

BEACH BUZZ

September – October 2001

Volume 2, Number 4

a publication of B.E.A.C.H.E.S. Foundation and its Chapters
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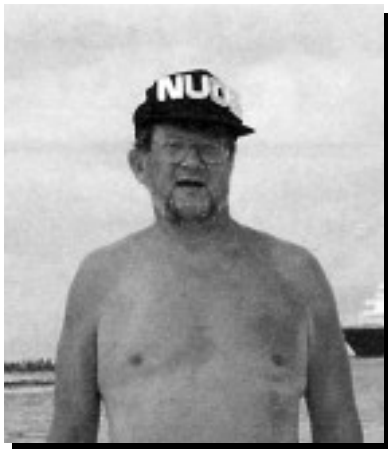
Vacation Spots for People Who've Got Nothing to Hide

By **Cara Buckley**

The Miami Herald

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Nothing to hike, golf or kayak in your birthday suit? The Nudist Society has a solution for you: They've compiled a list of the top 15 resorts amenable to the nudist traveler, and are featuring them in a video,



Lee Baxandall, author of The World Guide to Nude Beaches & Resorts, president of The Nudist Society, and originator of National Nude Recreation Week.

Vacation Naturally – Destinations.

Florida, Colorado and Hawaii each made the list twice, California three times. The most frequently cited destination was also the northernmost – the Canadian province of Ontario, with four destinations listed.

“The reason to go is to shed clothes and be free. It's a very effective way of de-stressing,” videographer

Michael Cooney said, from the Naturists' Society's headquarters in Oshkosh, Wis. “To make the list, we asked whether the destination was worth getting on an airplane and flying to.”

Canadian clubs scored highly, he said, because they are custom-made and boast a twist. “One has a dance floor that comes down and covers the pool,” Cooney said.

To assemble his list of show-all resorts – and Cooney scouted hundreds – destinations had to offer services and amusements beyond run-of-the-mill nudist colonies.

To wit, the **Paradise Lakes Clothing Option Resort** in Land o' Lakes, Fla., fills 70 acres and features a 70-foot Jacuzzi that never closes, canoeing, a lake, five tennis courts, miniature golf, an exercise room, a nightclub, three bars and a beauty salon.

Cypress Cove Nudist Resort in Kissimmee features 300 acres of wilderness, spa services, golf, and a poolside bar and grill known as “Cheeks.”

South Florida nudist clubs such as the **Seminole Health Club** in Davie, or **Sunnier Palms** in Fort Pierce, cater to local members and don't fit the bill as destination resorts, Cooney said. “We had to exclude a lot of nice places because they didn't hit the top tier,” he said.

Still, nudists nationwide doff their hats to Miami-Dade's **Haulover**

Beach, which is the site of this year's National Nudist Weekend [held July 14-15, 2001].

“Haulover is a textbook example of how it can be done,” Cooney said. “There's parking, lifeguards; it's a tourist attraction. It's win-win for everybody.”

While not the most obvious group to court, nudists are a sizable and marketable bunch. There currently are 50,000 card carrying members of the American Association for Nude Recreation, according to its spokeswoman, Carolyn Hawkins. There were only 21,000 members in 1980. The Nudist Society, which also favors shedding clothes, has 27,000 members. Most are baby boomers, between 40 and 60 years old, and entire nudist families are “very common.”

And their economic clout is substantial: some spend up to \$150 a night on nudist resort rooms. Paradise Lakes has a membership of 6,200, a payroll of \$1.6 million and 80,000 visitors a year, said its spokesman, Bob Moore. It's the second-biggest business in Pasco County, according to the Chamber of Commerce there, and was named business of the year for 2001.

“They won by a landslide. Their economic impact is astronomical,” said Kathy Dunkley, executive director of Pasco's Chamber of Commerce. “Not only that, they're doing a lot of charity work. What they



do for the community is wonderful.”

Paradise Lakes is toying with expanding southward, perhaps near Haulover Beach.

Miami-Dade’s tourist board said they were game.

“We welcome all infrastructure, as long as it’s legal,” said William Talbert III, president of the Greater Miami Visitors and Convention Bureau.

Paradise’s owners tried to open in South Florida about three years ago, when they found a faltering hotel in Fort Lauderdale that they thought was ideal.

“There was a very positive marketing response,” Moore said. “But as soon as the city fathers heard about us, they started imposing and blocking us with code requirements. If we could not have an agreement with local politicians, we don’t want to be there. We want to be where people want us.”

Spokespeople for Fort Lauderdale did not recall the incident, but pointed to the city’s code of ordinances, which, unlike the city of Miami’s,



Paradise Lakes Clothing Optional Resort in Land o’ Lakes, FL has a 70-foot jacuzzi that never closes.

prohibits alcohol from being sold where there is full nudity.

Still, “clothing optional” proponents insist that on their turf, alcohol mixed with the Full Monty does not lead to lewd behavior.

“We police behavior,” said Cooney.

“Swinger culture is not part of the culture, and not tolerated. The behavior or norms are in most cases what you would expect at a Holiday Inn.” ☆