

## **OVERVIEW**

2022 celebrates LifeRing's Silver Soberversary – 25 years serving people seeking substance use recovery. Things have changed dramatically since Marty's first in-person meeting, but one thing remains the same: LifeRing celebrates positive recovery.

LifeRing is thriving. We've enjoyed another successful year of exponential growth and community involvement. Our meeting attendance continues to rise with several meetings regularly hosting over 50 participants. New meetings are being introduced at an unprecedented rate and we're seeing unique communities evolving under the LifeRing Community umbrella.

As illustrated in the accompanying Financial Report, LifeRing is in good financial space with a strong show of recurring donations making up the majority of personal contributions.

Volunteer and convenor recruiting remains an uphill battle, but active LifeRing volunteers have been accomplishing amazing things since the last Annual Conference.

Management is in flux with the retirement of LifeRing's longtime Executive Director. An interim director will be appointed while we look for the person with the fundamentals required to advance our objectives.

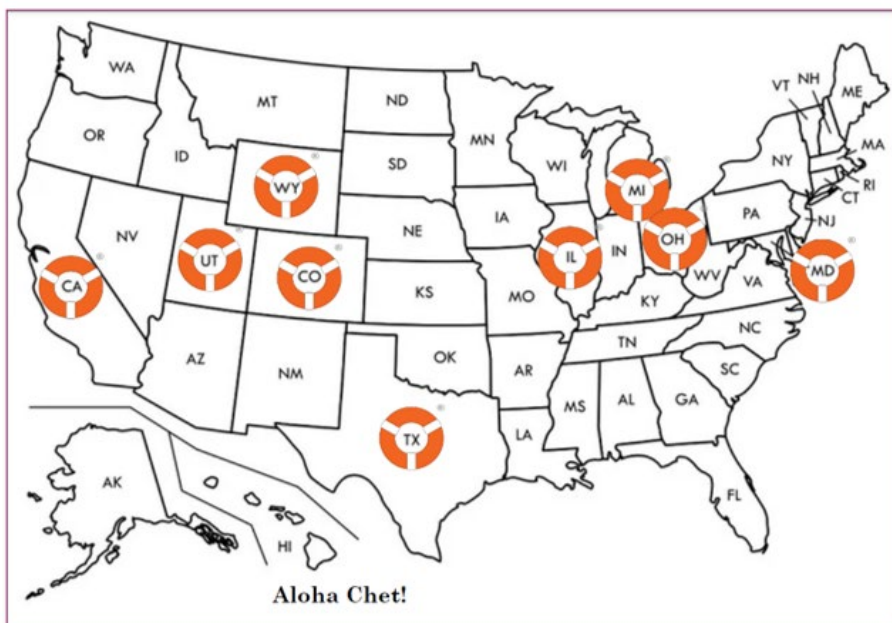
LifeRing is slowly making its way into the spotlight of secular recovery programs. Outreach projects, marketing efforts and our past participation in the PAL Study are catching the interest of healthcare providers and treatment professionals. LifeRing focus meetings are being recommended by physicians, therapists, and even other recovery programs.

We see only good things for LifeRing this year.

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## **IN-PERSON MEETINGS**

## Covid continues to take a toll on our in-person meetings



Covid mandates were strongly enforced until March this year with restrictions remaining in place for many of the facilities that previously opened their doors for LifeRing in-person meetings.

This continues to hamstring in-person meeting openings and reopenings. Even our current in-person meetings are seeing fewer participants. This may be a result of lingering “personal quarantine” practices or that people in recovery may prefer online meetings.

In response, many of LifeRing’s in-person meetings have temporarily morphed into local community online meetings – extending from Akron, Ohio to Boulder, Colorado and out to Walla Walla, Washington.

We cannot stress the importance and the resilience of true in-person meetings. The Service Center receives daily emails and phone calls from people asking about the status of in-person meetings in their region.

We are starting to see in-person meetings opening and reopening. There is a resurgence in Colorado, with six active in-person meetings happening weekly. And Ohio has reopened two of its in-person meetings in Akron.

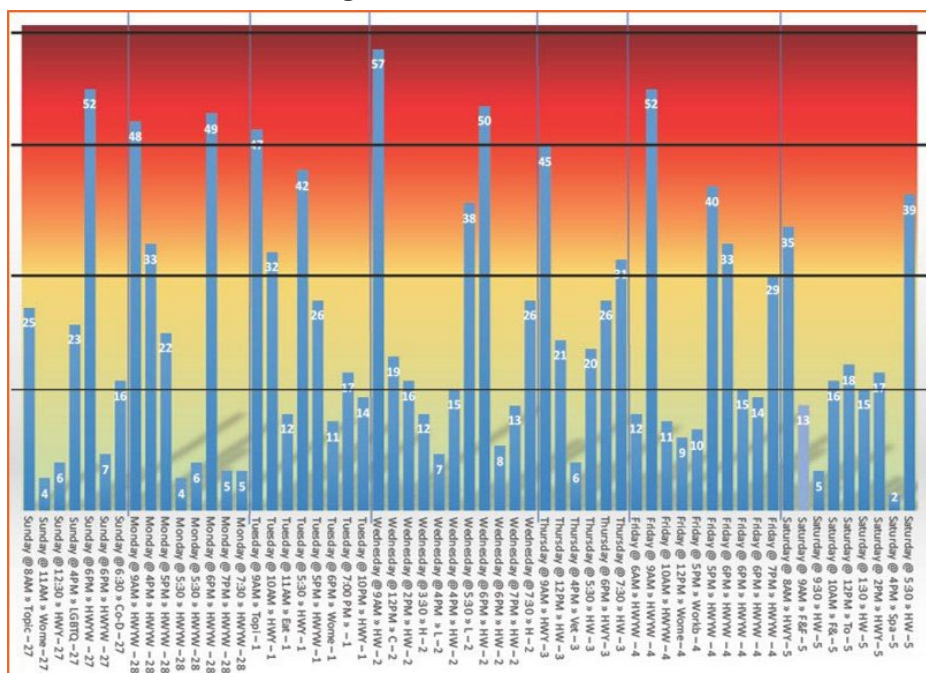
Technical and equipment requirements have been prohibitive to **hybrid meetings**. Perhaps this meeting platform will evolve in the future.

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## **ONLINE MEETINGS**

Online meetings are a phenomenal gift to the LifeRing Community. Zoom has proven to be a wildly successful answer to the problem of government-mandated isolation and the continuance of the “isolation” phenomena. LifeRing online meeting attendance has grown exponentially with reports showing a 583% increase since the beginning of Covid. We are currently offering 76 online meetings every week with additional meetings on the horizon.

Some meetings have more than 50 LifeRingers every week. There’s been a new movement toward extended meetings times to allow



more time for shares

and for crosstalk. It’s not unusual for a LifeRing meeting to run two-hours long.

These numbers clearly illustrate the importance of onboarding new convenors. Clearly defining the roles of convenors, co-convenors, and hosts will help us focus our recruiting efforts.

Online and text meetings open doors across time zones and continents to people who might not otherwise have access to our meetings. Meetings are seeing a rise in people attending from their hospital beds.

LifeRing hosts online meetings in the Imperial Valley of California and in the Kingdom of Sweden.

**Focus meetings** are on the rise. LifeRing has opened 12 new focus meetings since our last Annual Conference. From People in Recovery with Eating Disorders to Veterans in Recovery, focus meetings are tailored for people in recovery who are also in unique subgroups.

LifeRing is identifying needs and providing tailored spaces for recovery. Last year, LifeRing officially opened our doors to Family and Friends. We also opened new borders by introducing meetings for Spanish-speakers and Polish-speakers.

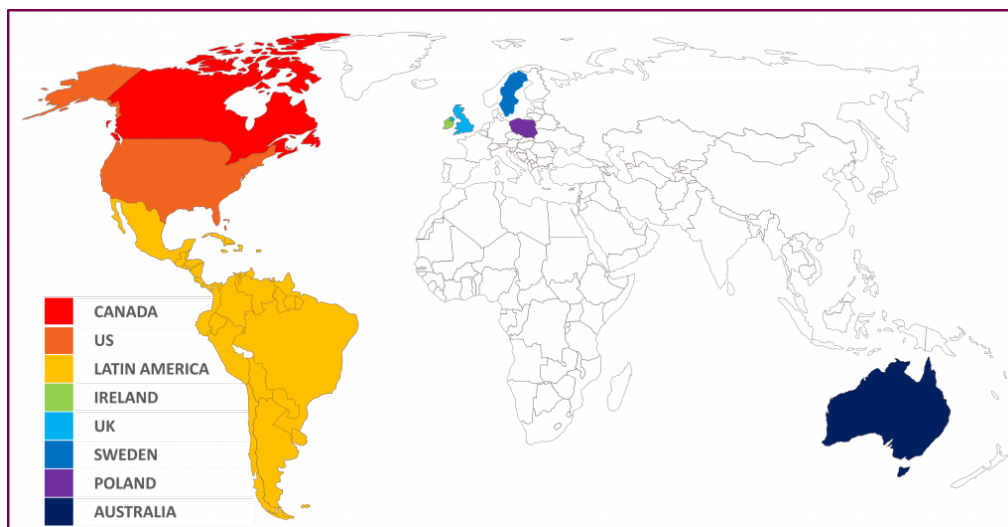
Next week will be the first HWYW meeting for People of Color, and the first for people who identify themselves as men in recovery.

**LifeRing eGroups** are flourishing! New eCommunities have started and participation is up. The LSR Women Empowered eGroup opened in January this year and its membership continues to grow.

So far this year, **LifeRing ePals** have provided 1-to-1 email recovery support for over 85 people. This platform offers a unique opportunity for LifeRing to show them the importance of finding a positive recovery community.

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## INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS



LifeRing has just added Poland as our newest international entity bringing our world total to 8 countries: Australia, Canada, Ireland, Latin America, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States. Our newest international in-person meeting opened in May 2022 in Edinberg, Scotland.

We are now truly *LifeRing Without Borders*.

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## TECHNOLOGY

LifeRing Community convenors and volunteers have evolved from luddites to *cyber heroes* – scaling the mountains of passwords, logins, eVerifications, and best practice to ensure safe and inclusive Zoom meetings for every LifeRing member. LifeRing now offers almost 80 online meetings adding potential stress when logins go bad and bombers get worse.

### **Current Projects**

The Team Tech committee is working on a LifeRing app that will include meetings lists, chat, and an interactive personal recovery plan.

The Meetings and Convenors Committee is introducing a pop-up workgroup to improve the LifeRing website user experience.

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## COMMUNITY



LifeRing meet-ups are on the rise in California. This was the first in San Francisco.

In late 2022, LifeRing threw open the door and invited anyone in recovery to join us for our new Holiday Gatherings. These marathon Gatherings were hosted by volunteers and

volunteer convenors. We've held six Gatherings to date and each has met with success. Attendance has been high with over 100 participants in some instances.

To foster more LifeRing Community involvement, the Annual Conference Committee returned to the roots of the Annual Congress. Convenors were asked to identify representatives for their meetings to present a meeting report delivered during the Delegates Assembly.

LifeRing was tapped to participate in the 2018 national ARG Peer Alternatives for Addiction (PAL) Study. The LifeRing Community has been asked again to participate in the ongoing PAL2 Study scheduled for publication in Fall 2023. [Click here to learn how LifeRing rates against other peer-to-peer recovery programs](#)

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## **COMMITTEES**

LifeRing is operating with five active committees: Fundraising, Marketing and Communications; Outreach; Meetings and Convenors; Technology; Executive Search; and our newest addition Strategic Planning. LifeRing Committees are "The Little Engines That Could."

**Fundraising** scratches tirelessly for on-time and recurring donors, **Outreach** made great inroads toward "introducing LifeRing" with our speaking engagement at the CCAR/MRPC in March. The Outreach introduction of a **Speakers Bureau** is a work in progress, but we are seeing more speaking engagements come through. **Meetings and Convenors** created new avenues for community engagement including Holiday Gatherings, Convenor Salons and the soon to be launched, Convenors Gatherings.



## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

LifeRing meetings encourage crosstalk between group members resulting in a deeper understanding of self and personal accountability. This is a rewarding experience, but sometimes you just wanna post up a picture. We get it. We got you!

Whatever your social media preference, all LifeRing pages consistently deliver inspiration. Drop in if you “like”.

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## **GOVERNANCE**

The LifeRing Board will see a churn this administrative year with a number of long-time BOD members terming-out and the introduction of 4 new BOD candidates. These candidates were introduced to the LifeRing Community during the 2022 Annual Congress. Nominees were offered an opportunity to speak about their involvement with LifeRing and their objectives if elected to the LifeRing Board of Directors. Delegates were invited to interview the candidates during an open Q&A session.

A new committee has formed to take on to create a Strategic Plan to guide LifeRing forward. This roadmap will be used to help other committees focus on attainable goals and encourage further LifeRing growth.

Our Executive Director of 10 years is retiring in June and will be replaced with an interim executive director until a perfect candidate is elected. LifeRing has created an Executive Search Committee to identify viable candidates, but the final approval process falls to the LifeRing Board.

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## **FINANCES**

LifeRing's financial health from Jul 2021 to May 2022 is overall very good. We ended the last

1	<b>Jun-May 2022 Revenue Detail</b>		
2	Donations	\$ 36,843	58%
3	Book Sales	\$ 20,403	32%
4	Other Recurring	\$ 1,104	2%
5	One Time/Special	\$ 5,000	8%
6	<b>Total Revenue TTM</b>	<b>\$ 63,350</b>	<b>100%</b>
7			
8	<b>Jun-May 2022 Expense Detail</b>		
9	Book COGS	\$ 5,798	10%
10	Royalties	\$ 3,101	5%
11	Payroll	\$ 32,856	54%
12	Marketing & Outreach	\$ 4,735	8%
13	Technology	\$ 8,277	14%
14	Insurance	\$ 3,008	5%
15	Credit Card Fees	\$ 2,061	3%
16	Other	\$ 1,048	2%
17	<b>Total Expenses TTM</b>	<b>\$ 60,884</b>	<b>100%</b>
18			
19	<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>\$ 2,466</b>	
20			
21	TTM=Trailing 12 Months	COGS=Cost of Goods Sold	

12 months with a surplus of \$2,466 (which does include a one time grant of \$5,000). We have a cash balance of \$70,067. Donations and the LifeRing Press make up 90% of our revenue sources. Book printing/shipping and Payroll makes up 69% of our expenses.

In the last 12 months, the "Recovery by Choice" workbook was our best selling book with 287 units sold. The other books: "Empowering your Sober Self", "Humanly Possible" and "How Was Your Week" each sold about 280 units (for a grand total of 1,126 units sold in the last 12 months). Martin Nicolaus is paid a royalty for all books but "Humanly Possible".

Due to the Pandemic shutdowns, our meetings moved almost entirely online; which reduced our in person "meeting money". We were able to recoup these losses by taking advantage of both Federal and State funding to receive a total of \$15,000 in one time special grants:



DATE	NAME	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
▼ Misc Income			
03/05/2021	PPP Loan	4300 Misc Income	5,230
05/19/2021	PPP Loan	4300 Misc Income	5,230
08/25/2021	State of California	4300 Misc Income	5,000
Total for Misc Income			\$15,460

In person “meeting money” has been steadily increasing over the past 6-9 months.

### Deficit Spending

We have to manage LifeRing finances as if grants will not reoccur. This was especially true during the Pandemic which saw unprecedented funding available to nonprofit and for profit organizations alike. Currently, LifeRing is spending about \$5,000 more annually than it is forecast to bring in. While this is in no way an immediate concern, it is something that we will pay close attention to as we go through our next two fundraising drives. Any additional recurring expense must be approved by the Board of Directors. If we do not close the funding gap for this year, we will consider reducing expenses, possibly in areas like Technology.

With that said, the whole of LifeRing’s operations are currently staffed by one part time paid position, with the rest of the work performed entirely by unpaid volunteers. We have a significant need for more paid positions and the Board has discussed spending some of our reserves on paid positions that could help us bring in more revenue, for example, in writing grants. The Board has discussed spending a portion of our reserves to pay for a position that would focus on bringing in more money to expand operations and provide more services to members.