

# ALBERTA FAMILY MEDIATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Edition 6: May 2005

## Special points of interest:

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- 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 recent AGM and Conference, book reviews and more!

## Update on the Annual General Meeting:

This year the AGM was held before the conference, we thank everyone who participated!!

## AFMS Conference April 29, 2005

The annual AFMS Conference proved once again to be a fascinating, educational and information rich day. Bill Eddy, a social worker, lawyer and mediator from San Diego was this year's speaker, on the topic of High Conflict Personalities: Managing Their Effects on Family Disputes.

[See second Page for exciting details.....](#)

## Update on the John Haynes Award:

Congratulations to Diane Shearer from Calgary, the recipient of the John Hayes Award.

## Inside this issue:

Conference Update	2
Family Law Act Changes	3
We'd like your input	3
Lunch and Learn sessions	4
Book reviews	5
Quotes	6

## Introducing the AFMS Board of Directors for 2005


Dr. Kent Taylor (President)  
Ms. Geeta Bharadia (Vice President)  
Ms. Bonnie Murray (Secretary)  
Ms. Barbara Acton (Treasurer)  
Ms. Barbara Bishop  
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


## 2005 Conference Update continued from front page:

Participants learned the kinds of behaviours that people with high conflict personalities tend to display and how to loosely classify these behaviours (without diagnosing anyone!) into known and accepted categories of personality traits. And then - techniques to help to mitigate these behaviours in conflict resolution situations! Bill's expertise and experience, and his myriad of relevant and fascinating stories, provided conference attendees with solid techniques that will be applicable to anyone dealing with people in conflict situations. Anyone who missed the conference and wishes to purchase CDs of the day can do so by contacting Sue Bedier at (1-877) 233-0143. The package is available at a cost of \$70.

During the luncheon portion of the conference, we were delighted to have The Honourable Ron Stevens, Alberta Minister of Justice speak to the attendees and present the AFMS John Haynes Award for outstanding contribution to the field of mediation in Alberta. The Minister spoke of the value of mediation and its growing role and support in the government and presented the award to Diane Shearer of Family Mediation Services, Alberta Justice.



In addition, for the first time, the AFMS annual conference included a pre-conference session the night before the main conference. Twenty people attended a lively and thought provoking session on Mediation Reports. Michael Porter provided an initial presentation on the subject which stimulated plenty of discussion and the sharing of other people's techniques and practices which provided all who attended with ideas for approaching and improving the often ignored subject of Mediation Reports - our ultimate product!



A great time was had by all! We look forward to Conference 2006 which will be held in Edmonton, plans for which are well underway - watch this space for emerging details.

## 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.

## Family Law Act Changes

The Family Law Act is new family law for our province and once proclaimed, it will replace the *Domestic Relations Act*, the family law provisions of the *Provincial Court Act*, the *Parentage and Maintenance Act*, the *Maintenance Order Act*, and the private guardianship provisions of general application in the *Child Welfare Act*. The Department of Justice is working towards proclamation of the Act in October 2005. There are a number of implementation steps that Justice is working on before it can be proclaimed.

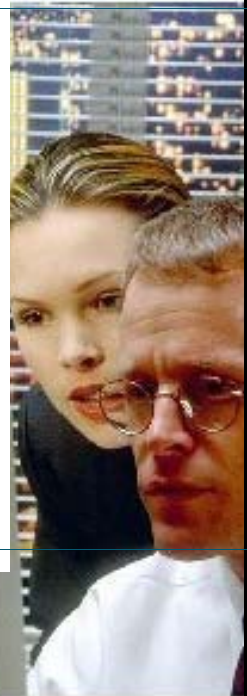
The Family Law Act can be printed from the Alberta Queen's Printer website at <http://www.qp.gov.ab.ca>.

## We'd like your input-

We are considering adding a few new pages to our website. What do you think about several pages for families? What would families like to see on the website as it relates to the society and to the field of family mediation?

## Did you hear the AFMS Commercial?

**Go to the AFMS website and on the homepage there is a link for you to click and listen to the commercial! It is just great!!!**



## Conflict to Opportunity– For Families By Charmaine Hammond, Newsletter Editor

On April 22/05 Charmaine Hammond (newsletter editor) and Sandy Livingstone (AAMS) co-presented a workshop to more than

300 social workers at the recent Social Work Conference. The topic was Conflict to Opportunity– for families. The presentation and helpful information will be added to the AFMS website compliments of Charmaine and Sandy.

# Lunch and Learn Sessions 2005– Edmonton

## Mark your calendars for the 2005 Lunch and Learn sessions!

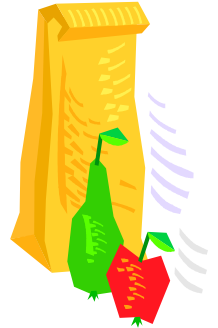
The location is always the Edmonton City Hall in the Heritage Room. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. and the presentations run from noon until 1:00 p.m. There is a question period and mixer beginning at 1:00 to 1:30. This is a great venue to learn, share information and network with colleagues (all over a lunch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

Wednesday 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– Nora Deisman Enhancement Mediation Pilot Project Alberta children's Service/Alberta Justice  
Presenting: Mediation in Child Intervention

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

## An opportunity to share your experience:

Have you volunteered in a Post-Conflict Country in the past 6 months to 5 years? If yes, I would love to talk to you about your experience. My name is Paula Drouin and I am responsible for conducting research on Canadian Volunteers in Post-Conflict Situations. This research is part of a larger research project that is being conducted out of the University of Melbourne, Australia, and the University of British Columbia. PLEASE CALL ME AT (780) 486-1996.

## From the newsletter Editor– Charmaine Hammond

We are looking to include more interviews with AFMS members across the province. It is an opportunity for you to talk about the work you are involved with in the field of family mediation and to share what is happening in your community. If you are inter-

ested in being interviewed, please contact Charmaine at 780-464-3828.

Also, if you would like to submit news about your community and the field of family mediation, a book report or share the out-

comes of a recent event, please contact me.

thank you.



## Book Review– By Mary Jane Klein What's Making You Angry?

By Shari Klein and Neill Gibson of the Centre for Nonviolent Communication

The cover of this pamphlet size book (18 pages of relevant text) promises a “10 step process to transforming anger so everyone wins”. The book focuses on recognizing that it is more important to identify what we **do** want rather than what we **don't** want when we find ourselves in an anger-evoking situation.

The first 5 steps involve "inner work" on the part of the person who is experiencing anger; all but one of the next five steps are outwardly focused.

The first step is to identify anger. (The book suggests we look at it as a red light on the dashboard). Next one needs to look clearly at what actually happened free of interpretation or evaluation. The third step is to take responsibility for one's feelings. No one can "make" us angry. Anger comes from perceptions of unsatisfied needs. The fourth and fifth steps are to

name our feelings and values and then identify our unmet needs.

The sixth step involves identifying a specific positive act you would like the other person to perform, and the seventh step is to make a present tense action request that is supportive of the positive act you have identified.

In Step 8 one is to imagine the needs and feelings of the other person who has evoked the anger. (Parenthetically this step seems to fit better with the first, introspective group of steps and logically, should be considered before approaching the other party.) In Step 9 the parties choose who will start to talk first and in Step 10 they start talking until both parties have been heard and understood.

Naturally the success of this Ten Step method depends in part on the willingness of the person who is the object of your anger to co-operate. Both parties have to be in-

vested in preserving their relationship – which we as family mediators know is often not the case. The most practical application of the method would seem to be in workplace and familial settings where both parties expect to continue to interact and hope to be able to enjoy mutually favorable outcomes.

Even if one is not able to engage the other party in this “transformative” exercise, understanding the principles in the first five steps (plus Step 8 – imagining the needs and motivations of the other party) are useful life skills to help change one's reactive patterns.



A book to add to your collection

## Book Review– By Mary Jane Klein Healing a Child's Grieving Heart By Alan D. Wolfelt, PH.D

This book offers 100 practical ideal for families, friends and caregivers with a grieving child in their life. The book consists of 100 pages with one tip per page. Each tip has a title in the form of a phrase or short sentence, followed by text explaining the concept and then a short section at the bottom each page entitled “*Carpe Diem*”: Seize the day - which gives a practical suggestion for an activity or prac-

tice which would support the idea.

The book offers a range of ideas for children of all ages and situations and so only some of the ideas will be appropriate for any one child. Most of the emphasis in the book is on surviving the death of a family member, but many of the principles can be modified and applied to children suffering from the loss of their familiar familial structure.

The author impresses as keenly sensitive to the needs of grieving children and masterful in his understanding of child development and psychology. The topic is, of course a “heavy” one, and the reading can make for “tough sledding”, however the emphasis on believing in the child's inherent capacity to heal helps to give the book a hopeful tone.

## Membership Categories with AFMS and special incentive

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

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

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

**General Member**  
**Student Member**

We are offering a special incentive for AFMS members who wish to advertise their organization/services/products to the AFMS membership and on the AFMS website. For a very nominal fee you can promote your organization. Please email Kent at [the-mediator1@shaw.ca](mailto:the-mediator1@shaw.ca)

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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.

**"The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.**

**We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable.**

**The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it."**

**-- Charles Swindoll**

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

-- Margaret Mead