



**Grand Teton  
Mediation Association**

<http://www.gtmediators.org>



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**January, 2007 Newsletter**

**The Meeting Room:**

As a reminder, the monthly GTMA luncheons have been moved ***permanently*** from the second Tuesday of the month, to the ***second Monday*** of the month. Also, the location also has been ***permanently*** changed and will be at ***Happy's Chinese Restaurant 549 Park Ave., Idaho Falls*** and begin at ***11:30 AM***.

This month's ***featured guest speaker*** at the luncheon will be ***Ann Just***. To begin the New Year, Ann will be discussing the current status, changes, and future opportunities in mediation in Eastern Idaho. For many people in Idaho, Ann Just is the reason we became mediators at all! She is Coordinator of Family Court Services for the 7th Judicial District. Ann is responsible for coordinating and monitoring activities related to divorce and child custody cases within the 10 counties of the 7th District. That includes referral and supervision of the list of Supreme Court approved Child Custody Mediators in the District. She often interacts with Judges and the Trial Court staff with relation to these issues and is called upon to respond frequently to legislative inquiries.

Ann has been a Certified Professional Mediator and an IMA (Idaho Mediation Association) Lead Mediation Trainer for roughly two decades. She has been involved in the development, support and oversight of virtually all the 7th District mediation programs. For nearly 10 years she has personally conducted or coordinated many of the training sessions necessary for the success of the current Small Claims, Victim/Offender and Parent/Teen Mediation throughout the District. She instituted the annual Mediator Appreciation Dinner, as well as the Honorable William G. Carlson Mediator of the Year Award.

Working with and watching Ann in mediation is a true learning experience! She frequently begins with a simple invitation: "Let's talk!" And from there, real communication and a meaningful resolution can begin. This is one presentation you shouldn't miss. So ..... we hope to see everyone there this Monday, January 8, 2007.

***In the Spotlight:***

We wish to express our *thanks to Janet Allen* for her contributions on the Board over the last year.

**A note from Dick Struthers on the GTMA Planning session:**

Monday evening, January 8th, at the Creekside Building, starting at 5:30 pm, I will be moderating a planning session to establish 2007 GTMA priorities. We will start with a discussion of what the

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members most want GTMA to provide them and then follow up with by addressing all of the activities we have initiated over the past few years and how can contribute to what the members want.

The activities will include:

- Newsletter
- Luncheons
- Web Site
- Training
- Workshops
- IMA
- BBB support
- Brochures
- Speakers Bureau
- Chamber of Commerce

We will examine how they support our needs, what resources they require, who is willing to lead the effort and what results we expect. This is the time to make your needs known. Don't rely of the Board to guess your desires. We set the time for those who would rather add a little to the work day rather than consume an entire evening for this meeting. If you can't attend, send me your thoughts and I will include them in the discussion.

Happy New Year

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### ***“To Thine Own Self Be True”***

**By Henry Henscheid, CPM**

If we've been involved with mediation for very long, or even if we haven't, chances are we've gone through some training that touches on the ethical implications of our work. I know certainly for any basic mediation training, and virtually all of the other workshops that I've participated in, addressing these ethical issues is an essential component.

But in the last analysis, it's our own sense of our strengths and weaknesses; our biases and “hang-up's”; our prejudices and life experience that will determine how we handle any situation we encounter. And so, one of the most important steps that any mediator takes in preparing for mediation is taking stock of him/her self. In short, To Thine Own Self Be True.

It goes without saying that any time we communicate with someone, particularly in a complex and emotional situation, we give out verbal and nonverbal signals that indicate our attitude and feelings about the situation. That's no different when you're serving as a mediator. If we don't like the way someone dresses, or walks, their religious or political persuasion, or any one of a 1000 other features of that person, it's bound to show! Conversely, if we have a preference for tall people vs. short, thin vs. fat, rich vs. poor, or whatever the distinction, that too may be apparent.

Don't get the idea that we can “hide” from these natural human shortcomings. We can't!! It's just not going to happen! Just because someone acts on their interest in helping people in a difficult situation, doesn't remove them from the human race and everything that goes with it. The real question is whether or not a mediator, as an individual, is able, *and willing*, to temporarily acknowledge and suspend their own biases and prejudices, so that the interest and the needs of the clients remain paramount. If they can't, they need to step aside.

In any line of work, but especially in our own, knowing and understanding our limitations, as well as our strengths is vitally important. Many of us will never be a marathon runner, or concert pianist, or a great public speaker. If we were, we'd be in another line of endeavor. But we've chosen to use our insight, willingness to listen, and compassion for other people to help define our place in the world. Knowing the difference between what *we can't do*, and what we *must do* is the first step toward success in anything *we choose* to do. First, last, and always; ***To Thine Own Self Be True!***