

FAMILY MEDIATION CANADA
2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2008

2:00 P.M. (Eastern Time)
Carleton University
Leeds Residence, Room 124
Ottawa, Ontario

Present: 16 Members Present In-Person. 4 Members Present by Teleconference.

FMC Board of Directors Present:

Linda Bonnell – President	(BC)	(Executive Committee)
M. Patricia Donihee – President Elect	(NB)	(Executive Committee)
Betty Ife – Treasurer	(BC)	(Executive Committee)
Gerry Schoel – Member without Portfolio	(QC)	(Executive Committee)
Judy McCann-Beranger	(NL)	
Frank Bulger	(PE)	
Cynthia Spratt Goodmundson	(MB)	
Elizabeth Sterritt	(ON)	
Mary Damianakis	(QC)	
Brenda Arseneault	(AB)	
Norm Smookler	(BC)	

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:05 P.M. Eastern Time

2. Acceptance of Agenda – Frank Bulger moved the agenda be accepted as written and Judy McCann-Beranger seconded. The agenda was accepted as presented.

3. Adoption of the 2007 Annual General Meeting Minutes – Andrew Pavey moved the adoption of the minutes and Betty Ife seconded. The minutes were adopted as presented.

4. Acceptance of Modified By-laws – Governance Committee

Norm Smookler moved we accept the modified By-laws as presented and Mary Damianakis seconded. The By-laws were accepted as presented.

5. Election of Directors – Gerry Schoel – Chair, Nomination Committee

The 2008-2009 FMC Board Nomination Slate was read and presented as follows:

Name	Province	Status	Term	Position	Period Ending (AGM)
Judge Michael Porter	AB	Elected	2 nd	Past President Director	2008 2009
Brenda Arseneault	AB	Elected	1 st	Director	2010
Linda Bonnell	BC	Elected	1 st	President Past President	2009 2011
Norm Smookler	BC	Elected	1 st	Director	2010
Betty Ife	BC	Elected	1 st	Treasurer President Elect	2008 2010
Cynthia Spratt Goodmundson	MB	Appointed	1 st	Director	2009
Pat Donihee	NB	Elected	2 nd	Pres Elect Secretary	2008 2010
Judy McCann-Beranger	NL	Elected	2 nd	Director	2009
Andrew Pavey	NS	Appointed	1 st	Director	2009
Dr. Howard Irving	ON	Elected	2 nd	Director	2009
Elizabeth Sterritt	ON	Appointed	1 st	Director	2009
Cyril Mees	ON	Elected	1 st	Treasurer	2010
Frank Bulger	PEI	Appointed	2 nd	Director	2009
Mary Damianakis	QC	Elected	1 st	Director Member w/o Portfolio	2009 2010
Gerald Schoel	QC	Elected	1 st	Member w/o Portfolio	2009

The election of directors was moved by Gerry Schoel and seconded by Judy Mc-Cann Beranger. The election of directors was accepted as presented.

6. Treasurer's Report – Betty Ife

As I complete my term as Treasurer for Family Mediation Canada it is my pleasure, once again, to report that Family Mediation Canada is in a stable financial position. Thanks to the hard work of our Board Members and Carrie Cekerevac, our Administrative Assistant in our Head Office in Waterloo, ON, we have managed to further streamline our operations, cut costs, and stay on budget.

Through the magic of technology and a lot of patience on the part of Board and Committee Members, we conduct most of the business of FMC by e-mail, fax, and phone, including conference calls. Carrie is our only full-time employee. She coordinates our operations from a home office, and this has allowed us to greatly streamline our operation. Aside from Carrie our staff includes a bookkeeper – Brian Altman – whom we pay a nominal monthly fee to keep our financial business in order, and to coordinate our audit each year. We contract with four assessors across the country – Carole McKnight in West Vancouver, BC; Anne Bolton in Winnipeg, MB; Leanne Shafir in Toronto, ON; and Kirsten Lund in Charlottetown, PEI -- to carry out certification assessments as needed. And we contract our web hosting and maintenance with Jason Stevens out of Calgary, AB. All the rest of our manpower is volunteer, and this has greatly enabled us to cut our operational costs these last two years.

This year's audit for the financial year ending March 31st, 2008 was completed by the offices of Simon McWhinnie Riediger and Meredith out of Kitchener, ON. A copy has been posted on our website. Should you have any questions arising from their report and financial statements please give us a call, or drop us a line, and we'll try to answer them as best as we can.

FMC continues to operate in the black. As of this writing we have no outstanding debt. Our net assets as of March 31st, 2008 totalled \$88,329 – up \$18,896 from 2007.

The balance in our **operating account**, as of November 15th, 2008, is \$57,717.88. 67% of our income overall, and 90% of our operating funds, comes from membership dues. To those of you who chose to renew your membership this year, or who came aboard as new members, we thank you. Without your continued support there would be no funds to keep FMC going. We also generate a small income from the sale of publications, and advertising (on our website, and in Resolve) thanks to the marketing efforts of Carrie. And we generate income from webinars which we share with our presenters 60/40 after expenses. From our operating account we pay out approximately \$1811 in office expenses (office supplies and equipment rental), and operational expenses (insurance, bookkeeper's fees, auditor's fees, utilities, web hosting, and banking fees) each month. And we pay Carrie and pay her employee expenses, bringing our total monthly expenses to approximately \$4,404. Annually this translates into a budget of \$52,846.82.

This year we felt that we were in a secure enough financial position to give back to our Members. We awarded the Daniel L. Hamoline Q.C. Bursary of \$1000. We gave an educational grant of \$200 to Family Mediation Nova Scotia. We gave a research grant of \$5000 to the Alzheimer's Society of PEI Inc. to further their research into the benefits of elder care mediation. We gave a \$200 grant to Family Mediation Nova Scotia to help out with their research into Child Protection Mediation. We sponsored five FMC members to attend the Elder Mediation International Conference in Ottawa last spring. And we donated a free membership, and held daily basket draws at the AFCC Conference in Vancouver, BC in

May. With your continued support we hope to continue with many more partnerships and membership rewards in the coming year.

The balance in our **certification account**, as of November 15th, 2008, is \$5,322.15. This account is totally separate from our operating account. Certification fees are paid into it, and certification assessor's fees come out of it. This past spring we parcelled out the duties of our former Certifying Administrator in an effort to further reduce the cost of certification and make it more affordable for our members. As a result of this move we have been successful in reducing the cost of certification from \$600 to \$400, and yet still cover our certification expenses.

A big thank you to Carrie Cekerevac, our Administrative Assistant, for the outstanding job she has done this past year coordinating invoices and receipts, processing payments, making deposits, entering financial information onto our working database, and answering financial questions from myself and other Board Members.

Although my term as Treasurer has drawn to a close I will continue to provide financial updates to our Members via *Resolve* and *Resolve Express*. And always we welcome your feedback.

Respectfully submitted, Betty Ife, Treasurer

Betty Ife moved that the Treasurer report be accepted as presented and Gerry Schoel seconded.

Gerry Schoel congratulated the Treasurer, as three years ago FMC had a deficit and three years later FMC has a surplus.

The Audited Financial statements for 2007/2008 were presented. Andrew Pavey moved we accept the Auditors report as presented and Mary Damianakis seconded.

7. Appointment of Auditors – Betty Ife

It was moved by Mary Damianakis and seconded by Cynthia Spratt Goodmundson that the existing auditors: Simon, McWhinnie, Riediger & Meredith, be declared auditors for the upcoming year.

8. Reports:

8a. President's Report – Linda Bonnell

As I look back over the last year I see that new energy has emerged within Family Mediation Canada. New board members have joined in with the more seasoned ones and together, they and their active committees, have been meeting, generating ideas, establishing plans and working towards their goals. FMC has been gaining more momentum because of the commitment, the energy and the enthusiasm generated by this Board.

In 2007 the FMC Board assessed in what way FMC provided for its members and then focused on initiatives that would benefit our members directly. Looking back over 2008 membership has grown and our services to members have also increased in the following ways: educational webinar opportunities;

the distribution of the newsletter *Resolve* filled with professional articles, news from other provinces and all of FMC's news; better than competitive insurance rates with AON; reduced costs for certification; FMC participated as a collaborating organization for the AFCC conference held in Vancouver last May, FMC hosted an exhibitor table, and held a reception for all attending FMC members. The FMC Committee chairs have done a wonderful job this year. Each of the chairs have donated additional time commitments in order for their committees to meet and carry out plans that benefit our members. Well done!

The financial health of FMC has been stable and in such good standing that the Board has focused on ways that FMC can offer financial assistance to its members and affiliates. This past year FMC provided some financial support to Family Mediation Nova Scotia both for their Child Protection Research initiative and to host an educational workshop before last year's AGM. Also, via a lottery system, five FMC members received full financial support to attend the Eldercare World Summit held in Ottawa last May.

Carrie Cekerevac, our Administrative Assistant, has completed one year as a FMC full time employee and her contract has been renewed. She is the front line for all the inquiries that FMC receives as well as being the glue that holds all of our FMC committees and Board work together and she has been doing a wonderful job. She completed the QuickBooks course and will be taking over the day to day book keeping in cooperation with the Treasurer.

The Board agreed to revive the discussion paper on FMC Certification Equivalencies Pilot Project at the last AGM. Over the year the certification committee has made some significant changes to the certification process, applicant's costs, and has hired experts to assist FMC with the development of a stream designed for those experienced mediators using Prior Learning and Recognition. One of our future goals is to examine how this approach can be incorporated so that FMC is more inclusive with each unique province or provincial mediation association.

As a national organization FMC wants to continue building and strengthening relationships with other mediation associations and we welcome feedback on how FMC can support the work of local and provincial mediation organizations. FMC has recently formalized a partnership with Eldercare Mediation Canada and together will develop a plan that is mutually beneficial to both organizations. An educational partnership has also been formed with the Canadian Counselling Association so that both organizations can benefit by sharing educational objectives and information about webinar offerings.

FMC graciously accepted an invitation from Ontario Association for Family Mediation OAFM –Ottawa to host our 2008 AGM in Ottawa and together with Carlton University's Centre for Conflict Education and Research. The three organizations have worked together to plan a day long event today. It began with a morning workshop given by Dr Cheryl Picard and attended by alumni from Carlton's Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution, OAFM-Ottawa members, and FMC board and members. After the FMC afternoon AGM, we have planned a dinner together and an evening of discussion with OAFM-Ottawa, CCER and FMC. Thank you to the AGM Committee for all their time and effort to organize this day. A special thank you to Elizabeth Sterritt, President of OAFM-Ottawa, and an FMC Board Member, who was the instrumental link that brought the three organizations together in this educational

partnership. Elizabeth worked especially hard to ensure that the details for this weekend came together. Ten members of the FMC Board from eight provinces coast to coast have gathered in Ottawa for this weekend and we are using this opportunity to meet together as a Board to discuss and create some new strategies and goals for FMC.

I look forward to another productive and exciting year working with the FMC Board for our many members across Canada.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Bonnell, President

Linda Bonnell moved that the President report be accepted as presented and Mary Damianakis seconded.

8b. Administrator's Report – Carrie Cekerevac

It has been a very exciting year here at FMC and a wonderful experience to work as your administrator. We have welcomed an increase in membership, made some certification changes and the overall office is running very effectively.

I would like to start by introducing myself as FMC's Administrator and tell you a little about my background. I started at FMC in June of 2003 as the Executive Assistant where I attended to; the day to day administrative operations, membership and certification administration. In June of 2005 I had left to explore other career opportunities and go back to school. In the fall of 2005 I took The Office Administration Executive diploma program at Conestoga College in Kitchener, Ontario. Some of the courses included Professional writing and presentation skills, Microsoft software programs, customer service, project management, business math, bookkeeping, database management and communications. During this time I was approached to work at FMC again on a part-time basis to take care of the administration needs and have been honoured to be back at FMC since then.

Some of my work history includes Administration for a marketing firm, Customer Service at a reputable life insurance company, Accounting for a computer company, Customer Satisfaction Manager at a coffee company, and a Credit and Collections Analyst at a leading waste and environmental service company.

In July of 2007 I was hired on at FMC full-time. This decision was made as the board felt it would be important for me to be available to our membership and to new members, on a regular basis. I was and continue to be energized about the opportunity to assist FMC.

Some of my activities include:

- responding to membership, certification, mediation and insurance inquiries
- processing membership applications
- certification administration
- processing renewals
- maintaining our database
- marketing to mediation professionals to join FMC
- processing deposits and maintaining financial records
- processing of brochure orders
- responding to board member requests

- website maintenance
- maintaining a filing system of daily transactions and all historic FMC documentation
- preparation of membership reports and maintaining membership records
- preparing invoices as required for payment
- providing membership verifications to insurance company
- processing webinar registrations as they arise
- Attending Board Meetings and taking minutes
- Remitting provincial dues
- Sending Resolve out to the membership
- Maintaining License agreement records
- FAMMA Awards administration
- Providing assistance to bookkeeper with financial records requested for year end audit
- Preparing and distributing of correspondence and reports
- Developing and managing membership renewal plan, including retention
- Submitting weekly reports of the admin. tasks I complete

I assist with the membership committee and with the Certification committee. During this past year I have created a marketing list of over 6000 mediation professionals throughout Canada to recruit new members. I spent time sending these professionals a potential membership letter, a complimentary copy of our Resolve magazine and a brochure order form. We have had steady success with this project and I was able to bring in \$2,621.50 in revenue.

In May of this year I had the opportunity to attend the AFCC Conference at the Westin Bayshore in Vancouver. FMC had an exhibit booth where I got the opportunity to network with mediators, tell them about FMC, hand out materials, business cards and FMC pens. With support from some of our BC members we were able to hold a daily basket giveaway draw; this lured guests to our booth to drop their business cards in a hat and win a gift basket. The business cards received at the conference provided FMC with the opportunity to send our materials to these mediators via email and get our word out there. FMC also donated a membership to AFCC's silent auction which also generated a new member. At the conference we held a wine & cheese FMC member reception with 88 attendees; it was great to meet and hear from our membership and get to know some of them on a personal level.

In March of 2008 we moved our files into the FMC Office at my home. I have been able to sort through all of our historical information and create a filing system so that all documentation is readily available to the board members and member's needs.

It is my pleasure to report that I am ready to take over the bookkeeping responsibilities for FMC. In March of this year I took a refresher course in bookkeeping to take on the position once our year end was complete.

This year I created a FMC catalogue of our inventory for the membership. This includes our informational brochures, FMC portfolio, FMC Wind shirts, FMC Golf shirts, FMC Executive pens, mediation videos, new member referral program, lifetime membership, resolve advertising and website advertising. I anticipate this to bring in some sales for FMC along with the chance for members to proudly showcase our items in their office.

Throughout the year various sources have contacted me regarding mediation training programs they provide to students. This has presented FMC the ability to send them FMC packages of our services and recruit new members.

I believe in what FMC does and am thrilled to be on board and help FMC grow. It has been an exciting and very productive year. It is my pleasure to serve as the FMC Administrator. I feel we are heading into another successful year and I look forward to working with you all. I am in the office Monday through Friday 9:00am-4:30pm eastern time to provide you assistance.

Respectfully Submitted by Carrie Cekerevac, FMC's Administrative Assistant

Andrew Pavey moved that the Administrator's report be accepted as presented and Judy McCann-Beranger seconded.

8c. Certification Committee Report – Betty Ife / Andrew Pavey

FMC recognizes the need for a national standard for certification, one that acknowledges the competency of mediators and speaks with a strong, credible national voice. The goal is to have family mediators from every province and territory in Canada FMC certified if they wish to be. FMC can then truly become the national gold standard in terms of support, advocacy and professional credibility, provide clarity for our members and invite the confidence of the general public. As of November 4, 2008 we have a total of 160 certified members. In our fiscal year April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2008 a total of 18 members became FMC certified.

In November 2008 your Board of Directors passed a Motion asking the Certification Committee to develop a framework to make the certification process more accessible and relevant those who might come to the process already possessing a standard recognized by their own professional association or organization. This builds on the work of the previous Board of Directors and Certification Committee, which looked at ways to extend the benefits of certification to more of our members.

We have listened to comments made by those who have, and have not, successfully negotiated the certification process, as well as by those who have been certified by other professional associations, about the good things about our process as well as the barriers inherent in it and how it could be improved upon or made more user-friendly. Based on consultations with other professional family mediation organizations, individuals who have completed the certification process, and those who entered the process or considered the process but didn't proceed, members of the Certification Committee are working together and in sub-committees to increase opportunities for more of our colleagues to become certified through Family Mediation Canada.

We recognize that any assessment must be reliable – that the criteria and standards must be recognized and respected by our members, by our provincial partners and affiliate organizations, and by our professional community of family mediators. We respect and honour the process of assessment that is currently in place – the video assessment and the exam – and plan to continue to use it. This process came about as a result of a lot of hard work by dedicated individuals and members of Family Mediation

Canada, and has produced a standard that is the gold standard of certification for family mediators in Canada – a standard that we proudly display as professional family mediators.

The application process for new mediators will remain unchanged. What we will be attempting to expand is the application process for experienced mediators. We are seeking to reach beyond a list of courses and hours of study to an application process that focuses on the unique needs and abilities of each candidate applying for certification. The prerequisites for entering the assessment phase of certification will be evaluated in terms of learning (knowledge, skills, and judgement acquired through study or experience), not in terms of experience alone. The expanded process will permit the recognition of a candidate's skills and knowledge previously recognized by organizations and institutions that are recognized and accountable for their work in family mediation. It will also give experienced, practising family mediators the opportunity to showcase their learning to gain entry into the assessment phase of the certification process.

We are pleased to announce that we have contracted with Nym Hughes of the Justice Institute of British Columbia to look at the certification standards of other provincial organizations and provide recommendations to FMC on a Prior Learning and Skill Recognition (PLAR) process. Nym Hughes is well-known for her skill in assessing prior learning, equivalency credits and transfer credits for programs and projects both in- and outside the Justice Institute of British Columbia. Similar to processes already in place in many institutions of higher learning, the PLAR process would give credit to individuals applying for FMC certification. From there we would determine what additional tasks and/or assessments the applicant would need to complete in order to fulfil the requirements for FMC certification. The application process might include a combination of traditional coursework, documentation, and evidence of knowledge (e.g. providing examples of actual MOUs), experience (e.g. listing courses taught, or presentations made, or papers written) and/or an interview process.

We have listened to feedback about support for candidates going through the certification process. We are working on a process to provide mentors to candidates seeking certification, on improving the resource materials available to candidates studying for the knowledge portion of the exam, and on improving support to candidates trying to complete the paperwork and their video assessment. We also want to build in an appeal process for candidates.

We have also listened to feedback about the exams. The Board of Directors has already passed a motion allowing candidates who don't pass one portion of the exam to re-write only that portion, and not the whole exam. We are working on a process that would enable us to provide multiple versions of the exam to facilitate re-writes, to redesign the exams to make the marking process more objective, and to provide options for candidates writing the exam.

We have listened to feedback about the cost of the certification process to individuals. On April 1, 2008, we transferred the duties of the Certifying Administrator in-house and said goodbye to Lilian Henrikson, our Certifying Administrator. This was strictly a cost-saving manoeuvre. The job of collecting the certification applications, assigning assessors, and coordinating the paperwork associated with new applicants was given to Carrie Cekerevac, our Administrative Assistant. Candidates now send their applications to the FMC Office and trained volunteers from the Certification Committee, who are

themselves FMC certified, look the applications over and provide feedback to applicants on parts of their application that need to be tweaked, if necessary. The assessment process has not changed. After ironing out all the details, things are running very smoothly. We are pleased to announce that we have been able to reduce the cost of certification from \$600 to \$400.

We have also listened to feedback about the certification maintenance process. We are working on ways to recognize the annual education and practical requirements of members renewing their certification. We are working on ways to recognize those certified members who renew their certification.

The Certification Committee wants to build on the wonderful work that has been done in the past and looks forward to working with all our members to achieve these changes.

Members, please let us know what other suggestions you may have as to how to achieve our goal of having all family mediators FMC certified. If you experienced barriers to becoming FMC certified, we would like to hear from you. We would also like to hear from you about the positive parts of the process, and what it means to you to be a certified member. And we welcome feedback on what FMC can do on a regular basis to acknowledge your commitment to maintaining your certification.

Andrew Pavey and Betty Ife, Co-chairs of the Certification Committee

Andrew Pavey moved that the Certification report be accepted as presented and Cynthia Spratt Goodmundson seconded.

8d. Education and Professional Development Committee Report – Judy McCann-Beranger

As Chairperson of Family Mediation Canada's Education & Professional Development Committee I am pleased to submit this report for the period 2007-2008. The annual general meeting is an important event as it gives our Board of Directors and members the opportunity to stop and reflect upon our activities, accomplishments and goals for the past year. Governments, organizations, and not for profits should be inspired and awed by the work that has been accomplished by this organization. I believe our success is because we have a group of solid, dedicated, mediators who bring considerable knowledge, passion and energy and, with the help of a great Executive Assistant, the output is phenomenal.

Review of 2007-08 Activities

Knowledge sharing and the development of meaningful partnerships has been high on our radar this year. Information was sent out to more than 6000 mediators and service providers. Workshops were held to celebrate Family Mediation Day across Canada. As a not-for-profit we are ever mindful of the need to offer opportunities as efficiently as possible while keeping committed to quality information and identification of new partnerships, new ideas, and new trends. Not only have we continued to offer and promote professional development opportunities this year, we have also offered to share them with like minded organizations and individuals, building new bridges, attending to ones we already have and mending ones that need attention. It is in our partnerships that we are exploring how to share more with others and thus do more for our members, creating synergy that ensures quality professional development for members and all others who use, or who are interested in our services. It is because of these

developing and unique partnerships Family Mediation Canada is growing and expanding more creatively and efficiently.

This year we advertised positions we believed mediators might be interested in considering. Examples included the Government of Ontario's call for proposals for the provision of family mediation and information services in connection with the Family Court of the Superior Court of Justice (previously known as Unified Family Court) in Brockville as well as in Cornwall and the Alzheimer Society of Cornwall's call for an Elder Mediator position in Cornwall.

An important component of our professional development commitment is promoting and sharing a variety of educational opportunities with our members. We partnered with several universities and curriculums vetting and promoting topics of interest for mediators. A 2007-2008 sampling of these opportunities include:

- Minister of Attorney General – Child Protection Mediation
- York University – Certification Preparation Workshop
- Centre for Conflict Education & Research at Carleton (in conjunction with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services) – Child Protection Mediation
- North Coast Conflict Solutions – The Mediator Newsletter
- Justice Institute of British Columbia – Mediating the Financial Aspects of Separation
- Centre for Conflict Resolution & Research – Advance Practice Workshop
- CHIN RADIO – Promoting family law dispute resolution radio series.
- Family Mediation Manitoba – Law and Reality: Grandparent Access issues.
- ADR – Intensive Arbitration for Family Lawyers
- Additional CCER workshops by Gordon Sloan – The Art of Convening Parties and Capturing Agreements
- Dr. Cheryl Picard (Carleton) – Introduction to Mediation
- Mediation PEI INC – promoted their conference and Annual General Meeting
- Family Mediation Nova Scotia and FMC - lunch and a day of discussion of current issues in mediation.
- Dr. David Wolf – Adolescent development with an emphasis on family and cultural factors affecting their adjustment.
- AFCC – promoted their Vancouver conference as well as supported the conference by an information table that was available to provide knowledge about FMC and its services.
- First World Summit & Symposium on Mediation with Issues of Aging – Promoted this pioneering effort and hosted five people to attend the event.
- Alberta Arbitration & Mediation Society – promoted their annual conference
- Carleton University – Insight Mediation & Dispute Resolution
- Community Mediation of Southern Alberta – The Joy of Conflict Resolution: Transforming People
- Dispute Resolution Office, Andrea Clarke – Promoting the RFQ for expanding the Child Protection Mediator Roster
- Centre for Conflict Education and Research, Carlton – Law and the Mediation Process
- Ontario Association for Family Mediators (OAFM) – Insight Mediation
- Carleton University and St. Paul University – Families and Conflict: Challenges to Transformation
- Conflict Resolution Network – Building Bridges of Understanding
- Centre for Conflict Education and Research – Child Protection Mediation

- St. Paul University – Making sense of conflict: Leadership in complex times – offered in British Columbia and Ontario.
- Association of Family and Conciliation Courts – Applications for high conflict families, domestic violence and alienation.
- University of Victoria – The Art of Successful Engagement with Adversaries and Restorative Resolution: Nonviolent Communication in Practice
- University of Victoria – The Creative and Destructive Potential of Conflict
- Corkum & Associates Chartered Accountants – Senior Citizen and Estate Issues
- York University – Certification Preparation Workshops
- Association of Family and Conciliation Courts – Fitting the Forum to the Family: Emerging Challenges for Family Courts
- OAFM, CCER, FMC - Thinking about Family Conflict Through the Lens of “Cares and Threats”
- Member participation in Family Mediation Day, public forums, workshops, and community presentations.

Our Board of Directors has been exploring opportunities for strategic alliances this year, realizing that in so doing we enhance and improve our capabilities and resources. Our hope is that this will allow our members to gain knowledge of our partners and their work thus inspiring us to discover and create efficient ways to develop our own community partnerships, growing and expanding our practices more intentionally and efficiently. A great example of a partnership is this AGM with our fabulous hosts – OAFM (Ottawa Chapter), along with our workshop presentation by Dr. Cheryl Picard. In the field of elder issues there is a growing interest from lawyers, physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, educators and other healthcare professionals to refer to mediation as well as to enhance their own knowledge of mediation. Family Mediation Canada has partnered with Elder Mediation Canada and assisted and supported them in their developing certification process for the Elder Mediation specialty.

Our webinar series has been very successful this year. Over one hundred mediators availed of these opportunities and evaluated the webinars with a high rating. Dr. Don Gordon, for example gave us the latest research which has been integrated in his “Children in the Middle Program”. We know that past research shows that the level and intensity of parental conflict is a very important factor in children’s adjustment after separation and divorce. Parents who cooperate after they separate, increase the chances that their children will have close relationships with both of them and cope successfully after the divorce. Parental conflict and lack of cooperation have a negative effect on children’s adjustment after separation. When the parents’ interpersonal struggles assume centre stage, the children’s needs are not given adequate attention. These facts are being repeatedly validated with empirical evidence.

Once again this year we invite each of you to share your expertise in particular subject areas necessary for ongoing development of mediators. This will give us an opportunity to expand and improve our webinar series. We wish to ensure that the learning needs of all mediators are considered while broadening our curriculum to balance traditional subject areas with developing areas. Webinars this year included:

- Mediator Compassion Fatigue delivered by Education Committee member Pat Brady
- Children In The Middle presented by Dr. Don Gordon from Ohio University
- Ethical considerations in Elder Mediation delivered by Judy McCann-Beranger
- Issues of Aging and its implications for mediators delivered by Judy McCann-Beranger

- Elder Mediation Part one and Elder Mediation Part two delivered by Judy McCann-Beranger
- Elder Mediation Case Studies delivered by Judy McCann-Beranger

I want to give a special thanks to the Professional Development committee, to President Linda Bonnell for her strong leadership and great direction – always forwarding interesting and relevant articles for us to review and to our efficient and dedicated Betty Ife who is doing a spectacular job for the professional development area by always ensuring that there are stimulating articles as well as current literature recommendations in every issue of Resolve. Experiencing how they model dedication to excellence in every encounter is truly a learning experience. Because of them and the many active, altruistic, forward thinking members we are now forging long-term partnerships that are creating synergies of respect and knowledge - thus growing this field like never before. It is the continuous learning, sharing, growing, and “hanging in there” by many committed members that is making us more than we would have been.

Respectfully submitted, Judy McCann-Beranger, Chair of Education and Professional Development Committee

Committee Members: Dr. Pat Donihee, Betty Ife, Elizabeth Sterritt, Pat McDowell, Greg McCann-Beranger, Laura Luz.

Judy McCann-Beranger moved that the Education and Professional Development Committee report be accepted as presented and Elizabeth Sterritt seconded.

8e. Membership Committee Report – Frank Bulger

It is an honour and a privilege to present this report on behalf of the Membership Committee of FMC. The Committee consists of four members, myself as Chair, Andrew Pavey from the Board, Carrie Cekerevac, Administrative Assistant with FMC, and Margot Gyorgy a member at large.

The Committee has had a successful year and in the spring of 2008 the Board conducted a telephone blitz to foster membership renewals. A mandate for the Committee was written and circulated amongst Board and Committee Members.

Family Mediation Canada has had a productive year in terms of membership. On October 31/08 we had 523 members-an increase from 478 at our last AGM. We also have 66 new members this year. If all pending renewals occur we expect a total of 545 members. I am also proud to say that we have a total of 31 lifetime members.

I want to extend a huge vote of appreciation to Carrie Cekerevac at our head office who keeps the membership lists up to date and tabulated on a regular basis. Also I want to thank other Committee members for their contribution to the committee. The Committee always seeks new members as it is a daunting task at times especially when for example a telephone blitz is planned. Thank you to all those members of FMC who have renewed their membership promptly which in turn facilitates smooth operation in the head office. Again thank you to all and all the best to you and your mediations in the coming year.

Respectfully Submitted: Francis P. Bulger, Chair of Membership Committee

Frank Bulger moved that the Membership report be accepted as presented and Gerry Schoel seconded.

8f. Public Outreach Committee Report – Mary Damianakis

The committee was responsible for distributing Press Releases to several newspapers across the country, regarding Family Mediation Day and one short blurb for the FMC website promoting Conflict Resolution Day.

FMC's Outreach Committee participated in a radio interview promoting Family Mediation Day, with CBC in the month of February 2008.

We are hoping for additional radio interviews in 2009.

This is an active and enthusiastic committee, which is currently working on developing FMC's Public Information Sessions across Canada (at least one, in every Province) promoting family mediation to the general public. The committee hopes to bring awareness to the issue of family mediation to the aboriginal, minority, and ethnic communities across Canada.

This project is in the early stages of development and is moving forward.

The Diversity Committee will also be providing assistance and guidance to the Outreach Committee to develop Public Information Sessions that are inclusive, diverse, ethnic and culturally sensitive for all Canadians.

Respectfully Yours, Mary Damianakis, Chair, Public Outreach Committee

Mary Damianakis moved that the Public Outreach report be accepted as presented and Pat Donihee seconded.

8g. Diversity Committee Report – Mary Damianakis

The Diversity Committee is new and at the initial stages of development.

The Committee will be helping and assisting the Outreach Committee on issues of culture and diversity. This is a short synopsis of the committees' ongoing work.

The committee is in the process of developing its' mandate which currently is exploring several avenues. The committee has suggested additional FMC diversity and culture specific training for all practicing family mediators in Canada, (including FMC and Provincial certifications):

The committee has also suggested that FMC reach out to all minority communities and promote the benefits of family mediation, including our Aboriginal communities (all minority communities /groups, including the handicapped); the committee would like "Resolve" to include more articles on the topics of Diversity, Culture and Family Mediation.

Respectfully Yours, Mary Damianakis, Chair, Diversity Committee

Mary Damianakis moved that the Diversity report be accepted as presented and Pat Donihee seconded.

9. Future Vision for Family Mediation Canada

The FMC Board is actively engaged in a retreat during this weekend about visioning our future. Daniel Lanoue expressed his warm regards from the Directors of Ontario Association for Family Mediation. The word collaborate has been frequently mentioned during this annual meeting and it encourages us all to remember our passion for our profession and enhances our collaborative efforts.

10. Other Business

A FAMMA Award was presented to Dr. Cheryl Picard in recognition of her services for her outstanding achievement in education and training.

A Recognition Award was presented to Lilian Henrikson for her service to FMC as Certifying Administrator.

11. Adjournment

Motion for adjournment was made and seconded at 3:15 P.M. Eastern Time. (The phone line was then closed.

Minutes taken by M. Patricia Donihee, Secretary and prepared by Carrie Cekerevac, Administrative Assistant.