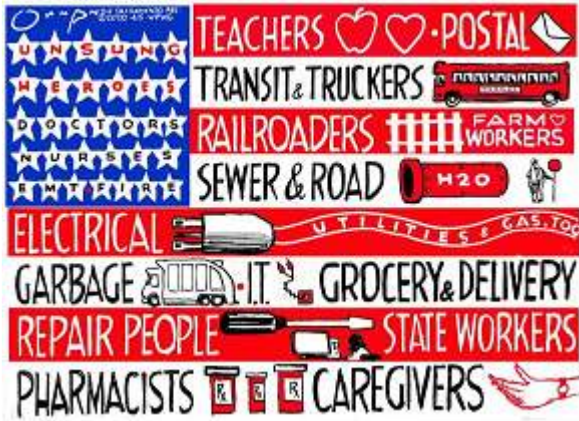


**COVID-19**



Hats off to all of the individuals who go to work knowing that they are potentially exposing themselves to COVID-19 so that our communities can continue to function with some sense of normality. My washing machine broke down a couple of weeks ago. The repairman's willingness to come to my house saved me from having to expose myself at the laundromat. Words seem inadequate to express my gratitude.

**WHAT? NO PICTURES?**

With all mediations being done via Zoom, with no in-person gatherings or events, with staff working remotely, there is nothing to take pictures of. The next best thing seems to be to find cartoons and the like that relate to either mediation or COVID-19 to use in place of pictures in our newsletter.

**ADVANCED MEDIATOR TRAINING**

The Advanced Mediator Training scheduled for Friday, September 11 is going to be very interesting. The participants have been assigned about 2 ½ hours of homework that will count towards the eight-hour requirement. Part of the assignment is to respond in writing to the videos and webinar that they are to watch. It has been fascinating and insightful reading those responses that have already been submitted. I suspect that there will be some

**USELESS USEFUL FACT**

Coronaviruses are impostors from biology. The tailpiece of each spike "imitates" the molecule of a useful substance, so that the cellular receptors gladly pull it into themselves, and the whole virus is squeezed into the cell after the spike is in. This is how infection occurs.

**QUOTE OF THE MONTH: STAY SAFE, STAY HEALTHY**

**STATUS REPORT**

- Since the beginning of the year,
  - NCM has opened 523 cases and closed 524.
  - NCM has closed 53 cases that have been mediated via Zoom with a 74% agreement rate.
  - NCM has closed 255 cases that have been face-to-face with an agreement rate of 71%
- Of the 524 closed cases, 377 have been either conciliated, facilitated or mediated.
- The COVID-19 cases continue to be on the rise on a daily basis in both Charlevoix and Emmet counties. Until that trend reverses and/or a vaccine becomes available, NCM will not schedule face-to-face mediations.

**SUGGESTION FOR THE ZOOM MEDIATORS**

Many of the clients are nervous and somewhat apprehensive of the Zoom technology. Therefore, it is essential that NCM does everything it can to make people feel at ease. Rather than making people wait in the "waiting room" until all of the participants have arrived, we admit them into the mediation as they enter the "waiting room." When people have to wait to be admitted, they begin to think that perhaps they have not done things correctly, thus increasing apprehension.

This does mean that the mediators often do not have time to talk privately prior to the mediation. Therefore, we encourage co-mediators to talk with one another on the telephone sometime prior to the mediation.

**CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER**

If you have not heard, Lisa Muneio retired several weeks ago. Her replacement as the Court Administrator for the 7<sup>th</sup> Probate Court in Emmet County is Matt Miller. Matt brings excellent credentials to this position. His experience with the Department of Health and Human Resources will be most valuable. NCM looks forward to working with Matt, who began in his new position on Tuesday, September 1.

**2020 & 2021 OUTLOOK – A FINANCIAL REPORT**

We all understand the COVID-19 has had a significant impact upon the finances of most organizations. Northern Community Mediation is no exception. Fortunately, it does appear that NCM will end 2020 in the black. The larger concern is what will 2021 bring? We have already been notified of decreases in funding from several of our major sources of income. As more definitive information rather than speculation becomes available, we will keep you informed. Be reassured, however, that NCM is in no way in jeopardy of having to close its doors. We will survive.