Bare Facts

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Summer, 2004

Official Publication of the Lake Edun Foundation, Inc.

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Summer Update From LEF

As part of our on-going effort to keep in touch with friends and past visitors, we send this special issue of Bare Facts. We are excited about some of our upcoming activities and hope you will find activities of interest to you. Please feel free to join us.

Take special note of our Picnic at Edun, a modification of our annual event scheduled for the end of this month. Also of interest are open houses scheduled for both July and August. If you are a past member or visitor, you will want to join us on August 14 for our Reunion Weekend. Finally, during Labor Day weekend, we will host the second annual Dagorhir, sponsored by the Society for Creative Anachronisms. It is mediaeval sparing, jousting, and fighting. Eduners found it extremely interesting last year.

If you wish to learn more about the Lake Edun Foundation or you want to explore the benefits of membership, contact us. Thank you for your continued interest and support of our efforts to promote the healthy aspects of living a clothing-free lifestyle.

Garage Sale During Labor Day

Many Eduners and our friends have indicated they are putting aside some great items to bring to our Labor Day weekend garage sale. Not only do we expect to help fill our coffers, it also provides an opportunity for garage salers to wander our fabulous resource.

Popular garage sale items include clothing, of course, but don't forget the household decorating items, pictures, kitchen utensils, appliances, bathroom items, etc. We all have stuff we no longer use; put yours aside and save it until Labor Day. Then bring it with you to Lake Edun. It will help Cindi; it will help LEF; it will help our legal defense fund. And, best of all: everything you contribute can be tax deductible.

Weekly Saunas Begin In September

Last winter, at the suggestion of a member, be scheduled a sauna every Saturday evening from 8-10. We will carry on this tradition once again this year.

Beginning September 18, you will be able to relax in our private sauna and allow the daily stress we all somehow seem to collect to peacefully drip on to the sauna floor. If you have never joined us for a sauna, plan to do so this fall or winter; if you have enjoyed a sauna in the past, be sure to remember to join us again.

Items We Need

- Digital camera
- Wheel Barrow
- Plastic Buckets
- Car ramps
- Pitch Forks
- Variable speed, reversible drill
- Chipper/shredder we can use about once a month

Plan To Attend Picnic At Edun

Our traditional mid-summer event is coming up at the end of this month. Don't miss it!

This year, for the first time ever, our summer event will be a clothed fund-raiser. This, we hope, will encourage others who have never visited our special place to see for themselves what we all take for granted. In addition, it gives those who support our cause but are reluctant to make a full-body commitment a means to stand up and be counted. All funds raised will go toward our Legal Defense Fund.

Here's the scoop: The event is from 4 - 10 pm on July 31. Of course, we expect many Eduners and friends will wish to come early and stay late. And, of course, the clothing expectations (or lack of the same) are the same as normal before and after the event.

We have great entertainment lined up. The Cloddy Broons, from Baldwin will entertain all with their Celtic and folk music. For those of us who remember what folk music is, it will be a great act. In addition, Mark Hofgard who made his first Topeka appearance last Winter will travel from Colorado especially for this. Finally, Ryan and Greg have promised to dazzle all with a spectacular display of fireworks.

Plan now to join us on July 31. Cost for the Picnic at Edun is only \$35 (or more, if you can. It's all tax deductible). If you plan to arrive early or stay late, the normal daily contribution will be sought. Send in your reservation NOW so you don't miss this [slightly modified] annual event. If you are unable to attend but wish to show your support for our cause, your tax-deductible donation will be appreciated.

DON'T FORGET

Activities designated HN are sponsored by Heartland Naturists July 8; Thur; 4-7; Open House July 10; Sat; 12-3; Open House July 11; Sun; 10am; HN Sun Run 4 – Race of Apollo July 16; Fri; 8-10; HN Swim July 17; Sat; 50's & 60's Party July 18; Sun; Family Tie Dye July 25; Sun; Christmas in July & Goofy Gift Exchange July 31; Sat; 4-10; Picnic at Edun Aug 8; Sun; 12-3; Open House Aug 14; Sat; LEF Reunion Aug 20; Fri; Jon's Birthday Party Aug 21; Sat; Jon's Weenie Roast Aug 21-22; Sat & Sun; Crafts weekend Sept 4; Sat; Labor Day @ Edun Sept 5; Sun; Dagorhir Sept 6; Mon; Labor Day Sept 10-12; Fri-Sun; Canuding trip Sept 26; Sun; Harvest Festival Oct 30; Sat; 6:30; Halloween Party Nov 27; Sat; Thanksgiving Leftovers Party Dec 11; Sat; Christmas Party

Skinnydipping

Ever been skinnydipping? Apparently most Americans have, at least according to surveys done a few years ago. Quite a number have done so in mixed company. Chances are most of them recall their skinnydipping adventure(s) with some fondness.

Perhaps some of you recall the Norman Rockwell magazine cover of the boys in some pond joyously skinnydipping in the "ol swimming hole".

Norman Rockwell's America was a different place. He stands for a more innocent time and painted what he saw as the best in our national character. The time was the 1950's, and the decade of *Leave it to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best*. This is the decade many turn when recalling when "times were better", and family values were what "they ought to be". Nostalgia is the key word here.

Some have pointed out "nudism", the North American term for clothes-free living and recreation, is scary. This is due to the media reinforcing an association of kookiness with this term in the public's eye over the last 75 years. It's amazing how sophomoric many public figures become when human nudity or nudism is brought up. They seem to revert to their grade school age alter egos who found endless mirth in anything having to do with the bathroom.

"Naturism" is the term that the rest of the English speaking world uses to describe nudism. The Naturist Society rose up in the 1980's and attempted to define "naturism" as meaning being nude primarily outdoors, and on public lands while distinguishing "nudism" as primarily being behind the closed doors of private clubs. In reality, there's not a lot of difference since The Naturist Society promotes resorts and tourist services, and AANR has some involvement in public issues. The aims of the two groups are not always that far apart.

Using the term "naturist" is somewhat confusing for many in North America. Is this about a bunch of tree-huggers? The term "nudist" likewise has baggage that is unfortunate and leads to a lengthy litany of explanations just to overcome initial negative reactions. This brings us back to the term "skinnydipping." More people can relate to this word right away with positive associations. It's not weird or kooky; it's memories of childhood, of joy, freedom and adventure. It's "skinnydipping!"

Keep "skinnydipping" in mind the next time you have a chance to talk to someone about your favorite way to enjoy swimming. By the way, at Lake Edun you can "skinnydip" to your hearts content

America is so funny that way. They have a big problem with nudity – not vulgarity and violence and cheapness, just simple nudity. I always marvel at how really uptight people are. You can have these really heavy-duty sex scenes with half-clothed actors doing really vulgar things on a kitchen table or in a bathroom or on an airplane. But take your clothes off and suddenly it's a big problem. It's a funny, prudish side we have. And it is so silly.

- Bo Derek

Back To The Future

By: Webb Garlinghouse

Opponents to naturism seem to long for the good old days. They wish society could revert back to the way it once was in a simpler time. And, they are shocked when they find naturists enjoying the beauty that surrounds us all. However, it wasn't always the way these historical revisionists world like for us to believe.

In the past month, I came upon two examples that make the point. The library is a great place to find videos and DVD's of some great classic films. While browsing their collection recently, I discovered a copy of Lost Horizon, a wonderful film based on the beautiful best selling novel of the same name by James Hilton. Released in 1937, it was a lavishly produced, high budget film directed by Frank Capra about the enchanted paradise of Shangri-La.

I found two scenes of particular interest. In one, the leading lady, Jane Wyatt (who married another Hollywood actor, Ronald Reagan) is swimming. There are some shots taken fairly close and she appears to be naked. This is proven so when we watch from the other side of the pond as she emerges from the water, turn to face the camera, and sit down on a rock. In the other scene, a class of children is dismissed early. Excited about sudden free time, they race to the water, shed their robes and jump playfully in.

In both of these scenes, the nudity is incidental to the overall story, but does seem to be used to establish the state of bliss that exists in Shangri-La. In the first, Hollywood, and presumably the nation as a whole, is clearly not upset at the thought of full frontal female nudity, although the camera was admittedly far enough off, that details were very lacking. In the other scene, although we only saw the children running away from the camera into the water, it clearly demonstrates to me that Hollywood and the nation at that time did not consider it improper for children to skinny-dip, even in a coed setting.

The other example of historical significance I chanced upon occurred during the Second World War. All branches of the service used artists to capture scenes and moments of significance. PBS ran a documentary of this little known effort. In their typical style, they showed some of the pictures and interviewed some of the artists, who are, obviously, much older now.

In one of the pictures, a young GI was doing some kind of dirty task on the beach in and near the water. He was naked. Evidently others were in the area and the young man had to be aware he was the subject of the artist's attention. During the interview for the PBS piece, the artist said his brass made him put a swim suit on the soldier. In this instance, 60 years ago, although the military engaged in "cover-up," it evidently had no particular problem with this soldier dressing appropriately for this task. I wonder if that would be as true today?

Your clothes conceal much of your beauty, yet they hide not the unbeautiful. And through you seek in garments the freedom of privacy, you may find in them a harness and a drain. Would that you could meet the sun and the wind with more of your body and less of your raiment.

- Khalil Gibran, The Profit

The Shower Room

Ernie C.

Many have probably read in recent naturist publications articles referring to the "graying of naturism". The articles center on the increasing age of naturists. Many ideas are presented as to why this is occurring. I would like to add to the ideas with a personal observation.

After several weeks of prodding Dad, my children were surprised when I told them that we would join the new workout facility that just opened near our home. It is a nice gym with all new equipment and of course professional trainers. During my initial visit to the men's locker room I noted with satisfaction a sauna along with the showers.

It has been many years since I have been in a locker room. The first day after joining, my wife and I both went for our first workout. Several other guys were in the locker room in various states of changing and showering. What was interesting to me was that most of them wore towels where ever they were in the locker room. Some even wore them into the shower stall and then tossed the towel on top of the curtain before turning the water on! And we had individual stalls!

After several weeks at the gym I noticed that an age gap was evident. The men 45+ were quite willing to undress by their locker and walk nude to the shower. They were also the ones who would emerge from the sauna nude. Some even have the nerve to sit by their locker nude for several minutes before they dress! The younger guys were very hesitant to be nude in front of anyone. I have noted that several of them actually go into the sauna wearing full sweats! Many will actually wait until the coast is clear before changing. Many avoid the whole thing and just change from street shoes to gym shoes and back again, preferring to go home and change and shower.

During my personal trainer time I noted this to the trainer. He looked sheepish and said he was not willing to show his "stuff" in a locker room either. I asked him if he had noticed that we were pretty much all the same. He said that he guessed so but sure was not going to look! I told him he should get over it! "After all you can't change what you got anyway!" He laughed nervously and noted that the guys in the gym who were older seemed more comfortable with being naked, "Perhaps when you get older it's less of a deal for you." He quipped.

One of the main points of naturism is be accepting of your body and the person you are, and accepting others for who they are. With the current comments in the press of being accepting of diversity it seems that we are after all walking backward in what we have taught the younger generations.

I have mentioned this gym observation to several lately. Many smile and say that it is about time we became a little more modest in our practices. Most however chuckle and give an antidote from their past and then add that most of us just have grown fearful of others we associate with.

One of those I spoke with was a retired airline captain, now seventy plus years young. He added that for many years he had played racquet ball three to five times a week. "We had a nice locker facility at the club. No shower stalls, just an open shower area, our toweling off area was also open and had several nice sofas we could sit on. That's what the second towel is for you know! To sit on! Many of us would shower, dry and sit on the sofa and discuss the current affairs of the world. I noted several years ago that the younger guys would hurry to the shower, dry quick and change and never join us in the discussions! I questioned several of them about this and was told that they were not about to sit on the sofa with "you older pervert's." Pervert? The young man then went on to say that he thought the older guys were a little perverted. "Yeah you sit around and expose yourselves to all to see. That's perverted!"

Surely we are distorted in our views when we find so many unwilling to even shower in the open with others of the same gender.

If you have stories or comments about this, please contact us at LEFmember@yahoo.com and we will consider them for the next "Bare Facts"

The Times They Are A Changing

Just the first in a series of reminders that our society sometimes makes "progress," one step backwards at a time.

Breaking with its 121-year-old tradition, the Milwaukee Athletic Club is now requiring men to wear suits when they swim – and some longtime swimmers aren't happy about it according to an Associated Press report.

Bob Schmidt, 56, figures he has been swimming nude at the downtown club since he was 6, and he greatly enjoys not having to tote a swimsuit with him. "This is not over yet," Schmidt said. "What would happen if I just show up for a swim one day without a suit?"

Club president Bob Bellin said he can understand why the ban on nude swimming, starting Jan. 2, is a little controversial. "Change is difficult," he said. "Some of our older members really enjoy this benefit. But we felt that, in an effort to appeal to younger members, we had to change with the times." In a letter this month to club members, Bellin said a supply of swimsuits has been purchased and will be available at the sign-in desk.

In his letter to members, Bellin dutifully notes, "I realize that this ends a long-standing tradition at The Club." "There are a number of reasons for moving in this direction, but one of the most important was the negative reaction to 'naked' swim from any prospective members. As we struggle to attract new members, this seemed to be a modest compromise to modernize our image." (It can be interjected that a total ban goes beyond compromise and looks a lot like capitulation. A real compromise would have been to set aside nude swim times for those wanting to partake in this time honored tradition at the club. This would have given a choice, and an opportunity for the "moderns" to discover the joy of a simple nude swim.)

Bellin ended his letter with an invitation: "We invite you to mourn the passing of the 'suitless swim' on New Year's Day and have one last skinny dip."

Teaching In The Nude: The Danish Experience

By: Wendy

(The following was passed on without any indication of the original source. The cross cultural perspective, however, is most enlightening and delightful)

So there I was, standing in the locker room. There were eight four-year olds (boys and girls) the two teachers (both women, about twenty five) and me. It was a Wednesday, which means it is a swim day. As everyone around me began shedding his or her clothes, I felt my heart skip a beat as I wondered where I was going to change.

"Um. Do I just take off my clothes and change right in front of the children?" I asked, sheepishly. "Well, unless you plan to swim in your clothes, I think it would be a good idea to take of your clothes!" was the Danish response. They were not used to my cultural views on nudity; but I was. Seeing as I did not want the children to think me strange, I took a deep breath and stripped down.

Standing there naked, for the first five minutes was the hardest thing I had ever done – or so I thought. Here in Denmark , when changing in a locker room, it is proper etiquette to wander around in the nude. One's towel does not serve any other purpose besides drying one off – it is not a cover for one's nude body. This was a big step for me. It is the American way to use your towel as a shield from exposing your naked behind to others. Well, not here.

So, I proceeded into the shower chamber (naked) along with my naked class of children and the two naked teachers. The shower chamber consisted of a long corridor of waterspouts – there was no place to hide! I had to grin and bare it, literally. After our six to ten-minute communal nude shower, we finally put our bathing suits on and went swimming.

I thought I had accomplished a great feat! I, the modest American, stood naked in front of the whole class and the teachers. Yay for me!! But, to my surprise, I was mistaken. After our swim, we entered the naked chamber once again. Our bathing suits and towels were hung up, and the naked party began! We all showered again (the Danes are really clean people!), and as I grabbed my towel and began to dry off, I received strange looks.

"Am I not supposed to be getting dressed yet?" I asked with apprehension visible in my eyes. I soon found the answer to my inquiry as I viewed eight little naked butts scurrying into the sauna. I proceeded to follow, going with the flow (and I also snuck my towel around my waist! I cheated a bit!).

Once I entered the steamy box, I was greeted by naked people – they were everywhere! I glanced around, hoping to find someone with a towel wrapped around them, but no luck. Everyone was sitting on their towels. So, I did like the majority. I consciously smoothed my towel on the bench and sat down, fully exposed, between two of the children. I just sat there, aware of how naked I was, aware of the fact that there was no part of my body hidden from anyone's view. We must have sat there for about twenty minutes. Just sitting, stark naked, in a sauna with eight four-year olds and two teachers – a classroom field trip. When it was time to leave the sauna, I felt a bit of relief – I think I was beginning to get used to my bare state! But I was given another chance at bravery because we showered once again. I was getting good at the showering part. After the final shower, we all dried off and put on our clothes. My clothes have never felt so heavy in my life! After being naked for so long I felt strange in clothes! What happened to me!!

My analysis of the situation is severe culture shock. I experienced culture shock in its extremity – I was fully exposed with nowhere to hide. Despite this, I am thankful for such an experience. I look at my self naked in a different way now. When I am naked, I am just naked. Roaming around in the nude with a group of people who find it normal is such a mind opening experience. I was the only one in the locker room who felt uncomfortable, no one else thought anything of my nakedness. And this has made me view nudity in a different way, in a more positive way. I recommend this sort of experience for everyone!

My Danish experience with teaching in the nude is one I will never forget, and it is one I cannot fully explain in words, hence the word experience. But I often wonder, will I one day get to teach in the nude? I could just imagine! But I will probably have to stick with wandering around my dorm room naked – it is good to start small when converting to the nudist way! Only in Denmark do you come home with such a tradition – just wait until my family sees what I have picked up over here!

Art In The News

Columnists in the Salt Lake Tribune report that Courtney Moffett, who won second place in the annual Reflections art contest at Jordan High School, was invited last week to the district awards ceremony, where all the winning entries from eight high schools were to be presented. Or so she was told.

The theme of the parent-teacher-student-association-sponsored Reflections contest this year was "I am really happy when . . ." Moffett's entry, "At One With Nature," featured a Hawaiian woman sitting nude on a river bank, placing a flower in her hair. The perspective painted was from behind and to the side, showing the woman's breast and her buttocks – way too much skin for contest officials.

Moffett arrived at Eastmont Middle School only to discover that her painting was not on display. She further discovered her painting was also excluded from the program in which each piece of art was shown on a large screen with a picture of the creator.

An addendum to the above report is that The Florida Naturist Association has advised Courtney Moffett to contact the ACLU to seek their support. She has agreed to do this.

There was a similar incident over a student's sculpture at a Ft. Lauderdale High School several years ago.

The ACLU filed a law suit and the sculpture was shown at the facility where the others were shown, in a special showing. Fight Back!

What Of Lake Edun?

By Michael

Some two years ago I stumbled on Lake Edun in a list of naturist resorts form TNS, The Naturist Society. I was pleased and shocked at the same time! A nudist place in conservative Kansas seemed, well just out of place! And it was in all places Topeka! The state capitol! I was new to naturism at the time and looking for a place that would be close by I could visit and hopefully get my wife to visit with me. It took three visits to the parking lot before I came in to visit the first time. During that visit I met Webb and John who were busy about the barn. Webb was open and a delight to talk to. I resolved that my wife and I had to come and try it out!

We did just that on July 4th of this past year. I wrote earlier of how my wife had said she would go with me but not take her clothes off. And how after I had undressed and entered the lake I turned to find her doing the same thing! Later that month during a family discussion at home she noted to my children who are still with us, that to remain dressed would have made her immodest in such a setting. "I never thought I would do such a thing," she said, "but it seemed so natural to do!" Thus, our naturist adventure has begun.

The next week I paid for a one year membership in the Lake Edun Foundation. I had the opportunity to come to the lake many times over the course of the summer sometimes with my wife and other times without. When I was doing business close by and the day was ending I would come by and enjoy the air and water for an hour or so before dressing heading home. Lake Edun was and is a wonderful place to let some stress go.

During the course of time I came to hear of and gain some understanding of the legal battles that Lake Edun has and is enduring. Since I am by birth a New Englander I come ready equipped from my mothers womb with a sense of independence and, well, a certain level of rebelliousness! (Vermont was not one of the original thirteen states; it was fourteen since we in Vermont were not sure this thing was worth the effort at first!) So the issues surrounding our special place were of interest to me. I thought I might take this space and give a couple of ideas that have been running around in my head since before Thanksgiving concerning the care and keeping of our special place.

Many who oppose us in the community wish only the best for the community. They are responding from false assumptions and beliefs about what it means to be socially nude. Change comes after much struggle and trial. When the world in which we currently live only shows people nude or partially dressed when sex is involved, or for the sake of advertising, are we then surprised that when they learn of Lake Edun they assume the worst?

In recent years there has been an increase not only in the publication of pornography, but also of the number of "juice bars," and "gentleman's clubs." Such commercialized exploitation of nudity for sexual purposes engenders fear and suspicion from our friends and neighbors, leading to their mistaken linkage of naturists and Lake Edun with these enterprises. Countering these misconceptions is no easy task which has to be approached both on a community and individual level. However, never underestimate your influence. We have the opportunity to demonstrate that these fears and judgments are false among those we know. By renewing our memberships, and inviting our friends to join us at Lake Edun, they are enabled to experience the truth that the human body is not inherently evil, and sex is not the automatic result of removing clothes!

I recently read an article found on www.Christian-oneness.org written by a lay minister, Mr. Ian B. Johnson concerning clothing and nakedness in the Bible. I thought his arguments quite in line with naturist beliefs. He states in his work that, "I am not a practicing nudist and am not publishing these articles to promote nudism. Rather, I am publishing them to promote unity and to lead to a clearer understanding of our salvation in Christ, and of the basis for true Christian morality and ethics."

What was most important about his article was the reason for initially undertaking a study of nakedness and the Bible. Again quoting from his article, "It should be noted particularly, from the outset, that, while my interest in this subject resulted from a local political controversy and my study has led me to the conclusion that Christianity and carefully-practiced nudism may be compatible...," and the political controversy he is referring to is LAKE EDUN! Mr. Johnson lives in the Topeka area! The Christians he is talking to are those who live in Topeka, Kansas and the surrounding area!

We are having an impact. Surely there are more Mr. Johnsons in the area! We are demonstrating that nudism, naturism, clotheslessness or however you want to refer to our naked state at Lake Edun is good, wholesome and edifying. When we, through fear of legal repercussion, do not renew our membership, do not bring friends to the lake, or otherwise stop our association with each other, we undermine the positive steps we have made to this point. We need to continue to show the neighbors and county commissioners that we are a growing, thriving concern that wishes the best for the community and the state. Growth is a good deterrent.

Lake Eduners have over the course of time always been open and friendly to those who are visiting for the first time. Had this not been so, I know my wife and I would not have returned for another visit. Had we, during our first visit felt threatened or seen behavior that was lewd or indecent we would not have returned a second time. It was the example shown by those at the lake on our first visit that taught us the value of Lake Edun. Are others looking as we were?

Yes, Lake Edun is alive and well! We need more to come and enjoy the blue Kansas sky and summer sun. We need more to spread the word of the goodness found at Lake Edun. We need to show county and state officials a healthy growing community of naturists, vibrant in their stance and belief. We need to be willing to allow those who are timid or fearful to come visit with us, and see for themselves the freedom that learning to be ones self can bring.

Nude is Normal

From The Mail Bag

Dear Lake Edun,

Just a quick note to say that I appreciated Ernie's article "The Shower Room."

With the accounts mentioned in the article, the author clearly illustrates how we are moving backwards as a nation in terms of body acceptance and, for that matter, in human sexuality. I have no doubt as to at least two of the causes of the lockerroom behavior of the younger men: Abstinence Education and Homophobia. Both can be traced back to the agenda of the Religious Hard Right.

The Religious Right has pushed and pushed Abstinence Education on this country, even to the point of forcing state legislatures to accept it as a standard for Sex-Ed. On the surface, a lot of people think that Abstinence Education is just about teaching kids to wait until they're a little more ready to participate in sexual behavior. But it's much more insidious than that. The hidden message in this form of "education" is that sex, sexuality, and for that matter nudity, is a bad, terrible thing that needs to be keep under control and bottled up, lest dire consequences come of it. It withholds valuable information from our children, while subtly laying down a foundation of guilt and shame, which is the hallmark of their brand of religion. This inevitably spills over to how young people see their bodies and how they will relate to other people's bodies in contexts like this one.

The other issue is Homophobia. Both religious and secular arts of our society haven't quite fully come to grips with homosexuality and gay people. To the religious, homosexuality is a sin that needs to be stamped out and gays to be censored and repressed. Much of secular society, on the other hand, still reviles homosexuality because it's viewed as "sissyness" or "being different." Young men growing up absorb these attitudes and fear and find themselves petrified to disrobe in the company of their own gender for fear of someone calling them a "faggot" or a "homo" regardless of their orientation.

The only thing sadder than these trends is the fact that it wasn't always this way. That there was a time not too awfully long ago, in living memory, when things weren't as bad as this. I, for one, am quite disturbed by the direction our beloved America is taking. I don't know all the things that need to be done to reverse this course. At the very least, education on body acceptance issues is necessary. Getting the word out both to friends and family members and society as a whole has to be a starting point.

Thanks again for your article.

- C.B.

Lake E	dun Foundatio	n, Inc.		
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