

APPRECIATION PARTY



From left to right: Jenny Brower & Jane Millar

What a delightful time everyone had at our appreciation Gala, which was held on Tuesday, June 16 from 5:00pm to 6:30pm at Executive Director Jane Millar's Bay View cottage. As Jane said, "People must have had fun because they stayed until well after 7:00." Thank you Chef Sarah for delicious appetizers: chocolate pistachio cannoli, lamb meat balls, skewered shrimp to name a few.

Each year special recognition is given to three different individuals. Receiving the 2025 Rookie Mediator of the Year was Kathy Krecke. Being a rookie does not imply that the person is still in the learning stages, it merely means it is someone who has been with the organization less than two years and enthusiastically accepts opportunities to mediate and goes out of his/her way to be a super-duper mediator. Kathy more than met the criteria.

The recipient of the 2025 Veteran Mediator of the Year was Mark Muniak. Upon retiring from Charlevoix County, Mark joined the Northern Community Mediation team as a volunteer mediator. Even in the hardest, most challenging of times, Mark has always been reliable. He is the person that the case managers can call upon when they are in a pinch.

There was no doubt about it. The person to receive the advocate of the Year had to be none other than Denise Drake: board member, mediator, and chairperson of the FUNding Committee. With Denise at the helm, fun was had by all. Even the tedious meetings and the demanding attention to detail required to pull off our more than successful Oscar After Party was accepted and enjoyed by everyone involved because Denise made certain that fun was had by all.

Go to the right-hand column to learn more.

VERY SPECIAL ACCOLADES

What is this picture on the left all about? Although Leah Green was never employed by Northern Community Mediation (NCM), she was one of the original mediators and a highly skilled trainer. In fact, she spent so much of her time volunteering for NCM that most people thought she was an employee. In the early spring of 2025, she was diagnosed with a highly aggressive form of cancer and given a short time to live. As an expression of appreciation for all that she had done to promote NCM and mediation in general, it was decided to create the Leah Award. This recognition was to be bestowed upon an individual who rose above and beyond all expectations over a period of time and would not necessarily be given out every year. The first recipient was to be Leah herself.

At the 2025 Appreciation Gala, which was held at Crooked Tree Arts Center in December, with tears in the eyes of most, Leah was honored to learn that this award had been created in her name and that she was its first recipient. Shortly after the first of the 2026 year, Leah was hospitalized and died a few days later.

No question about it. Jenny Brower more than deserved to receive the Leah award. No one gives more of herself than Jenny, be it for Northern Community Mediation, or her community as a whole. Unfortunately, Jenny was in Florida at the time of the Appreciation Gala. So, having lunch together at Side Door, Jane presented Jenny with her Leah Award. The first words out of Jenny's mouth were, "I don't deserve this." How wrong you are, Jenny. You are truly one of the most deserving individuals to have received this recognition.

JUST A REMINDER

An important date to get on your calendar is Friday, September 25. NCM will be offering an in-person, Advanced Mediator Training from 8:30am to 12:30pm on Agreement Writing. The class size is limited to 20 people and will be on a first-come, first serve basis. So, go to <https://www.northernmediation.org/workshops-trainings/> on the NCM website and sign up for this workshop. The theme of the workshop will be the importance of including the answers to who, what, where, when, how and sometimes why in the written agreement.

USELESS FACT

Benjamin Franklin was the oldest person to sign the Declaration of Independence.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"There was never a good war or a bad peace." ~ Ben Franklin