



# Northern Community Mediation

Where The Solution Is Up To You

Serving Emmet &  
Charlevoix Counties

## BRIDGES

May 2006  
Vol. 3 No. 5

### A FINE LINE

We all know that as mediators, it is neither our role nor responsibility to give legal advice. On the other hand, we do have an ethical obligation to ensure that the mediation process is fair to all concerned. Consequently, there are times that we might want to consider asking a question for the purpose of planting a seed.

For example, when two parties come-up with an agreement relating to a breach of contract/small claims type of case, it will generally entail that one party will pay the other party a certain amount of money within a given time frame. Often that amount is less than what was originally asked for.

Consequently, you may want to consider having a clause in the agreement that states that if the defendant does not live up to her/his part of the agreement, the plaintiff retains the right to go after the original amount.

Of course, this has to be done with utmost care so that you do not overstep the bounds of appropriate, mediation behavior.

### IN THE FINAL STRETCH

Five of the 2006 graduates of the 40-hour training are in the final stages of becoming full-fledged mediators. In the near future, we look forward to calling on Keith Lapp, Melissa Ludwig, Gayle Miller, Elizabeth Most and Jamie Winters for mediations. Keep up the good work.

### SOON TO BE UP AND RUNNING

A huge thanks goes to Janice Elliot. She has been working on her Master's Degree in Social Work through Michigan State University. One of her requirements has been an internship, which she has been doing at NCM. In that capacity, she has developed our very own website. As soon as some final details are taken care of, we will have a presence on the internet.

One of the features will be a "Mediator Access" page. Among other things, this page will contain our newsletters and various forms that are used in mediation. It will require a password, which will be shared with you when we are up and running.

### MUCHOS GRACIAS

North Central Michigan College has a neat custom that allows staff to wear jeans on certain Fridays if they put \$5.00 into a kitty. Then, a name of one of the participants is drawn, and the money is given to the non-profit organization of his/her choice.

Well, thank you to Diana Souza. Her name was drawn, and she stipulated NCM as the recipient of \$95.00.

### IN THE NEWS

Past Executive Director of NCM Celia Partida continues to reach out and help others. Her picture was in the *Petoskey News-Review*, which featured an article on Bob Hicks, a tenth-grader at Petoskey High School. He did a school project at BASES. Celia supervised him in his investigation of substance abuse.

Ever busy Connie Saltonstall saw her commitment to banning indoor smoking in business places become a reality. Seeing the Charlevoix County Board of Commissioners reverse their previous decision was Connie's first agenda item upon taking office.

### ONE OF OUR BOARD MEMBERS

Dennis Halverson, who is one of NCM's board members, is running for re-election to the Charlevoix School Board. Presently, he serves as president of the board. Reflecting upon the financial status of the school district, Dennis stated, "This is not just a school board problem. This is our problem as a community." It goes without saying that his remark applies to all school districts.

### OVERCOMING FEARS

While giving a speech on his early bicycle-riding experiences as a child at Tip-A-Da-Mitt Toastmasters meeting, mediator Keith Lapp had his picture taken. This picture appeared in the *Petoskey News-Review*. What talent our mediators, board and staff possess!

### THINK ABOUT THIS

Middle age is when you choose your cereal for the fiber, not the toy.

Wrinkles don't hurt.