



Northern Community Mediation

Where The Solution Is Up To You

Serving Emmet & Charlevoix Counties

BRIDGES

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MMMMM GOOD!



Are they smiling about the candy or the soup? President of the NCM Board of Directors Jill Ryan and David Jones from the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation pose for a picture with the display that was developed for the first-time offender, shoplifting program. Did you know that for every \$1000 worth of merchandise shoplifted a merchant must sell 900 candy bars per week per year or 380 cans of soup per week per year in order to recoup that \$1000 loss?

CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING

Just when we get to understanding what PPMP stands for—Permanency Planning Mediation Program—the state goes and changes the name. We will now be referring to what used to be PPMP as Child Protection. The reason for this is that PPMP as a program as such throughout the state no longer exists. What remains is the fact that mediation is used to determine placement of a child in cases of abuse and neglect. Do keep in mind, however, that NCM is doing more of these types of cases than ever.

SYMPATHY

Mediator John Berndt lost his uncle several weeks ago. As John explained, what was really difficult was seeing how hard it was on his dad.

SPEAKING OF CHILD PROTECTION

Congratulations to Bob Harkness, Jamie Winters, Tim Hass and Karen Cole. They recently completed the 20-hour, specialized training for child protection. Pat Dull was delighted to have some more mediators for these cases.

ON THE SUBJECT OF TRAINING

The first, three-hour session of four relating to divorce mediation was held on Tuesday, May 1. Fourteen mediators participated in the training. The subject was the Divorce Law & Process. Judge Pajtas did an excellent job of explaining the various ramifications. The next training session will be held on Thursday, May 31. The topic will be Domestic Violence. Each session is a stand alone session. So, if you could not make the first session, you can still sign-up for the upcoming sessions.

Thirteen people participated in the first session: Dick Arlen, Kirsten Cochran, Karen Cole, Lou Fantini, Dick Hendrian, Bruce Herbert, June Jackson, Keith Lapp, Josie MacLean, Bert Rousseau, Connie Saltonstall, Del Weitzel, and Jamie Winters. Kathy Lame was the trainer.

EVEN MORE TRAINING

On Thursday, May 10, our 40-hour training for 2007 will begin. This year's training will be slightly different because we have been approved by SCAO for general civil training as well as center training. Our illustrious Kathy Lame will again be the lead trainer. What would we do without her? Board member and attorney Steve Tresidder is serving as co-chair.

FEE CLARIFICATION

For cases that are not referred or ordered by the court, NCM does charge a fee. The range is from \$40 to \$60, depending upon the complexity of the case. This fee is often waived because of inability to pay. Our procedure is to send a bill after mediation has occurred. Occasionally, parties will bring the money to mediation. If they do so, accept the payment and put the money in the packet. Include a note so that we know from whom the payment was received. That is your only responsibility in terms of fees. We do this deliberately so that you as mediators retain your neutral role as facilitators and are not burdened with administrative responsibilities that could interfere with your role as a mediator.

MORE AND MORE CASES

Our caseload continues to grow. For the first quarter of 2006, we closed 118 cases. For the same time period in 2007, we closed 192 cases. Although this is somewhat skewed because of some unusual circumstances, it still is indicative of the fact that more and more cases are coming our way. And, many of these are highly specialized, which means we have to rely upon those mediators who have advanced trainings.