

Volume 3, Number 12.

December, 2022

The Newsletter of the *Naturist Action Committee* and the *Naturist Education Foundation*


Assembled and published by Doug.Hickok@NaturistEducation.org. Mail: PO Box 132, Oshkosh, Wi., USA. 54903. Tel: (920) 415-2900

New Fiction Films Available for Digital Loan

The effort to digitize the contents of the NEF Research Library have reached another milestone (or, perhaps more appropriately, another "inchstone"). We've finished with the second half of the Fiction DVD's.

If you're a registered patron of the NEF Research Library, you're welcome to request these films and enjoy them at home, all for FREE. At NaturistEducation.org, go to the NEF Research Library section and see the Digital Lending page for details.

Digitizing DVD's and preparing them for digital loan is more involved than pressing "Play" and "Record". Some have copy protection that needs to be bypassed. Some have extra features to include. Some have multiple audio tracks. In the end, they all need to be transcoded to the format that is playable in a web browser. Lastly, the cover art needs to be scanned, and the whole package needs to be prepared for lending.

We hope you enjoy some of these films! The last in the list, *This Nude World* (1932), is reviewed next. 

<i>Film Title</i>	<i>Asset Tag</i>
Nudisti per Casoi (2004)	video277
Park (2008)	video281
Ready, Willing and Able (1971)	video284
Roadshow Shorts, Vol. 4	video287
Romance with a Double Bass (1974)	video289
Sinderella and the Golden Bra (1964), and Goldilocks and the Three Bares (1963)	video297
Snap Decision (2001)	video298
Steambath (1973)	video299
Sunswept (1961)	video300
This Nude World (1932)	video307

This Nude World

1932, Directed by
Michael Mindlin

By Reb Belstner

Smile when you call this a nudist exploitation film.

I write the above because, despite some obvious tropes that easily fit this film into the “nudesploitation” subgenre, *This Nude World* overall treats its subject matter with relative respect. That, and, frankly, there’s not much in the way of “jiggle factor” in this movie, as you would find in other examples of this type of film.

We open with a text scroll (and there are a lot of them in this movie) proclaiming this film to be an investigation into the nudist lifestyle and community. There are lots of questions about these people, the scroll proclaims, so is there any truth to the more ludicrous-sounding claims? Let’s find out!

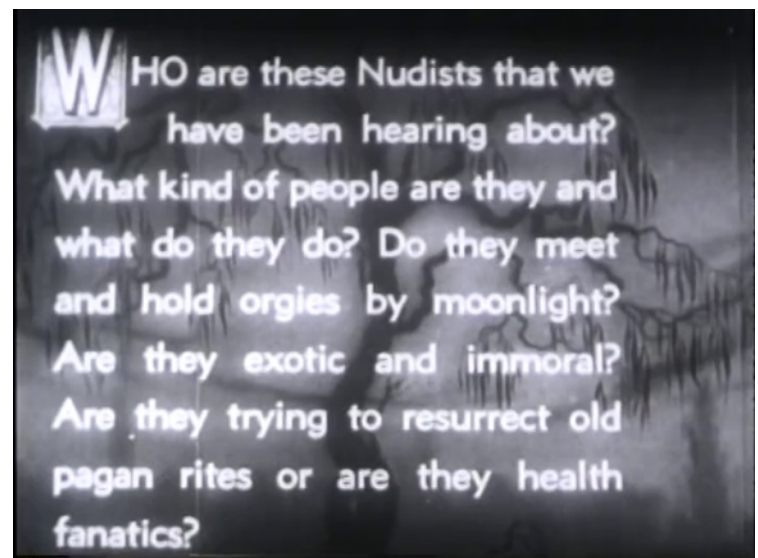
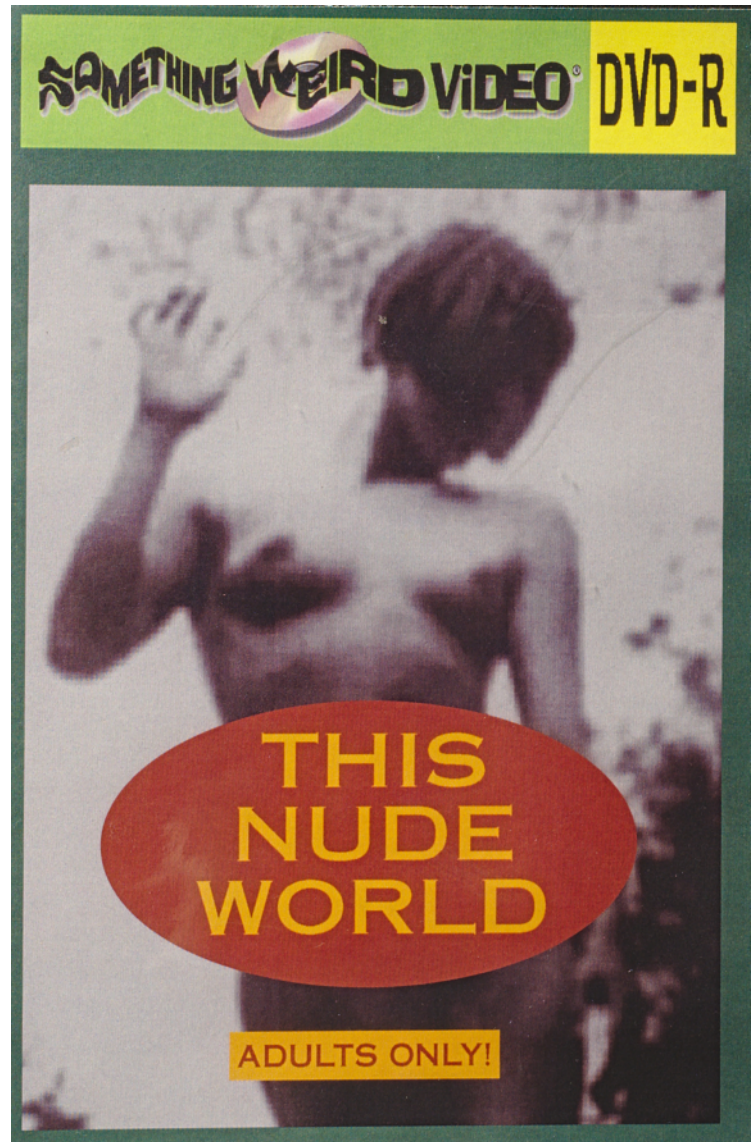
First, we are given a little history: “Benjamin Franklin, Thoreau, and Walt Whitman were all enthusiastic believers in the practice of nakedness” we’re informed. A quick search on Google shows (with supporting documentation) that Good Ol’ Ben often wrote and composed in the nude, Thoreau would often take what he called “air baths” by wandering naked through the woods, and Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* is replete with references to communing with nature while unclothed. It’s nice to know that this documentary isn’t just whistling Dixie.

After the scroll, we are given several aerial shots of the ruins of Ancient Greece and informed by the narrator that it and other past civilizations often “revered” nudity. While this is true, the film neglects to mention that the focus of Greece’s reverence for the nude human form almost exclusively focused on the male figure, the female being almost an afterthought in the arts, and especially the overall culture, which by today’s standards would actually be considered chauvinistic (women could not vote and, in many ways, were barely above slaves in the social pecking order). But this film is not about the democracies of antiquity, so let’s move on.

We then switch to New York City and a brief discourse contrasting the (presumably) more in-touch-with-Nature ancient peoples against their modern brethren, who stay inside dusty office buildings or dwell amongst the “gloomy chasms” between said structures. While I agree being trapped in an office, or even one’s home, for innumerable hours is detrimental to one’s health; I must object to the streets of New York or another major city being called “gloomy”. Fans of architecture, such as myself, see the beauty of the structures surrounding them when wandering downtown New York or Chicago. But, once more, that’s not what this film is about...

From NYC we board a boat and set sail down the river to make our way to our first “nudist” stop, Camp Olympia, located in the Catskill Mountains about 75 miles from the Big Apple. During this trip mention is made of Rip Van Winkle (whose tale is set in this area) being potentially surprised by such nudist shenanigans going on in his back yard. This is an example of the mild humor to be found scattered about the narration of *This Nude World*. We are also informed of the

[Continued on next page...]



[Continued from previous page.]

difference between the members-only clubs and the more inclusive resorts; although, it is quickly mentioned, the resorts, despite being open to the public, do have strict access rules to be followed for admittance (three letters of reference, etc.).

Camp Olympia, as shown here, operates as an actual camp. Residents are woken early in the morning by a hand cranked air siren in order to practice various forms of exercise and to commune with Nature. There are shots of people playing in a body of water, leading to the narrator (a certain Leo Donnelly) to speculate on the merits of swimming with or without swim trunks – and the “no trunks” crowd appears to have it! A couple things to note about the scenes shot here: it’s mostly men, interestingly enough, and the shots of the naked revelers are careful not to show genitals or breasts, so if (mostly) male butts are your thing, this portion of the film is for you!

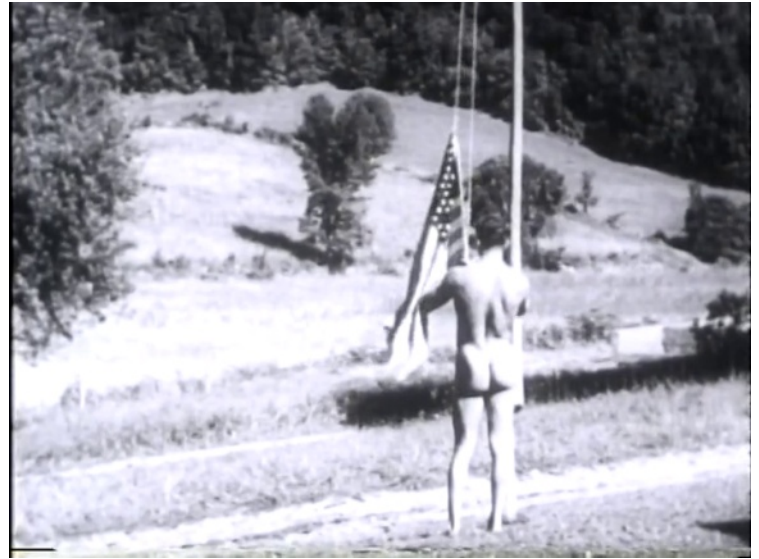
We then leave the United States via ocean cruiser to visit Paris before going to our next destination... but not before we are saddled with filler in the form of shots of Parisian nightlife and fairly empty promises of glimpses into the more risqué venues of the City of Light. These venues are Club Lido – famous for having a large pool used by both guests and entertainers – and an Artists’ Ball, where Bohemian ladies display their bare breasts during a procession (oh, my!). And since we stayed up all night partying with the Parisians, we stay up past daybreak for a couple moments’ worth of filler shots of people shopping at the morning market for their vegetables and bread.

Soon enough we reach our next destination: Iles de Naturistes at Villenes sur Seine (try saying that five time fast!). Iles de Naturistes, founded by brothers Drs. Gaston & Andre Durville, in their interview clip, are quick to explain that their resort is “similar to, if not exactly the same as the Nudists” and that they practice “Nudism in a modified form”.

By “modified form” they mean “not nude”, in my humble opinion. The “naked men” are wearing skimpy (for the times) bottoms and the women are wearing bikini-like outfits, which is interesting because the bikini was supposedly unveiled unto the world by Ursula Andress in the James Bond film Dr. No in the Sixties.

A key aspect of life at Iles de Naturistes is physicality. Everyone participates in vigorous calisthenics followed by bountiful displays of leap frog, tossing around the medicine ball, wrestling, and plenty of dancing. While fresh air in the great outdoors accompanying wholesome activities such as those listed above certainly fit in with naturist philosophy, the fact is this is not “Nudism in a modified form” simply for the fact it is lacking in one key area; and that is nudity itself. One has to wonder if this section of the film was added to round out the film to feature length without relying on an exorbitant amount of padding.

But we then move, without much fanfare, to the Sparta Club in Normandy, founded and lead by M. Kienne de Mongeot. Here we have actual nudists behind the walls and locked doors of a country chateau. With the exception of



[Continued on next page...]

[Continued from previous page.]

members and guests required to be clothed while dining, and allowed to be naked only at certain areas of the club, this particular place appears to be true to the ideals of early nudist culture. We see more exercises and even a Russian master of Interpretive Dance performing with his Chinese protege, which, disappointingly, they did while clothed. I can't help but feel it would have been beautiful if they performed as naturists.

Then, suddenly, at the 31:42 mark we see a shot of female full frontal nudity. There is no context to this shot, and it feels spliced in. The woman, who is in an outdoor setting, walks towards the camera and then away before we jump right back to scenes from the Sparta Club. Quite jarring and out of place for this film, if you ask me! One has to wonder about the intentions of this addition: was it to give something to serve the more prurient interests of the audience? This is a fair assumption as the nudity in this film is comprised mostly of butts (not that there's anything wrong with that). One also has to wonder how this snippet in the movie made it past the censors of the day. I suspect it was a much later add-in to make the movie sell more viewings.

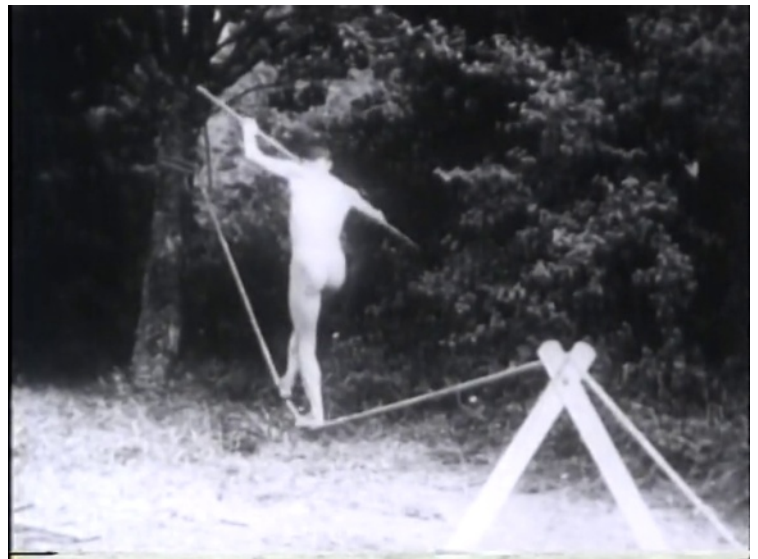
In any case, we close out our time at Club Sparta with more calisthenics before moving on to our final destination of our tour of various communities.

Our next stop is Germany, where we are treated to more filler, this time of scenes from Berlin's nightlife, focusing heavily on beer gardens, where we view many a kraut guzzling brew from gigantic steins. And then... more scrolling text, where we're told German nudism is far more egalitarian than its counterpart in France, and we are also introduced to Adolph Koch and his Friköpurkulturschule, which we will hereon refer to as the "schule" for simplicity's sake. After the text scroll we see Herr Koch and his rather pretty wife, Ilke. Adolph, we are told, does not speak English, so he pages through a book while Ilke, who does, explains how the schule was designed for the benefit of German youth and their physical welfare.

This "physical welfare" consists of naked children doing simple, repetitive movements to the beat of a tom-tom. We also get a view of adults doing the same. It should be noted this is all happening indoors, which is unusual for the naturist movement.

But it's not just these movements the schule promotes: about once a month the Youth's Municipal Bathing Pool in Berlin closes off to the public for the schule's exclusive use. Incredibly, over 1,000 members gather at the pool to dive in and revel – it's an awesome site to see, and worth borrowing this film just to see the spectacle!

During the warmer months, we soon learn, the schule spends its time in a park they rent from a nearby airfield. The families live in tents and practice what is essentially communal living: pooling money together to buy the milk and bread for the day, working together to assemble the meals and eat together, and so on and so forth. But one thing in this place which has not changed is gender roles (not surprising for the time in which this was made): the narrator makes a comment on how the women may be on a naturist vacation, but there's



[Continued on next page...]

[Continued from previous page.]

still work to be done! Such as washing the baby and cleaning the “house” which in this case is a tent. Kids are expected to eat a hearty breakfast of oatmeal and spinach; which means Lucky Charms had not yet been invented. Afterwards there are more calisthenics and people busying themselves with the upkeep of the camp and gathering of foodstuffs for the meals, which in the evening presented in the film consists of rice with a sauce made from wild berries. And then we watch the members of the camp head home from the weekend, spent and full of good cheer.

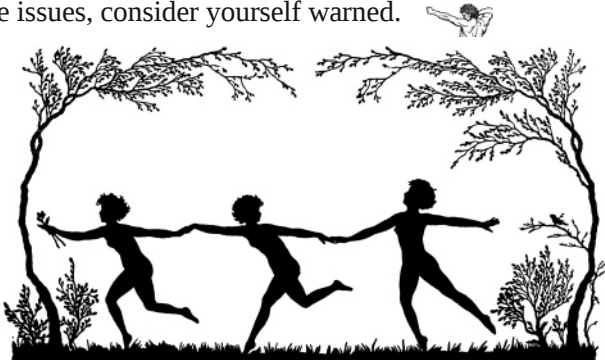
This Nude World ends with yet another scrolling text, in which the filmmakers proclaim they have merely presented the facts and they leave it up to us, the viewers, to decide what to make of these “nudists” shown to us in a frank, matter-of-fact style.

All in all, I recommend its film because of its historical value. While the folks at Ilas de Naturistes are not, in fact, nudists, the rest of the examples shown do appear to embrace the early philosophy of Naturism in various forms. While many of us are now used to visiting resorts where people mostly seem to lounge around pools, tan, and more often than not drink, it's nice to see where the movement started, with an eye on healthy living and the physical betterment of the self.

It's also worth noting that the liner notes of the DVD box, penned by a certain “François Pinky”, are far snarkier in their treatment of this film that I have been with this review. Certainly worth a read.

This Nude World comes with two extras: *Back to Nature*, a short compilation (sans narrative) of scenes of various activities at a series of naturist resorts, and *Expose of the Nudist Racket*.

Expose deserves a few words. While presented in a “documentary” style similar to that of *This Nude World*, *Expose* does not treat its subject matter with the same respect and relative seriousness. Instead, as we can see from the outset with the opening text scroll, this short is meant to be a light-hearted look at the movement. And, for the most part, it is, but at a dark cost: body shaming. Intercut with scenes of bare chested women playing leap frog and focusing on bare butts and chests, there is a recurring gag concerning what we would today call a “plus size” woman wandering among and participating with her more shapely and petite peers. The narrator never misses a chance to make fun of her. One has to wonder if woman in question was aware she was to be the butt of jokes and, if so, how she felt about it once she saw the actual film in post-production. If you watch this short and have body image issues, consider yourself warned.



A Naturist Song Competition

By Shannon Lewis

The *Eurovision Song Contest*, which began in 1956 and is the longest-running television show in history, has inspired numerous other singing competitions, including such series as *American Idol*. But in the early 1970s, France held at least two little-known competitions dedicated to naturist songs. The competitions were organized by the Fédération française de naturisme (FFN) under the musical direction of Emil Bouthiaux. Interestingly, the tiny French record label Regence released recordings of the top four songs on a 45 RPM vinyl record called “Chansons Naturistes” or “Naturist Songs.”

The liner notes of the record state “the songs on this record won first prizes at the two competitions for naturist expression songs organized in Paris” and that “the jury was made up of eminent personalities from radio and television, the arts and literature scene, and the naturist world,” but no names are provided. Four songs are included on the record.

The winner of the competition, “La Dame Nue De Chenonceaux” (“The Naked Lady of Chenoneaux”) performed by Henry Bernard, with lyrics by Léo Stephen, is said to transport the listener “to the time of Diane de Poitiers,” the mistress of King Henri II of France. “Les Naturistes” (“The Naturists”) the other “gold medal winner” is performed by Les Gymnopodes, a trio from Belgium led by composer and singer Louis Noël.

The other songs on the record are “La Première Fois” (“The First Time”) and “Saison” (“Seasons”) which are described as “charming melodies, accompanied by fresh poems by Monique and Bernard Plumer” who “interpret them themselves, with great simplicity and delicacy.”

Composer Emil Bouthiaux is credited as producer, and is noted to be a member of the Commission Artistique/Artistic Commission of the FFN. Bouthiaux also composed a 1975 B-side song called “Faites L'Amour Non La Guerre” (“Make Love Not War”) for French vocalist Flora, and a handful of other songs for relatively obscure French artists. Otherwise, very little information exists about the competitions and the participants. Even the cover artist for this extremely rare record is uncredited.



Rise of the Machines

By Doug Hickok

There's been a rather interesting shift in the art world over the last several months. What if you could type a description of an image, and suddenly a computer creates it for you in seconds. No illustrator, painter, or photographer needed.

Prior to August 2022, there were two major Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms that used proprietary code and cloud-based subscriptions for the service. These were Midjourney, and the more popular and smarter DALL-E. At the end of August, an AI on the same caliber as DALL-E was released as open-source, by the name of "Stable Diffusion". This allowed everyone to start using AI to generate images for free. Artists went into a frenzy, and many big art and stock photo sites like Getty Images have completely banned the AI-generated art.

Artists fear being drowned out by the flood of AI art. Artists also question the copyright legality of using their images to train the AI, and that small pieces of their art may appear in the generated images. There's concerns about using the technology to create "deep fake" content, as photo-realistic images can depict just about anything. I've already generated images of Pope Francis, Donald Trump, Joe Biden, and Santa Claus each enjoying a nude beach.

Stable Diffusion is trained using 5 billion text-image pairs, and it took about \$600,000 worth of Amazon cloud services to crunch the data into a final data set. To get it running, you'll need the data set (about 5 gigs) and a few gigs of software that uses it. If you have a gamer PC with 10+ gigs of GPU, you can generate images in seconds. If you don't, like me, it takes about 10 minutes per image. Most of the time the images are just "not right". Stable Diffusion has a lot of trouble with correct anatomy (like extra or missing limbs, messed up faces, and bodies that just aren't accurate). Sometimes things are just unrealistic or off target. It takes several tries to get something worth keeping. Photo-realistic results are tougher to get than illustrations, paintings, and other artistic styles.

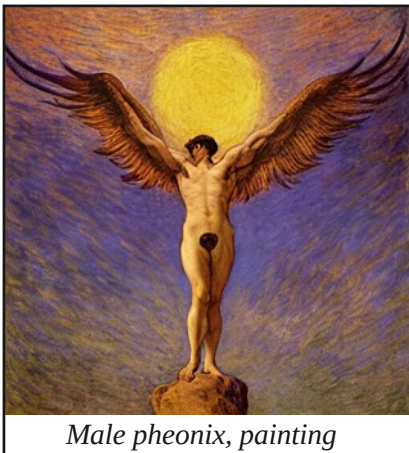
In the June 2021 *Pages of History* newsletter, I asked readers for stock photos that we could use. Not many came in. Back in the June 2020 newsletter, I wrote about Fidus as I introduced the new masthead graphic, and in the April 2022 newsletter I doubled-down on using the 100+ year old public domain artwork already in the NEF Research Library. Going forward, you may be seeing AI-generated artwork among these pages as well. Believe it or not, but some of it is pretty good.



Photorealistic tropical beach



Couple on a nude beach



Male pheonix, painting



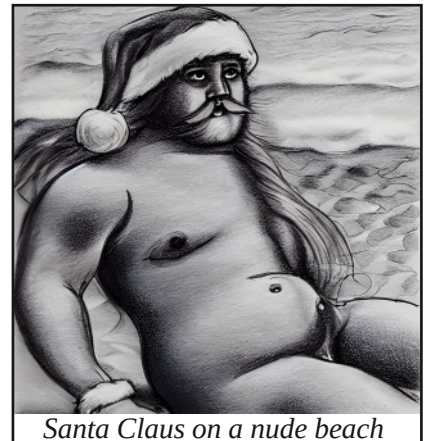
Nude on pattern, line art



Tintype of Abraham Lincoln holding a jackalope



Santa Claus on a nude beach



Santa Claus on a nude beach



Heavenly angel, woodcut

Caption This!

This ongoing series highlights a time when cameras were allowed and cheesy photographs were encouraged. (See the May 2021 newsletter for more details.) All photos are from items held at the NEF Research Library.

About this Photograph

This cover of *Sunshine & Health* (June 1955) certainly brings to mind *Green Acres*. What might she be saying on the phone?

Now it's your turn to Caption This! ➡

Send your caption ideas to:

Doug.Hickok@NaturistEducation.org

Please include:

- ▶ Your name that we can print if yours is selected. (Full name, or first name, or nickname, or anonymous...whatever you prefer)
- ▶ The type of caption (Title above, Caption below, Speech Bubbles, or a mix of all these).
- ▶ The caption wording, or who said/thought what.

Winners get fame in the next newsletter!



Like this newsletter? Sign up today and be notified each month!

Newsletters provide you with original content about:

- ▶ the activist efforts of the Naturist Action Committee,
- ▶ the educational & public outreach efforts of the Naturist Education Foundation, &
- ▶ the preservation of naturist history by the NEF Research Library.

Be in the loop with the **FREE** newsletter!

Sign up on the newsletter page:

<http://naturisteducation.org/library/newsletters.html>



By signing up, you'll also get occasional NAC Action Alerts, Advisories, and Updates too.

NAC is on Facebook and Twitter too!
<https://Facebook.com/NaturistAction/>
<https://Twitter.com/NaturistAction/>

Like Our Efforts? Here's a great way to help out:

Please support NAC with its mission of naturist activism set forth by Lee Baxandall. NAC relies entirely on donations from generous naturists like you, now more than ever. Donations are accepted online or by mail.

NaturistAction.org/donate

NAC
P.O. Box 132
Oshkosh, WI 54903



Please support NEF with its mission of naturist education and public outreach set forth by Lee Baxandall. NEF is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and all donations to NEF are tax-deductible. Donations are accepted online or by mail.

NaturistEducation.org/donate

NEF
P.O. Box 132
Oshkosh, WI 54903

