



# THE PRESENTER HOTLINE

North American Lutheran Marriage Encounter Presenter Newsletter

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Happy Spring!!

We hope you are making time to enjoy  
the beauty of God's creation!

We thank you for your continued work  
to make marriages what God intended.

## Marriage Encounter Outline Committee Information

As we have stated before, Outline changes are not planned for anytime in the near future; however, the Worldwide Outline Committee is hard at work continuing to plan for the next update to keep our talks relevant and up-to-date. You may have noticed in the Interfaith Board Report in the last NAR Minutes, the outline committee is tackling what they see as the “six big rocks” in the outline:

- Shorten the weekend by ending Friday earlier (possibly only one talk) and ending earlier on Sunday afternoon.
- Add another sample dialogue—perhaps on a difficult topic.
- Look at redundancy in the outline and things that don’t add value (e.g. the room description on Friday night)
- Look at creating “read as is” places for clarity (e.g. personality style instructions and “I think vs. I feel.”)
- Look at the transformation story and the music (Note: Prince and the Rose is “gone.” There is some consideration being given to returning to Aldonza. Nothing is settled on yet.)
- Look at the use of audio-visuals (and clips) and other changes that might update our image.

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### Deeper Information

Another reminder that the next Deeper is scheduled at the Holiday Inn in Houston on **September 18-21, 2009**. Please keep Deeper Coordinators, Dave & Elsa Larson, at [delarson@windstream.net](mailto:delarson@windstream.net) or phone 402-483-5404 informed of couples in your area preparing to attend a Deeper. The Larsons report that we currently have 4 couples registered.

- Couples attending the Deeper are to write the Deeper Homework questions and also the Self talk III: A,B,C, & D. The Deeper Homework is emailed to the APCC and then sent on to the Larsons. The Self talk parts are to be workshopped and sent back to the writers, but no re-writing is necessary before the Deeper. These writings plus the registration form should also be sent to the APCC, then on to Larsons.
- Also, if you would like to schedule a Deeper Deeper (very inspirational weekend for presenters), contact the Larsons.

## The Idea Corner

What idea would you consider sharing?  
Please send to:  
[fjschamber@comcast.net](mailto:fjschamber@comcast.net).

### A LOVE FLOAT - INVITING TOOL



#### How about this great inviting tool?

A Circle in Nebraska known as "The Love Float Circle" is planning their 26<sup>th</sup> annual Love Float Weekend for July 31-August 2. It is a weekend to come together to celebrate the strength of couples and families. Each encountered couple is encouraged to invite an un-encountered

couple/family to come and experience the weekend. Couples bring food to share, and the Circle furnishes some meals. They set up camp at Keller State Park on Friday. Saturday morning they travel to the Niobrara River and float down the river on "supertubes," and then return to Keller Park for an evening of fun and relaxation. Saturday evening also includes supper and church services and the ME information presentation. Sunday is a day of fun and fellowship. Families can stay as long as they wish to play volleyball, Frisbee golf, go hiking, go fishing, rest, visit or whatever they wish.

Thank you to Nebraska 3<sup>rd</sup> Set Presenters, Doug and Leanne Fox, for sharing this information with us. For further details, you could contact them at: [dlfox@huntel.net](mailto:dlfox@huntel.net).

## Our Circle, Weekend, or Marriage Encounter Activity

Please consider submitting a story (and picture if possible) of YOUR Circle, a M.E. Weekend, or any Marriage Encounter Activity. We'd love to share them with the Presenting group.

Thank you to Charles & Billie Roach for sharing with us the great story about their love circle:



*Shown are: Charles & Billie Roach (Presenting Couple Coordinators for the Carolinas and for District I), Scott & Lynn Mullaney (newcomers to LME), Bill & Mitzie Edwards (Episcopalian registration couple—27 years active), Bob & Evelyn Waters (snowbirds from Texas—involved for about 20 years) and Ray and Annette Sheffield (prayer couple coordinators and Presbyterian presenters, active for about 20 years.)*

The Western North Carolina Spiral has been very regular with their spiral for about 6 years. They do a rotation between the homes and have a potluck supper. They say that the food and company cannot be beat, and with their mixture of couples, the presentations (the duty of the hosts) and the 10/10's and open sharings are supportive and encouraging to all of them. 4

Wonder how an outreach weekend with 18 couples (13 of whom are Seminary student & spouse couples) evolved in Dubuque, Iowa? Thank you to the presenters Dean & Marcia Redman for putting together the following story.



*Shown is the presenting team, from left: James & Lisa Schmidgall, Rich & Nittie Frerk, Dean & Marcia Redman, Russ & Ann Hillman.*

DISTRICT III OUTREACH WEEKEND IN DUBUQUE, IOWA  
MARCH 20-22, 2009

Excited anticipation was in the air as 4 presenting couples, representing 4 different states, and 3 Districts, arrived in Dubuque, Iowa, on March 20, 2009, for a District III outreach weekend. We were all excited about the number of registrations (18) and the number of seminary registrants (13). There had been so many Godsendings in the process of putting the weekend together that we all felt the Holy Spirit was right there with us!

It all began in July of 2008. The Wartburg Seminary couples group, Fellowship of Wartburg, made a contact about their interest in planning a spring activity for their group. The subject of marriage had come up in their yearly planning and they decided that they wanted to be on solid ground with their own marriages before the "fishbowl," otherwise known as parish life, formed their lives.

The initial contact was with James and Lisa Schmidgall, Central Illinois area lay contact, District II. They immediately forwarded the information to District III Lay contact, Dean and Marcia Redman, and the planning started. The Wartburg contact, Ginger Zoerb did the legwork to find a hotel, choose a date, and begin contract negotiations via the computer.

The computer also helped us obtain addresses for local churches; a publicity package was sent to 66 churches. (How did we ever manage without computers?) Ginger was responsible for the promotion at the seminary and she passed out brochures, used the video and publicized the date.

Planning an outreach weekend is complicated only in that everything must be done long distance via telephone and computer. When there is no support group in the area, everything must come from a distance. Supplies and banners must all be brought in. Support, such as registration, must be long distance. The new registration couple from Wisconsin agreed to receive the registrations, and a Catholic couple from the Dubuque Catholic community agreed to be there Friday evening to sign couples in. Yet another Godsend!

Registrations came in slowly and it was decided that with a small weekend we would go with 3 presenting couples. James and Lisa Schmidgall, Illinois, and Dean and Marcia Redman, Wisconsin, would present; a call went out for clergy. The outreach weekend was announced at the NAR meeting, and Russ and Ann Hillman, Washington, volunteered to be clergy. The team was formed, and emails flew back and forth. When the registrations began to come in furiously, we decided that there should be a full presenting team, so at the last minute a plea went out for a first set presenting couple, and Rich and Nittie Frerk, Iowa, immediately volunteered. A Godsend! It was an awesome team!

A plea for prayer couples got immediate response throughout the U.S. LME community, and a flood of sharing letters was received. Weekend couples were blessed to have someone praying for them from Ohio, Indiana, Nebraska, Minnesota, South Dakota, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin - the fingers of God. Prayer couples were not asked to be present for a sing-off because of the distance, so candles were purchased for the couples and were given to them at Sunday dinner.

On Sunday a wonderful group of loving couples from Central Illinois drove to Dubuque to support everyone. They brought a cake and punch, greeted all the couples, and gave warm hugs to all. A northern Illinois couple recognized a couple's name from the prayer plea and realized they had gone to school with one of the weekend couples. They drove to the weekend, renewed friendships, and have decided to return monthly to help get a love circle started in the area.

#### Reflections:

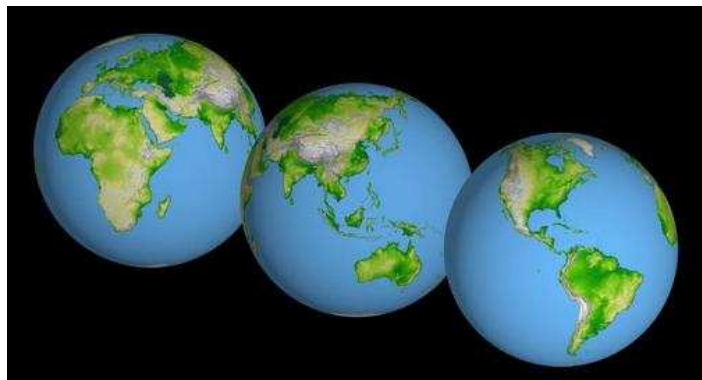
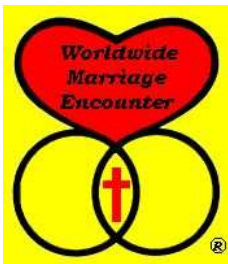
For many years the concept of an outreach weekend was that after the weekend the newly encountered couples would get a group going and schedule another weekend. The reality is that that doesn't happen. After coming off the weekend the couples may be bubbling over with love

and excitement; but when asked about the idea of getting another weekend in the area, they are overwhelmed. District III is trying an experiment - to schedule another outreach weekend immediately. The information for a 2010 weekend date was included in the couples' weekend packets. The hotel has it on their calendar and the couples know that any inviting can begin for that date. There were many favorable comments about knowing a future date, including from the presenting team who already has March 19-21, 2010, on their calendars.

We certainly don't want to minimize the presence of the 5 non-clergy couples on the weekend! They are interested in forming a Love Circle in the area, and it is hoped that they will be the future of ME in Dubuque.

Presenting on Marriage Encounter weekends is always overwhelmingly fulfilling. But with 13 future clergy on the weekend it was double that! To know that 13 couples not only enriched their own marriages but also will take that with them to their call - wherever that might be - is awesome. May the seeds of Marriage Encounter blossom!

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Don't forget to check the website [www.ilme.org](http://www.ilme.org) for all kinds of information for encountered couples. Click on "Presenting Couples" and enter the password "LME/pc" for lots of great presenter information including: the Feb 2009 NAR minutes, the talk outlines, the current workbook & replacement pages, the NAR/District & District Presenter Rosters, Admin documents and Deeper and Kickoff materials.

