

NORTH AMERICAN REGION
CALL TO BE FAMILY
DBA Lutheran Marriage Encounter
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June 24-26, 2018

Dear Lovers,

This package provides the minutes of the NAR Board Meeting that was held June 24 to 26, 2018 at in Lombard, IL.

The minutes record the proceedings of the meeting. We attempt to avoid repeating the contents of the prepared District and Staff reports, so please read the entire package for completeness.

Please Note: The posted reports are prepared before the meeting for presentation and discussion. Concerns, requests and proposals may be modified during the meeting, so the reports attached to the minutes may not reflect decisions of the board. Matters of consensus are recorded in the minutes.

Next NAR Board Meeting: The next NAR Board meeting will be a virtual meeting, January 26, 2019, beginning at 11AM EST. The next in person meeting will be held, June 21-23, 2019 in St. Louis, MO, hotel to be determined.

The **NAR Roster** reflects the changes to the NAR Board, as of the date of the meetings.

The **Distribution List** for these minutes is as follows: NAR Lay & Clergy Execs, NAR Staff, District Lay & Clergy Execs, District Presenting Couple Coordinators (PCCs), District Finance Couples, Area Lay & Clergy Contact Couples, Area Presenting Couple Coordinators (APCCs), European Region Lay & Clergy Execs, ILME Chair Couple, Canadian Facilitators, and Canadian Finance Couple.

To accommodate distribution of the minutes, the contents will be organized into several sections for easier downloading and printing. The minutes are available to all presenting couples, and are on the www.ILME.org website.

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Sunday, June 24, 2018

Meetings began at 7:00 PM.

Attending NAR Board Members – Rufes, Kasts, Prestons, Hartmans, Larsons, Guilfoiles, Heins', Fells, Leinickes, Ricks'

Guests – Teuschers

Opening Service – led by Ed and Emily Kast on 'Why Male and Female', with Bible readings.

Dialogue questions: Husbands, tell your wife what her female qualities contribute to your marriage...and how you feel about those qualities. Wives, tell your husband what his male qualities contribute to your marriage...and how you feel about those qualities.

Open sharing: Introduce yourselves, share your position on the NAR board and share 3 or more qualities about your spouse.

Beyond the Box – led by Steve and Sue Rufe

- All attendees were given a set of colored cards to use in voting for ideas posted on the screen. They were asked to read the screen and hold up the color of card that represented their vote.
 - Green Card: I love this idea!!!
 - Yellow Card: Let's explore this!
 - Orange Card: Hmm...Not sure about this one, but I don't want to dismiss it outright.
 - Red Card: Umm...no thank you.

- Votes were tallied. Those that receive many positive votes will be explored further.

Closing for the evening – meet with prayer partners: Hartman – Fell, Preston – Kast, Rufe – Heins, Larson – Leinicke, Guilfoile – Ricks.

Monday, June 25, 2018 – begin at 9:00 AM

Opening prayer – led by Ted and Marty Hartman

Call for approval of meeting minutes from January 2018 virtual meeting. Larry Guilfoile moved to approve, Ted Hartman seconded. **Unanimously approved with no changes.**

District Reports:

These oral reports are meant to mention items not in the written reports, which were published for pre-read, and to answer questions from the written reports.

- District I – David and Jean Fell reported that pay ahead Experiences have worked in their area. They have one new presenting couple that came from another faith which is no longer holding Experiences.

- District II – John and Connie Heins held an outreach Marriage Encounter in Indianapolis, IN which went well. They are working to get a journey group going for those couples and planning an October ME Experience there. One possible presenting couple from the Experience. A 1st set

presenting couple has moved from Nebraska to Quincy, IL. They are working to get them in contact with area couples. They are looking to hold an Experience in Wisconsin, which has been idle for a while. One couple is writing 1st set talks in Rockford. Presentations are being done at seminary and pastor conferences.

- District III – Larry and Coke Guilfoile report that Minnesota is planning a Marriage Encounter in St. Cloud for April 2019. Also planning for Wausau, WI for October 2019 and a possible non-weekend Experience in June 2019.
- District IV – Mick and Sandy Preston reported that the June Marriage Encounter held in Phoenix, AZ was successful as a pre-pay Experience. Couples paid their application fee, then paid for their hotel and food. On Sunday they were asked to pay it forward and received an average of \$394 per couple. 6 couples attended. Using this method, you do not need to have a large number attending to cover expenses.

Deeper Report;

- Dave and Elsa Larson reported that no new Deeper Experiences are planned, due to lack of new couples writing.

NARPCC Report:

- Larry and Coke Guilfoile referred to the posted report. Reminder, all admin couples on Marriage Encounters need to send post Experience details to NAR Finance Couple, Dean and Marcia Redman.

Break

Media/Publicity Report:

- Craig and Connie Leinicke report that, of contacts on the GodLovesMarriage website, 76% are new visitors with an average looking at 2.5 pages;
- Most are on mobile devices rather than desktop;
- Most get to the site by generic search, next frequent by typing the address, and then by referrals (other sites with links to our site);
- Try to get your church to add a link from their site to GLM site;
- e-Blasts go out for each Marriage Encounter Experience;
- Please be sure the Leinickes have current lists for churches in your areas;
- On Facebook, promote ME Experiences by joining the event on the GLM Facebook page; this stimulates interest.

Joining the meeting via video – Dean and Marcia Redman

Finance Report:

- Dean and Marcia Redman remind all ME Experience admin couples to submit Experience reports to NAR Finance Couple as they happen; please do not wait until the end of the year.
- When planning an Encounter with other Faith Expressions, it should first be determined if the Encounter is Jointly Sponsored or if one Faith Expression is sponsoring the Encounter and other faith expressions are supporting the Encounter with presenters or other support couples. If the Encounter is jointly sponsored, the Encounter finances (income and expenses) and statistics are to be shared equally between the sponsoring Faith Expressions. If one Faith Expression is sponsoring the Encounter but inviting guest presenters or support couples of other FEs, the sponsoring FE is responsible for all finances and the full reporting of statistics. There are options; just be sure everyone's understanding is the same, and that NAR Finance Couple is informed.
- Finance Review/Discussion – Previously encountered couples are helping to support LME Experiences by donations, resulting in increased reserves. Administrative expenses are around \$100 per presenting couple, varying based on how many couples attend an ME Experience. We need to avoid saying what part is tax deductible, and suggest they ask their tax attorneys. The W/E quote, now known as the Recommended Contribution, includes the \$150 general overhead figure. The figure Dean uses in his year-end donation letter that may be tax deductible (seek professional guidance for your situation) is any amount donated above the \$100 application fee plus the per couple room and board cost rounded up to the nearest \$5.00 increment. The Encounter Participant Couple's application fee plus their room and board are direct benefits; and direct benefits are not tax deductible. Any additional donated amount may be deductible.
- The Dream Fund will remain as a fluid fund, to be spent for special projects as they occur, following board approval.
- Pre-pay Experiences seem to be working, as expenses are covered.
- We need to establish some general guidelines so that the financial information for each Experience is less confusing on the application web site. Couples are confused that some Experiences have no cost posted, while others do. After much discussion, this was tabled for further discussion later in the meetings.

India Outreach Summary:

- Dan and Judy Teuscher and Dean and Marcia Redman shared a slideshow of pictures from their trip. Eight (8) couples started the Encounter; six (6) completed the Encounter; three (3) clergy and three (3) lay couples all who are now writing to become Presenters. (Note: the next India LME Experience is set for January 2019.) The couples that attended understood English. Workbooks were translated, but presentations were given in English.
- Couples are needed to workshop the India couples.
- The writing couples in India are seeking help in translating their written talks into English so that couples here in NAR can workshop more accurately.

Lunch

NAR, ER, ILME, Interfaith Reports:

- Discussion and direction from recent Interfaith Board meeting – Please no longer refer couples to other specific enrichment programs as this may create a legal liability issue.
- As a non-profit organization soliciting and receiving donations in many locations in the USA, we are required to register as a non-profit in every state in which we have an active presence. This information is to be submitted to World Wide. (Note: this is a different requirement than the tax exemption issue we dealt with earlier this year.) **All district leaders need to send a list of all states in which they are currently holding Experiences, (as planned to the end of 2018), to the Rufes by September 1; and begin the registration process in those states. Please complete as soon as possible, (by year's end).**
- It is the goal of the Interfaith Board to offer Marriage Encounter Experiences in all 50 states (and all Canadian Provinces) by the year 2025. LME has been challenged by Interfaith to hold ME Experiences in 4 new states in the next 12 months.
- LME Market Research Survey Initiative – NAR to develop Survey to find out what couples hope/intend to accomplish by attending a marriage enrichment, continuing education event. **Kast and Leinicks will develop.**
- 3RE Video Program – The board viewed snippets of the 3RE program, supplied to us by the Methodist team who developed the program. The board also viewed a PowerPoint presentation with basic outline of the process. The program is divided into in 7-8 sessions. There is flexibility in the scheduling of sessions. More than one presentation can be combined into a session; however, presentations must be viewed in order. Only one couple (who has completed a Deeper Experience) is needed to facilitate a 3RE Video Program; however, additional helping couples are recommended. See the pre-read info for details. Discussion of pros and cons of using the program followed. We have been authorized to do a pilot program with already Encountered Couples.
- There was discussion regarding the 3RE Video Encounter questions that follow; decisions were tabled until the next day of this meeting:
 - Is it still the Board's desire to pilot the 3RE video encounter 'in house' before offering the Experience to Pre-Encountered Couples?
 - If it is still the Board's desire to pilot 'in house' – which, if any, Areas are willing to pilot the Experience?
 - If 'in house' pilots, what is the target date for pilots to be completed and evaluations to be submitted to the NAR board?
 - If 'in house' piloting cannot be done in Areas, who on the Board is willing to commit a weekend to piloting it this summer or early Fall?

5-Point Gold Star Strive to Thrive Encounter Excellence Review:

- **Be sure to send copies of post Experience evaluations to NAR execs.**
- **Please consider adding these questions to ME Experience evaluations: ‘Have you invited anyone else to attend a LME Experience? If not, why not?’**
- **Share info on things that have been tried on LME Experiences to improve the couples’ experience.**
- **Focus: Pre-Encounter Excellence Intro – viewing of promotional video clips, (from the 3RE producers), branded for GodLovesMarriage. Later in meetings we will review and decide if we will use any of these videos.**

Break

Pre-Encounter Excellence Small Group Breakout Session by District:

Brainstorming sessions: Broke into small groups by District; reviewed list of Pre-Encounter challenges (see attachment G.5); each small group chose top items to focus on in their District and brainstormed ways to overcome the challenges, and listed actions they will execute in their District; shared the brainstorming results with the whole Board as follows:

- District I: Lack of personal inviting – encourage immediate inviting by cell phone during the Experience; give opportunity for discounted rate to be redeemed within 1 year; lack of church support – encourage Clergy to Clergy contact, use “language” when talking with clergy that we’d like to partner with their church.
- District II: Lack of church support – find a church that we can get to commit to being a presenting sponsor for an upcoming Experience; offer incentive of free registration for a church staff member for each 5 registrations from their church and add their church name as sponsor in our advertising; send LME Experience info to the local Lutheran schools.
- District III and IV: Misconception that we are a ministry for marriages in trouble – change marketing to focus on transitions in life, like when couples becoming new parents, empty nesters, or are beginning retirement; rebrand name by take out the word ‘Encounter’ – just say Marriage Experience; for Saturday dinner on weekend experiences, group couples by life transitions so they meet couples with common needs.

External Marketing Promotions by the Leinicke Group – Phase One – Create Marketing Materials for Use in External Marketing Campaign; proposed assets to include the following:

- Create and Produce Spots – Strategy: air 15-second spots on local radio stations near GLM Experiences; air during high drive times; includes script development, talent selection, recording, editing, and distribution prior to 35 events; media buy cost TBD – Total estimated cost = \$2,500
- YouTube In-Stream Video Ads – 30 second video ads to play in front of selected YouTube videos; to run 14 days during each ME Experience’s registration period; Suggested video content may

include: Disillusionment, The Secret to Marriage Success, Lifetime Honeymoon, etc.; media buy cost TBD – Total estimated cost = \$6,000

- Create and Place Banner Ads on Targeted Websites – Develop three Banner Ad messages; suggested messaging may include disillusionment, joy, a fresh start, etc.; place ads on targeted websites (5) with a budget for 4,000 impressions at each site; media buy cost TBD – Total estimated cost = \$1,000
- Create and Place Facebook Ads – Two weeks of targeted Facebook Ads 7 weeks prior to each ME Experience; develop three Facebook Ad messages; in targeted regions, 3 messages; suggested messaging may include disillusionment, joy, a fresh start, etc. – Total estimated cost = \$1,000
- Total to do all of the above, \$10,500.
- Discussion: Buy Costs will vary for actual publication based on local market. Radio ads are costly and you have no control of who is listening. With YouTube and Facebook we can choose what types of videos we would link with.
- Other ideas: Out of the Box Marketing – Create a ‘Marriage Secrets’ channel on YouTube, with topics that are hot, like disillusionment – development cost estimate \$14,000. Set up links to the channel from Facebook and Instagram. Tabled for next day decisions.

Dinner and closing for the evening.

Tuesday, June 26, 2018 beginning at 9:00 AM

Opening Prayer – led by John and Connie Heins

Next NAR Board virtual meeting will be January 26, 2019 at 11:00 AM EST; allow 3 hours. Details will be sent out closer to the meeting date and as plans are developed.

Next in person NAR Board meeting will be June 21-23, 2019 in St. Louis, Missouri; details to be sent out when developed and confirmed.

Reminder that election of new NAR Leadership Couples will be held at the June 2019 in person meeting; be thinking about and talking with potential nominees and prayerfully considering if you are willing to serve if nominated.

Unfinished Business

3RE Video Program:

- **A majority consensus was reached (with Hartmans and Prestons standing aside) that we will order a 3RE Video Program Toolkit to begin in-house previews and evaluations, (to be attended only by Encountered LME couples as per our agreement with MEUM – Marriage Encounter United Methodists).**

- **Consensus was also reach that qualified couples throughout NAR can begin locally hosting 3RE Video Encounters** (using additional rented toolkits as per MEUM Guidelines).
- It is expected that the 3RE Video Program will be previewed and evaluated, and that evaluations will be shared with the NAR board.

WWME 50 Years of Enriching Marriages Celebration:

- **Unanimous consensus was reached that a \$50.00 discount off the registration fee for all 2019 LME Experiences will be applied in celebration of WWME's 50 years of enriching marriages.** The promo/discount will be reflected on the GodLovesMarriage web site and on all 2019 promotional materials. This discount applies to 2019 LME Experiences only.

Pre-Pay Encounters:

- As a result of the positive outcomes of piloted Pre-Pay LME Encounters over the past several years, and after much discussion of various ideas, a proposal was made for all 2019 LME Marriage Encounter Experiences to be Pre-Pay of the discounted \$50 registration fee plus the per couple facility and meals costs. (Additional facility costs like meeting room and equipment charges should be pro-rated per couple and added to the room and meals cost.)
- The Dream portion of the LOC talk will be presented with the couples being asked for their most generous donation to support the continuation of ministry and to help provide financial assistance for couples in need. Encounter Admin Couples will not give a recommended contribution in the Dream talk. (No overhead calculations/amounts will be asked for.)
- The "What is the Cost?" page on the website will show that financial assistance/scholarships are available. Those requesting financial assistance will be directed to the local leadership couple to approve (as is the current procedure). As always, all couples will be welcomed to attend regardless of their ability to pay.
- **Consensus was reached for all 2019 calendar year LME Marriage Encounter Experiences to be Pre-Pay as noted above.**

Marketing Plans:

- After reviewing the options presented by the Leinicke Group, it was proposed to accept the "Out of the Box" plan in which a "Marriage Secrets" You Tube channel will be created with an ongoing series of two-minute 'teaser videos' reflecting an Encounter concept with links to GLM website, plus the online banner and Facebook ads. Total cost would be up to \$22,250 through 2019 with funds allocated from the Dream Fund. Ads would begin in January of 2019 or sooner if for specific early 2019 Encounters. **Unanimous consensus was reached.**
- **In addition, if we are able to get the raw videos promos shared by MEUM, it was agreed, by consensus, that once they are edited we will accept those recommended by the Leinickes for promotional use.**

Beyond the Box Ideas:

- Suggested that we include the history of LME in the workbook. It should be put in the back, before “New World” song sheet.
- It was decided that we should include a presentation on Constructive & Compassionate Conflict Resolution as a post-experience Encounter Wrap-Up Gathering, or as a video presentation available on our GLM website. This would be a resource for the newly encountered couples to access. **Hartmans, Kast and Leinickes will develop.**

Consensus was reached that the current suggested guidelines for the number of presenting couples on an MEE (Marriage Encounter Experience) remain in effect as follows:

- **10 or more couples registered, 4 Presenting Couples;**
- **5 -9 couples registered, 3 Presenting Couples;**
- **Less than 5 couples registered, consider postponing the Experience; note: Some areas have been using 2 Presenting Couples for these smaller Encounters.**

Since there are a significant number of smaller Encounters in which only 3 presenting couples are scheduled, in order that new presenting couples are offered adequate opportunities to present in a timely manner, **couples who express an interest in presenting are to be informed at the time of their Kick-Off that they are to begin writing a minimum of 5 presentations** (instead of the current four 1st set talks).

Take back to your communities the idea of couple-to-couple connections as another option for community involvement. Gather feedback on results.

Leinickes will create a custom GIF for quick and easy social media sharing. This will be added to their proposal at no additional fee.

New Business

Re-evaluate the need for district NARPCC, DPCC, APCC. This can be done by areas based on the number of couples eligible to present.

When sending email to Connie at the Leinicke Group, please copy Craig as well.

Make use of the prayer letter coordinators. There is a couple for each district and one that works with the European countries. Send them a letter to be shared. (See Appendix C.7)

Meeting was closed with prayer and singing of ‘There’s a New World Somewhere.’

Respectfully Submitted,
Dan & Charlotte Ricks
NAR Secretary Couple