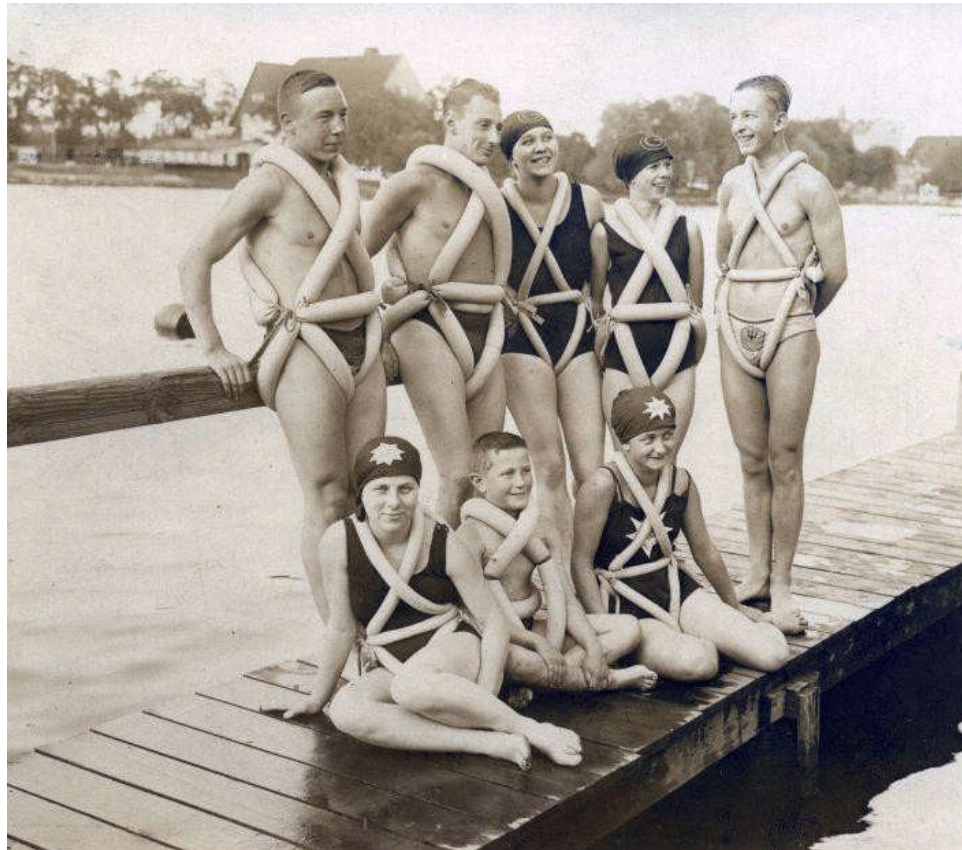


# Snakes!



“Eww, it feels like I’m wearing *snakes!*” complained Margie, co-captain of the Dinklaker High School Swim Team. She was referring to the new Acme Body Tube, a lightweight personal flotation device that, according to the manufacturer, “provides the wearer 40% more freedom of movement than other inflatable life vests.” The way it tightly wrapped around the torso, however, would give any ophidiophobe pause. But the coach’s brother-in-law’s stepfather *was* the regional distributor, so it naturally became part of the team’s habiliments. By the time of the Statewide Junior Varsity Swim Meet, the eight swimmers had gotten used to the new PFDs, and Margie’s lap times had even improved. That all changed when Lenny – that prankster – substituted *real* snakes for her body tube just before Margie’s big race. It marked the first time in memory that a human had actually shed her own skin.