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

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MoonGroove Keeps Growing

By Luke S.

MoonGroove is a clothing optional music festival taking place in western Pennsylvania in mid-July. The eclectic festival features a range of psychedelic artists, funky vendors, professional lighting, sound, and music. It is in its fifth year, driven by a group of friends who had long planned nude volleyball tournaments. The event features three stages and a wide range of music from a variety of artists (clothed and non). Headed by Eli Hunter Porr and a group of dedicated volunteers, the festival has grown from a small gathering to an event with over 850 attendees. This year the festival moves from Penn Sylvan Health Club (PSHS) near Reading, to White Thorn Lodge outside of Pittsburgh. The event has steadily expanded over the past three years, outgrowing the grounds at Penn Sylvan.

Prior to attending the festival, I was skeptical about its impact. Maybe one too many Jimmy Buffett cover bands while a bunch of aging naturists sit poolside left me jaded. Yet, the MoonGroove crew brings fresh energy, bold music, and a diverse crowd to a traditional naturist venue. Porr and company have a knack for welcoming first timers and creating an environment where anyone can feel comfortable. The event creates a middle ground where those curious about naturism can acclimate at their own pace, and a fun festival culture creates a carefree environment where people aren't shamed or ogled for stripping down. The crowd is refreshingly more diverse than any I've seen at a run-of-the-mill resort on a normal day, and it gives me hope that organized naturism can transform from an aging country club like atmosphere to a more dynamic and inclusive atmosphere.



Find NAC and NEF this summer at:

MoonGroove

GNI Gathering

TNSF Western Gathering

TNSF Eastern Gathering

AANR Midwest Convention

AANR Convention

...and probably more!

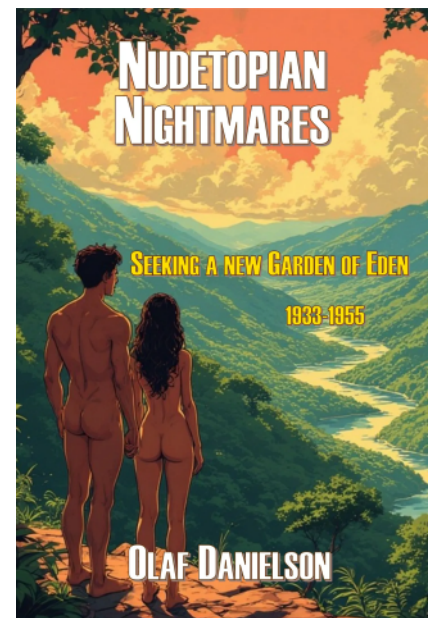
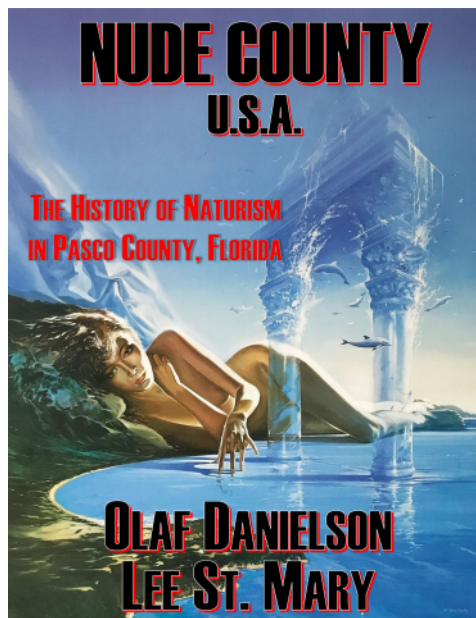


Exploring Nudist History

On April 1st, NEF Board Member Brad McDonald (Olaf Danielson) gave a one hour lecture to around fifty people at the West Pasco Historical Society in New Port Richey, Florida. He discussed with the largely textile crowd what the Naturist Education Foundation did and that there was a system of Nudist Research Libraries in North America. He then went on to discuss the history of nudism in Pasco County. It was a supportive crowd.



Olaf has a few copies of his and Lee St. Mary's book "Nude County USA, the history of naturism in Pasco County, Florida." They may let it go out of print this summer. This 340 page 8.5 x 11 inch book filled with many photos is the definitive history of all the resort and nudist locations in the county, and also discusses how nudism came to Pasco County. It is available for \$40 while "Nudetopian Nightmares" is \$20 plus shipping. Email Olaf at: storolaf@yahoo.com for details. Both are also available on Ebay.



Taking On The Foreign Films

By Doug Hickok

The NEF Research Library has several foreign films that, quite frankly, are a challenge to do anything with. There are three main categories:

- ▶ Foreign films on DVD with no or broken subtitles.
- ▶ NTSC (American) VHS without subtitles.
- ▶ PAL (European) VHS without subtitles.

After finding the right tools, and finding the right PAL-capable VCR, I've been able to work through these. ALL of our foreign films are available for digital loan, complete with English subtitles.

The PAL VHS

If you've done any shopping for a working VCR, it's shocking how expensive these can be. You'll be lucky to find a regular consumer-grade VCR for regular American VHS tapes for under \$100.

Shopping for a specialty VCR that can play European tapes in America is easily around \$700 for one that works. There just aren't many around, and if they work, they've probably been refurbished. Even broken ones sell for more than \$100.

After watching eBay for a couple months, there was a broken Aiwa HV-MX1 for a "buy it now" price just under \$100. (This is a really good VCR that can play both NTSC and PAL format, and convert between them.) The seller said it "powers on", and came from an estate. In my mind, "powers on" means there's no serious electrical issues (like lightning damage or aged capacitors). Coming from an estate means that other VCR refurbishers haven't scavenged the good parts from it and resold the rest on eBay. Figuring that I could fix whatever was wrong with it, I jumped on buying it.

"Powers on" was a rather generous statement. The LCD screen lit up with the VCR in "off" mode with none of the buttons doing anything. The reason? It was in an error mode because three belts were so old they had literally melted off.

After ordering a new set of belts, and after tons of cleaning to get the melted rubber off (and all the dust and gunk off the important stuff), it sprang to life! Time to put it to use.

Plan A – RF Tap Points

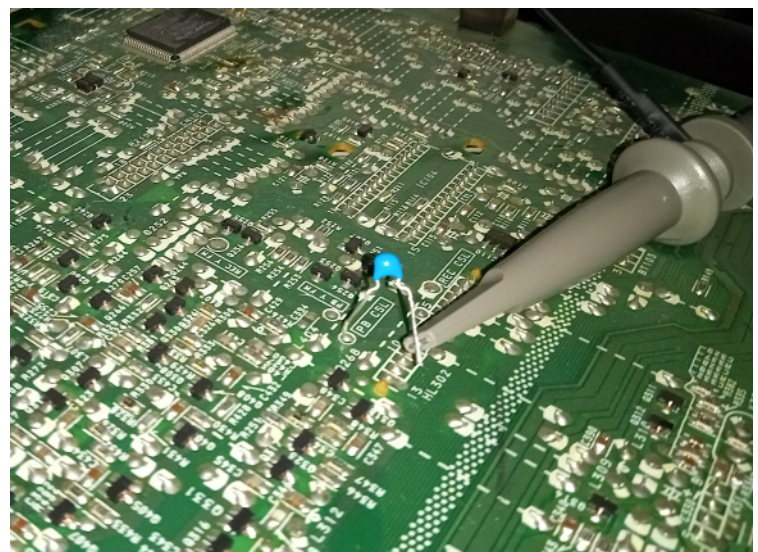
See the July 2024 issue of this newsletter for an overview of the "mad scientist" method of preserving VHS tapes. In short, I'm tapping into the raw signal (RF) as close as possible from the VCR head as it reads the VHS tape, and then using software to interpret the signal into a video. Keeping the raw



[The Aiwa VCR playing a PAL VHS with PAL output.]



[New set of belts that drive the loading, unloading, and playback functions of the VCR.]



[Checking one of several potential RF tap points.]

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signal is the best method available for preserving VHS tapes.

After a lot of poking around, and spending \$15 on a service manual with schematics, I concluded that it's not possible to tap the RF signal in any meaningful way. The VCR uses a single chip to combine the RF signal from the two drum heads and the same chip splits the RF into the luminance and chrominance channels. There is no single tap point with all of this combined. I found an excellent tap for luminance, and thought about playing the video twice to capture luminance and chrominance separately, but there was no good chrominance tap. I gave up on Plan A.

Plan B – The DVD Recorder

The next best way to digitize a VHS tape is using a DVD recorder. It's capable of capturing every frame, but with some loss of quality as the VCR processes the signal to the RCA output and as the DVD recorder processes and compresses the video. (There's no loss in ripping the DVD afterwards, but I found that it did some weird stretching of the audio channel.)

This didn't work for all the videos. A couple of the VHS tapes were low enough quality that the horizontal sync would wiggle a bit, and the built-in PAL-to-NTSC converter would completely screw up the video output. One of the videos, I recorded to DVD three times and was able to piece together a fairly clean copy from those three DVDs.

Plan C – USB Capture Device

I hate using the mid-range USB capture device that I have. (Professional ones are pretty good, but they're also like \$800.) While mine is better than most, it still skips frames and has visible compression artifacts. The results are certainly watchable though, and best of all, it can handle PAL format directly, unlike the DVD recorder.

The VCR could play the PAL tapes in the native PAL format as best as it could, and the USB capture device could do its work as best as it could. Not ideal, but not bad either.

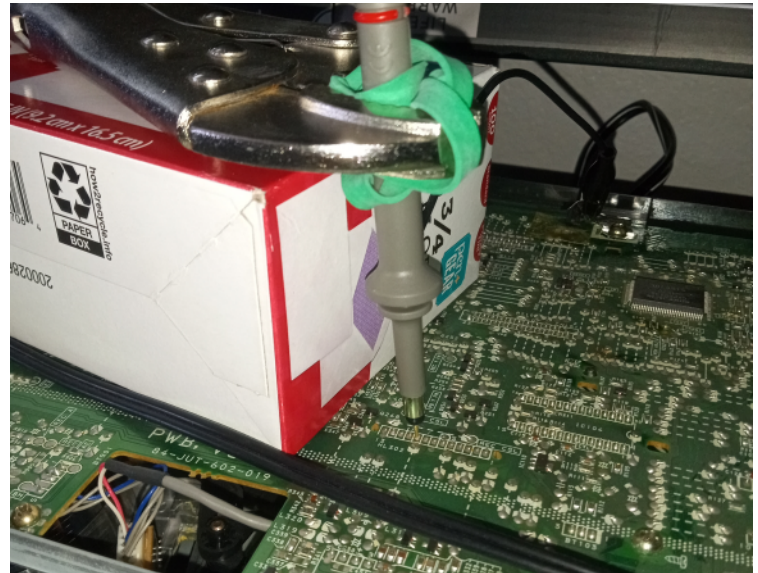
Plan D – Sending it in.

If Plans A through C all failed to deliver a watchable film, I had plans of sending it to a professional to see what they could get from it. Luckily, the most important historical films were done with the Plan B method. Only a couple films fell to Plan C, and those aren't really naturist films so I think it's fine.

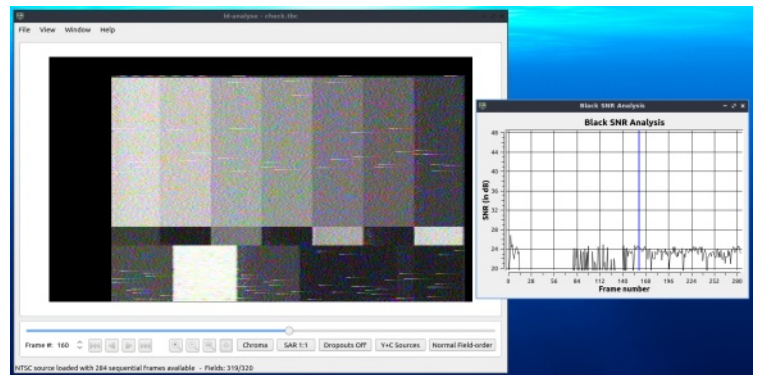
NEFRL Makes Good Use of AI

I found a wonderful, free, offline tool called "whisper". It uses an AI model to transcribe audio files to text.

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[Checking a RF tap point on the ribbon connector that goes to the VCR video head drum assembly.]



[Weak signal. Should be 30+, measuring about 22, no color.]



[NTSC output for the "Plan B" DVD recorder.]

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One of my many projects has been digitizing a few suitcases of cassette tapes. I've already used "whisper" to bulk-transcribe the audio to plain text. It works pretty well for that. The audio track to a film is a different story – there's a lot of noise between the talking. Whisper seems to be made for this. One special feature is that it can directly output time-synchronized closed captions, making it incredibly easy to add the closed captions back on the video.

A second special feature, and what I'd consider the most powerful, is that it can translate audio in most foreign languages directly to English. So you can play an audio file in German and watch it instantly spit out English text. Pretty amazing stuff!

There's a few problems with the output though. First is that it tries to handle noises like "[birds chirping]" and "[tires squealing]" and "[music]". Second is that it tries to process every part of audio, so if there's no dialog it's totally guessing at what the noise is, or just putting a generic word like "the" to span the couple seconds. Third, and with any AI, is that it will miss things and get other things wrong, sometimes even repeating lines a few times. I had to make a pass through the closed caption files to remove things that seemed wrong.

All of the foreign films at the NEF Research Library, if they didn't have subtitles already, they do now!



[Using the "Plan C" method via a USB capture device (which is out of view behind the VCR) and recording using "OBS Studio".]

[Above: The AI-powered "whisper" software listens to German speech and outputs English text, with the color indicating the confidence of the transcription. Whisper is running the "medium" model, which fits on the 3 gigabyte GPU that I have.]



[Left: The final output with the generated Closed Captions.]

Now Available for Digital Loan:

Asset Tag	Title	Language
video631	Das Lichtkleig: Die Visionen des Paul Zimmermann	German (PAL)
video217	Dirndljagd am Worthersee	German (PAL)
video748	FKK Spieldauer	English (PAL)
video720	Hans Ertls Expedition zur unberuhrten Zauberwelt des Amazonas	German (PAL)
video791	Sexy Sports	German (PAL)
	The following have new subtitles:	
video239	Le Gendarme De Saint-Tropez	French
video240	Lepota Poroka	Slovenian
video246	Luz del Fuego	Spanish
video250	Mon curé chez les nudists	French
video260	A Natividade Solitária (Luz del Fuego)	Italian
video277	Nudisti per Casoi	Italian
video279	O Homen Nu	Dutch
video317	Adventures with a Naked Boy	Slovak
video318	Point de Fuite	French
video544	History of Naturism	German
video690	Goloe Obshchestovo	Russian

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- ▶ the activist efforts of the Naturist Action Committee,
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- ▶ the preservation of naturist history by the NEF Research Library.

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