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In this issue:

LifeRing Congress Requires All Members to Get Tattoos

Six LifeRing Convenors Speak in San Francisco

New LifeRing Meeting In Smithtown Long Island

LifeRing Board Calls For 2005 Congress Proposals

2004 LifeRing Congress Brings People Together

Board of Directors Posts Annual Report

LifeRing in Guelph Ontario Expands to Four Meetings

LifeRing Convenors Talk to CAADAC Students

LifeRing Press Places Ad In *Addiction Professional*

LifeRing Volunteers Do Congress Mailing

LifeRing Convenors On Speaker Circuit

First LifeRing Meeting Opens in British Columbia Canada



Historian William L. White, guest speaker at the LifeRing Congress, holds audience spellbound with four-hour presentation on history of addiction and recovery in America. Above, White's research reveals that famous Abolitionist Frederick Douglass was a recovered alcoholic and probably had been a member of the Washingtonian Temperance Society.

For a review of White's book *Slaying the Dragon*, go to the BookTalk section of unhooked.com.

LifeRing Congress Requires All Members to Get Tattoos

At its annual Congress on March 28, the LifeRing Congress passed an amendment to the LifeRing By-laws that will require every LifeRing member to have the LifeRing logo tattooed on their body. The amendment was sponsored by LifeRing Board of Directors member Robert "Itchy" B., who had the LifeRing logo tattooed on his arm in 1999, and Australian LifeRing founder Jill T., who had the logo tattooed around her navel on the occasion of her first anniversary clean and sober earlier this year. For this reason, the amendment was known as the Itchy/Down Under Amendment. LifeRing CEO F. Arty Nickels commented that "in keeping with our commitment to free choice in building a personal recovery program, LifeRing members are free to choose where on the body they want the tattoo." However, he added, members will have to show the tattoo to get admission to LifeRing meetings. -- 4/1/04 [Happy April Fool's Day!]

Six LifeRing Convenors Speak in San Francisco

Six LifeRing convenors gave a presentation about LifeRing to a group of about 25 patients in early recovery at the Kaiser Permanente Chemical Dependency Recovery Program on Fillmore Street in San Francisco on Tuesday evening, March 30. The six were Marty N., Katie F., Jim V., John P., Anthony P., and Jill T. Jill particularly impressed the group because she had come all the way from Western Australia to attend the LifeRing Congress, and because at the end of her talk, she bared her midriff to display her LifeRing tattoo. The presentation was part of a regular series of talks at that facility. Kaiser counselor Jeanne Kelly chaired the session. -- MN 3/31/04

New LifeRing Meeting In Smithtown Long Island

A new LifeRing meeting will start on April 9, 2004, in Smithtown, Long Island, New York, founding convenor Michael P. has announced. The new venue is in the Pederson-Krag Center North, at 11 Route 111 in Smithtown. The

meeting will convene on Friday evenings from 6:15 to 7:45. Persons interested in more information please contact Michael P. at 631-979-3269. -- 3/30/04

LifeRing Board Calls For 2005 Congress Proposals

At its meeting on March 28, the LifeRing Board of Directors issued a general call for proposals and ideas on locations for the 2005 Congress. Any LifeRing meeting or group of meetings interested in hosting the next Congress is invited to submit its proposal promptly to the LifeRing Service Center, service@lifering.org or 510-763-0779. The Board will meet next on Sunday April 25 at 5/6/7/8 pm PT/MT/CT/ET to decide on a venue for the 2005 Congress. Proposals must be received before the meeting. -- 3/30/04

2004 LifeRing Congress Brings People Together

The 2004 LifeRing Congress brought people from some far corners of the earth together in Berkeley CA over the March 26-28 weekend. LifeRing convenors from Western Australia, from Sapporo Japan, and from two provinces of Canada, along with numerous others from nearer places, gathered in a conference center at Herrick Hospital to hear guest lecturers, share convenor experiences, have a clean and sober party, and finally hold a governing assembly and elect directors. A highlight of the weekend was the guest appearance of noted historian and prize-winning author William L. White in a four-hour illustrated lecture on Saturday afternoon. White held the capacity crowd spellbound throughout the session and the audience gave him a thunderous standing ovation at the end.

Attorney Alison Aubrejuan of Disability Rights Advocates in Oakland gave a guest presentation

on the recent US Supreme Court case of *Raytheon v. Hernandez*, which affects the employ-

ment rights of people in recovery from chemical dependency.

Counselor Marcia Leonard LCSW, on the staff of the Kaiser Permanente Chemical Dependency Recovery Program in Vallejo CA, led an hour-long workshop on Relapse Prevention.

Two LifeRing convenor workshops -- one on how to start a meeting, the other on how to grow a meeting once started -- filled the conference room and featured lively exchanges with much laughter.

On Saturday evening, more than 50 guests filled every seat and then some for a buffet banquet in the bayside Tartan Room of Hs. Lordship's restaurant in the Berkeley Marina, with live musical entertainment by Chet G. and the Bay Area Blues Society.

The next morning more than 35 delegates assembled to hear an annual report from the Board of Directors, and to make reports of their own on the state of their meetings (face-to-face or online). The delegates unanimously approved a bylaws amendment granting the Board the ability to issue "country charters" to LifeRing organizations in other countries, and then unanimously elected convenors Craig Whalley of Washington State, Jacqueline Jones of Virginia and Marty Nicolaus of California to three-year terms on the Board.

A number of congress guests remained in town after the event to take in the attractions of the San Francisco Bay Area, number one tourist destination in the world. -- MN 3/30/04

Board of Directors Posts Annual Report

The LifeRing Board of Directors today posted its Annual Report, including the Financial Report, in advance of the upcoming 2004

(Continued on page 2)



Convenors share experiences in workshops at 2004 Congress



Capacity crowd hears William White lecture at 2004 Congress

(Continued from page 1)

Congress. The Annual Report characterizes the past year as one of laying foundations for growth. It discusses advances in the LifeRing infrastructure, in convenor development, and in tools for building meetings. LifeRing's financial condition continues sound and debt-free. Click here for full text of the Annual Report and the Financial Report. -- MN 3/21/04

LifeRing in Guelph Ontario Expands to Four Meetings

Thursday night's meeting at LifeRing Guelph has just divided into two meetings. This meeting has grown to over twenty participants in just two short months. There are now two meetings every Thursday night at the Dublin Street United church.

Last month, the Tuesday evening meeting outgrew itself and divided into two meetings at St. George's Anglican Church, both at the same time in different rooms.

A new meeting is scheduled to be launched on Monday nights in Guelph beginning in April of 2004. With the addition of this meeting there will be four new meetings in the City of Guelph!!! Things don't stop there.

There has been a request from a treatment facility in Orangeville (45min north of Guelph) to open meetings both in Orangeville and Mount Forest. Talks are also beginning at the Maplehurst detention centre, typically referred to as the Super Jail. The target for new meetings in Ontario has now been raised to eight, by the end of the summer of 2004.

Wish us luck,

-- Jason Kelly 3/18/04

LifeRing Convenors Talk to CAADAC Students

LifeRing convenors Gillian E. and Marty N. gave a two-hour presentation about LifeRing to a group of 20 adult students in Fairfield CA on Friday evening, March 13. The students were preparing to take the exam for certification as CAADAC counselors. CAADAC is the California Addiction Counselors Association. The course is held under the direction of Nicole Meredith, a principal in PharmaTox, a treatment center headquartered in Fairfield, about 40 miles north of Oakland. Gillian E. gave the main presentation, outlining the "Three-S" philosophy of LifeRing, the meeting format, "How it Works," and other topics. During the question period, there was animated discussion among the students on the issue whether a counselor can ethically tell a client that the client will relapse unless the client works the twelve steps. Marty concluded the session with brief remarks on the role of the clinician. The speakers distributed a literature kit including the Presenting LifeRing booklet and the main LifeRing brochures. The supply of workbooks brought by the speakers was grabbed up. Many of the students thanked the speakers enthusiastically for the presentation. -- MN 3/14/04



The clean and sober Saturday night banquet featured live entertainment by Chet G. and the Bay Area Blues Society at Hs. Lordships in the Berkeley Marina. The weather cooperated, affording diners a clear view of the City and the Golden Gate Bridge.

LifeRing Press Places Ad In Addiction Professional

LifeRing Press placed its first advertisement this month, in the March issue of *Addiction Professional*. The advertisement features *Recovery By Choice*, the workbook. *Addiction Professional* is the quarterly journal of the National Association of Addiction Professionals (NAADAC). The March issue has an estimated circulation of 25,000, including nearly 15,000 licensed professional counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, addiction medicine specialists, nurses, rehabilitation counselors, prevention specialists, social workers, and clinical supervisors who are members of NAADAC, plus more than 6,000 addiction treatment program directors and administrators. An additional approximately 4,000 copies of the March issue are being distributed free at the annual conferences of several professional associations concerned with addiction treatment. To see a copy of the quarter-page ad, click here. The LifeRing Board of Directors authorized the ad expenditure as a test to gauge the response. -- MN 3/8/04

LifeRing Volunteers

Do Congress Mailing

On a lovely Wednesday, Katie F., Andree G., Laura H., Gillian E. and Syl S. gathered at the LifeRing office in Oakland CA to stick closure dots on 3500 LifeRing Congress brochures. You know, those little clear dots that hold the flyer closed so the post office machines won't tear up the flyer? Other than the awesome challenge of keeping the flyers in zip code order, there isn't much intellectual going on here, so there was lots of laughter and socializing. The five of us managed to complete the entire mailing in four hours. If other LifeRing members are willing to volunteer at the office or take work home, there's always work to do. Call the office at 510-763-0779 and leave a message or send an email to service@lifering.org. -- Katie F. 3/4/04

LifeRing Convenors On Speaker Circuit

LifeRing convenors Katie F. and Marty N. gave a presentation about LifeRing to a group of nearly 40 patients in an early recovery education class of the Kaiser Permanente


Chemical Dependency Recovery Program in Oakland CA on Tuesday March 2. This presentation was part of an eight-week cycle that has been ongoing at this facility since 1995. On a show of hands, all but seven of the 37 patients present had already attended at least one LifeRing meeting. Kaiser staff members Jeff Blair and Dina M. chaired the session.

LifeRing convenors Ted N. and Marty N. gave a presentation about LifeRing to about 30 teens and a dozen parents and staff at the Kaiser Permanente Chemical Dependency Services facility in Walnut Creek CA on Wednesday evening March 3. This was the first LifeRing presentation at this facility. Kaiser staff counselor Jeff Brossbeck hosted the session. Brossbeck introduced the speakers by observing that many of the teens had expressed dissatisfaction with the 12-step approach, particularly its religious nature. He was happy to be able to provide the teens with information about an alternative support group. There was an active question-and-answer session and lively interest in the LifeRing approach from the audience. -- MN 3/6/04

First LifeRing Meeting Starts in British Columbia Canada

The first LifeRing meeting in British Columbia Canada opens at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday March 2 2004 at the Qualicum Beach Civic Center, 747 Jones Street, Qualicum Beach B.C. The meeting will convene every week thereafter, founding convenor Jack M. has announced. For further information call toll-free 1-877-752-1058 or email jr.mcneil@shaw.ca.

An announcement for the new meeting was printed in *The News*, the local daily newspaper, on Feb. 24. Click for a PDF copy of the press clipping. -- J.M. 2/25/04



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