



Northern Community Mediation

Where the Solution Is Up To You

Serving Emmet & Charlevoix Counties

BRIDGES

January 2018

Vol. 1 No. 1

FESTIVITIES OF THE HOLIDAYS



Case Manager, Caroline Smith

As all of you know, the Northern Community Mediation staff works very hard to fulfill its responsibilities and obligations to the community and the courts. Never let it be said, however, that the NCM staff does not find time to have a good time. Last year just before Christmas, Administrative Assistant Kristy Whitman started what has become a tradition—hopefully for years to come. She baked an array of sugar cookies and brought them to the NCM office along with frosting and sprinkles so that we could decorate the cookies. We had so much fun that we decided that cookie decorating would have to be an annual tradition. So, this year, we all went over to Kristy's home for the decorating party. Just to make certain that everyone was in the spirit of the evening, Caroline Smith wore her Christmas sweater. Some people might say it qualifies for the ugly, Christmas sweater competition, but we all thought it was adorable. Way to go, Caroline.

CONDOLENCES

No matter how old we are, the death of a parent is always difficult. It is all the more difficult when those deaths occur around the holidays. Our sympathy goes out to mediator Carolyn Belknap on the death of her mother and to Jim Raber's wife Joy on the death of her father.

USELESS FACT

All the water in Lake Superior would cover North and South America in one foot of water.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for noon on Thursday, January 18 at City Park Grill in Petoskey, will take on a somewhat different format this year. As always, the Annual Report will be available, and we will recognize the outgoing board members and welcome the incoming board members. What will be different this year is that we will be presenting the Annual Awards at the Annual Meeting rather than at the Appreciation Luncheon, which has traditionally been held in May.

The reason for this change relates to our 25th Anniversary Celebration. On Tuesday, May 15 rather than holding the Appreciation Luncheon, NCM will celebrate with a 25th Anniversary Party from 4:30pm to 6:30pm at City Park Grill. Since this will truly be a party with socializing, appetizers and wine and beer for spirits, presenting the Annual Awards would get lost in the shuffle.

So, put these two dates on your calendar: Thursday, January 18 for the Annual Meeting and Tuesday, May 15 for the Anniversary Celebration Gala. If you plan to attend the Annual Meeting, please call the NCM office to make a reservation. For the Anniversary Celebration, you will receive an invitation in the mail.

A RECORD YEAR

It was the busiest year in NCM history. The Case Managers opened 1,045 cases and closed 1,051 cases. Of the closed cases, 576 were ordered by the courts, and 160 referrals were from the schools. The most common dispute type was Breach of Contract, which included everything from small claims to general civil cases. The second most common dispute type was school related, and the third most common was divorce. Eighty percent of the cases came to full or partial agreement. This could not have happened without the dedication and support of all of you who mediate for NCM. Congratulations and thank you for a phenomenal 2017.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. ~ Steve Jobs

HAPPY NEW YEAR