

Living Free



Naturism & Our World

No. 17 — Summer 2023

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The Case For Compulsory Nudity

Perhaps there is no such case to be made.

That statement is made in jest; it's just that no one from Lake Como Family Nudist Resort has responded to requests for an interview about what drove the Co-op Board of Directors to issue a directive making "all buildings, amenities, and events as nudity required."

The directive ends any clothing-optional use of the resort, stating, "It is the intent of the Board to make Lake Como a nudist resort and community in fact, and not just in name. Lake Como is a place for nudists, not a place for people who want to look at nudists."

Is that truly the intention of those who prefer a clothing-optional approach to nudity? More likely, what the resort is experiencing is the constraining effect of having too many of the guests remain clothed. Those who prefer nudity can feel inhibited when they appear to be outnumbered by those wearing clothing, and they may interpret the presence of those people as folks wanting only to look at nudists. In fact, while gawkers exist, they rarely join naked people, preferring to watch from a safe observation spot. When invited to come out in the open, they hasten away.

That is not to say that wanting to look at nudists never motivates people to enter a nudist resort. Those people soon find that they do not fit in or find themselves escorted off the premises for inappropriate behavior.

The Lake Como Co-op Board of Directors appears to exhibit a prejudice that, unfortunately, of-



Lake Como Family Nudist Resort

ten divides nudists and naturists. Naturists are willing to accept that not everyone is immediately comfortable with social nudity, and that some people need time to adjust.

Naturist New Hampshire welcomes everyone, recognizing that their upbringing, past experiences, and self-consciousness can make it difficult for some people to bare it all right away. Over time, they learn that they are safe, protected, and welcome, and the clothes usually come off after a few visits if not after a few minutes.

Reluctance to embrace social nudity also can account for the disparity between genders in nudist/naturist events. Women tend to be less inclined to attend events than men, and the greater the disparity between the numbers of women and the numbers of men, the greater the reluctance. Despite all that, Naturist New Hampshire's emphasis on a safe, welcoming place has made women feel comfortable not only in

attending, but in attending alone.

That does not mean there is no place for gender quotas or compulsory nudity. Some people need the assurance that there is parity between the sexes, making couples-only destinations popular. Some people want, as the Lake Como Co-op Board of Directors maintains, "to live and practice the nudist lifestyle and want to be with other people who practice nudism."

That would have been the topic of the discussion if anyone from Lake Como had responded to the request for an interview ahead of the May 24 meeting when the board will put forth a motion to set the terms for enforcement of the new nudity policy. The board has asked residents and members who wish to comment on the policy to attend "and make their wishes known".

Any problems that the resort has encountered with people who have remained covered up are unknown due to the silence from Lake Como.

Living Offers More Than Mere Nudity

Some common themes in naturist publications are the need to come together and come out about the practice of social nudity and what naturism really is, all that it means to participants, and the increasing number of threats to nudity in all its forms. It's not just the United States, which always has had a difficult time discerning between simple nudity and sexual behavior; there are attacks on nudity throughout the world that need to be answered.

Yet there are those who prefer not to discuss anything beyond the platitudes about how wonderful naturism is, and to speak only to those who already are believers. They do not want to read or discuss any problems, viewing publicity about disagreements between clubs or clashes with government officials as something that must undermine support for naturism, rather than as information that will help the movement navigate through the challenges.

Certainly, it can be difficult to take a public stand when one has to think about potential backlash from friends, relatives, and employers. Not everyone is in a position to be a public advocate for nudity.

That does not mean one has to pretend everything is all right. There is plenty of work that can be done anonymously behind the scenes, contacting advocates and providing financial support for the clubs and organizations that advance natur-

ist opportunities. One can befriend their representatives at the state and national levels and raise concerns when proposed legislation might negatively impact naked rights. Even volunteering to help out at naturist events can be helpful in ensuring that the opportunities for naked recreation remain in place.

Naturism no longer exists solely as a practice to be observed at beaches and nudist resorts. Hiking, biking, and running events can incorporate nudity. Naked comedy venues and naked dining are becoming popular. Simple get-togethers among friends can offer chances to enjoy clothes-free socialization.

Traditional naturism, based on the German model, emphasized health and exercise, something that largely got lost as more sedentary activities became the norm; but today, a renewed interest in holistic health and Eastern practices has brought that sensibility back. Naked yoga has become popular, and many other practices can easily incorporate nudity.

Yet it is not necessary to identify as either a nudist or naturist. Many people object to all labels on the grounds that any such term can distort an appreciation of who they are — multifaceted beings who can be comfortable naked or dressed up, who want to forge their own way in the world without being bound by rules and procedures, or who simply are exploring their identity without

a specific goal in mind.

Naturists need to embrace all of that. It may be that only by being inclusive can we build the kind of consensus that will protect and expand our rights to be naked. People can take diverse approaches to nudity without rejecting the way others observe it.

Living Free: Naturism & Our World attempts to examine all these things and invites our readers to be part of the effort. People are encouraged to tell their own stories about how they observe nudity, but also what other interests they have and their perspectives on the world around us. Nudity is but one example of ways that lead to personal growth, and we'd like to hear about what else is of interest to you, and may be of interest to others, as well.

We welcome poems, photographs, short essays, longer articles, cartoons, or examples of whatever moves you. Our process of posting to Substack before compiling stories into a magazine format gives readers a chance to offer additional information, correct any statements that may have been misstated, and suggest similar lines of inquiry.

The summer is just getting started, at least in the Northern Hemisphere; look forward to accounts of how naturists around the world are spending their time and what new interests they may have.

Live free, naturally!

Perhaps those problems were discussed at the May 24 meeting.

What is certain is that Lake Como is not the only resort facing decisions like this. Many nudist resorts

are experiencing financial problems that some are unable to survive. An aging demographic, competition from resorts that focus on swinging and other sexual activity, and op-

position from their home communities are all challenges that many resorts face, and questions about clothing-optional vs. required nudity are among those challenges.

Nudist? Naturist? None of the Above?

By Brian Leonard

We come together, we fall apart. We create new inroads, we get stale and then we get revitalized. Leadership changes, feelings get hurt. In times of uncertainty some bear down and cling to the original ideas while others tear down what wasn't working and start a new framework. In this ever-changing world, we strive for something better. Sometimes we don't see all the moving parts of what makes a movements thrive. It is here that I want to thank everyone, every free beach, every nudist camp, and all the organizations that have put such a fantastical effort into carrying this movement forward; but it doesn't end here — it's just the beginning of the next exciting phase!

Create Where You Belong

Who am I and why would I take this on?

My name is Brian Leonard and I am the Ambassador of a Body Justice/Body Autonomy event called "SENTIENT Fest" (formerly the Northeast Naturist Festival). I live out as a queer, naked person that loves to camp in the nude with my family. Others have attempted to judge me and punish me for my naked activities, so I found it strange how much judgment there is within the naked movement and how this is a hindrance to getting back to that vibrant, activated, diverse, and inclusive nature of the best movements.

I have been a member of FCN (Federation of Canadian Naturists),



TNS (The Naturist Society), NAC (the Naturist Action Committee), and AANR (American Association of Nude Recreation), and I have had at least 100 other affiliations with non-sanctioned groups — couples and individuals who are actively eclipsing and expanding the tenets, perceptions, and experiences of the naked movement. I have let all of my subscriptions to all of the large naturist/nudist organizations lapse.

Our major organizations have found it worthy to argue and judge about where naked culture gets to sunbathe!?

I have news for them: It's not just about the naked sunbathing, naked wars any more — it's so damned much more than that! Expanding ethical naked culture and beyond is at the forefront of my intentions. I do not judge on what kind of ethical naked you are — we leave that responsibility up to you.

If the first thing you do is attempt to judge a person by the concept if they are a nudist or a naturist, you've lost half the battle of expanding ethical naked culture. You've just lost an opportunity to meet them where they are at. Be welcoming, be a resource, be a supporter — you may

just find that they are the future, not you! I continually work at rediscovering the initial joyous moments of discovering tremendous body freedom before the divisive concepts of nudism and naturism clouded my heart and my vision.

If you choose to hold your version of being naked above others because you think you know more of its history or just because you recycle and have more of an earthy connection than others, please lay your judgments down at our front door! If you think nudity represents open season and incessant cruising, you won't be happy here.

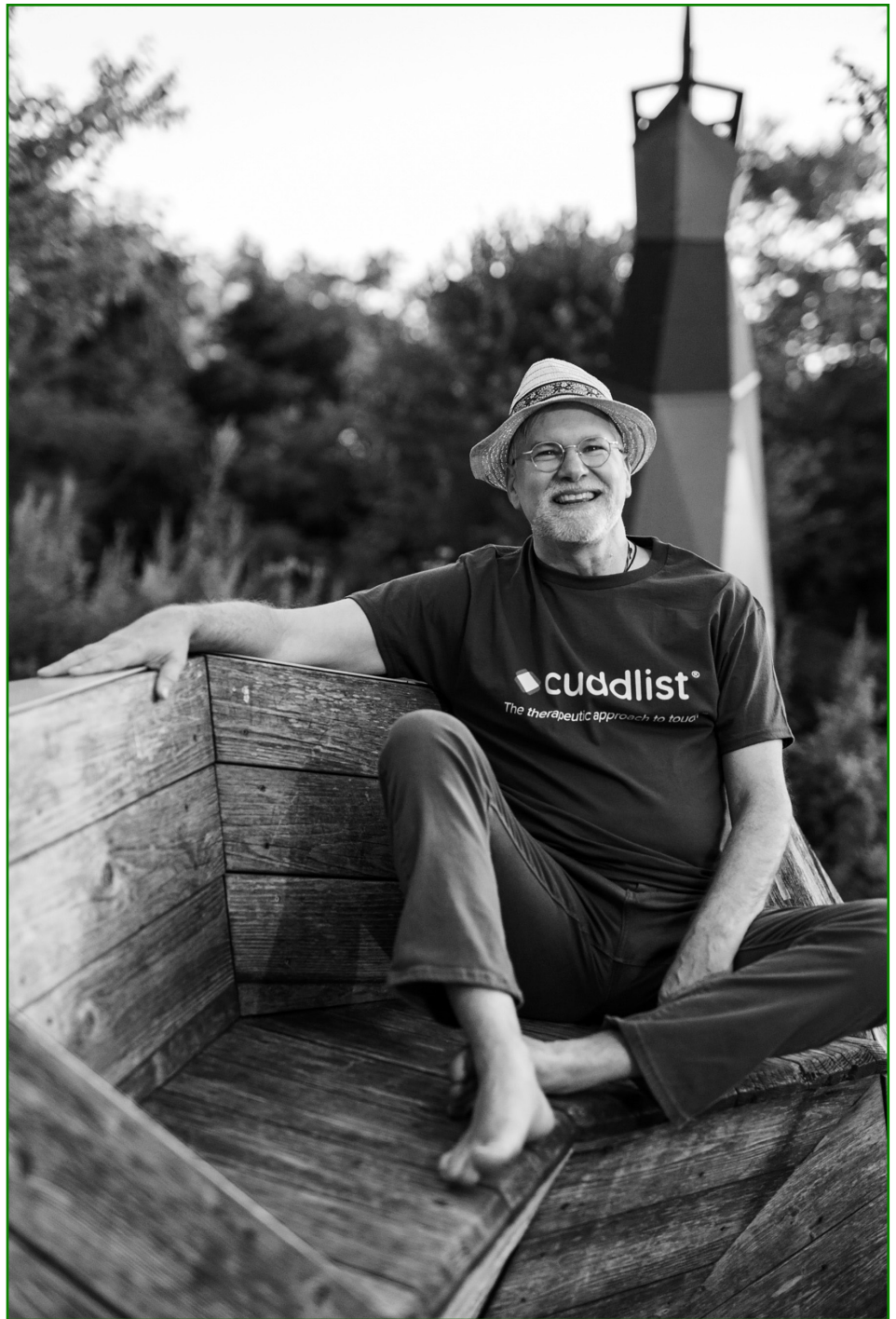
It should be known that we are not without our own boundaries, as you will see below. As a festival director, ambassador, and public FB group provider (Naked Diversity, Human Sexual, Cuddle Party Syracuse/Ithaca, Aging Disgracefully, PYRK Collective, F.E.A.R. Council of CNY, and more), I represent a moving target for haters and judges! Consent plays a critical role at SENTIENT Fest as well as all social engagements. Judgments are natural but we can also strive to apply much more compassion than exists today in the rather insular side of the Na-

turist Society movement! Nudists have a grand welcoming spirit and they will openly tell you that their organization suffers from dysfunction. So I found myself in the sometimes-difficult position of pushing beyond the harsh dictates of nudists and the very vague, “wholesome values” of naturists. I opted for less obsession about being naked and instead chose a route that opens the surrounding communities to come in as well as us going out and meeting them on their own terms, rather than looking for converts. As the more experienced of us come to realize, enjoying the benefits of ethically naked times is far from anyone’s first choice for rejuvenation and community, even if we could offer a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow!

My “mission” is not to engage in naturist or nudist evangelism/mis-sionary work. I see myself as a resource or a beacon, not a dictator of forced values and judgments. People that enjoy ethical nudity don’t need to be “saved” or “guided” by our major nudist/naturist organizations, or converted. Newbies or interested parties aren’t hapless or directionless; they just discovered something so breathtakingly amazing that they wonder why they never tried it sooner. And that’s part of it: We all discovered it in our own way, at our time, at our own pace.

Can’t We All Just Play Along Together?

After years of having incredible conversations with members of both major nude organizations as well as asking questions and reading available materials, I began to see how longstanding differences of opinions, judgments, divisiveness, and propaganda were perpetuated within the movement and may very



Brian Leonard

well be the cause of faltering numbers, members who don’t vote and others who simply judge you for not being “their accepted or vetted version of naked”.

As I began to see the fractures in the broader naked movement, as well as my own previously biased attitudes in a different light, I began to conceptualize a workshop and panel discussion called “Nudist? Naturist?

Or None of the Above”. We featured key individuals from many facets of the movement. The goal? Is there a chance for unity and diversity? Is there a way to move beyond the divisions and rediscover the heart rather than the stuffy intellectual prejudices? I was so activated to open the landscape to differences that I renamed my fully 100% public Facebook group to its updated title:

“Naked Diversity”! In nudity, as with politics, religion, and sports, there is an unfortunate and underlying divisiveness. It doesn't matter if it's the Catholics versus Baptists, the Yankees fans versus the Mets fans, or the Republicans versus Democrats. Labels always work until they don't. I don't identify as a Democrat, which for many, automatically means that I am a Republican (couldn't be farther from the truth). If I don't like the Yankees or the Mets, it must mean that I don't like baseball — nope. And since I don't identify as a naturist, then I must be a nNudist! Nope — I refuse to categorize myself based on everything I've learned over the last 10 years of asking questions of those well-connected with both organizations (many of those were in the inner circle of both TNS and AANR). For all due purposes, I no longer use the terms naturist or nudist; I am proudly none of the above, and it is the most liberating thing a person could consider!

Parks and campgrounds that don't carry the AANR seal of approval are considered swinger hangouts — how vane and almighty you are to judge us. Naturists assume that true naturism can not exist without forced non-clothing rules at their clubs/campgrounds. In this day and age of body autonomy, there are those of us that seek embodied choices, whether they have clothing or not. Naturists also tend to assume nefarious acts occur at non-naturist private clubs and campgrounds (even though they strangely attend them).

The terms, in my own experience, are divisive, threatening, and an impediment to rediscovering one's original and evolving intentions concerning their own nudity, regardless if it is public or private. The



incredible freedom I received from not judging other people in the movement — especially the newbies (these people are wonderful!) — has been nothing short of monumental for me. I get to see all the different and glorious contributions of people who bring such delight to my personal experience as well as to their own! It is truly and totally OK not to rush down the pre-ordained escalator of nudist or naturist. But first, like anything important, you have to trust yourself, rather than have somebody else do the thinking for you. In naked culture, believe it or not, there are two gangs: naturists and nudists (it's the Crips versus the Bloods, except without clothing!) And just as with any other established groups sharing the same landscape, they are engaged in their own petty little battles. The

organizations further break down into The Naturist Society (TNS) and the American Association of Nudist Recreation (AANR). As impressive as their titles are, they are typically split down the middle on how to be nude and what to do while nude, as well as dictating “wholesome values” (which usually means that private consensual sexuality or polyamory are to be eradicated at every step). The naturist leaders call themselves “nudists with more” (Morley Schloss and Stefan Deschane) — the “more” part usually means they recycle and enjoy a high level of connection with nature (something most nudists do, as well as many in the textile world do also). Naturists have taken it upon themselves (they were never asked to be the chosen arbiter of naked values) to create what they describe as the spectrum

or a binary” nudists on one side and naturists on the other. They believe all people fall somewhere in the spectrum. They describe themselves as being comfortable labeling people as a helpful gauge. Unfortunately, their version comes off more like a ladder. Nudists at the bottom and naturists on the top. The surface belief is that nudists don’t care about the history of “the movement”; nudists like to party and sometimes will engage in consensual private sex with other adults (apparently attraction or nudist relationships with a private sexual component are not supposed to happen?) and other unwholesome acts, sometimes called swinging, more often than not is the ultimate ethical practice of “polyamory” that has many established naked groups up in arms. Naturists on the other hand are likened to the scholars of the movement (or the fundamentalists). Their nudity is deeper, more well-read, but, unfortunately, even they fall short of their own lofty Naturist Enlightenment! Unfortunately, it doesn’t end there! Historically, the naturists like to sunbathe on public lands, primarily beaches (yet they love to attend private nudist camps to have their reunions and festivals rather than on public lands). Nudists, on the other hand, apparently love to sunbathe at private camps with large fences and walls, and have been observed to partake in such libertarian pastimes as smoking and drinking adult beverages behind their walled nature preserves, without the threat of uninformed and intimidating police forces.

Empire Haven (where SENTIENT Fest is held) is private, but on closer look, there are no walls, moats, or barbed wire fences. In fact, it butts directly up to state land and a walk on the nature trail may bring one



face-to-face with hunters during turkey season on their side of the state line!

I’m not sure how the movement got to be relegated to sunbathing on public lands versus private lands, but it turns out that both organizations contribute in lesser-known areas. Read on for more information!

Both organizations do their best to share the early history of the movement. They also seek to protect what little rights nudists and naturists have. They promise to monitor bills and laws that may unjustly curtail body rights. They try to protect public lands designated as naturist beaches and on occasion lose those battles. They both print an informative magazine and they are both in desperate need of new members and volunteers, as both are on the decline (I wonder why?). If you identify with their objectives, they would desperately appreciate your support — preferably over your lifetime. They also offer referrals and resources for individuals or families struggling with navigating divorces or meddling parents or relatives that are threatening legal action where ethical nudity is not being respected. Founders and purveyors of both organizations are crossing over and sharing views in an effort to broaden what was a very limiting scope previously.

So what does a person do that

wants to try naked camping or sunbathing? First, don’t be railroaded down a single path. Don’t allow your values to be compromised, and never give up while rediscovering the heart of why you enjoy ethical nudity! In fact, stand up for your own version of what ethical naked culture means to you! Don’t resort to petty and uninformed judgment of others; it hurts the movement with “holier than thou” sentiments! Find ways to contribute to the movement! Work on expanding your perspective to see the incredibly new and vibrant groups and individuals that are growing like wildfire!

For SENTIENT Fest attendees: We prefer that you choose to honor our Consent First approach in all your social dealings, as well as our [Code of Conduct/Ethics](#).

This is our way of giving everyone a sizable field of choices and expression while exhibiting boundaries. At the top of our list is creating the clearest lines possible to reduce abuse, trauma, and confusion. We prefer that you practice a high quality of self-regulation, refrain from excessive intoxication, honor our grounds and our seasonal camping community, and most of all honor each other.

If you have any questions after reading our C.o.C., please contact me!

Naturist Defends Sunbathing On British TV

Helen Barriman, a member of British Naturism, appeared nude (but pixelated) on the May 30 installment of Good Morning Britain in order to discuss the dozens of complaints that the City of London Corporation had received about a person who chose to sunbathe naked at a park.

“All the things going on in the world at the moment, are we really that bothered about a nude body sunbathing in a quiet corner of a park? There’s so much else going on that we could be concerned about,” Barriman said.

“My body is just my body; there’s nothing sensational about it; there’s no need to sexualize it. I accept it for what it is,” she said.

Barriman argued that people are “conditioned” to sexualize naked bodies, but everyone has one, even Nick Ede, described as an environment and culture expert, who said naked sunbathing can be a “very selfish thing”.

“I am bothered about it,” he said. “I mean, the only bush I want to see when I’m having a sandwich is a green one with birds in it! That’s the only thing I want to see. And I have issues with it because I think it’s a very selfish thing. It’s about you and your empowerment, and I completely understand the body positivity, which I think is fantastic; but you’re not taking into consideration the other people within that environment who might be a little bit triggered or finding it offensive.”

“How is it offensive? It’s just



Good Morning Britain hosts Ed Balls and Charlotte Hawkins interview Helen Barriman about the controversy over nude sunbathing.

body?” Barriman asked. “You’ve got one, you’ve got one in the shower, it’s naked as well.”

She explained that people can be “triggered” by anything, such as a color.

“Where do we draw the line?” she asked, adding, “If I can help one person be comfortable in their skin, then that’s a win.”

Good Morning Britain hosts Ed Balls and Charlotte Hawkins did not seem bothered by their naked guest.

The Independent reported on the exchange, noting that current laws in England and Wales make being naked in public lawful unless it causes “distress” — in which case the complainant has to prove that the defendant intended to make someone upset.

Fourteen percent of those responding to a survey — one in seven people — now describe them-

selves as naturists or nudists. British Naturism says attitudes about nudity are “changing with taboos” and “eroding stigma”.

Viewers of the Good Morning Britain segment were divided on the matter, with some suggesting they do not see why being nude should cause such a stir — one writing, “Provided people are not do inappropriate things I don’t see why people can not go naked in certain public areas or they should be free to go naked in your own back garden.”

Another wrote, “It’s only because we stigmatise naked bodies that so many people have body dysmorphia. It’s unclean teeth that puts me off.”

Others remained opposed, with one viewer writing, “I have no issue with nudity, I do have an issue with nudity in public places and the risk it [poses to] the vulnerable. Chil-

dren should not be given the message that everyone gets naked anywhere!”

One person responded, “Actually kids do need to see healthy normal naked bodies rather than unrealistic airbrushed ones.”

Still another wrote, “Some people just want to be outraged at anything. If people want to sunbath naked in



their own garden what the heck has it got to do with you.”

Nude sunbathing in London’s Royal Parks (Hyde Park, St. James’ Park, Green Park, Regent’s Park, Greenwich Park, and Bushey Park) may meet with trouble from their police forces, but the local authority parks are generally less fussy, since it is not a crime.

Future Uncertain For Alexandria Bay Nude Beach

Alexandria Bay, located on the eastern side of Noosa Heads National Park, is the most popular nudist beach in Queensland, Australia, but it has no legal status as such. Queensland is the only state in the country without a legal nude beach, and since police arrested a 53-year-old man on a charge of committing an indecent act in a public place, as well as 15 other beachgoers charged with willful exposure, Alexandria Bay’s future as a nude beach is uncertain.

“Noosa” is a popular tourist area comprising a collection of towns about 150 kilometers north of Brisbane. Noosa National Park is a multi-unit park in the Noosa region, with a Headland Section that covers a bit less than five square kilometers of dense forest, with the west side abutting the town of Noosa Heads, the south side abutting the town of Sunshine Beach, and the east and north sides abutting the ocean.

Alexandria Bay Beach has about one kilometer of sandy beach, and the southern half has become popular among nude bathers. Authorities usually ignore Queensland’s laws making it illegal to expose one’s genitals in a public space, although about seven years ago police did crack down on nudists in Alexan-



dria Bay — a move met with strong opposition, including street protests.

This past April, police visited the beach twice after receiving complaints about what they describe as “adverse”, “predatory”, and “deviant” behavior.

Sunshine Coast Superintendent Craig Hawkins told 7NEWS, “People who wish to sunbake nude, they’re more than welcome to do that in the privacy of their own home where they can’t be seen by others, but it’s not permitted in a public place.”

The 53-year-old man who was arrested allegedly was masturbat-

ing near a couple on the beach, and Hawkins said that was what had sparked the crackdown.

“People visit regularly, and they do not need to be exposed to people walking around nude, but also the predatory behavior, deviant behavior that has been occurring,” he said. “The situation has arisen where we’ve received multiple complaints in regards to adverse and predatory behavior around Alexandria Bay. People are feeling unsafe in that area The greater concern is, I’d hate to think that this behavior would escalate even further, to the point of somebody being attacked in a sexu-

al way.”

He said police are working with park officials to install signs stating that Alexandria Bay is not a nude beach.

Noosa’s state Member of Parliament Sandy Bolton did a survey, asking whether the community would support a change in the law to allow nude beaches. She says 973 people responded, with 820 supporting a change in the state laws to allow legal nude beaches, and 798 supporting legalizing Alexandria Bay as a clothing-optional beach.

Bolton said there are passionate views on both sides. Many nudists have lived in Noosa since the 1960s, and she said the April crackdown came as “quite a shock”.

Those charged with willful exposure faced fines of \$287, although Queensland Naturist Association President Rachael Freeman said four members who received fines went to the Noosa Police Station and had their fines converted to cautions.

Superintendent Hawkins said, “The nudist activities, arguably — and I’d say with pretty solid evidence — is attracting the behavior in regards to the indecent acts, and as a consequence we need to pay attention to it. We can’t pay attention to one matter without paying attention to the other.”

Freeman said she hoped police would exercise discretion in the future, pointing out that, in other states, where nude beaches are legal, anyone behaving inappropriately is made to leave.

“Unfortunately,” she said, “because ours isn’t legal, people are too scared to go there, so you might get one or two people and it’s hard to police the lewd activity.”

Naturist Raice Nicholls pointed



out that the nudist community has a culture that strongly rejects lewd behavior.

“Our number one rule by far is there is no hanky-panky in public, ever — not even with husbands and wives,” he said. “We will not tolerate people being lewd or touching each other or anything like that. [Police] are trying to mix us up with that group, when we’re nothing like that.”

Freeman said, “We’re not all hippies. We’re actually doctors and lawyers and hairdressers and business owners and CEOs of companies.

“If you go to a normal beach,” she continued, “you’re lucky to speak to one person. Come to one of our beaches, everyone talks to each other. By the end of the day we’re friends, we’re taking each other’s phone numbers and meeting up at different places ... it’s a lifestyle.

“People say, ‘We don’t like to see naked people’ — we don’t like to see people that are clothed when we’re naked, because it’s embarrassing to us as well,” she added. “It works the same way.”

Bolton said she suspected that some of the people who reported the nudists to police did not know the beach’s history.

“They weren’t aware because it’s not signposted and so they were probably a bit taken aback, and hence why they’ve made complaints to the police,” she said.

Spokesmen for the Noosa Shire

Council and Queensland Parks and Wildlife said the issue was a police matter.

Joy Ringrose, a retired teacher in mathematics and science, has lived in the Noosa shire for more than 20 years and said she doesn’t know anyone who is unaware of the beach’s unofficial status.

“You’ve got to go to a fair bit of trouble to get there,” she said, “and if you don’t like seeing dangly bits and naked people, you don’t go there.”

Bolton, however, notes that the national park has become busier, and Alexandria Bay has lost some of its remoteness. If she is convinced that legalizing nude bathing would not lead to an increase in inappropriate behavior, she said she will take her constituents’ support for legalizing nude bathing at Alexandria Bay to parliament.

Even official nude beaches in Australia have come under new scrutiny. Councils in New South Wales and Victoria have been considering revoking the clothing-optional status of nude beaches, citing concerns about indecent acts spilling out into surrounding dunes and carparks.

Byron shire narrowly voted down a bid to revoke the clothing-optional status of Tyagarah beach in 2018. Cameras now record vehicle registrations as they enter the beach car park, signs define where nudity is allowed, police strictly enforce the law where it is not, and a safe beaches committee of “genuine naturists” watches and reports indecent behavior, according to Debra Conomy of Byron Naturists.

In December 2022, Mornington Peninsula shire agreed to retain the clothing-optional status of Sunny-side North beach, the only nude beach in greater Melbourne.

Toronto Naturists Score A Big Victory

The news this year seems to have leaned toward the bad side when it comes to nudism and naturism. It has been one challenge after another as one group or another, or one person or another, tries to ban or limit the opportunities for social nudity. However, sometimes, [things go right](#):

TORONTO — In March, Planet Nude reported to our readers that Hanlan's Point, Toronto's famed clothing-optional beach, was under threat from city planners' schemes to "redevelop" the Toronto Islands, the huge offshore park where the beach is located. News emerged in February of a "Master Plan" being assembled by the local government which would have seen the erection of a concert and festival venue right next to Hanlan's, one of two official nude swimming spots in the country and site of Canada's first Gay Pride celebration back in 1971....

Summertime does provide more opportunities than the winter, when cold temperatures themselves limit where one can enjoy nudity. There is always some out-of-the-way spot where one can go skinny-dipping and sunbathe nude. That especially true this week, when the summer solstice offers Naked Hiking Day. Planet Nude [offers this information](#):

Naked Hiking Day is an unofficial observance celebrated every year on June 21, coinciding with the summer solstice. Going also by similar names such as National Naked Hiking Day, or International Hike Naked Day, the event provides a unique opportunity for individuals to connect with nature in a liberating and unconven-



tional way....

We continue to experience the closing of nudist campgrounds and popular gathering-places, but there seems to be a greater movement toward informal nude gatherings to help make up for it.

House parties, cookouts, and overnights are becoming increasingly popular. Even activities by non-landed clubs such as the Maine Coast Solar Bares seem to be thriving. Typically, those activities took place only during the winter months, but MCSB's pool parties and barbecues have remained popular enough that they are continuing through the summer now.

It is encouraging to see separate groups coming together for common goals, as we are seeing with naturists, LGBTQ groups, hikers, bicyclists, and artists. There truly is strength in numbers, and if we can put aside petty differences to focus on what is most important, we can make the sorts of strides the Toronto beach-goers have

shown.

Social nudity does not require a high-end resort or campground; a lowly pond in the middle of a farmer's field or a place to pitch tents and park RVs serves just as well to bring together people who want to enjoy the sunshine and natural beauty that is all around.

Here's to a wonderful summer ahead!

Getting Away To Dyer Woods

By Jeff Bradbury

A rainy but enjoyable getaway with my girlfriend. We were down at Dyer Woods Nudist Campground this past weekend.

Yes, it rained! However, many nudists enjoyed walking the hiking trails to the second lake, the wood-burning sauna, showers, and more.

Evening time was filled with socializing at the clubhouse, that had a wood-burning stove going — socializing and enjoying the pool table with fellow nudists.

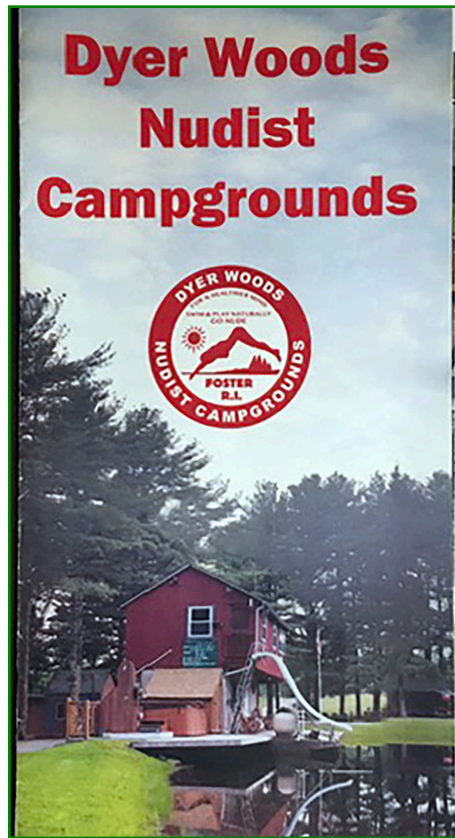
The small snack shack was filled with yummy stuff — purchase on honor system. The lunchtime: Outdoor grill served up great lunches.

Several nudist families showed up, celebrating Father's Day.

The Cabin 2 we rented worked out great. We enjoyed having free TV movie stations, and grilling meals on the porch was relaxing.

Dyer Woods gave us a discount for our membership in Naturist New Hampshire, plus waived one day of fees, resulting from the rain.

Check out Dyer Woods at www.dyerwoodscampgrounds.com.



Celebrity Nudist Helen Mirren

Actress Helen Mirren, Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire, responded with “That’s great!” when she learned that she is [number one on the list of celebrity nudists](#).

“I’m not the sort of person who goes off to a nudist camp, but the very few times I’ve found myself naked on a beach or somewhere with a lot of other naked people, it is a fabulously liberating experience,” she told the Los Angeles Times. “The whole construct of what it means to be a human being in terms of your earrings, your lipstick, your shirt, your age ... everything falls away! And you become a different kind of human being, a human being that’s not related to anything physical. It’s a very lovely thing.”

At 77 years old, Mirren currently plays Cara, the Dutton family matriarch, in “1923”, the prequel to “Yellowstone” on Paramount+.

Mirren has never shied from baring it all, in films or in public.

“It becomes very, very sweet — very human in a rather beautiful way,” she once said of visiting nude beaches. “I’m proudly a naturist.”

Other “celebrity nudists” on the

list include actor Kevin Bacon, who admitted that he likes to wander about naked when he is behind closed doors — “Not when the nanny is around, but I [get naked] with my wife and kids. There’s something therapeutic about nudity ... take away the Gucci or Levi’s and we’re all the same.”

Canadian singer Celine Dion was quoted as saying she likes to be naked, and that she has “always believed it is what’s underneath that counts. If we were all forced to be naked, perhaps we would start to see that a little bit more.” She added, “I’d like my audience to be naked, too.”

Singer-songwriter Justin Timberlake and co-star Mila Kunis was mostly naked with in 2011’s “Friends with Benefits” and he said he was tempted to strip off at a nudist beach in France.

Brad Pitt told CNN, “I’m naked all the time at home.”

King Lifts Nudity Ban

King Charles has [lifted a ban on nudists](#) at [Fraisthorpe](#), East Yorkshire, dating back to 1994 when the East Riding of Yorkshire Council imposed it. Sunbathers who once were a common sight there put up a three-decade fight to regain the right to be naked, but had to wait until the council’s lease was returned to the [Crown Estate](#), which owns half of the beaches in the United Kingdom.

The king’s new guidance says that nudity is “not expressly permitted” but is “not prohibited” either.

Fraisthorpe, owned by the Crown Estate since 1760, was a designated nudist beach for 40 years before the ban.

Florida Naturists Urge Legislative Vigilance

In sounding the alarm about Florida legislation that, while targeting drag shows and massage parlors, also could threaten social nudity, members of the BEACHES (Beach Education Advocates for Culture, Health, Environment and Safety) Foundation Institute maintain that naturists need to pay attention to the political trends across the country.

Shirley Mason, who, with her husband, Richard, fought to establish a portion of Haulover Beach Park as a clothing-optional mecca, issued an alert through the BEACHES Foundation on April 23, describing the pending legislative bills as a “three-alarm fire” that threatens beaches, clubs, and resorts that allow public nudity.

“Bills with names like and reference to Child Protection, Human Trafficking, Massage Therapy, Live Performances, Grooming, Beach Re-nourishment, etc. use vague, often misleading language that could easily be used to shut down nude recreation in our state,” she wrote.

[Florida laws](#) criminalize being naked “in a vulgar or indecent manner” but breastfeeding and “merely [being] naked at any place provided or set apart for that purpose” are not currently criminal activities.

Ramon Maury, who has lobbied local and state government on behalf of clothing-optional and nude recreation in Florida since 1994, said in an email, “Fortunately, Florida Statute 800.03(3)(b) exempts and protects nude recreation in places set apart for that purpose. Mere nudity in our state is not a crime as long as it does not involve



Richard and Shirley Mason receive recognition for helping to establish a clothing-optional section at Haulover Beach Park in Miami FL.

indecent, vulgar, or lewd behavior. However, municipal, city, and county ordinances have been used indiscriminately at times to charge nudists with ‘disorderly conduct,’ ‘indecent exposure,’ ‘disturbing the peace,’ etc.”

The new laws that made their way through the Florida legislature this month have the potential for similar enforcement efforts that may conflict with some of the currently protected rights.

Senate Bill 1438/House Bill 1423 is intended to prevent children from attending drag shows, but it would criminalize and revoke the license of any establishment that offers entertainment “exposing children to an adult live performance” that depicts or simulates nudity, as well as

performances that are “patently offensive to prevailing standards in the community” and “[t]aken as a whole, [are] without serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value of the age of the child present.”

Such a violation, the bill says, would constitute “an immediate, serious danger to the public health, safety, or welfare” of such spectators. Furthermore, treading on constitutional rights, the law would “prohibit the raising of specified arguments as a defense in a prosecution for certain violations.” A first violation would result in a \$5,000 fine and subsequent violations would cost \$10,000. “A person’s ignorance of a child’s age, a child’s misrepresentation of his or her age, or a bona fide belief of a child’s consent may not be

raised as a defense in a prosecution for a violation of this this section,” it states.

SB 1338/HB 615 is intended to prevent prostitution and human trafficking at massage establishments by imposing regulations that include prohibiting sexual activity on the premises. It requires employers to maintain employee records but also to keep a record of the clients, including their full legal names and their home addresses. The bill would provide an exemption for lodging establishments and health care facilities. A first violation is a first-degree misdemeanor, but subsequent violations would be prosecuted as third-degree felonies.

Ramon said that, while the latter bill did not make it through both houses this session, it has already been refiled for the next session of the legislature.

“I’ve been around a long time,” Shirley Mason said in a telephone interview, “and we’ve had to do years of lobbying up in Tallahassee.... What I was trying to do [in the BEACHES message] was alert the sleeping naturist public: You’ve got enemies, and they’ve been around before, and they’re only stronger now.”

In issuing the April alert, the BEACHES Foundation had to be careful about the message because, as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, there are limitations on how much political advocacy is allowed. While the message centered on the Florida bills, the aim was to issue a wakeup call to the broader naturist community.

“This situation is particularly dire now,” Shirley said. “We have seen how the Republican party has changed since the ’90s. Now they have these cookie-cutter pieces of legislation that we’re going to be see-



Florida State Capitol in Tallahassee.

(Adobe Stock Photo)

ing throughout the country.”

Attempts to amend the bills during this session failed because legislators knew that Governor Ron DeSantis wanted them to pass.

Rhetoric around the “dangers” of nudity is rising, as when a Florida school principal, Hope Carrasquilla, was forced to resign after a parent complained that an art appreciation class featuring Michelangelo’s statue of David was an example of pornography in the schools.

Even Brian Krassenstein, who describes himself as an independent investigative journalist “fighting hate and tackling conspiracy theories,” has implied that nudity is wrong. In a tweet that he obviously thought was funny, he wrote, “BREAKING: Joe Biden will now allow naked children to be taken to public parks where other naked strangers are there waiting... Oops... my mistake.. that’s Ron DeSantis, who already allows children on PUBLIC nude beaches in the state of Florida. Why aren’t Republicans calling him a ‘Groomer’? Many Republicans only pretend to care

about your children. They simply want BIGOTED laws that attack the LGBTQ+ communities in order to score politic points with their ignorant, hateful base.”

The fight for naked rights, of course, is not new, having been around since nudism gained a foothold in the United States.

Lake Como Resort in Lutz, Florida, about 20 miles north of Tampa, was founded in 1941 as a cooperatively owned community of naturists whose core philosophy comes from Germany as a reaction to the rapid pace of the industrial revolution and the increasing density in urban centers.

In 1961, Art Coterrill, the owner at the time, defied a state law requiring nudist camps to meet stringent background requirements, and he was jailed and fined. He took his case to the Florida Supreme Court where the decision and the accompanying statute were overturned. Then, in 1977, authorities brought drug charges against several residents, who said it was a publicity stunt by the sheriff who was run-

ning for reelection at the time. Later that year, a Pasco County television station photographed a nude resident without her knowledge, and she successfully sued them. Finally, in 2016, Pasco County passed a resolution recognizing “the 75th anniversary of the establishment of naturism” in the county.

Today, Pasco County attracts a million naturist tourists, and 10,000 are permanent residents.

A similar story played out with Haulover Beach when the group South Florida Free Beaches identified that stretch as a possible location for nude bathing.

Richard and Shirley Mason worked for years with local authorities, arguing that, as taxpayers, they should have the right of access to the same beach amenities that other taxpayers have.

When they approached Miami-Dade County in 1990, their request was ignored, as were subsequent requests to designate it as a nude beach. They secured a meeting with the park manager who still refused to approve their request. After contacting the American Civil Liberties Union, which assured them of their constitutional rights, several naturists gathered on the beach for the first time during National Nude Week on July 14, 1991.

The Masons’ first lobbying efforts took place after the superintendent at the Canaveral National Seashore tried to end nude sunbathing at Playalinda Beach by issuing citations to about 150 beachgoers and arresting some of them.

“The superintendent and these two churches up in the Titusville area were hell-bent on getting nudists off the beach,” Shirley said. “We worked hard to make sure that the



Haulover Beach

people would plead not guilty and ask for a jury trial.”

The court finally ruled that skinny-dipping is not a violation of Florida’s statutes.

That loss in the courts only made opponents of nude recreation more determined to ban mere nudity — not only on the beaches but also at landed clubs. The Christian Coalition’s Florida affiliate joined them, and the organization’s influence fanned the hatred.

Shirley recounted, “When we were going to different county commissions, the one in particular that stood out was when they threatened to hang my husband or run him over.”

Like the BEACHES Foundation, the Christian Coalition is a nonprofit corporation, originally formed in Virginia, and as such is prevented from actively engaging with political candidates. However,

in 1994, the Christian Coalition’s Georgia affiliate sent a letter expressly advocating the re-election of Congressman Newt Gingrich, violating federal election law. In another case that year, the Coalition gave a list of its supporters who also had served as delegates to the Virginia Republican convention to Oliver North’s campaign. Because such lists have commercial value, the contribution to the North campaign constituted a prohibited corporate contribution.

The Federal Election Commission filed lawsuits which wended their way through the courts until February 23, 2000, when the court approved a negotiated agreement between the FEC and the Christian Coalition in which the Coalition would pay \$45,000 to the FEC.

Since that time, the Coalition has worked behind the scenes, and its name has not been as prominent.

However, in private mailings, the group has continued to focus on legislation that advances conservative causes like the bills that passed in Florida this past week and are on the way to Governor Ron DeSantis' desk for signature.

Democratic Senator Jason Pizzo has been an advocate for nudists, having introduced legislation in 2020 and 2021 that would have carved out an exception for clothing-optional beaches in the state's indecent exposure statute. The bill failed in the heavily conservative legislature.

Nevertheless, thanks to the public efforts on behalf of naked freedom, Miami Beach has accepted top-free sunbathing for women since the 1980s. Haulover Beach Parks's clothing-optional section is a tourist destination, generating an economic impact of \$1.3 billion annually.

With legislative turnover, many of those in office today are unaware of those economic benefits and they are quick to see nudity as something evil.

"If legislators have a chance to sell the nudists down the river, they'll do it in a heartbeat," Shirley said. "But what I'm really concerned about, too, is that there's been no real attempt to educate lawmakers [that] this is a form of recreation, and you want to have innocent fun; you just want to chill out from the workday and go to your favorite nudist club or beach."

Having first gotten involved in the effort at Haulover Beach alongside Shirley and Richard Mason, Ramon Maury observed, "Although legal, and despite the years of advocacy, clothing-optional and nude recreation in Florida unfortunately remains a partially hidden/accepted

recreation and way of life. Public involvement remains a challenge and fragmented — especially when dealing with government and government officials. Lobbying and advocating on this topic has always been an uphill battle due in part because nude recreation advocates and nude recreation resorts are not always aligned or involved in advocacy as they should."

Ramon agrees with Shirley that nudist organizations have to get serious about working together to get the laws on their side, clearly stating that mere nudity is not indecent or lewd, and is perfectly acceptable at designated public and private locations. Nudists need to be vigilant to see that their gains are not lost.

"Effective messaging and education of elected officials remains a challenge," Ramon said. "Nudists in general opt to remain hidden for the most part, having vociferous opinions among themselves but rarely sharing them one-on-one with elected officials. Nudists unfortunately remain fragmented in this effort and lack the unity other interests and advocacy groups [use to] thrive and prosper."

In the past, nudist resorts did not care to support the free beaches, but that is changing as they come to realize that the beaches serve as feeders to nudism and private facilities. Still, "Investments in organized advocacy remain challenging and inadequate despite the immense positive economic impact to the state of Florida," Ramon said. "Organized, collective, and well-funded advocacy remain the biggest challenge."

He said, "Bright spots include the efforts to identify, advocate, and create new clothing-optional public

beaches in our state."

Shirley says that, to maintain the momentum, naturists need to get to know their legislators.

"Personal contact is so important," she said. "If you're a voter of that elected official's district, they're going to pay more attention to that than Joe Blow from some other district."

Once you have a legislator's ear, "You really have to kind of lead them by the hand and explain the situation and the law."

Even though Senator Pizzo's amendment to the indecent exposure statute failed to pass, Shirley said it succeeded in teaching members of the legislature about nude recreation.

Shirley tells of doing a "soft campaign" in 2022 in which the American Association of Nude Recreation-Florida and BEACHES sent out several photos of beaches, with information about how good they are for Florida's economy.

"The industry brings in \$7.5 billion a year to the state," she said.

Finally, she said, "there is talk amongst the different nudist organizations about getting together and doing a summit, because it's obviously not just Florida, it's the country [having these issues and bills]. We have to start planning for and coming up with strategies to fight these things."

The limited but effective lobbying efforts have prevented bad legislation from being enacted, but Shirley says, "We just need to educate ourselves and, for God's sakes, have people get to know their legislators. They're just people. We have received support from both Democrats, Republicans, and Independents."

Lobbyist Describes Challenges To Nude Recreation

Promoting and preserving nude recreation in Florida has been a challenge, according to lobbyist Ramon Maury, who has been involved with the free beach movement since the early 1990s.

“We fought tooth and nail and killed those pieces of legislation [seeking to outlaw nude recreation], to the point where the member who had filed a bill reached out to us later and said, ‘Hey, can we work something out?’ And I’m like, ‘Well, there’s nothing to work out. I mean, what you want is really unacceptable for clothing-optional and nude recreation in the state.’”

Today, the Republican Party has been out in front when it comes to legislation that might infringe on the rights embedded in Florida law, but Ramon points out that, prior to 1996, when Florida was controlled by Democrats, the situation was similar.

“People have a misconception that there wasn’t a conservative movement or that Democrats were all about freedom,” he said. “Well, that is not the case.”

Florida lies within the “Bible belt” where socially conservative Protestant Christianity plays a strong role in society. The Florida panhandle still has many Blue Dog Democrats, a group that arose from the vestiges of “Dixiecrats” — white southern Democrats who supported segregation — and some members still oppose same-sex marriage and abortion.

Ramon said that, in many cases,



Ramon Maury describes his work in a Zoom interview.

they “are actually more conservative than some of our own Republican friends today.”

He explained, “Despite the fact that there are some more liberal tendencies when it comes to social services and other things, when it came to nudity, there was a line drawn in the sand.”

Ramon commented, “Interestingly enough, we have had, for the most part, since the Republicans gained control of both the House and Senate in Florida, mostly a collegic and non-threatening environment when it comes to nude recreation in the state of Florida. Legislative bills that have been filed many times come

from other sources and for other purposes.”

An example is Senate Bill 1438, “an act relating to the protection of children” introduced by Senator Clay Yarborough, whom Ramon describes as “a dear friend of mine who came into from the House into the Senate from Jacksonville” and is “a very conservative member of the legislature”. The bill does not target nude recreation, instead focusing on parents who bring their children “into an environment that is not suitable for children”.

The bill would revoke the license of establishments that admit a child into “adult live performances” which

are defined as “any show, exhibition, or other presentation in front of a live audience which, in whole or in part, depicts or simulates nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or specific sexual activities”.

“The fact that those performances were considered 21 and over and the fact that the venue producers and the people who are running them didn’t give a hoot, and all these people decided to bring their kids to the performance and got exposed to all these things, that’s truly what triggered that,” Ramon said.

“There were pieces in that legislation that we felt as nudists that could be an infringement on our ability to be nude in a place that is certified for the purpose, or in a private property,” he said. Many landed nudist clubs hold performances that involve nakedness that is not lewd, lascivious, or indecent, thus are allowed under the law.

“We tried to amend the bill by creating an exemption which already exists in law, and the governor’s office and the legislature said, ‘Hell no, we’re not going to open any windows on this issue.’”

The other legislation, Senate Bill 1338, focused on massage establishments, and because 18 of Florida’s 34 nudist resorts provide massage therapy and spa services, they were concerned that the new legislation would affect them.

“The way that the language read had two portions that were very alarming,” Ramon said. “One of them said that a massage therapist could not provide massage therapy services in the nude or without clothes, and that they had to be fully clothed, and so obviously that raised one flag: We’re a nude resort. Why would you want to put in new pieces of legislation that is so broad that it

could possibly impact us?”

When nudism advocates were unable to work with the sponsor on an amendment to satisfy their concerns, they lobbied against the bill, and it died on the way from the Senate to the House. It has been refiled for the next session, but Ramon is hopeful that they will be able to work out a compromise.

“It’s just going to be a little bit of hand-holding and understanding as we move forward,” he said.

“The Florida Legislature has yet to come after us [nudists],” Ramon said, “but there is a continual fear that, because our governor has gone after LGBTQ issues and has gone after Disney, and has gone after all these things, that we could be next, because of our type of recreation and lifestyle.”

One thing on their side is the economic benefits. A 2018 study found that nude recreation is a \$4.5 billion industry in Florida, attracting two million visitors who come specifically for that purpose. Many of them come from South America, the Caribbean, Europe, and Australia, and they purchase property for their stays.

“Their furloughs traditionally can last between two months to three or four months,” Ramon said, “and so, instead of paying for hotels and all this stuff, all these people were buying properties in either landed clubs, private properties, or adjacent to landed clubs or close to beaches for the purpose of nude recreation.”

Nude cruises, carrying as many as 3,500 people, also are very popular.

“So once we started adding up all these factors — the homes, the car rentals, the food, all the economics — it turned out to be a very, very significant number,” he said.

Additional Nude Recreation Areas

Ramon said there has been an effort to increase the number of nude recreation areas in the state, with the success of Blind Creek Beach serving as a model. In four years’ time, that effort succeeded in bringing together naturists, local law enforcement, the St. Lucie County manager, and the county commission in a cooperative effort to create a clothing-optional beach at Fort Pierce.

Encompassing 108 acres, Blind Creek is a wetland preserve with a mile and a half of beachfront dunes and is a nesting area for green and loggerhead sea turtles.

“That was a turning point for us because the properties we converted into clothing-optional were actually a lease from the state to the county for preservation and protection, and a barrier island and current Department of Environmental Protection rules prohibit nudity in any state lands,” Ramon said. “So that created literally an avenue, and number two, an opportunity, for nude recreation to show the state of Florida they can be done in the right way, under the right circumstances, and with the right leadership.”

This past January, the St. Lucie County Commission adopted an ordinance and a resolution designating the beach as a nude beach, and allocating \$3 million to build a parking lot, ramp, and Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant bathroom facilities to create the right amenities for nudists to enjoy.

“They saw the positive economic impact that it was creating for their area. They invested that kind of money in order to preserve it”

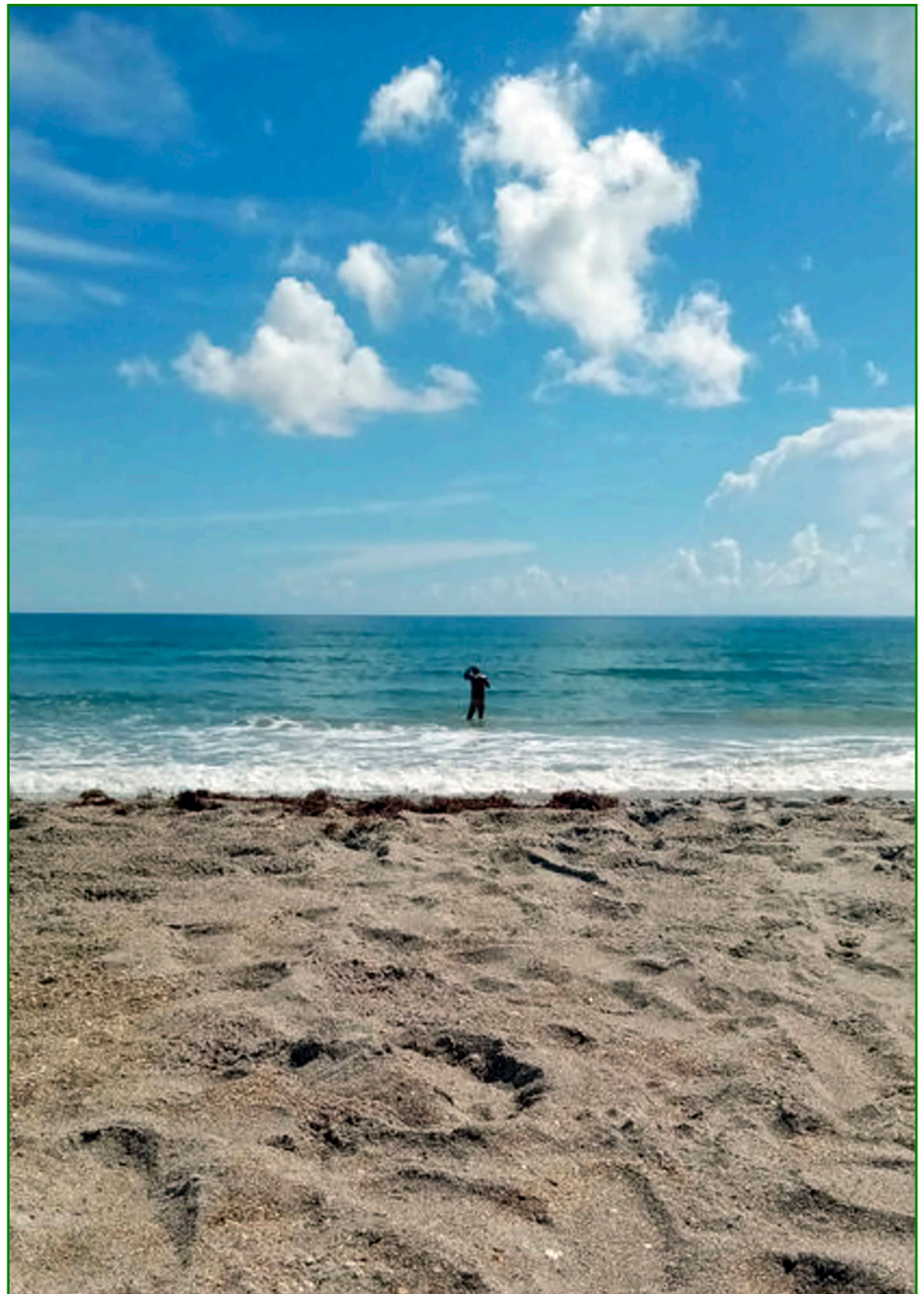
Ramon said, adding that they are taking that model in pursuing talks about a similar venture in Pinellas County on Florida's west coast.

“The problem with West Florida is any properties surrounding the Gulf of Mexico are mostly county properties,” he said. “The state properties that are there are mostly inaccessible or highly sensitive for environmental reasons, and so it's created an interesting dilemma of how we go about this.”

The other hurdle is overcoming bad feelings from years ago when a group of nudists pressed the county commission and parks department, demanding that it was their right to be naked. The county reacted by creating an anti-nudity ordinance that blocked off all nude access.

“The nudists, although well-intended, did not have the foresight or the manners or the understanding of how to deal with local government and with the sensibilities that exist in certain communities,” Ramon said. “And that's always been an issue in Florida. There are many, many nudists that take the position, ‘Well, this is our right ... and they have to do what we want them to do,’ — and government politics does not work that way. Most of the time, it basically comes back to haunt us. ... It created a divide and, since that happened, we have been unable to even have conversations with county officials or with Park Department officials, because they have no reason to have a conversation with us any more.”

The other problem is the stigma around nudity that has increased with the proliferation of resorts and clubs that embrace sexual behavior and welcome swingers. Other groups are unable to dictate how private clubs operate, so they have to focus on creating spaces for those



Blind Creek Beach

who want non-sexual, family-oriented recreation.

Ramon has his eye on Fort De Soto, the largest of Pinellas County's park system, which has rarely used areas. Fort De Soto Park has 1,136 acres over five interconnected islands, with beach plants, mangroves, wetlands, palm hammocks, hardwoods, native plants, and more than 328 species of birds. The beach also provides refuge to the loggerhead sea turtle. It used to be federally owned but was turned

over to the county.

He anticipates that it will take a few years to go through the Parks Department and the Pinellas County Commission and find a way to overcome the anti-nudity ordinance, but with all the visitors who are looking for nude recreation, it will be worth the effort.

“When it does happen, I hope you can come down and enjoy that beautiful beach.”

Historic Tavern Welcomes Naturists

The Railway Tavern in Burnham-on-Sea, near Bristol, England, has a rich history, dating back to 1841. Originally known by its street name, Tynning Lane, the owner, William Milson, renamed it Masons' Arms in 1851.

William Milson fell down the cellar stairs at the pub and died on May 9, 1871. The inn passed to his widowed daughter, Sarah Smith Haskins, who remarried in 1873, to Andrew Fidler, who took over the operation. When Tynning Lane was renamed Station Road in 1881, Andrew changed the business name to the Railway Inn.

Andrew Fidler died in 1893, and the pub returned to Sarah. By 1901, it was known as the Railway Hotel.

Today it goes by both the Railway Inn and the Railway Tavern. The current owners "welcome everyone's individuality and differences" — and that got them into some trouble.

A nude couple, Neil Cox, 34, and Danielle Quiggan, 35, who had casually walked through Clifton Downs and along the Harbourside, entered the Railway Tavern for beer and burgers. They had checked with the inn ahead of time to make sure they would be welcomed.

According to Neil, "It was a new place and people were not expecting it and there was an element of surprise when we first walked in. We sat in the corner of the pub and had our meal. People quickly went back to their drinks and got on with their day. After all, two naked people sitting in a corner of a pub having a beer and burger quickly becomes



The Railway Tavern in Burnham-on-Sea

boring. Several people came over to us whilst we were there to have a chat and ask questions or request a photo."

Not all of the customers were so accepting. Soon they were posting their discontent on TripAdvisor, with one woman writing, "We expected the bar man to refuse to serve them. There were several families with children in the pub, including ourselves, therefore it was not appropriate for them to be served. We decided to leave the pub and find somewhere else for dinner in town. Unfortunately another family were not able to as they had already ordered food. If you advertise as a family pub you should maintain these values. Locals who frequent the pub apologised to us, but the staff seemed to think this was okay. Very disappointing."

Another wrote, "We were concerned as there were families and young children there. I heard one customer mention this to the staff.

As other people have said, staff seemed unconcerned. We will not be going again."

Still another wrote, "Never again not what I want my children to be subjected to at 5 & 7 yrs old a man with his bits hanging out. There's a time and a place for being naked and a pub full of diners isn't one of them. Whatever we're you, the management, thinking of allowing them in? Would you take your kids into a strip joint??? Or let them watch it on tv??? No bloody different! Clearly no moral standards whatsoever or a thought for your other customers including children. People have paid good money to eat and drink here and shouldn't have to be subjected to this. Won't be returning here."

Not all diners felt that way, and reviews for The Railway remained overwhelmingly positive.

"Great food and great accepting staff. Not bothered at all by the naturist couple. Will certainly be

back,” wrote one.

“Fantastic pub, no dress code required, open and welcoming atmosphere. Really enjoyed our visit and not at all put off by naturists,” wrote another.

Yet another reviewer wrote, “*** BEWARE NATURIST PUB*** If you are into seeing people naked, this is the pub to come to. If you have children, it a good idea to bring them.”

When another reviewer commented, “What a lovely place to go and so wonderful for being so accepting of other peoples way of life! Wish more places were like this,” General Manager Greene King responded, “thank you for your kind words and this wonderful review! Hope to see you back in soon!”

Responding to one angry post, Greene King wrote, “we were contacted by a lovely couple who happened to be naturists who politely asked if they would be allowed in, we checked the laws and regulations and there was no reason to say no, as a father myself with young children I didn’t see any issue or threat, thankfully most of the customers were fine and inquisitive, it’s a shame to let this put you off of our great food, customer service or staff who work so hard.”

Neil Cox said he was “deeply sad-



Neil Cox and Danielle Quiggan

dened by the negative reaction of some pub-goers, but added, “We felt welcome and comfortable in the Railway and would like to say thank you to its owners, staff, and customers for accepting us.”

Neil has been a naturist for more than 10 years, while Danielle has five years as a naturist. Danielle is a health-care worker who originally lived in Australia but now resides in London.

She commented that it is rare to get a negative reaction to being nude; “most seem to get it,” she said.

Neil, who works in finance, said, “I am very comfortable and used to this. Yes, you still get attention and you can feel on show, but it is usually curiosity rather than bad attention.”

He referred to a House of Commons report from 2020 that found that more than fifty percent of people feel negatively about their body. “There are lots of studies to show that people who have been introduced to naturism and nudity come away positively about their bodies and their mental health,” he said.

Neil took part in last summer’s Free Wilders naked bicycle ride from the Scottish village of John O Groats to Lands End in western Cornwall, a distance of a little over 840 miles, to benefit the environmental charity Rewild Britain and the mental health charity Mind.



Naturists Neil Cox and Danielle Quiggan walk the beach.

(Neil Cox/SomersetLive/BPM)

Bringing Naturism Into Your Living Room

By Chris Moore

I was browsing through our local Craigslist listings when one particular ad caught my eye. Nestled in the “creative gigs” section between “\$100 for vehicle photos” and “Seeking female model for figure / abstract shoot” was “Nudism.TV seeking participants”.

There was an attachment which I clicked, then immediately wondered if I had just committed the cardinal sin in cybersecurity protocol. Two images popped up with a lot of spiel about what Nudism.TV was all about and why they were looking for volunteers.

If you're still reading and haven't already abandoned this article by typing Nudism.TV directly into your favorite search engine, great! If you do go to their site, you will find a short video that tells you Nudism.TV is in the process of being created and will be coming to a smart device near you soon. But how soon and what could I expect to find? Wanting to find out more, I tracked down the entrepreneur behind the initiative.

[Pasha](#) was born and lived his early years in Belarus when it was part of the USSR. Today he lives with his wife and daughter in the United States and describes his family and himself as “occasional nudists in certain circumstances”. They are not card-carrying members of any nudist club or live life clothes-free all day long but, like many of us, enjoy being nude when appropriate, and they have a number of friends who



enjoy nude recreation.

Growing up in the USSR, visiting public co-ed baths where nudity was the norm, Pasha appreciated the freedom of naturism — what a different story in the USA, where people freak out at the sight of a female nipple in public.

“Porn has taken over nudism on the Internet,” he remarks.

It's true. Anyone who has searched “nudism”, “naturism”, or simply “nude” on the Internet will be faced with pages of porn offerings before possibly finding real, uncensored, nudist content.

His idea for Nudism.TV is to address this and offer a direct platform of body-positive, family-friendly nudist content free of porn.

It sounds perfect, but it's hardly the first time someone has tried to establish a place on the 'net where nudists and nudists can roam freely without being subjected to more

lascivious material. So, what's different about this effort?

Pasha is an IT professional first and occasional nudist with a passion for the body-positive lifestyle second. He is driving the project from a software development standpoint. He is building a platform — not a website, but a place outside of Google restrictions where uncensored nudist content can be deposited. This would include video, articles, and images. There would be many different video channels, each with a theme — a bit like TV where you can choose to watch different channels: the inspirational video channel (a nude TED-like channel, perhaps?), the nude yoga and exercise channel, the creative channel, a home-and-garden channel, a cooking channel — all for nudists, by nudists. The intention is to have many hours of different offerings. One hundred hours of nude yoga sessions have already been filmed (being careful



to avoid camera angles that inadvertently show something that is more explicit than intended). All the content is real, unstaged, and unfiltered. As Pasha says, “A lot of it might not be super-interesting, but it’s realistic.”

There are two very small teams of people working on this right now. One deals with the technology of developing the platform and the other with content development and marketing. This project is not a small undertaking, especially as there needs to be a lot of material ready to go and a strong pipeline for new content once the platform is up and running.

Searching for content has not been difficult so far and the team is currently spending three to four days per week filming segments. Reaching out to potential contributors has been mostly through word of mouth, social media connections, and, of course, the odd Craigslist ad. The team has been overwhelmed by the number of responses.

So who are these people volun-

teering up content?

One naturist couple was being interviewed when it transpired they were gymnasts. They will now be filming a series of fitness and gymnastics teaching videos, in the nude, of course.

One lady was being filmed talking about dealing with anxiety and stress. She ended up filming a naked yoga and meditation session. The session was so emotionally powerful, she broke down.

It’s hard to find this kind of genuine, naturist material online, even if it does already exist. A dedicated naturist platform will make such things much easier to find.

Nudism.TV is currently privately financed and will be free to access — no need to sign up or subscribe. However, if someone wants “more advanced” features (e.g., advert-free streaming, pause-and-rewind capability on videos) then a fee will be levied. It’s a model that has been used widely elsewhere. So, there will be advertising at some stage,

and that opens up tremendous opportunity: Think not only naturist vacations, but sunscreen, skin care, hats, and pareos.

Pasha has not yet reached out to naturist affiliations like the American Association for Nude Recreation (AANR) or the Naturist Society Foundation (TNSF). It will be interesting to see their response and support (or lack of) in the future. Nor has he specifically reached out to nudist clubs for content — yet. “This is something we will perhaps need to do in the future, but for now, we have to be very careful to maintain people’s privacy,” he says (not wanting to inadvertently capture individuals in the background of a shoot). But he is considering visiting a club or two to recruit people to help with content production.

I have to confess that I was skeptical when I first learned of this. The Internet highway is littered with failed and abandoned websites and blogs that were launched as the “go-to” place for naturists to connect and people to learn about naturism

(“A Naturist World”, “Naturist Living Show Podcast”, and “Clothes-free.com” being some exceptions currently alive and well). However, the establishment of an independent platform, rather than a website subject to the censorship of the host organization may give Nudism.TV a chance. The scale of what is being proposed for Nudism.TV is vast and, although it will initially feature content from North America, it will have global reach and everyone will be able to contribute. Perhaps this is what it takes to establish naturism as a mainstream, no-big-deal activity that is free from being hijacked by the porn industry.

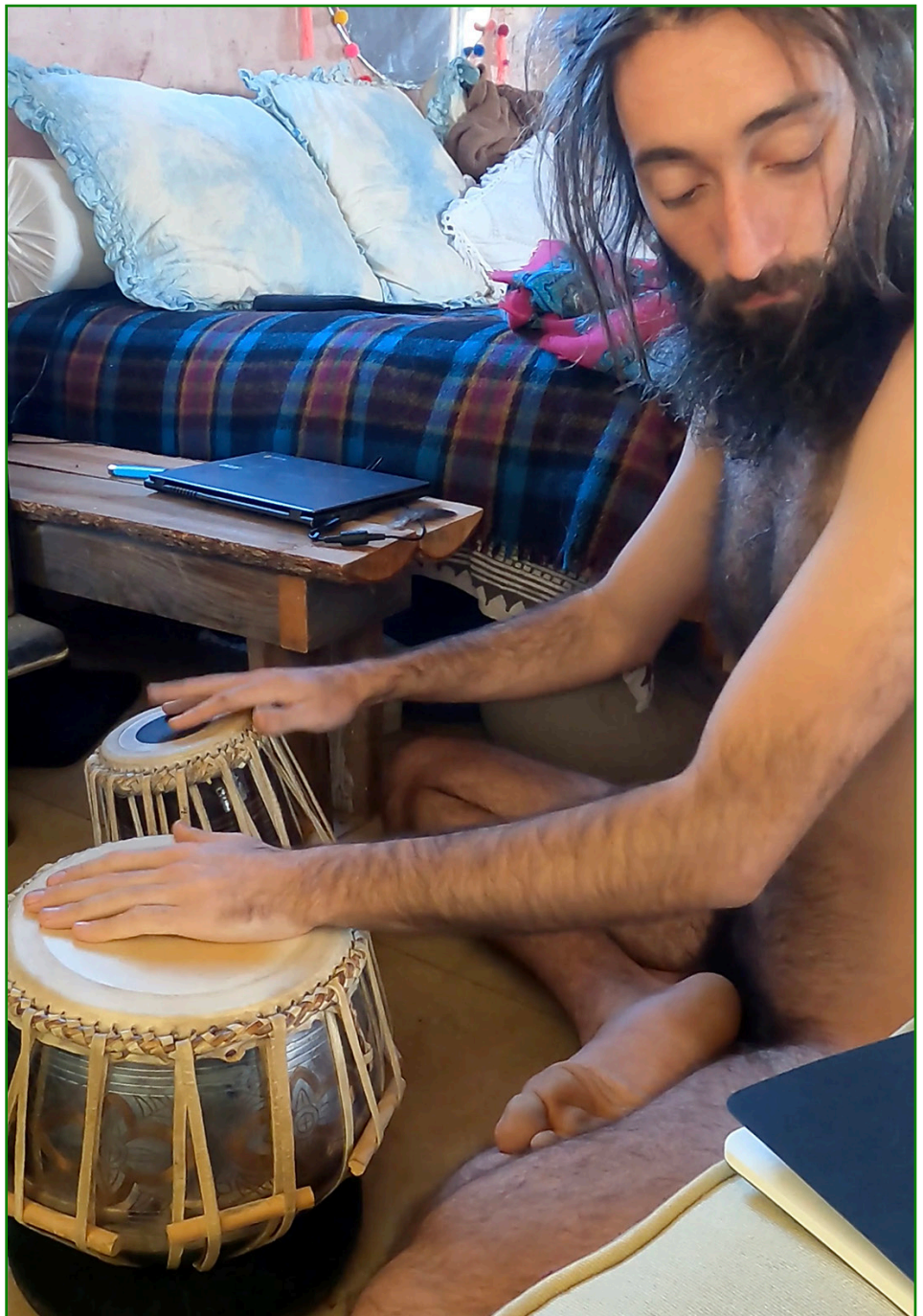
In an age when younger generations are beginning to show an interest in nude recreation but have absolutely no interest in joining organized clubs and are permanently plugged into an i-something, maybe, just maybe, Nudism.TV will be the shot in the arm naturism needs. I, for one, am keeping my fingers crossed.

(Editor's Note: This article was first published in H&E)

Since that article first appeared, Nudism.TV has progressed a lot, and the project has evolved into something Pasha describes as being “super-unique and amazing”.

Pasha and his team began giving away GoPro video cameras, allowing naturists — individuals, couples, and families — to document their own lives on video and to submit the results to Nudism.TV, which pays as much as \$800 per hour for the material.

Along with the pay, Nudism.TV promises to use all content only to promote family-friendly naturism



and to address any mature-themed subjects in a culturally sensitive, educational manner.

Having rolled out the program to great success, Pasha says they are now focusing on the GoPro program, licensing around 300 hours of video per month.

“No longer do we do any studio work,” he says, “but everything that we are capturing is 100 percent authentic by the people themselves. In a way, it’s almost like a video diary

people create, and everyone loves doing it!”

Nudism.TV has become affiliated with the American Association of Nude Recreation and the Naturist Society Foundation, and has been appearing and financially supporting many local naturist events, including Sentient Fest at Empire Haven Nudist Resort and the upcoming Eastern Naturist Festival at Eastover Estate and Eco-Village.

Nudism.TV Anticipates Fall Launch

Nudism.TV is on track to launch its new platform this fall, after overcoming a social media storm that included death threats to its creator and his family.

Pasha Knight was understandably reluctant to discuss the personal attacks he endured when an “influencer” linked him to a Pennsylvania child pornography case, failing to make it clear that the court case did not involve charges against him but, rather, a challenge to the state’s Internet Child Pornography Act by the Center for Democracy & Technology, the American Civil Liberties Union, and Plantagenet, Inc.

The social media attack identified Pasha as Pavel Ushakov, the first person named as a “child pornographer” under the Pennsylvania law passed on February 21, 2002.

The court document stated that, on April 22, 2002, Special Agent Dennis Guzy Sr., the supervisory special agent in charge of the Child Sexual Exploitation Unit, “contacted a child pornographer the OAG had identified in Ohio, Pavel Ushakov, and informed him that the OAG had identified child pornography on his web site. Mr. Ushakov was told by Agent Guzy that he could continue his Internet business if he removed the offending images from his web site.”

The document went on to say, “The OAG decided to contact Mr. Ushakov directly because ‘it was a very unique case.’ The web site he administered was ‘devoted towards nudism’ and included pictures of nude adults and children. Agent Guzy was concerned that ‘if we followed the normal practice and



Nudism.TV

contacted the ISP and asked them to deny access to the site, it would deny access to the entire site which included the adult male and female nudism pictures which were not in violation of Pennsylvania law.”

Note that the Internet Child Pornography Act defined pornography as “sexual intercourse ... masturbation, sadism, masochism, bestiality, fellatio, cunnilingus, lewd exhibition of the genitals or nudity if such nudity is depicted for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any person who might view such depiction.” Nudism is not pornography under that definition.

Ushakov, however, responded to the request by removing the child images from his site.

The court determined in its ruling on the case that “Pennsylvania’s Internet Child Pornography Act ... and the Informal Notice process used by defendant to implement the Act are declared unconstitutional.”

Those facts were ignored in the social media attack on Pasha and Nudism.TV, and under the relentless pressure, he removed the images of children from the NTV website, announcing that the site would include only adult nudist videos going forward.

The website now states, “Maintaining ethical integrity is our primary goal in facilitating content made directly by Nudism.TV and any footage produced by our affiliated creators. We are legally bound

by the promise that all content will only be used by Nudism.TV to promote family-friendly naturism and address any mature-themed subjects in a culturally-sensitive, educational manner. This promise extends to any platform affiliated with Nudism.TV that makes content available for public viewing.”

The Launch

When launched this fall, the Nudism.TV platform will be free to the public, Pasha announced, “as we push to normalize nudity without any paywall restrictions.”

The announcement continued, “Integrated into the Nudism.TV platform will be our new ‘BeFree’ mental health & wellness brand. At its core it will help individuals across wide spectrum find their own freedom, peace of mind & balance in their life through our Be Free Program.

“At debut the two core components of the Be Free Program will be positive energy wearable accessories and providing access to a growing library of self-improvement footage. We want all individuals to be able to find their own personal freedom while having Nudism.TV platform be an open example of how freedom manifests within others.”

The wearable accessories are naturally sourced and “will physically travel to different locations around the world to absorb experiences along their path. Every item will be cleansed in natural hot springs, dried on precambrian mountains and smoked using local lumber in each special location. Natural stones, minerals and crystals would help bring balance to each wearer.”

The platform itself will boast a growing library of wellness and self-improvement videos available



Nudism.TV

only to the Be Free Program subscribers.

Nudism.TV is looking for licensed footage that promotes improving mental health, balancing work and life, finding purpose and passion, stress management and self-care, navigating complexities of modern life, finding personal freedom, overcoming personal hesitations, trauma, and day-to-day struggles, and relationships.

“Footage can also include meditation, yoga, cleansing, and wellness rituals,” and 10 percent of all Be Free Program proceeds will go to a body-positive charity of people’s choice, while the rest will help make the entire project possible.

Those interested in creating more content may contact Pasha and the NTV Team at pasha@nudism.tv.

Lessons Learned

The ordeal that Pasha experienced is not unique. Nudists have long fought the popular misconception that any form of nakedness is obscene, and that any photographs of nude children are pornograph-

ic. Most naturist publications now take the safe approach of excluding photographs of children — and with some reason. Now that most publications also have an online component, those photos may serve as gratification to pedophiles or those with thoughts in that direction. The posting of nude children’s images, even with the most innocent of intentions, can be a form of exploitation. People with bad intentions are willing to pay for such content, but the temptation of profit must be resisted in such cases.

It is an issue that the late Jim C. Cunningham wrestled with in his publication, *Naturist LIFE International*. His moralist naturist philosophy dictated that he buck tradition when it ran counter to his strict gymnosophy, and he decided to take the issue on by placing a photograph of a young naked boy on the cover of one of his magazines. As soon as it went to press, he agonized over the decision, fearing that there would be a backlash that never materialized. He knew that, if he were to face pornography charges, he could make a logical argument for his decision, but logic does not always play well in the courts.

NLI was not even on the internet at that point, so the consequences of such a decision today could be very different.

The only conclusion in today’s world is that using images of naked children on a platform that is easily accessible to anyone is dangerous, and can amount to exploitation, whatever the intention. True naturism is family-friendly, and children benefit from being in a naturist environment. However, that environment must be safe for everyone, and secure from those who would defile it with evil intentions.

A Quarter-Century Of Social Nudity

One of the hardest decisions that naturists have to make is how open they will be about their nudity. How will sharing the information affect their family, friends, and people at work?

In the case of Donna P, treasurer of the Northern Exposure Sun Club, one of those decisions was made for her. The non-landed naturist club had to obtain liability insurance in order to resume its monthly swims in a new location.

“I had to open up to my neighbor,” Donna said, “because we had to get insurance and we were stuck.”

She took a bottle of wine and walked across the street to the home of her neighbor, who was an insurance agent, and opened the conversation by asking, “Can we talk?”

“He was pretty cool,” Donna recalls. While the neighbor has declined offers to attend one of the clothing-optional swims, she said it has made him a closer friend.

The club, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in April 2023, had been a not-for-profit organization affiliated with the American Association of Nude Recreation since its formation in the 1998. However, it did not have an official IRS tax exemption.

The coronavirus pandemic that hurt many naturist organizations did not have much of an effect on NESC because the club already was struggling to stay together, having lost the pool where it had been meeting because the new ownership no longer allowed nude swims. For eight years, the club had no place of its own to meet.

Finally, in 2022, the Gateway Sports Complex in Cohoes, New York, agreed



to allow the club to hold monthly swims that grew into two swims per month during the cold-weather season. Its last swim of this season took place on April 15, but the club plans to return to Gateway this fall.

Arranging nude swims after the hiatus was more complicated than it had been in the past: NESC found it had to take out an insurance policy to cover liability. In order to obtain the general liability insurance, the club had to file with the IRS for official status as a tax-exempt private foundation.

Going through those steps — including involving Donna’s neighbor to get the policy in effect — had its benefits. “We also now cover our organization insurance-wise for any event we participate in, like the Pride Festival and the Car Show,” Donna said.

Albany’s Capital Pride Parade and Festival is scheduled this year on Sunday, June 11, and the Antique & Classic Car Cruise-In co-sponsored by the Full Tan Sun Club and Northern Exposure will take place on Saturday, August 19.

Northern Exposure Sun Club currently has 38 members, but its activities draw many other naturists

from as far away as Connecticut and New Jersey.

Discovering The Benefits

Every naturist has a story to tell about the journey toward becoming an adherent of social nudity. The president of Northern Exposure, Tom Moore, explained how he got involved with nudity [in an earlier interview](#) with *Living Free: Naturism & Our World*. The club’s vice-president, Bill, described his entry into naturism through attendance at a Grateful Dead concert in the 1980s.

“When I was in college, I had a roommate who was into the Grateful Dead,” Bill said. “I attended one of the concerts, and generally, people would get naked at Grateful Dead concerts.”

His first personal experience with mixed-gender nudity was in a coed sauna by a lake near the college campus. He learned of the wood-fired sauna through a feature on nudist camps by the television show *Real People*.

Bill said he had always been interested in *National Geographic* which regularly featured stories about primitive tribes where nudity was

part of life. He discovered Lee Baxandall's *World Guide To Nude Beaches & Recreation* at a Barnes & Noble bookstore in the 1990s, and he subscribed to the Naturist Society's *N* magazine, along with another publication from New Jersey. Through them, he learned about the various nudist camps. However, it was not until he was 35 years old that he made his first visit to an organized group, the Solair Recreation League, a family nudist resort in Woodstock, Connecticut.

He later joined Empire Haven Nudist Campground in Moravia, New York, after taking advantage of a free-admission day.

"I went over, found out I enjoyed it, and actually, the guy I sat next to, I've been friends with him ever since," Bill said. "I've done things, both naturist and non-naturist things, like concerts, music events, and I still see him a few times a year."

Then Bill learned of Northern Exposure Sun Club.

"I didn't know that we had winter swims relatively close to me," Bill said. "So I joined Northern Exposure — I think in like 1999 — and I've been a member ever since, and I've worked my way up to being vice-president."

Bill was there when, in his words, "the internet exploded" around 1996, allowing people to share their experiences at the various nudist camps. Through the internet, Bill has been able to find out about a wide range of venues and activities where clothing is optional.

"I just like not having clothes on," he said. "I mean, even if I do wear clothes, I'm most comfortable wearing like jeans and a t-shirt. I don't like being bundled up. ... Plus, I've never been into fashions."

For him, naturism is about free-



Bill

dom and body acceptance.

"You have less judgment then. I'm not saying you have no judgment, but you have less judgment then, I think."

Bill spends most of his time on East Coast, although he did travel once to Vancouver, British Columbia, visiting Wreck Beach. He also has visited a couple of camps while spending time with family members in Texas.

"I've never been to California and I'm probably not likely to go because of my age now," he said. "I'll just stay

on the East Coast or maybe the Central Time Zone."

Coming from a very religious family background, Bill has not shared his naturist lifestyle with relatives, and he works for a multinational organization that would not appreciate anything that might embarrass the company. However, he has mentioned it to someone in his health club.

Summing up his views on naturism, Bill said it allows one to meet people from many different backgrounds — "probably more so than

if you're in a clothed world, because you get a relatively small group of people come together."

He said the fastest-growing segment of naturism that he has observed is in the LGBTQ community. A large segment of the people who are supporting the Northern Exposure swims come from a local gay men's club.

"I've heard of some nightmare scenarios with other clubs, where they had problems with people," Bill said. "In all of my time here, we only had to ask one person to leave, which is amazing for all those years. This was a guy who thought it was supposed to be like a strip club, and he wanted to know, 'Where are all the hot young women?' We just told him you're better off going."

When the club lost its swim location, Bill said, "We sort of didn't know whether we could keep our membership up to where we can keep a charter."

During the eight-year search for a new venue, NESC members kept active by attending other clubs' events, such as those put on by Naturist New Hampshire. Even though they now have their own pool, NESC members comprised about half of those attending Naturist New Hampshire's March swim/social.

NESC membership has ranged from a low of 18 to its present roster of 38, and the season of swims at Gateway Sports Complex has attracted 130 first-time participants. The swims' average attendance is about 30 people.

"My senior year was the first time our school had computers, so I'm a little bit more technology-oriented than what someone even one or two years older than me would be," Bill said. "I use social media quite a bit

to promote our events. Some of our members are sort of resistant to that and want to do it more traditionally, but we have to use what's available and what works."

Anyone interested in starting a new group, he advises, should first look into the local market to find out if they should be catering to families, male-female members, or the LGBTQ community.

"Don't let ideology get in your way," he said.

NESC tends to have many more men than women attending, and generally does not see families coming to the swims, although a family did attend a recent swim. However, a Pennsylvania group known as TikiTomba has a younger membership, with some in their 20s and 70-80 percent of them in their 30s. That group sponsors music festivals and volleyball tournaments.. That group sponsors music festivals and volleyball tournaments.

Donna's Story

Donna's journey into naturism began after she had gotten over breast cancer. Her youngest son was in elementary school and her older children were graduating from high school.

"I was really ready to step out, because I've been a mother now for 29 years," she said. "All I did was be a wife and a mother."

She and her husband were looking at different things they could do with their free time. An acquaintance mentioned naturism and said his friend, Denny, would be having a naked party. Donna called Denny to ask some questions about it before committing to go, but decided to give social nudity a try. Her husband

was not interested, so she agreed to meet up with the friend who had recommended the event.

He did not show up.

"So I called Denny and I said, 'Look, I am two hours away and I don't know where I'm going and I don't know anybody.' And he said, 'No, come on up; you'll be fine.'"

With the aid of her GPS, she got halfway down the dirt road toward his home when the GPS failed, leaving her to search for the house number on a mailbox. Then she turned into the driveway and encountered a gate with the message "clothing optional".

"The gate freaked me out again," she said. "Each step is like, do you take another step? And I looked around the corner and I saw like 15 cars, so I'm like, 'Okay, I'm not gonna get kidnapped or put in a basement.'"

She entered the house to find 15 naked people who greeted her with "Hi!"

"I was nervous because it's something I'd never done before, but I've done things that were in my own head out of the box before — but this was by myself. This was people I didn't know and I'd never been in a group of nudists before. And I'm like, 'What's the worst can happen?' And that day, I had a great time."

Asked about the adjustment to social nudity, Donna said, "The one thing that took me a little while to get used to was standing next to somebody you didn't know and watching them take off their tidies. It was more of getting used to changing in front of people than it was just being in a space."

Donna joined Northern Exposure Sun Club and makes trips to Hariman Reservoir and the nude area known as The Ledges in Vermont.

She enjoys the summer solstice hike at Harriman Reservoir because it presents a challenge.

“They’re mostly younger, and it’s at least four miles. It’s uphill. It takes me an hour and half to get to the top of that damned mountain,” she said. “I’m always the last one, ... I’m older than most of them; I’m heavier than a lot of them; I’m just not in the same physical shape that they are. And I get up there. I like to do that because it feels like an accomplishment. And at the top I also get to be a naturist.”

Saying that she has crowd anxiety and dislikes having to talk in front of people or engage in networking at work, Donna said, “When you’re in a room with 100 nude people, you don’t see class, you don’t see economics, you don’t see education. ... I feel relaxed. I think that was the biggest change for me.”

Being part of a naturist group, it is possible to go lie on a towel and not be viewed as being antisocial, she said.

“If I go to any of those places by myself, after I get over the initial ‘Where’s the check-in? Where do I go? Where do I park?’ and all that, then I’m comfortable and I can take a towel and my chair and go sit in a corner and I don’t have to introduce myself. I can just go and be, and somebody might eventually come say ‘Hi’ or I might go in the pool or something, but I’m not obligated; I can just be and think, and a huge benefit is I don’t have to suck in my stomach. I’m not worrying about any of those kinds of considerations.”

Talking to others about naturism is not easy, and when she told a friend of 25 years, the friend stepped back from their relationship.

“If you mention it to somebody who’s just not open, they will kind of separate themselves,” she said.



Donna P.

Although her husband has accompanied her to The Ledges, he does it for something to do, and does not get the same kind of stress-relieving benefits she derives from naturism.

Donna said she took her time telling her children. “I’ve opened up to my kids over the last year, one at a time,” Donna said. “The one at home figured it out first, and now the four kids know that Mom goes and they call it ‘butterfly time’. But they kind of feel like, ‘Oh, Mom’s more interesting than she was,’ and they laugh about it.”

She also told her mother and grandmother, and said, “I’ve even convinced my grandmother to come with me. She’s like, ‘I’m going to do it with you,’ and I’m ‘Okay.’”

Working in a conservative environment, she let her boss know about her naturist pursuits, but she does not want to broach the subject with other workers.

“I told my boss I only have one or two years left and then I’m out of there,” she said, “but I can see doing this for the rest of my life.”

Life As A Naturist Author

By J. S. Allen

Naked authorship has a long and rich heritage. It is easy to imagine the earliest recorders of human history inscribing pictographs in stone in the buff, or some ancient scholar penning his master work comfortably nude. In more recent eras, several Romantic writers, such as Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman, are said to have practiced naturism. Today, there are quite a few writing nudists, such as David L. Hatton and Aaron Frost. I myself have been a nudist since my late teens, and a writer since long before.

But what makes one a naturist author, as opposed to an author who just happens to be a naturist? I would say very little, but if there is a difference, then it is in content. For some, their lifestyle has little to no impact on their writing. Naturist authors, on the other hand, are very strongly influenced by their living clothes-free. It is such a part of us that it finds its way into nearly all of our work in one form or another. It brings to mind that old adage: “Write what you know.”

This has certainly held true for me in my career as an author. As someone who spends over 60 percent of my time in the nude, naturism is something I know very well. As a result, it has a very heavy presence in my work, not only in the nonfiction I write, such as this article, but in poetry and even full-length fiction as well. Sometimes it is more subtle, such as in my debut young adult novel, *Sauragia*. In it, the anthropomorphic dinosaur protagonist is established early on as preferring to go



J.S. Allen

without clothes whenever possible, yet the few instances of casual nudity in the story have no real impact on the plot. By contrast, the young hero in my *Knights of Aralia* series is raised in a completely naturistic society. Because of this, he has a little trouble adjusting to clothing later in the story, to the extent that he ditches it as often as he possibly can.

In my personal experience, though, being a naturist author goes beyond just the work itself. Every “official” author photo of me, for instance, is in the nude, whether it stands alongside an article like this or in the “About the Author” section of a book (cropped much higher up in the latter case, of course). When I did an interview about my writing in the spring of 2022, I did so nude as well.

Now, some might well ask why. Why would I risk limiting my audience by refusing to get dressed even for a formal filmed interview, knowing perfectly well what people might think or say? And my answer is sim-

ple: because it’s genuine.

Certainly, I could dress up like some glitzy rock star for the public if I so desired. Some might even consider that to be more professional. But it wouldn’t be the real me, and I feel that reaching a true rapport with your audience requires you to be honest and up-front with them about who you are. And there is no denying that shirtless photos — even cropped — tend to catch the eye. Go through any random sampling of author photos and count how many are taken in the nude. Not too many, I’d guess. So being a “naked author” is bound to stand out from the crowd just a little as well, for better or worse.

Writing is a big part of me. It’s one of the few things I can do halfway decently. Naturism is also a strong part of who I am. If I couldn’t be naked at times, I would feel extremely restricted, both physically and spiritually. The joy I derive from having the freedom to be and to express myself naturally is a God-given gift.

A Naked Summer Solstice Hike

Hike Naked Day is recognized throughout the world as way of welcoming the arrival of summer, and there is no better place to take that solstice hike than in Vermont, where nudity is allowed year-round, as long as it is carried out in a respectful manner.

Hikers in the Northeast have long chosen the 3,051-foot Mount Tabor as a perfect location for a solstice hike. One reason is that there are easy and moderate versions, giving hikers a choice of how much effort to put into the hike.

This year's solstice hike brought out some 30 ramblers of which the majority took the longer route. Some of them did not intend to make the full 10-mile hike along that section of the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail, but when they had a chance to turn around, they decided to persevere, and by the time they reached Little Rock Pond, they



Hikers pause for photos while enjoying the vista at Big Branch Overlook.

(Tom Caldwell Photo)

were glad they did.

The shorter route is an easy 2.2-mile hike from the main Long Trail parking lot. That trail follows the length of Little Black Branch Brook,

crossing the stream as it gradually climbs to Little Rock Pond.

Both sets of hikers met at the parking lot on Forest Road 10 east of the town of Mount Tabor, which was the starting point for the short hike. Those taking the longer hike carpooled from there to Appalachian Trail parking lot on Route 140, east of Wallingford.

The Appalachian Trail covers about 150 miles in Vermont as it makes its journey through fourteen states, from Maine to Georgia. The hike from the eastern side of Mount Tabor was somewhat taxing, as the trail gained nearly 1,000 feet in elevation in the first couple of miles of rocky terrain before leveling out to more gentle up-and-down slopes. The path is surrounded by hardwood forest and towering hemlocks.

The trip leaders were careful to pace the hike in a way that gave ev-



White Rocks

(Tom Caldwell Photo)

everyone plenty of opportunities to rest and drink water. There also was a designated person in front and another at the rear to make sure no one was left behind.

Trail etiquette suggests that parties of eight are optimal for hiking so that other hikers they encounter are not inconvenienced by having to wait for large numbers of people to pass through; or, if they are coming up from behind, are easily able to pass. Through-hikers on the Appalachian Trail and those taking shorter hikes are willing to make an exception on Naked Hiking Day when the groups they meet are likely to be larger in number.

What is the reaction of someone who encounters a naked hiker? Most of those meeting this group were perfectly fine with the experience, many of them calling out, “Happy solstice!” Only one through-hiker appeared disgruntled, stepping off the side of the trail to push ahead past the oncoming group, and there was no smile on his face.

Some of the hikers who encountered the group stopped to talk with the naked travelers, and they seemed interested in hearing about the tradition — and about Vermont’s tolerance for nudity.

The first major stop was at an area known as White Rocks, where hundreds, perhaps thousands of rocks had been piled into cairns and other shapes. Many had tumbled down or had been knocked down, giving the area somewhat the appearance of a graveyard, or perhaps a stone quarry. And, yes, they were white.

The next big stop was on the Big Branch Overlook, a high ledge offering views of distant mountains and signs of civilization below. It was a place to rest, eat lunch, and



A naked hike by a man and his dog.
(David Vogel Photo)

take a few photos.

Then it was onward to Little Rock Pond, which actually is a fairly large pond that also offers a campsite with two tenting areas and toilet facilities for backpackers. The naked hikers were happy to get out of their hiking boots or sandals and take advantage of the pond for skinny-dipping or simply soaking sore feet. A few got in all over and swam far from shore.

While at the pond, those who were back on shore had the treat of watching the elegant way a few leaches were swimming at water’s edge. Normally viewed by swimmers with horror, leaches actually are harmless and, in fact, were used by physicians as far back as ancient Egypt for their anticoagulant effect and to increase blood flow to help heal wounds. However, of the 70 or so freshwater species in North America, only a couple of them are

bloodsuckers, and those in Little Rock Pond showed no interest in the naked swimmers nearby.

After cooling off and relaxing at the pond, the hikers grabbed their gear and continued the remaining couple of miles to the parking lot where everyone had met half a day earlier. Upon departure, several of the hikers got together for pizza before finally going their separate ways.

For some hikers, one day was not enough, and they got an early start on June 20, a day ahead of the official Hike Naked Day, taking in the Stratton Mountain/Stratton Pond Loop. Some also camped at Emerald Lake State Park or at the Big Branch shelter.

The Vermont hike was but one of the many taking place on June 21, and had the largest turnout that particular hike has ever had. Most of them agreed that they will return next year for another go.

David Vogel’s way of observing the solstice was to go on a 90-minute hike — with a break for a swim — at Raccoon State Recreation Area, a state park in western Indiana.

He reports, “Knowing that state laws make it particularly unlawful to be nude in a state park, and knowing that our park is filled with campers during the summer, I waited until nearly dusk before starting my hike. The trails were clear but for me and my dog, and I even got a swim in a lagoon that is a favorite of fishermen, but which was empty that evening.

“Following my swim, which came at about the half-way point in my hike, I completed my hike barefoot as well as nude.

Pickleball: A Fast-Growing Game

By Chris Moore

Like so many others around the world, my wife and I were isolated at home during March 2020 as we waited for the coronavirus pandemic to subside. We live in Michigan and spring seemed to be taking its sweet time getting here, but that did not stop us from getting outside for some fresh air and lots of exercise — it's one of the keys to retaining our sanity.

We are fortunate to have a decent-sized driveway, so we cobbled together a pickleball court and a very Heath-Robinsonish net and started playing. When we shared an Instagram video of our exploits with friends and family from the United Kingdom, the unanimous response was: "What's Pickleball?" Surprisingly, that also was the response from our U.K. naturist friends ... and we thought pickleball was the universal naturist game. Perhaps not — but it will be.

There many things that the United States has exported to the U.K. over the decades, a number of which we wish hadn't made it across the pond; but there are plenty of others for which we are grateful. Pickleball arrived in the U.K. around 2011 (there is a U.K. pickleball association and apparently over 2,000 players, though I'm not sure how anyone came up with this number).

As we lashed together our own net, we could not help but think back to the origins of the game, which started in a back yard in Washington state in 1965. Story has it that U.S. Congressman Joel Pritchard and friend William Bell noticed their families sitting in the garden, bored, with nothing to do. The Pritchards had an



old badminton court, so they grabbed two ping-pong bats and a perforated plastic ball and started to hit the ball over a very high net. They quickly lowered the net from 60" to 36" to make it easier for the whole family to play. The following weekend, as neighbor Barney McCallum joined them and started playing, game rules were established, and "pickleball" was founded. Barney used his wood-working skills to create better paddles and went on to head a company making pickleball equipment.

We first came across pickleball at naturist clubs in the U.S. a couple of years ago. We would hear the thud, thud ... "Darn It!" sounds penetrating our courtside condo early in the morning as hardy souls got their competitive workouts before the heat of the day. We found that resorts were either installing new pickleball courts or converting some tennis courts to pickleball use, thereby increasing court usage as the popularity of pickleball soared.

So why is pickleball so popular, especially among naturists? Well, it's simple, cheap, easy to play, and you don't have to be super fit to enjoy it.

Pickleball can be considered to be a toned-down version of tennis. The court (layout is similar to a tennis court but the size of a doubles badminton court) is about a third the area of a tennis court and the ball is a hollow plastic ball with holes making it travel about a third of the speed of a regular tennis ball. Serving is underhand and there is no volleying within seven feet of the net (an area known as the "kitchen" and perfect for social distancing!). All this makes pickleball less strenuous than tennis but just as much fun.

Other than shoes, no other attire is needed. Paddles can be wooden or made of composite material and cost anywhere from £15 to well over £100. Games are played to 11 points with points, gained only on your own service, and the end of the match is usually accompanied with a traditional touching of paddle handles — a bit like tennis players touching racquets over the net.

No wonder, then, that this is the fastest-growing game in the USA, with more than 2.8 million players — and it's only a matter of time before it becomes an Olympic sport.

The Search For Atlantis

By the mid-1970s, my father had become a kind of walking, talking concentration of the sort of ideas that today go under the general umbrella of “new age”. Bearded, bald, with a perpetually intense, preoccupied expression (as a young child I suspected that he must have lost his hair from thinking too much), and he was in appearance and character perfectly suited for this role. Without much in the way of conscious calculation, but instead just by being himself, he became the definitive example of the Fringe Investigator: the familiar figure with the whitening beard, khaki bush jacket, and unfazable open mind who was forever lurking on the outer edges of accepted science and conventional thinking. From Peter Tompkins you could always count on learning that the impossible wasn’t really impossible at all....

That was why, at the beginning of the summer of 1975, I found myself on Bimini. My father had long held an interest in Atlantis because of the emphasis placed on it in the work of Rudolf Steiner, the remarkable teacher and philosopher who founded the Anthroposophical movement.... Steiner claimed to have witnessed the unfolding of Atlantean civilization....

The Bimini Road, as the collection of sunken stones my father had come to investigate was called, did not dramatically rise up out of the ocean depths in 1968, but that was the year it first came to public notice, and this coincidence struck my father as impressive enough to call



for action....

“When,” my father asked gruffly one morning up on the bow, “are we going to get you out of those abominable trunks?”

Today, as every day, I was clothed in a T-shirt and bathing suit, which separated me from the majority of the adults, who, other than the occasional pair of sneakers or sun hat, wore nothing. In front of the cameras, behind them, or somewhere in between, if you were involved in the Atlantis project and wearing clothing, my father would eventually have something to say about it. Nudity was not so much an option in my father’s mind as a badge of honor; a sign, as it were, that you were on the Atlantis team.

This persistent presence of naked human bodies — young and old, male and female, toned and worn — had a less than totally positive effect on me. As the summer wore on, I found myself in the odd position of feeling envious of my friends back at school, for whom female bodies were items of supreme mystery rather than everyday scenery.

Deprived of this romantic distance, the human form — more specifically the female form — was taking on a distressingly mundane aura for me while at the same time retaining its intense adolescent desirability. All the variously shaped breasts and distressingly concrete genitalia I was forced to maneuver among out on the boat each day were turning into false idols; objects I was at once drawn helplessly toward yet at the same time distrustful of. I found this combination of elements deeply irritating, not to mention confusing, and I responded by affecting a mood of total — if false — disregard for all of it. I made a point of being clothed as much as possible and looked with increasing disdain upon the Atlantis hunters with whom, it seemed, I was destined to spend my entire summer.

My father, in his distracted fashion, was monitoring my behavior and trying to fathom it. Somehow it was beyond his comprehension that a 13-year-old boy should insist on remaining clothed all the time while on a boat in the middle

of the Caribbean.... By refusing to parade around naked at odd and inconvenient times, and by looking askance at those who did, I was doing more than just being difficult. I was placing myself in the company of the naysayers, the advocates of the mundane and the ordinary, who wanted to prove that the Road was no road at all but simply a meaningless geological accident.

"You guys look like idiots running around naked the way you do," I told him. "Besides, it's dangerous."

My father shook his head bemusedly. "Dangerous! What an absolutely ridiculous idea! I suspect it's that school we spend so much money on that feeds you these curious puritanical notions. We'll have to have you deprogrammed by the time you're ready to graduate."

"I suppose you think the Atlanteans all walked around naked?"

"That has absolutely nothing to do with it, nothing at all."

He paused for a moment and glowered back down at the stern of the boat, his assorted worries visibly regaining their hold over him. Then, collecting himself as if he were about to address some greater audience, he turned back to me.

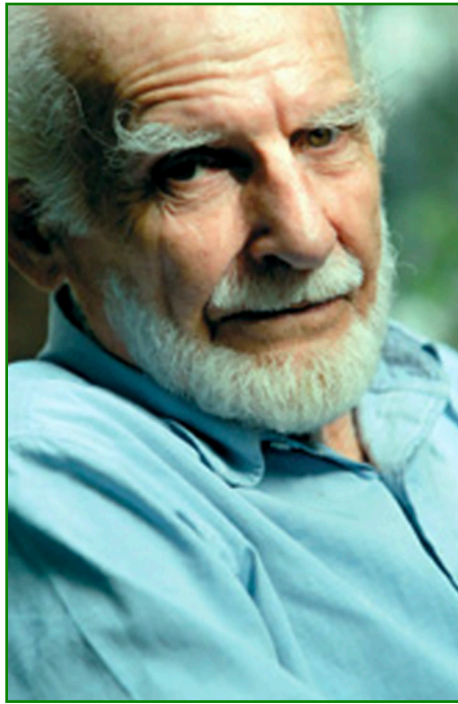
"Do you know what all this is really about?"

"All what? This boat and everything?"

"Yes, this boat and everything."

"No."

"It's about freedom. The freedom to do as you like when you like and not get sucked into some artificial system of laws that tell you what to do and what not to do. That's why I'm here looking at this damn Road, and that's why I've chartered this bloody boat, and that's why I'm



Peter Tompkins

hemorrhaging money keeping all these machines running."

"I don't get it," I said. "I mean, what does being naked have to do with the Road?"

"It has everything to do with the Road," my father pronounced with satisfaction. "The academic establishment says Atlantis never existed when there's plenty of solid evidence that says it did. Now, just why, in the face of this evidence, should they be so intent on denying its existence outright?"

"I don't know. Maybe they just don't feel like believing in it."

"... If there's one thing I'd be happy that you took away from being around for all this crazy stuff is the importance of being free to say and do what you think, regardless of the consequences and even if everybody tells you you're out of your mind."

"... So what are you going to do if it turns out the Road is just a bunch of regular old rocks?"

"Then I will have laid the question to rest, and that will be the end of

it. Because whatever that Road turns out to be, it doesn't take away one bit from what I just told you. The one important thing in life is having the freedom to find out what's bullshit and what's true and real, and to go after the true and the real with all of your energy. If you can't have that, there's not much point going and looking for anything else."

"So how come I'm not free to wear a bathing suit without you bugging me about it all the time?"

"You can wear a space suit and a bowler hat for all I care, as long as you're doing what you want — what you really want, and not what some bastard in some institution tells you you should."

"And that means I'm free to go deep-sea fishing on one of those charter boats too, right?"

"That," said my father, "is a matter not of freedom but of money, and if I weren't running out of the latter faster than I can believe, I'd rent you one of those boats tomorrow."

"So, money's different from freedom, huh?"

"Ideally, yes," said my father, the specter of cash dampening his mood slightly, "but practically, no."

— *“Lost Atlantis, Nude Scientists, Giant Sharks, Bad Vibes, and Me” by Ptolemy Tompkins, in Harper’s Magazine, January 1997*

Ten miles of beach front and not a damn person on it except me. I would come out of the swamp and race full speed past the sand and sea oats. I would hit the beach sprinting as hard as I could go. The beach breeze kept the five million mosquitoes hovering in the forest behind me. I would run until I got

tired, then strip naked and swim in the surf. The water was shallow and very warm, but the salt felt good on my mosquito bites, and there is something undeniably salubrious for the soul about floating naked in the surf without another human being in sight or sound, free from the encumbrances or worries of the classroom.

— *The Water is Wide* by Pat Conroy, 1987, Bantam Books

By this time, both Prok and I were stripped down to the barest essentials while working out of doors, and both of us developed such deep tans you might have mistaken us for a pair of Italian laborers. Prok wasn't a nudist, not officially (he was far too self-sufficient to join any group or movement), but he was often naked or as close to naked as he could reasonably be given the circumstances, because to his mind nudity was an expression of the most natural and relaxed state of the human animal — the very same agencies of social control that had proscribed certain sexual acts dictated that people should wear clothing, whereas any number of societies outside the ken of the Judeo-Christian tradition did perfectly well without it, or with very little of it.

“The Trobriand Islanders, for instance, think of the Trobriand Islanders. Or the Samoans.” To emphasize his point with the neighbors and any uninformed pedestrians who might happen by, Prok ultimately reduced his gardening costume to a kind of flesh-colored jockstrap and a single shoe, which he wore on the right foot, for digging. I followed suit, of course, because this



was what was expected of me, and I always did what was expected.

... As I've said I wasn't much for camping — and Corcoran was even worse — but Prok more than made up for us. His energy was explosive. Even after sitting behind the wheel from early morning till late in the afternoon (he insisted on doing all the driving himself), he sprang out of the car to set up camp, collect armloads of scrub oak or mesquite and cook us flapjacks and eggs or even the odd fish he'd manage to pull out of a hidden puddle in the time it took the cook fire to die down to coals.

He was indefatigable, as solicitous of our comfort and welfare as a scoutmaster — or better yet, a big brother — and as genial and full of high spirits as I'd ever seen him. He educated us in the fine points of woodcraft, entertained us round the

campfire with stories of his gall wasp expeditions in the Sierra Madre, allowed us the solace of my flask and the bottle of brandy Corcoran had brought along against the chill of the night, though there was no chill and Prok himself had little interest in liquor except as an agent in loosening the tongues of his subjects.

There was, as you might expect, nudity as well. Prok cooked in the nude, set up the tent in the nude, hiked and bird-watched and swam in the nude, and encouraged us to do the same. My tan came back. My muscles hardened. And Corcoran, fair-skinned as he was, burned and burned again until he peeled like an egg and showed off the beginnings of his own tan.

— *The Inner Circle* by T. Coraghessan Boyle, 2004, Viking Press, The Penguin Group

S tern drifted over. The tub protruded about a foot above the level of the porch. Sam had already eased off the canvas cover. The water temperature was moderate, apparently for Sam's benefit. What, after all, was the harm?

Sam hugged him the instant he agreed and immediately shed his clothes. Fully naked, he dipped in a toe.

"Come on," he said.

"Pardon me?"

"Come on. Get your clothes off."

"Thank you, Sam. I do not care to get into the hot tub." The boy gaped.

"You have to."

"Sonny says I can't go in without a grownup. I'm only five years old, you know."

"Yes," said Stern. He stood a moment and stared at the moon, just rising and visible through the fingerlet branches of the trees of the ravine. He had lost control over most everything sometime ago. In the dark, he kicked off his shoes and loosened his belt.

As life had repeatedly shown him, there was usually something to other people's pleasures. However suspect it seemed, the hot tub was enchanting. Little foggy wisps rose in the moonlight and the thin evening air was gentle as a breath. His large body felt lighter, submerged in the dark. Stern sat on a bench inside the tub and Sam crouched beside him to keep his chin above the water's level.

— *The Burden of Proof*, by Scott Turow, 1990, Farrar Straus Giroux

I n my opinion, I personally have gotten steadily sillier and sillier and sillier — and that's a fact."



"No kidding, Sir? You can't mean that! You mean, sillier than when you were young?"

"Much, much sillier."

"I'll be darned. ... Then experience is no use at all? You're saying it might just as well not have happened?"

"No. I'm not saying that. I only mean, you can't use it. But if you don't try to — if you just realize it's there and you've got it — then it can be kind of marvelous —"

"Let's go swimming," says Kenny abruptly, as if bored by the whole conversation.

"All right."

Kenny throws his head right back and laughs wildly. "Oh — that's terrific!"

"What's terrific?"

"It was a test. I thought you were bluffing, about being silly. So I said to myself, I'll suggest doing something wild, and if he objects — if he even hesitates — then I'll know it was all a bluff. ... you don't mind my telling you that, do you, Sir?"

"Why should I?"

"Oh, that's terrific"

"Well, I'm not bluffing —"

"So what are we waiting for? You weren't bluffing, were you?"

"Hell, no!"

They jump up, pay, run out of the bar and across the highway and Kenny vaults the railing and drops down, about eight feet, on to the beach. George, meanwhile, is clambering over the rail, a bit stiffly. Kenny looks up, his face still lit by the boardwalk lamps: "Put your feet on my shoulders, Sir." George does so, drunk-trustful, and Kenny, with the deftness of a ballet-dancer, supports him by the ankles and calves, lowering him almost instantly to the sand. During the descent, their bodies rub against each other, briefly but roughly. The electric field of the dialogue is broken. Their relationship, whatever it now is, is no longer symbolic. They turn and begin to run toward the ocean.

Already, the lights seem far, far behind. They are bright but they cast no beams; perhaps they are shining on a layer of high fog. The waves ahead are barely visible. Their blackness is immensely cold and wet. Kenny is tearing off his clothes with wild whooping cries. The last remaining minim of George's caution is aware of the lights and the possibility of cruise-cars and cops, but he doesn't hesitate, he is no longer able to; this dash from the bar can only end in the water. He strips himself clumsily, tripping over his pants. Kenny,

stark naked now, has plunged and is wading straight in, like a fearless native warrior, to attack the waves. The undertow is very strong. George flounders for a while in a surge of stones. As he finally struggles through and feels sand under his feet, Kenny comes bodysurfing out of the night and shoots past him without a glance; a water-creature absorbed in its element.

As for George, those waves are much too big for him. They seem truly tremendous, towering up, blackness uncontrolling itself out of blackness, mysteriously and awfully sparking, then curling over in a thundering slap of foam which is sparked with phosphorus. George has sparks of it all over his body, and he laughs with delight to find himself bejeweled. Laughing, grasping, choking, he is too drunk to be afraid; the salt water he swallows seems as intoxicating as whisky. From time to time, he catches tremendous glimpses of Kenny, arrowing down some toppling foam-precipice. Then, intent upon his own rites of purification, George staggers out once more, wide-open-armed, to receive the stunning baptism of the surf. Giving himself to it utterly, he washes away thought, speech, mood, desire, whole selves, entire lifetimes; again and again he returns, becoming always cleaner, freer, less. He is perfectly happy by himself; it's enough to know that Kenny and he are the sole sharers of the element. The waves and the night and the noise exist only for their play. Meanwhile, no more than 200 yards distant, the lights shine from the shore and the cars flick past up and down the highway, flashing their long beams. On the dark hillsides you can see lamps in the windows of dry homes, where the dry are going dryly to their dry beds. But George and Ken-

ny are refugees from dryness; they have escaped across the border into the waterworld, leaving their clothes behind them for a customs-fee.

And now, suddenly, here is a great, an apocalyptically great wave, and George is way out, almost out of his depth, standing naked and tiny before its presence, under the lip of its roaring upheaval and the towering menace of its fall. He tries to dive through it — even now he feels no real fear — but instead he is caught and picked up, turned over and over and over, flapping and kicking toward a surface which may be either up or down or sideways, he no longer knows.

And now Kenny is dragging him out, groggy-legged. Kenny's hands are under George's armpits and he is laughing and saying like a Nanny, "That's enough for now!" And George, still water-drunk, gasps, "I'm all right," and wants to go straight back into the water.

But Kenny says, "Well, I'm not — I'm cold," and Nanny-like he towels George, with his own shirt, not George's, until George stops him because his back is sore. The Nanny-relationship is so convincing, at this moment, that George feels he could curl up and fall immediately asleep right here, shrunk to child-size within the safety of Kenny's bigness. Kenny's body seems to have grown gigantic since they left the water. Everything about him is larger than life; the white teeth of his grin, the wide dripping shoulders, the tall slim torso with its heavy-hung sex, and the long legs, now beginning to shiver.

"Can we go back to your place, Sir?" he asks.

"Sure. Where else?"

"Where else?" Kenny repeats, seeming to find this very amusing.

He picks up his clothes and turns, still naked, toward the highway and the lights.

"Are you crazy?" George shouts after him.

"What's the matter?" Kenny looks back, grinning.

"You're going to walk home like that? Are you crazy? They'd call the cops!"

Kenny shrugs his shoulders good-humoredly. "Nobody would have seen us. We're invisible — didn't you know?"

— *A Single Man* by Christopher Isherwood, 1964, Methuen & Co London

Rockwell [my son] proposed, now that the snow lay deep, that both of us every morning take a snow bath. And, since a father mustn't show himself a sissy, I agreed. From then on, at daybreak I would first jump up, turn on the drafts of the smoldering airtight heating stove, and jump back into bed again; then, when the cabin was toasty warm, we'd both get up, strip and perform some frantic exercises, and, sweating hot, run out into the snow and roll around in it. After a good rubdown in the warm cabin, we'd feel like a million — no, what am I talking about? What good were dollars on Fox Island — like the good, big plate of oatmeal that was ready for us. Colds? Sickness of any kind on Fox Island? No! Only continuous, exuberant health, hands that grew ever harder, muscles that were strong as workmen's muscles have to be; and souls that could expand and fill immensity.

— *It's Me o Lord, The Autobiography of Rockwell Kent*, 1965, Dodd, Mead