



# Northern Community Mediation

Where The Solution Is Up To You

Serving Emmet & Charlevoix Counties

## BRIDGES

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### GENERAL CIVIL TRAINING



Pictured from left to right: Jim Erhart, Jane Gootee Nelson, Steve Tresidder

A huge thanks needs to go to NCM Board Vice-President and attorney Steve Tresidder for the well-planned, informative and interesting workshop he put together on General Civil training. With his team of Jane Nelson, Jim Erhart and Kathy Lane, he provided a wealth of knowledge for those who attended the training.

Among other things, we learned about Dower Rights. In the state of Michigan, "The widow of every deceased person, shall be entitled to dower, or the use during her natural life of 1/3 part of all the lands whereof her husband was seized of an estate of inheritance, at any time during the marriage, unless she is lawfully barred thereof." (MCL 558.1). While this is valuable information, as mediators it is important that we do not step over the line by giving advice. Mediators can, however, ask questions like, "Do you feel comfortable with

### MEDIATOR ROUNDTABLE

Be certain to put Tuesday, February 12 on your calendar for the Mediator Roundtable. Kathy Lane, Connie Saltonstall and Bruce Herbert will be there to explain the Proposed Quality Assurance Plan that they are developing. Your input on this process is essential. Plan to attend from 4:30 to 5:30.

### FOURTH ANNUAL THEATRE PARTY

It is hard to believe that Tuesday, March 11 will be our fourth-annual Theatre Party fund raiser. Tickets are available at NCM, and are still the bargain rate of \$25 per person. This includes sampling an array of appetizers and non-alcoholic wine, beer and soft drinks, the chance to win a door prize, and admission to a movie of your choice.

This year we are adding another feature. We will present the annual awards: Veteran Mediator, Rookie Mediator and NCM Advocate of the Year.

Sponsorships at the \$25, \$100, \$250 and \$500 are available, and would be greatly appreciated. If you are interested in being a sponsor, contact the center.

### IN THE NEWS

Very exciting is the fact that the News-Review Editorial Board took a stand in the Opinion section of the paper that encouraged disagreeing parties to come to mediation. This certainly points out the fact that our services are valued and the work that our mediators do is respected throughout our community.

The NCM Annual Meeting was recognized in an article in the newspaper. Among other things, the article summarized the annual report. Did you realize that the value of the mediator volunteer hours in 2007 totaled \$162,790? Now, that is impressive!

On January 11, the *Petoskey News-Review* ran an article on the use of community service in sentencing people who break the law. All four of our judges (Johnson, May, Mulhauser, and Pajtas) make use of community service. According to Judge Johnson, it is "another way that someone who has harmed the community can pay back some of the damage they've done." As Judge Mulhauser pointed out, "Community service can sometimes have a profound effect on young people."

Keith Williams, treasurer of the NCM Board of Directors, is a busy volunteer. His picture appeared in the paper because he is the incoming vice president of the Petoskey Chamber of Commerce.

Mediator June Jackson made a distinction when she said, "I don't think primaries are a waste of time but our primary system is. We need to change the system."