



# FMC

Family Mediation Canada / Médiation Familiale Canada

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**President's Report**  
**Prepared for the 2015 FMC Annual General Meeting**  
**on Saturday, November 14, 2015**

As my term as President expires in November this year, I can't help but reflect on the ups and downs of my term of office. I am very glad to report that the ups far outdo the downs.

First the "ups".

We are presenting very well deserved FAMMA Awards to some very special people this year in several categories. It is wonderful to recognize people who have made such valuable contributions. Their names will be revealed at our reception.

The dedication of our Board of Directors continues to inspire me. We, as members of FMC, are so fortunate to have the volunteers we have. Everyone pitches in and everyone works so hard to ensure that our standards are maintained, our budget secured and services provided to the public and to our members in a professional manner.

Last year, for our AGM, we travelled to St. John's Newfoundland where our members were treated to a wonderful presentation on child support issues and how to mediate them by Betty Ife and Linda Bonnell, two past presidents. We enjoyed the wonderful hospitality of Judy McCann-Beranger and her husband, Greg who welcomed us into their home and then entertained us for an entire evening – true Newfoundland welcome for us. Judy was also instrumental in making the conference a success.

Betty Ife has done wonders in pulling together the conference in Vancouver recognizing our thirtieth anniversary. We are looking forward to this event.

We finalized our new by-laws last year at our AGM in time for full compliance with the federal legislation governing not for profits.

As reported last year, FMC is also involved with a new Ontario group, Family Dispute Resolution Institute of Ontario (FDRIO). We have attended meetings to learn more about this group. Through our joint efforts, Ontario has proclaimed the week of Monday November 23<sup>rd</sup> as "Family Dispute Resolution Week". FMC is fully in support of the week and is supporting programs which will take place throughout the province. Many municipalities have joined in and proclaimed the week as well. Events will take place in those municipalities. FMC will be part of some of them.

FMC is also working in collaboration with Ontario Association for Family Mediation (OAFM), British Columbia and Alberta in working toward court reform. As your President, I am sitting on committees in Ontario designed to promote court reform, reform promoting peaceful conflict resolution.

In August this year, I was invited to make a presentation on family mediation to the Conciliation and Arbitration Board, a not for profit group of volunteers who provide high quality dispute resolution services for the Ismaili community throughout Canada. I hope FMC will work with CAB to gain a better understanding of how we can all collaborate and learn from each other. Peaceful conflict resolution is the goal of both our association and CAB. We have promised to share ideas and statistics so we can learn what works and what does not work in family mediation.

Before our AGM in November, the Board will meet in a retreat facilitated by Linda Bonnell whom you all know. We intend to discuss many topics of concern to our members and to the Board. This will be a committed working group. We intend to create a work plan and follow through on what we know will be many good ideas as to how to expand our membership, expand the public's access to family mediation services thereby benefitting the public and our membership.

Only really one "down":

We are losing two very strong Board members in Betty Ife and Elizabeth Reagh. We are very sorry to see them leave us. It will be very hard to replace them.

We are always looking for members who want to join the Board or a Board committee, whichever you prefer. If you are interested please submit a resume to Carrie at the FMC email address. We need representatives from all provinces so if you can spare the time, please consider volunteering. The work you do will be of benefit to mediators across Canada.

In conclusion, I wish to give a warm welcome to our incoming President, Lia Versaevel. Lia has many great ideas and will strive hard to make our organization more vibrant and more visible. I also wish to say a very heartfelt thank you to those Board members who will be leaving us this year. We will truly miss them at the Board level. We know though that they will continue their support and continue to be around if we need to draw on their experience.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Dart  
President  
Family Mediation Canada