

HOPE



All we have to do is to hang in there just a little bit longer. We have already gone through 10 months of wearing face masks, social distancing, washing hands, and avoiding crowds. In the greater scheme of things, what are a few more months, even if it means five or six months more for herd immunity to kick COVID-19 good-bye?

NEW BOARD / OLD BOARD

We have to say good-bye to three of our board members who have termed-out. Thank you to Ed Engstrom, Stuart Fenton and Bill Meengs for their six years of service. Bill served as treasurer, Stuart as secretary, and Ed made our Donor Campaign Tracker.

Give a welcome to Phil Harmon, Brooke Jacoby and Suzi Kanine, our new board members. Phil is with the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa, Brooke is Canadian but got her law degree in Australia, and Suzi is the Emmet County Clerk.

Continuing on the Board are Iza Babinska, Nikki Devitt, Emily Hoffman, Maureen Hollocker, Liisa Morley, President Bob Banner, Vice-President Brian Kasiborski, Treasurer Hugh Conklin, Secretary Kirstyn Horan, and Member-at-Large of the Executive Committee Mitch Brown.

HOLIDAY PARTY

Twenty-five people enjoyed our holiday party via Zoom. We shared Christmas memories, had a medley of Charlie Brown Christmas music, and played two games: Christmas Trivia and Naughty or Nice. We do believe that the 2021 holiday party will be face-to-face at the center at the center with appetizers, wine, egg nog and non-alcoholic drinks as well.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“I’ve got nothing to do today but smile.” ~ Paul Simon

AWESOME MEDIATORS

Karen, Laura and I cannot thank all of you enough for your willingness to jump into the unknown. Who even had heard of Zoom prior to March 2020? Yet, so many of you were willing to give it a try. If you had not done so, Northern Community Mediation would not have been able to continue offering its mediation services. We would have had to close our doors. What a disservice that would have been to our community.

We also want all of you to understand that we regret that we have not been able to make use of your services as much as we were able to do so in the past because of two factors. First, our caseload is down, which is a pattern throughout the state. Second, by having to use Zoom, our first contact for a mediator has to be a mediator who is qualified to handle the technical aspects of mediating via Zoom. We then have to consider gender and if a mediator trained in a specialized type of mediation is required.

We know that there are times when the mediator notes are less informative than you would like. When this happens, it is due to the fact that we are unable to get the information from the parties.

WHEN WILL WE BE BACK TO NORMAL?

We all know that it is still not over. At this point, we cannot give you a definitive date for resuming face-to-face mediations. That decision will be dependent upon the progress in the administration of the vaccine and advice from health officials and leading epidemiologists. However, I can say this. It sure will be nice to see each and every one of you in person, be able to see smiling faces, and give everyone a hug.

ADVANCED MEDIATOR TRAINING

The four-hour training that was scheduled for Friday, February 4 has been postponed to Friday, March 4. The topic is “The Mediator’s Health and Well-Being.” Details of the training along with registration will be posted on the NCM website by the end of this week. A second four-hour training will be offered later in the year.

SILLY RECOGNITIONS

Steve Hall did our first Zoom mediation. Fred Mulhauser was not sent his \$.35 mileage reimbursement. Connie Saltonstall and Bill Cattin did a mediation that lasted 9 ½ hours. They did do it over a two-day period.

USELESS FACT

Jupiter is twice as large as all the other planets combined.

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