

ALBERTA FAMILY MEDIATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Edition 4: January 2005

Special points of interest:

- AFMS is pleased to feature the new look for the newsletter
- Newsletters will be distributed six times yearly
- We welcome your input about the newsletters and encourage you to submit articles and features
- This newsletter features information on the 2005 Membership Directory, interviews with colleagues and more!!

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AFMS sends best wishes your way for the new year– 2005! We hope that your holiday season found you well and that the new year has started off well.

We hope you enjoyed the special holiday season edition of the newsletter distributed in December 2004.

As we begin the new year, AFMS is looking forward to membership submissions to the newsletters.

Please forward your favorite web links and resources that you utilize in your work, consider submitting an article about news and happenings in your community, or any other information you feel is valuable to the membership.

In the next edition: ideas for family wellness, interviews with practitioners.

Introducing the AFMS Board of Directors for 2004 and 2005

Dr. Kent Taylor (President)
Ms. Geeta Bharadia (Vice President)
Ms. Bonnie Murray (Secretary)
Ms. Barbara Acton (Treasurer)
Ms. Barbara Bishop
Mr. Yogesh Gupta
Ms. Jane Warren

Ms. Marilyn Herrmann
Dr. Trevor Neil
Ms. Lori Yasenik (past president)
Mr. Michael Porter
Ms. Kim Rieger
Ms. Shelley Taggart
Mr. Terry Zibin

News from around our province

What's Happening Around Lethbridge?

A diverse interest in mediation is being generated in Lethbridge and southern Alberta. Businesses, large and small are looking to mediation as a way of resolving conflict. The Civil Mediation Project, a joint venture of Court of Queen's Bench and the Department of Justice will be launched as of January 1, 2005. The goal of this particular project which will serve the Lethbridge/Fort Macleod district, is to promote interest based mediation as an additional method of dispute resolution for families involved in civil non family cases in the Court of Queen's Bench.

In broadening our scope of practise, a small group of mediators from Lethbridge recently took part in a two day training session in Medicine Hat, the focus of which was Interdisciplinary Collaborative Practise.

Providing a voice on the Board of Alberta Family Mediators, from the southern portion of the province Bonnie Murray is in her second term as Secretary. Thirty years of experience working in the field of psychiatry has provided a solid foundation for mediation. Private practise provides ample opportunity and the flexibility to provide mediation, individual and family therapy, as well as clinical consultations in southern Alberta.



Mediation continues to expand in southern Alberta in areas it has not been readily used in the past. A mediation coordinator has been hired for the Civil Mediation Project, to promote interest based mediation as an additional method of dispute resolution for families involved in civil non family cases in the Court of Queen's Bench.

In Bonnie's role on the AFMS board, she provides a bridge between Southern Alberta and our major urban counterparts. More than 30 years experience in the field of psychiatry, crisis intervention and education, has lent itself well to the development of a vibrant practice in Family Mediation, and a desire to see more people look to mediation as a career opportunity.

Our Directory is on line.

Have you listed your name in our directory on line? If not, please contact Sue at the office for information. Please feel free to provide this directory and web link to referral agents.

Did you know we also have a directory of trainers and education providers? This directory is also found on our web page.

AFMS Conference

High Conflict Personalities—Managing their Effect on Family Disputes

Date: April 29, 2005

Location: Calgary, AB.

William Eddy, an Attorney, Mediator and Social Worker is an experienced practitioner in

family disputes. This seminar will cover:

- understanding the role of underlying personality characteristics which impacts high conflict situations in families
- identifying behavioral patterns
- responding constructively
- collaborating with other professionals

To find out more, please contact AFMS. Please help spread the word—this seminar is for mediators, lawyers, social workers, psychologist, and others working with families.

Resources for families

Family Mediation Canada (fmc.ca) has some new resources for families. The “Family Changes” workbook is now available for families, this educational workbook is for children 6-12 years of age and has been written to help children and families experiencing separation and divorce.

Also available through FMC’s web-

site is a website specifically for children and another for teens.

There is also a directory that families can access for referrals across the provinces.

Our task now is not to fix the blame for the past, but to fix the course for the future.

John F. Kennedy

The 2005 AFMS Membership Directory is now available

AFMS is pleased to report that the 2005 Membership Directory has been printed and sent to all members.

In addition to helping the public locate services in their area, it is also a tool that promotes family mediators and AFMS across the province. Please let us know if there are organizations/individuals you feel we should provide a copy of the directory.

Lunch and Learn Sessions 2005– Edmonton

Mark your calendars for the 2004-2005 Lunch and Learn sessions!

The location is always the Edmonton City Hall in the Heritage Room. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. and the presentations run from noon until 1:00 p.m. There is a question period and mixer beginning at 1:00 to 1:30. This is a great venue to learn, share information and network with colleagues (all over a lunch break).

Wednesday January 19/05– Rhonda Fox Miles (Fox-Miles & Associates). Bankruptcy, credit counseling applicable to families and family businesses in financial concern.

Wednesday February 16/05– Marnie Plucer and Averie McNary (Alberta Justice). Civil Claims Pilot Project.

Wednesday May 18/04– Lloyd Steier of University of Alberta School of Business Center for Entrepreneurship and Family Enterprise. Sibling partnerships at best and worst.

Wednesday June 15/04- /TBA

There is no cost and you just need to bring your own lunch.

These sessions have been held now for several years.



Lunch and Learn

Thank you to: Impressions by Sunrise

Impressions by Sunrise has done a fabulous job with printing and distributing the directories across the province.

Impressions by Sunrise can be contacted at:
infor@impressionsbysunrise.ca or by phone at 780-469-6772.

Sometimes in the face of conflict, it appears that there are boundaries, constraints and hurdles standing in our way of resolving the issues and bringing about relief. It is during these times that we must sometimes think about and look at the conflict from a different set of lens—thus creating opportunity by building a doorway.

**If opportunity
doesn't
knock,
build a door.**

Milton Berle

From the newsletter Editor– Charmaine Hammond

Wishing you all the best for the New Year! As we reflect on the year gone by and what the future holds, we often find ourselves setting goals (and resolutions). As I think about the goals and resolutions for the year to come, it reminds me of a quote by Charles Colton who said "Great minds must be ready to not only take opportunities but to make them".

What opportunities lie ahead for you? What opportunities are within reach for AFMS? This year, AFMS has some exciting initiatives underway, some of which have been described in previous newsletters.

We encourage you to bring forward any ideas you have to AFMS, we are always interested in your input. Additionally, I would like to extend my appreciation for the members who have forwarded information for the newsletter and who have

also taken time to pass on their feedback about the newsletter. I am most appreciative of your perspectives!



Book Review

Mediation: Positive Conflict Management by John Haynes, Gretchen Haynes, and Larry Fong Reviewed by **Bernie Mayer**

Questions about the relationship of theory and practice are critical to the development of the conflict resolution field, and this book is the most detailed and interesting example of exactly how this process works in real cases that I have seen. The reader can follow the thinking of John Haynes and Larry Fong from their broadest conceptual frameworks about the purpose and structure of mediation to micro applications of their ideas in specific interactions. In detailed discussions of six cases, they reveal

their thinking, strategy and uncertainties in an enlightening and courageous way.

In *Mediation: Positive Conflict Management*, John and Gretchen Haynes and Larry Fong have provided a feast for anyone interested in how theory informs mediation practice.

John Haynes was the first president of the Academy of Family Mediators and has been a wise leader and guide for the mediation field since its modern renaissance in the 1970s. He died five years ago and his

passing has left a big absence in our field. This wonderful book, compiled with collaboration from his wife Gretchen and his long time associate, Larry Fong, is a rare gift for us to savor and treasure.



Continued on last page of newsletter.

A book to add to your collection

Stress and harassment, on the rise?

A recent article in the Alberta Venture Magazine (January 2005- The Legal Guide by Marzena Czarnecka) reported that there is about a 220% increase in stress cases between the years 1990 and 1999. The article further enlightens us that more than half of all short term disability claims in Canada are estimated to be stress related. Also estimated is that psychological harassment will become for the “first decade of the 21st century what sex-

ual harassment was to the closing decade of the 20th.”

Psychological harassment (according to the above mentioned author) often involves abusive behaviours such as screaming or yelling, micromanaging, lack of respect, unfair employee appraisals and evaluations, and verbal abuse.

As professionals working in the area of conflict management, it is

important to recognize that we will often work with individuals who have levels of stress that is not always disclosed yet may in fact become a challenge in a conflict management process. Additionally, it is important to be aware of the differences between conflict and harassment and the most effective mechanisms to deal with the different situations that arise.

Membership Categories with AFMS

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing in separation/divorce mediation

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing in Family Business Mediation.

Practicing Mediator (designation for those who are continuing to gain mediation experience or for whom mediation is a small part of their practice.

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing in General Family Mediation



AFMS Membership Categories

General Member

Student Member

ALBERTA FAMILY MEDIATION SOCIETY (AFMS)

#405, 918-16 Avenue NW
Calgary, AB T2M 0K3

Phone: 403-233-0143
1-877-233-0143
Email: info@afms.ca
Webpage: www.afms.ca



Alberta *family* Mediation Society

*Advancing the practice of
family mediation.*

*We're on the web—
look us up!*

About AFMS

Established in 1984,
the non-profit
society provides
services to family
mediators.

The organization has a
part time administrative
assistant and is managed
by a volunteer board of
directors, with
representatives across the
province.

The society is dedicated to
both professional and public
education regarding family
mediation.

We are continually faced
with great opportunities
which are brilliantly
disguised as unsolvable
problems.

-- Margaret Mead

Continued...

Haynes, Haynes and Fong view mediation as a “process of identifiable steps or stages and the role of the mediator is the manager of other people’s negotiations.” They believe that “questions, neutrality, hypothesizing, and strategizing all form the hallmark” of mediation. The authors are committed to an approach that focuses people on the problems that they can solve and helps people envision a “future with a difference.” Through artful questioning, mediators help people define problems in mutual and solvable terms, they offer hope, encourage reflection, search for the real issue, and they do this all without becoming therapists, judges or experts. According to Haynes and Fong, “The mediator becomes an educator, not by telling [clients] what to do, but through questions that are respectful, dignified, and without blame so clients gain insight into their interests that allow them to modify their positions. Those questions are ones of intense curiosity.”

What sets this book apart, however, is the thoughtful application of their methodology to six varied cases mediated by either John Haynes or Larry Fong. Each case study presents an overview on what occurred, including annotated transcripts that reveal what the mediator was thinking at given moments of the mediation. There is considerable wisdom in some of these annotations. For example:

“Powerful people act. We make threats when we feel powerless...”

“I constantly avoid trying to discover the truth of the matter.”

“I believe the longer the silence following a mediator question, the better the question.”

“It is much more useful for the mediator to reflect on his frustrations rather than to act on them.”

Haynes and Fong believe the mediator’s job is to assist people with negotiations and problem solving, not to produce a deeper understanding of themselves or their environment. Transformation is not for them: “As long as the mediator views himself as the manager of negotiations, he will not engage in a therapeutic relationship with the clients. The moment the mediator believes he has a higher responsibility to transform the clients (whether they want to be transformed or not), then attempts at creating the transformation will be through therapeutic not mediation strategies. Our clients have the right not to be treated as therapy clients.”

The reader does not have to agree with all aspects of their approach to find the book valuable. I found myself frequently questioning their interventions and disagreeing with parts of their rationale. For example, my take on a number of cases was that a deeper and less chopped up exploration of the thinking and concerns of each party would be more effective. I also question whether they always drew the line between process and substance as clearly or effectively as they seem to think. But these are the very passages that I found the most useful. They helped me to think in very specific terms about what I do and why, and how I might re-examine or broaden my own thinking and assumptions. In this way Haynes and Fong have provided us with an intriguing journey into our own thinking.

Bio: Bernard Mayer, Ph.D., is a partner at CDR Associates in Boulder, Colorado and is a founding member of the ACR Board of Directors

Book Review

Narrative Mediation: A New Approach to Conflict Resolution John Winslade and Gerald Monk

This book deals with revolutionary techniques for resolving personal, professional and legal conflicts.

“In this groundbreaking book, John Winslade and Gerald Monk— leaders in narrative therapy movement—introduce an innovative conflict resolution paradigm that is a revolutionary departure from the traditional problem solving, interest based model of resolving disputes. The narrative mediation ap-

proach encourages the conflicting parties to tell their personal “story” of the conflict and reach resolution through a profound understanding of the context of their individual stories. The authors map out the theoretical foundations of this new approach to conflict resolution and show how to apply specific techniques for the practical application of narrative mediation to a wide variety of conflict situations.

A ground breaking book bringing together ideas of social con-

structionist theory, narrative therapy and mediation. The authors develop a very clear framework toward understanding this approach with case examples provided. I found this book useful to me both as a practitioner and as a researcher.”

By Jerry Gale, Director MFT Doctoral Prg. Dept. of Child & Family Development, the University of Georgia, Co-Pi Mediator Skills Project.

More about the book...

Victoria C. Dickenson, co-founder of planet therapy.com and co-author of “If problems talked, narrative therapy in action” provides the following review of Winslade and Monk’s Narrative Mediation book:

“An important must read for anyone contemplating mediation either as a receiver or as a provider. John Winslade and Gerald Monk are consummately qualified to bring us this book that is rich in social con-

structionist understanding and revolutionary in approach. Focussing on stories of respect, mutuality, consideration and support, their suggestions can only lead to new possibilities of peaceful coexistence—on both personal and global levels.”

This book is published by Jossey Bass.

Ideas for promoting your practice

- provide information about the services you offer to physicians, counseling organizations, community agencies, and other appropriate community referral sources
- develop a marketing and communication plan with

marketing tasks each month

- keep your business cards with you, you never know when you will meet a potential referral source
- attend business mixers
- remember that word of mouth is usually the most effective

marketing tool

Do you have strategies to help the community become better aware of mediation and other forms of conflict resolution? What strategies have you found in promoting the field and your services? We invite you to share your thoughts with others.

AFMS Welcomes Its New Members:

The following is a list of the new members to AFMS in 2004

Mr. Chant Richard, RFM, Sangudo
Dr. Cotter Anne-Marie, GM, Calgary
Ms. Deines Erika, GM, Calgary
Ms. Dolman Trudianne, GM, Edmonton
Ms. Dubetz Dianne, PM, Hinton
Ms. Fielding Bridget, PM, Red Deer
Ms. Gardiner Wendy, PM, Calgary
Ms. Goruk Carole, PM, Calgary
Mr. Gunn Roger, PM, Edmonton
Ms Krulicki Margot, PM, Red Deer
Mr. MacDougall Scott J., PM, St. Paul
Ms. McGriskin Valerie, PM, Fort McMurray
Mr. Millington Frankie O. , PM, Athabasca
Ms. Nemeth Sandy, GM, Canmore
Ms. Peterson Holly, GM, Edmonton
Mr. Schmidt Peter G., GM, Calgary
Mr. Spangler Bill, GM, Red Deer County
Mr. Vinni Allan, PM, Fort McMurray
Ms. Whiteside Lily R., PM, Calgary
Mr. Zibin Terry, GM, Ponoka