Eastern District report January 2024

**Presenting couple roster status:**

No changes in Northeast, Northwest, or Central Areas at this moment, although an Anniversary couple in Ohio is currently considering the invitation (and in Eastern Canada the Guthries have invited yet another young couple to join the team, and they already presented the renewal talk).

**Good News:**

Michigan Area has made 3 major changes which are being received positively by our area couples and board.

1) we have new cancellation policy. If 5 couples are not signed up for a weekend a month ahead, our weekend will be cancelled. Even if the hotel’s cancellation policy is more lenient, we agreed that it is better to have an earlier cancellation policy then just a few days before the weekend.

2) We have two main communities that can host a weekend in Michigan. We have not had recent success scheduling 2 weekends each year so we are reducing it to one. The 2 communities will alternate years, beginning with Spring 2025. A new couple is taking over the Saginaw hosting coordination from Don and Judy Christiansen. Brian and Donna Zelner will host the Kalamazoo community weekend.

3) Our annual Fall event that has been a Renewal weekend for LME Veteran couples is now going to include unencountered couples who are guests of veteran encountered couples. This new policy was introduced in the Fall of 2023 in the board, got feedback from our Michigan community, and is now officially promoted for 2024 as “A Marriage Renewal.” Brian & Donna Zelner, past Area Lay Contacts, have successfully coordinated the event for 15+ years.

--Rev. Ed and Emily Kast continue to be active in their LME journey group and the annual Fall Vets Renewal (renamed 'A Marriage Renewal' for Fall 2024). They are in their 90s yet are in good health. They want to serve as long as they can and apprentice new clergy couples for the future. They are open to traveling to support weekends in Indiana and Ohio as well. They have presented with Piazzas for many years!

Northeast is planning an event in April in Lancaster PA. Davidsons and Steeles are bravely managing their local activities, but we can’t ask much more of them at this time as they continue to recover strength.

Ohio continues to hold enrichments and social activities: our early December lunch and visit to Nativity Display had 7 encountered couples and 10-12 assorted friends/family in attendance. The September Five Love Languages enrichment led by Ohio couples (attended by about 25 people) will be repeated as a VIRTUAL event on Saturday February 10th starting at Noon Eastern time (we sent emails to NAR board already). March 1-3 is the annual Encountered Couples Retreat, expecting 16 couples, based on theme of “Rivers of Living Water.” Next Weekend end of April.

**Concerns:**

Scarcity of presenting couples, and we doubt that 6 months warning is sufficient for us to support the International Reunion.

**What are some insights you have that may be helpful to NAR Board as we move forward?**

Whenever we receive comments pertaining to one of the Development Committees, we have been passing them straight to them rather than holding for general discussion.

Ohio and Northeast have confirmed that the Excel document was updated. What’s next?

**How can we be supportive of you?**

We Fells would like to see the Virtual Weekends continue on a regular basis so our Registrars can refer people to them who don’t like our dates. Follow-up resources for Circles and enrichments – always looking for good suggestions for these community-wide enrichments that appeal to both encountered and pre-encountered couples.

With love,

David & Jean Fell Kevin & Raye Guynn

Lay Execs Clergy Execs