not good enough. We are so good at being down on ourselves and consuming, (make up, clothes, anything to attain an unrealistic ideal) that we perpetuate the cycle and convince others to do the same. The system is rigged. We're actually doing advertisers' jobs for them! Let's not make it so easy for them. Let's reframe the question... What do you love most about your body?

See how others answer this question here.

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