



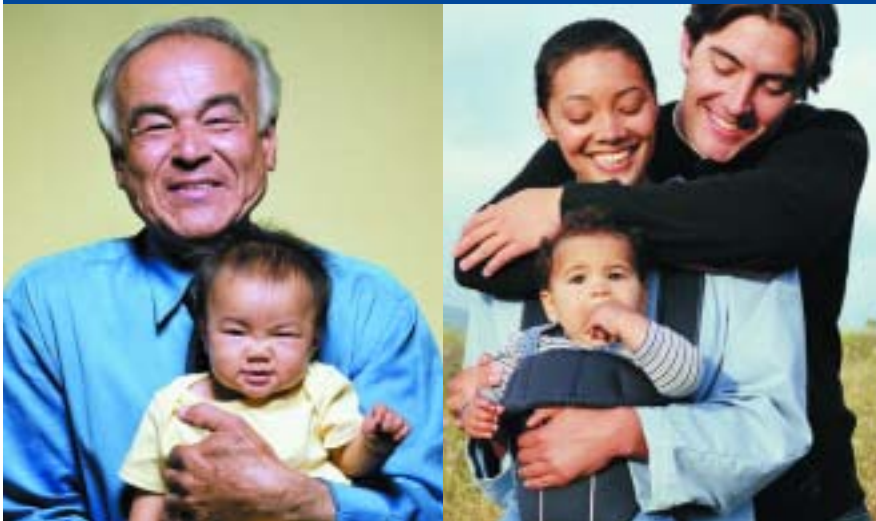
FOUNDED IN 1963

AFCC NEWS

ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS

Volume 25, Number 2

Spring 2006



AFCC's 43rd Annual Conference

On our Way to Tampa Bay

"After attending my first AFCC Annual Conference, I promised myself to never miss one."

— Hon. Raymond McNeal, Ocala, Florida

It's not too late to register for AFCC's 43rd Annual Conference, May 31-June 3, 2006 and join friends and colleagues at the Westin Innisbrook Resort in Tampa Bay, Florida. The world-class resort features a PGA tour golf course, tennis, bike trails, the Loch Ness Pool and Spa, and is minutes from crystal blue water and sandy beaches.

This year's conference theme is *Juggling Conflicts, Crises and Clients in Family Court* and includes an outstanding lineup of presenters and more than 60 sessions on research, mediation, child custody evaluation, parenting coordination and family law education.

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Atlanta Symposium Features Great Debates in Child Custody Evaluations

Atlanta, Georgia will be home to AFCC's *Seventh International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations*. The Symposium will take place October 19-21, 2006, at the Sheraton Midtown in the heart of Atlanta's vibrant Colony Square neighborhood.

Symposium plenary sessions will examine the controversial issues that have had AFCC members buzzing in recent years. Among the topics up for debate: Tippins' and Wittmann's call for a moratorium on recommendations and

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ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS

AFCC is an interdisciplinary and international association of professionals dedicated to the resolution of family conflict.

Mission

To improve the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict.

Vision

A justice system in which all professionals work collaboratively through education, support and access to services to achieve the best possible outcome for children and families.

Values

- Collaboration and respect among professions and disciplines
- Learning through inquiry, discussion and debate
- Innovation in addressing the needs of families and children in conflict
- Empowering families to resolve conflict and make decisions about their future

Views expressed in the AFCC News are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of AFCC.

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AFCC News

Vol. 25, No. 2 Spring 2006

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AFCC News is a publication of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts and is published four times a year. Deadlines for news items and advertising are January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15.

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President's Message

The Foundations of AFCC: Solid as a Rock!

Having now completed about ten months of my term as President of AFCC, I'd like to give you a first-hand report on how AFCC operates and what specifically our organization is accomplishing. You have to be participating in the daily flow of information and decision-making to fully understand how we carry off our substantial responsibilities. I think it is important for each member to have an idea as to how AFCC manages its business.

We have a Board of Directors with 19 members. They are very diverse geographically and by professional designation. The Board meets twice a year, at our Annual Conference each spring and at our fall conference. Board members pay their own travel and lodging expenses. Each Board member is obligated

I think it is important for each member to have an idea as to how AFCC manages its business.

to serve on at least one committee or task force; generally AFCC committee meetings are conducted by conference call, with liberal use of email.

An Executive Committee, composed of five Officers, meets by telephone as needed for decisions that can't await a Board meeting.

The AFCC headquarters office is located in Madison, Wisconsin, and houses the Executive Director, four full-time and one part-time staff members. We are often asked, "Why

Madison?" The reason is that up until 1989, the association was small enough so that administration moved to the location of the Executive Director, which was then a part-time position. AFCC now has approximately 2,700 members, 90% of whom are in the U.S., seven percent Canadian and three percent from Australia, Bermuda, China, England, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and West Indies.

We have eight state chapters (Arizona, California, Florida, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New York and Texas) each of which puts on some form of educational program every year, in addition to a wide variety of other activities.

Our budget for the upcoming year is approximately \$1,000,000, with the prime sources of revenue being membership dues and from our

conferences. About half of our expenses go toward organizational support, including staff salaries, benefits, rent, telephone, postage, printing, accounting services, etc. About 30% goes toward the expenses for AFCC conferences.

The budget also helps fund special projects and AFCC member benefits. AFCC is proud to be financially self-sustaining with grant support only for some of our special projects.

Here is a potpourri of the projects AFCC has engaged in recently:

- Task Force on Model Standards for Child Custody Evaluation
- Parenting Coordination Guidelines Task Force
- Family Law Education Reform Project
- Court Services Task Force, and Innovative Programs compendium
- Innovations Publication Series (forthcoming)
- Workgroup on an Educator's Guide to Working with Children of Separating and Divorcing Families
- Committee on Interdisciplinary Training Guidelines
- Development of Essays from the *Family Court Review* series

Our ongoing member benefits include:

- *Family Court Review* (print and electronic)
- The *AFCC News*
- The newly launched e-newsletter, *AFCC eNEWS*
- Our Web site, with online access to *FCR*, membership directory, links to Chapter Web sites, conference audio and a host of other valuable information
- Online Member Bookstore facilitated by Barnes & Noble

AFCC has also stepped up its focus on collaborating with other organizations, in particular with the National Council of Family and Juvenile Court Judges, the ABA Section of Dispute Resolution and the Association for Conflict Resolution Family Section. We also have excellent working relationships with other organizations, including the American Psychological Association, the International Association of Collaborative Professionals, the ABA Center on Children and the Law, and the National Association of Council for Children.

We are a strong, lean machine! This is like a little civics lesson on AFCC, isn't it? I think it's healthy to sit back now and then to look at the big picture of who we are and what we do. This is perhaps a useful thumbnail sketch to describe to prospective members why they should consider joining AFCC.



Hon. Hugh Starnes
AFCC President
Fort Myers, Florida

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MEMBER PROFILE

AFCC Committee Chair, Annette Burns

Annette Burns, AFCC Board Member from Phoenix, Arizona, is an attorney in the private practice of family law. She is Co-chair, with Linda Fieldstone, of the AFCC Chapter Committee. Annette grew up on a farm in central Illinois and lived in Illinois until moving to Arizona in 1981 to attend law school at Arizona State University. She has been practicing family law since 1984 and loves the warm climate of Arizona.

When did you become interested in AFCC?

I became interested in AFCC in the mid-1990s when I was invited to speak at an AFCC Arizona Chapter conference on relocation issues. It was love at first sight. I immediately admired and respected the atmosphere, the people and the attitude that practicing family law didn't always have to be so negative for everyone involved—including the lawyers.

The people involved (in Arizona AFCC) are absolutely the kindest, most intelligent and involved people I've met in any walk of life.

How did you become involved?

I became involved in the AFCC Board as the result of great mentoring by Fred Mitchell, a longtime Arizona AFCC star, who got me involved in

chapter projects and the Chapter Council. From there, and following the leadership of Linda Fieldstone, I became a Chapter Council representative on the AFCC Board and thoroughly enjoy the involvement.

Tell us about your experience with the AFCC Arizona Chapter.

My experiences with the AFCC Arizona Chapter have been amazing. The people involved are absolutely the kindest, most intelligent and involved people I've met in

any walk of life. The Arizona Chapter is like being involved in a family business—we have our fights and our reunions; we have a great deal of mutual respect; we work very hard; but mostly we have fun because we love what we're doing.

What is the favorite part of your job?

My favorite part of the practice is educating clients about the process and the substance of family court and how they can make decisions about themselves and their children in a way that doesn't have to be confrontational and adversarial. I'm continually amazed at how much of my practice has little or nothing to do with the law but has everything to do with human nature, good judgment and common sense. It's so easy to forget that the people we serve often have few skills in conflict management, and little knowledge about relationships and child development. It's our job to bring them along in those areas.

What was your favorite job prior to your career as a lawyer?

My favorite job in the past was working during four summers in college at a country club golf course in central Illinois. Surprisingly, that job taught me a lot that helps in the practice of law, especially family law. Golfers (especially the men) tend to get very upset by things that happen on the course (usually their horrible game, but often something else like a confrontation on the course or a golf cart that broke down). Part of my job was to calm them down and make sure their experience was a little better. I'm still doing that today with divorcing people.

So, what else do you do for fun?

When I'm not practicing law or involved in AFCC matters, I love traveling to Flagstaff, Arizona and to Florida. I anxiously watch every hurricane to see how it's going to affect the Florida Gulf Coast. I visit Key West whenever I can, especially during the Parrothead (Jimmy Buffett) Convention every November. I devour books, mostly non-fiction, and am currently reading "Bayou Farewell" by Mike Tidwell. Tidwell's book came out in 2002 with his concerns about how the Louisiana coastline is disappearing into the Gulf. He very accurately predicted how a catastrophic hurricane would affect the Coast and New Orleans.

Major Change in New Hampshire Divorce Law

by **Honey Hastings, J.D.**

Temple, New Hampshire

New Hampshire's Parental Rights and Responsibility Act took effect October 1, 2005. The new law states that "Children do best when both parents have a stable and meaningful involvement in their lives." It declares that it is the policy of the state to "support frequent and continuing contact between each child and both parents" and "to encourage parents to share in the rights and responsibilities of raising their children."

The laws for separating and divorcing parents were changed by eliminating the terms "legal custody" and "physical custody." Instead, "parental rights and responsibilities" will be allocated between the parents. The old terms led to "win-lose" thinking with the children as the prize. The new language supports shared parenting that benefits children.

All the provisions concerning children in the divorce statute were moved to a new statutory chapter entitled, "Parental Rights and Responsibilities." In addition to the language changes, "best interest criteria" were codified for the first time.

The new law requires divorcing and separating parents to complete a parenting plan describing how they will share responsibility for their child or children. This is a separate document from the agreement dealing with the divorce, alimony and property division. It requires more detail than most lawyers, mediators, or pro se parties have been putting into agreements. The plan includes the weekly and holiday schedule, information sharing and access, decision-making procedures, transportation and exchange of children, relocation and procedures for adjustment of the plan. Continuing education programs for mediators, lawyers and judges have included copies of the AFCC booklet, *Planning for Shared Parenting*.

In court rules adopted to implement the statute, the Judicial Branch has prescribed a standard paragraph lettering system for the topics covered in parenting plans. Rules also require a "proposed parenting plan" if the parents cannot agree or, preferably, a "partial parenting plan" showing the issues agreed on. The courts offer fill-in-the-blank versions of parenting plans with instructions that can be accessed at www.courts.state.nh.us/superior/selfhelp/divorceforms.htm.

The new law also places more emphasis on alternative dispute resolution in family matters. Mediation is one method for parents to work out a parenting plan and make other divorce decisions. Under prior law, a judicial officer could refer a case to mediation only if the parties agreed. Now, the court is able to order most parents to mediation. The exceptions are cases with domestic violence, alcoholism, or substance abuse. In these cases, mediation may be ordered only if the parties agree.

New Hampshire certifies mediators who meet specified training and internship requirements, which can be viewed

at www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/. Certification is not required for private practice but only certified mediators participate in the court-referred program. Such mediators contract with the Judicial Branch to accept the program's fee schedule. The state pays a \$300 flat fee for "indigent" cases and the parties pay \$60/hour in all others. The court-referred program requires participating mediators to have malpractice insurance.

Enactment of the Parental Rights and Responsibilities Act coincided with legislation expanding the pilot project "Family Division" to all New Hampshire counties. The Family Division handles certain types of cases formerly handled by the Superior, Probate and District Courts. Traditionally, divorces have been granted by the Superior Court. Now, the Family Division will grant divorces, the number of Superior Court judges will be reduced as judges retire and the savings will be used to hire more marital masters (judicial officers appointed to 5-year renewable terms) and other staff for the expanding Family Division.

Chief Justice John T. Broderick Jr.'s leadership has been key to the Judicial Branch changes. In his 2005 State of the Judiciary speech he said:

"My colleagues and I are interested in creating alternatives to trial by combat for those who want them. We need to infuse our court system with new ways in which parties can choose to resolve disputes more efficiently, at lower cost and without having to appear before a judge... In my judgment, we also need to fundamentally rethink how divorce is handled in our courts. Taking spouses and children in stress and forcing them into an adversarial system, with no other meaningful alternative, is neither economically sound nor socially beneficial."

The Parental Rights and Responsibilities Act was recommended by a multi-disciplinary Task Force on Family Law. Two AFCC members played key roles in the statutory change. In 2002, John Cameron, a lawyer-mediator who frequently serves as a GAL, proposed the original legislation to require parenting plans. The bill was amended to establish a Task Force to make recommendations on how to reduce adversarialness in divorce and custody cases. Cameron and Honey Hastings, also a lawyer-mediator, were appointed to the Task Force.

The Task Force spent two years studying the divorce process and the adversarialness question. Its report (accessible at www.nhbar.org/publications/newsroom-archives.asp) recommended a change in approach to divorce and custody cases with a presumption that parents will make the decisions for their children, that courts be empowered to order mediation, elimination of "custody language" and the use of parenting plans.

Hastings drafted this statute for the Task Force and both she and Cameron provided testimony to and lobbied the legislature. The new statute can be found at www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/.

Child Custody and Care Arrangements for Military Families

by **Gerald Laver, J.D.**

Executive Director, Henry County Child Support Enforcement Agency
Napoleon, Ohio

As an Air National Guard attorney with a family law practice in my civilian capacity, child custody and care arrangements for military families are a significant area of focus in my practice. The recent mobilization and deployment of active duty, reserve and National Guard members has raised awareness on the level of difficulty of these issues in both the military and family law arenas. I am alert to the ways in which military and civilian attorneys not familiar with "the other side" could improve services for our clients in both settings. I offer this review of their respective needs with this objective in mind.

I have often heard family law professionals express the belief that a parent's military responsibilities somehow reflect a lack of commitment to one's children. This is especially true for women in the military, but pertains to all active duty, reserve and National Guard members. The notion that a parent in military service is somehow less capable is inaccurate, as many active duty military families grow up with intact households and well-adjusted children. For example, one of my past clients, a single mother struggling to maintain sole custody of her young daughter as she prepared to leave for basic training, was told by a legal professional that a "committed" mother would never join the military.

There are numerous needs unique to military families that must be considered when working with this population. One such area is potential scheduling conflicts that can arise in relation to the demands of general military training or when the military parent is called to service. Reservists and National Guard members usually have a commitment of one weekend of training per month, which may or may not fall on the same weekend each month. This can wreak havoc on two-week rotating weekend schedules. The non-military co-parent can be faced with a potential loss of income and the increased burden of acting as the sole parent if the military parent is called to service. Ideally, parenting plans should include a framework for accommodating these potential schedule changes resulting from both routine and extraordinary military service, with adequate notice and adjustment by both parents.

Another unique need involves planning for uninterrupted financial and medical support to the child, should the military parent be deployed. Upon activation, the

reserve or guard member leaves his or her civilian employment and assumes full-time military status, meaning the source of child support is no longer the civilian employer, but the active duty military pay system at the Defense Finance Accounting Service. Child support enforcement agencies, some of which may be unfamiliar with the peculiarities of the military pay system, need to be notified. The member's activation may result in drastic increases or decreases in income, which may make a review of child support appropriate, but sometimes difficult to complete within the member's relatively short preparation time between notification and departure. Military members must properly document his or her dependents through the military pay system to receive maximum allowances. They must also enroll their dependent children through the military personnel system in order for health insurance to be provided through the Defense Department's Tricare system.

We are all familiar with the emotional toll that may be inflicted upon the children of divorced or never married parents when caught in "normal" parental conflicts. This

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AFCC Presents Chicago Training Programs in June

AFCC is pleased to announce its return to Chicago in June with two excellent training programs in collaboration with Loyola University Chicago. *Parenting Coordination: Helping High Conflict Parents Resolve Disputes*, presented by Joan Kelly, Ph.D., will take place June 26-27, 2006. *Advanced Issues in Child Custody: Complex Family Violence, Alienation, Child Sexual Abuse and Attachment*, presented by Nancy Olesen, Ph.D., will take place June 28-29, 2006.

Both trainings have been approved for 13 hours of continuing education for psychologists. Continuing education credits for social workers licensed in Illinois are pending approval. AFCC members receive a \$65 discount on registration for a single training and a \$125 discount on registration for both trainings. To register, or for further information, please view the AFCC Web site at www.afcc.net.org/training or contact AFCC at (608) 664-3750.

Tampa Reception Provides Networking Opportunities

AFCC members Mike Bridenback, Greg Firestone and Marty Merrell invited colleagues to join other mental health professionals, judges and attorneys at a reception for family law professionals, February 8, 2006 at the George C. Edgecomb Courthouse in Tampa, Florida.

AFCC President Hugh Starnes, Executive Director Peter Salem and Program Director Candi Walker welcomed the participants and highlighted events that will take place at AFCC's 43rd Annual Conference, May 31-June 3, 2006 in Tampa Bay, Florida. Special reception guests included Joan Kelly and Mindy Mitnick, AFCC presenters of the training programs in Tampa and Debra Carter, AFCC Florida Chapter President. The reception provided an opportunity for more than fifty professionals who work with families to network and expand their knowledge of AFCC and its programs.

Special thanks to Mike Bridenback, District Court Administrator of Hillsborough County, Florida, for serving as host.



AFCC hosts a networking opportunity in Tampa, Florida.

On our Way to Tampa Bay

Continued from page 1

The conference features three plenary sessions and six full-day pre-conference institutes including an *Advanced Institute on Parenting Coordination* presented by Christine A. Coates, M.Ed., J.D., Barbara Jo Fidler, Ph.D. and Matthew J. Sullivan, Ph.D. to kick off the conference on Wednesday, May 31, 2006.

Hotel rooms are going quickly and the Westin Innisbrook Resort may already be sold out on various nights during the conference. Reserve your room today by calling the resort toll-free at (800) 456-2000 or (727) 942-2000 and ask to be put on a waitlist if necessary. Alternative hotel options are listed on the Conference Page of the AFCC Web site at www.afccnet.org/conferences/afcc_conferences.asp. If you haven't already registered for the conference, register online at www.afccnet.org.

Atlanta Symposium

Continued from page 1

AFCC's Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation.

The Symposium will also feature four pre-conference institutes and twenty workshops on a variety of topics for experienced evaluators and those who are just starting a practice. Topics will include psychological testing, testifying and cross-examination, report writing, interviewing skills, and numerous advanced and professional practice related topics.

If you are interested in presenting a workshop, go to www.afccnet.org and download the Call for Presenters. Proposals are due May 15, 2006. Look for the conference program this summer and watch the *AFCC eNEWS* and www.afccnet.org for updates.

Parent Education Congress and Networking Opportunities

AFCC's *Seventh International Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs* will take place October 22-23, 2006, at the Sheraton Midtown in Atlanta.

The program will feature two days of workshops, plenary sessions, networking and opportunities for participants to share resources and information about their programs. The Congress will feature an update on the latest research on children and divorce from around the globe. Workshops will examine non-traditional families, how to keep audiences engaged, quality control, high conflict families, never-married parents and more.

This year's Congress will again feature the opportunity for all Congress registrants to participate in the Parent Education Resource and Networking Center. Participants may bring materials to display and share with others, join table top discussions with colleagues and network with some of the most experienced professionals in the field.

Watch the *AFCC eNEWS* and www.afccnet.org for program updates.

The Sheraton Midtown Atlanta

The *Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations* and the *Congress on Parent Education and Access Program* will both take place at the Sheraton Midtown Atlanta at Colony Square. The Sheraton is located between downtown and Buckhead in the heart of Midtown, Atlanta's arts and business district. The Colony Square Mall and Food Court are just off the hotel lobby, offering shopping and casual dining options. The Sheraton Midtown Atlanta is offering an affordable AFCC rate of \$131 per night for single or double occupancy. For more information contact AFCC at (608) 664-3750

ABA Presidential Initiative Recommends Family Law Education Reform Project

Recommendations from a planning conference for the ABA's Presidential Youth at Risk Initiative include two proposals related to the Family Law Education Reform Project (FLER) cosponsored by AFCC and the Hofstra Center for Children, Families and the Law.

An interdisciplinary group of 60 professionals and youth met in New York in early February 2006 to develop recommendations to address important issues in America's Youth. The recommendations propose that the FLER recommendations be studied and implemented and the Initiative's Action Plan suggests that the ABA Section of Family Law study the *FLER Report* and assist with implementation.

The conference was hosted by Hofstra Law School and planned by the ABA Center on Children and the Law, Division for Public Education and Office of Karen Mathis, ABA President Elect. AFCC members participating included Hon. Hugh Starnes, Dr. Robin Deutsch, Professors Andrew Schepard, Herbie DiFonzo and Linda Elrod, Hon. William Jones and Peter Salem. The recommendations are available at www.abanet.org/child/youthatrisk.

More Endorsements for Family Law Education Reform Project Report

The Family Law Education Reform (FLER) Project continues to receive endorsements from organizations and individuals. The latest organizations to endorse the report joining the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, include the American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution, Association for Conflict Resolution, International Academy of Collaborative Professionals and National Association of Counsel for Children.

The Project, co-sponsored by AFCC and the Center for Children, Families and the Law of Hofstra University School of Law, seeks to close the gap between the teaching and practice of family law. The *FLER Report* can be accessed on the AFCC Web site at www.afccnet.org/about/fam_law_tf.asp.

AFCC will be hosting two workshops on the research and implementation of the *Report* at its 43rd Annual Conference in Tampa Bay, Florida, May 31-June 3, 2006.

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AFCC Thanks Contributors

AFCC's Annual Appeal for 2005-2006 raised more than \$18,000. AFCC's Resource Development Committee would like to thank AFCC members for their generous donations.

This year the Resource Development Fund made a \$5,000 contribution to New Orleans Habitat for Humanity to aid victims of Hurricane Katrina. It is awarding seven conference scholarships to the Annual Conference in Tampa Bay, two international scholarships that include a \$1,000 travel stipend, one local scholarship and three \$500 travel stipends for residents of the New Orleans area to

allow them to travel to Tampa Bay.

The Innovation Mini-Grant Program will offer a \$5,000 grant to enable an organization to provide a two-day parenting coordination training at little or no expense to the trainees. In exchange, the trainees will commit to provide at least twenty hours of pro bono parenting coordinator services.

Thanks again to everyone that contributed to this year's Annual Appeal. These programs and initiatives would not be possible without your support!

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Special Thank You

Special thanks to Diamond Contributors Charlie and Barb Asher, Doneldon Dennis, Arline and Barry Rotman and the Suzie S. Thorn Family Foundation and to AFCC's Chapters for going above and beyond the call in their contribution to the Resource Development Fund. Thank you!

President's Message

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But what I have observed this year is more personal. What I see is a tremendously dedicated, hard-working and skillful staff, led by one of the most competent and respected executive directors in the field. They provide the institutional memory, the glue, and the energy that ensures our organization continues to run smoothly and effectively day-by-day. They handle the myriad of details that must be taken care of for AFCC to function for its 2,700 members. They are the structure of AFCC in many respects.

In addition to this capable staff is a dedicated Board of Directors, who donate a considerable amount of their personal time and expense to be in a position to make

decisions about the course we take and to provide the leadership for our Committee structure. There are also numerous AFCC members who are not on the Board but who give extremely valuable work and talents as committee or task force members, or as presenters at our conferences, workshops, and training conferences. Finally, but certainly not the least, are the members who attend the conferences, who network with each other, and who apply the knowledge and skills they acquire at the local level. This reservoir of talent makes AFCC an enormously admired organization, and puts into the daily workplace a powerful force of positive energy for constructive resolution of family law matters.

To be a temporary caretaker for such a wonderful organization for a year is indeed a privilege!

Getting the Most from your Online Subscription to Family Court Review

AFCC membership includes access to the Blackwell *Synergy* Web site. From there (or thru the AFCC Member Center) members can access the entire collection of *Family Court Review (FCR)*, dating back to the first issue published in 1963.

How to Register:

- Login to the Member Center of the AFCC Web site.
- Click on the *FCR* link followed by the *FCR* Online link.
- Click on the "Register" button at the top of the page.
- You will now have a unique Username and Password for Blackwell *Synergy*. The next time that you log into the AFCC site to access *FCR*, you will also have to enter the Username and Password that you created while registering in the correct fields at the top of the Blackwell *Synergy* Page. Once you have logged in, your name will appear (as you entered it during the registration process) at the top of the Blackwell *Synergy* page.



As a registered Synergy user, you'll have the ability to:

Sign up for Electronic Tables of Contents (E-TOC) alerts:

- An email will be sent to you when the latest issue of *FCR* publishes electronically. Issues generally publish online two weeks before they are published in print.
- Enter your Blackwell *Synergy* Username and Password on the Blackwell *Synergy* page.
 - Click "Sign-up for FREE email table of contents alerts."
 - You can sign up for the E-TOCs for any journal that Blackwell publishes, free of charge. Click on the "My Synergy" button at the top of the Blackwell *Synergy* page, select the "E-mail Alerts" tab and check the boxes for the journals where you would like to receive E-TOCs. This does not grant you access to these additional journals, but you are permitted to view the article titles, and abstracts if available.

Search the entire electronic Blackwell journal collection, and save search terms for a later date:

- Enter your Blackwell *Synergy* Username and Password on the Blackwell *Synergy* page.
- Click the "Search" tab at the top of the page and enter your terms. If nothing turns up, you can re-enter your terms and ask to be notified by email when an article is published on Blackwell *Synergy* that matches your terms.
- You can search the entire *FCR* archive and all journals published by Blackwell.

Add *FCR*, as well as other journals, to your list of "Favorite Journals:"

- Enter your Blackwell *Synergy* Username and Password on the Blackwell *Synergy* page.
- Click the "Add this journal to your favorites" link, located to the right of the *FCR* cover on Blackwell *Synergy*. You can add other Blackwell journals to your list of favorites as well, but you will not be able to access the content unless you or your library has a subscription.

Many of the journals have free electronic issues set aside. A note will be highlighted in green next to an issue if it is free.

Be notified when a particular article from *FCR* is cited:

- Enter your Blackwell *Synergy* Username and Password on the Blackwell *Synergy* page.
- Click on *FCR* journal along the left side of the screen that you would like to highlight articles from.
- Click the "Highlight" box beneath the tabs to PDF and References for a particular article in the table of contents, and then select the "Track Citations" link located just below the *FCR* cover on Blackwell *Synergy*. This function can be activated for all Blackwell titles.
- Clicking on "Home" at the top of the Blackwell *Synergy* will take you to the main Blackwell *Synergy* page. From here you can browse journal titles by subject and select titles by clicking the A-Z drop down menu at the top of the page.

New Brochure from the ABA Center for Pro Bono

The ABA Center for Pro Bono released a new brochure, *Pro Bono Clients: Strategies for Success*, available to pro bono programs for distribution to volunteer attorneys. The brochure outlines eight tips to help attorneys understand and effectively serve their pro bono clients. It also identifies

resources for further reading on the topic of working with low-income populations. A downloadable PDF version of the brochure can be found at www.abanet.org/legal/services/probono.

WEB SITE UPDATE

Most Viewed—www.afccnet.org

The most-viewed web pages by afccnet.org users since January 1, 2006

Top 5 Accessed Pages

1. Home Page: Check it often! AFCC's home page is the first place where important AFCC announcements are made. From scholarship applications to the Call for Presenters, keep an eye on the four boxes to the right of the member login to stay current on AFCC's most recent developments.
2. Member Center
3. AFCC Conferences
4. AFCC Trainings
5. Resources for Professionals

Are you making the most out of your AFCC Membership?

Top 3 Accessed Pages in the Member Center

1. Member Directory: Looking for a colleague in another jurisdiction? AFCC's membership directory allows you to search by name, city, state, province or country.
2. *Family Court Review* Online: AFCC's quarterly academic and research journal is available only to AFCC members online, dating back to the first issue published in 1963.
3. Member Resources: Provides online reports and additional resources for AFCC members.

Top 5 Downloads

1. Tampa Bay Conference Brochure
2. AFCC Guidelines for Parenting Coordination
3. Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation
4. Parenting Coordinator Resources
5. Model Parenting Time Plans for Parent/Child Access (available in English and Spanish)

Top 3 Conference Audio Sessions (Mp3 format)

1. Parenting Coordination and Domestic Abuse, presented by Billie Lee Dunford-Jackson and Linda Fieldstone, M.Ed., September 24, 2005
2. What Grown Children Have to Say About Their Parents' Divorce, presented by Constance Ahrons, Ph.D., Janet A. Walker, Ph.D. and Hon. Linda Dessau, May 14, 2004
3. The Politics of Research: The Use, Abuse and Misuse of Social Science Data, presented by Richard J. Gelles, Ph.D., Janet Johnston, Ph.D., Joan Kelly, Ph.D. and Kyle Pruett, M.D., May 19, 2005

Having trouble finding something on the AFCC Web site? Check out the sitemap and new web search function powered by Google at www.afccnet.org/sitemap.asp.

AFCC Launches E-newsletter

AFCC launched its first e-newsletter, *AFCC eNEWS*, in February 2006. Published bi-monthly, *AFCC eNEWS* will provide timely and up-to-date information for professionals from a wide range of disciplines, including case law and research updates, international news and the initiatives of AFCC's collaborating organizations.

The e-newsletter will be delivered to AFCC members who have provided AFCC with their email address and is also available to the public. Make sure we have your email so you can receive future editions of *AFCC eNEWS*. Please login to the Member Directory on the AFCC Web site to check if your email is listed and accurate. To update or provide a new email address, login to the AFCC Member Center and click "update your email."

All e-newsletters will be archived in the Member Center on the AFCC Web site, accessible to AFCC members. AFCC will never share or publicize your email address to anyone outside AFCC.



AFCC E-Newsletter

AFCC Member News

Hon. Paula M. Carey, AFCC member from Canton, Massachusetts, received the Daniel F. Toomey Excellence in the Judiciary Award at the Massachusetts Bar Association's 2006 Excellence in the Law Celebration, February 16, 2006 in Boston.

Hon. Roger W. LeGrand, AFCC member from La Crosse, Wisconsin, was sworn in as a La Crosse County Circuit Court Judge, March 1, 2006 at La Crosse County Courthouse. Judge LeGrand has practiced law in La Crosse since 1975 and has served as the county's family court commissioner for the last fifteen years.

Marsha Kline Pruett, AFCC member from New Haven, Connecticut, will become the Maconda Brown O'Connor Chair at the Smith College School of Social Work in Northampton, Massachusetts. After sixteen years at the Yale School of Medicine, the Chair is tenured and she has received a promotion from Associate to Full Professor. Dr. Pruett's new responsibilities will focus on mentoring faculty and graduate students in research, and creating collaborations between the School of Social Work and other departments at the College, and across Colleges and Universities with similar interests.



AFCC Members Write On

Joan McWilliams, AFCC member from Denver, Colorado, has released *The Peace Finder—Riley McFee's Quest for World Peace*. Ms. McWilliams combines the magic of poetry with the practicality of a "how to" handbook to provide an answer to an important question: Can all people unite to make peace a reality?

Isolina Ricci, AFCC member from Tiburon, California, recently released *Mom's House, Dad's House for Kids—How to feel at home in one home or two*. Following the successful *Mom's House, Dad's House*, this book breaks new ground—combining years of research, teaching and counseling into an invaluable guide that speaks directly to kids about divorce in language they can understand.

Where to find it? AFCC's Online Member Bookstore! More than 80 books are available that were written or edited exclusively by AFCC members. Go to www.afccnet.org/shopping/ and click "Online Bookstore."

Have you written a book? We want to let others know about new books in the field by AFCC members. Please send information to David Vigliotta, Editor, *AFCC News*, at editor@afccnet.org.

In Memoriam

AFCC Member Sharon James

More than 300 friends and relatives of Sharon James attended the memorial service in Portland, Oregon on Saturday, February 11, 2006. The attendees included her husband, two daughters, brothers and sister, co-workers and friends from her art group, along with members of the judiciary and the community she served so well.

How paradoxical that we learn so much about a person at the end of their life than we ever knew while we worked with them.

I knew Sharon from her days as a mediator in California when she worked for the Ventura County Court. When I retired from the Multnomah County Family Court Services, I heard she had returned to her home state, Oregon, and I recruited her to take my place, a role she performed wonderfully.

Sharon served on the State Family Law Advisory Committee in Oregon. She helped develop protocols for mediation with victims of domestic violence, craft a model parenting plan for the state, plan conferences, make presentations and represented the service in a host of forums. In all these activities she demonstrated the intelligence and compassion of a true professional.

What I did not know and learned at the service was what an accomplished watercolorist she was. Everywhere were her exquisite paintings of flowers and plants, which might just as well have hung in the Louvre or the Hermitage. These paintings revealed that careful, observant side of Sharon which characterized all of her work.

Sharon worked up until three weeks before her passing. Her family, physician and spiritual advisor were at her side when she left us. During this final moment of her life, she demonstrated bravery and even humor, serving as a model for how anyone should transit this final passage.

It was such a privilege to have known and worked with her.

— *Hugh Mclsaac, Manzanita, Oregon*

AFCC Chapter News

AFCC Massachusetts Chapter Update

The AFCC Massachusetts Chapter is co-sponsoring, with the Center for the Study of Psychology and Divorce, *Parenting Coordination: Working with High Conflict Families*, May 5-6, 2006 at the Hilton Dedham Hotel. AFCC Board member Dr. Robin Deutsch and AFCC member Hon. Eileen M. Shaevel will be presenting.

Further information can be found on the Massachusetts Collaborative Law Council Web site at www.massclc.org/events.htm.

AFCC Texas Chapter Update

The AFCC Texas Chapter has announced its Annual Conference will take place September 22-23, 2006 in Dallas, Texas. The conference features AFCC members Dr. Joan Kelly of Corte Madera, California and Dr. Chet Muklewicz of Dunmore, Pennsylvania. For updates go to www.texasafcc.org.

AFCC Missouri Chapter Update

In March 2006, the AFCC Missouri Chapter hosted two of its trademark Lunch and Learn Series programs. The topic of Parenting Coordination was discussed in St. Louis on March 8, and the topic of Fathering Courts was discussed in Kansas City on March 29. The St. Louis talk featured Ann Bauer, J.D., and Art Nissenbaum, J.D., attorneys in the St. Louis area who are interested in developing legislation for parenting coordination in Missouri. The Kansas City session featured Hon. Robert M. Schieber, who discussed an innovative program developed to motivate parents who are obligated to pay child support.

AFCC Florida Chapter

The AFCC Florida Chapter (FLAFCC) is proud to be the host state for AFCC's 43rd Annual AFCC Conference in Tampa Bay, May 31-June 3, 2006. Chapter members have been promoting the conference at events around the state and hope to have many Florida registrants. The FLAFCC will not have an Annual Conference in 2006, but will present an institute on domestic violence at the AFCC Annual Conference and three workshops at the Florida Unified Family Court Conference, August 3-4, 2006 in Orlando, Florida.

The FLAFCC continues its leadership role in parenting coordination. After working years to develop a statute, rule and standards, it was necessary to put efforts to pass a statute on hold. The FLAFCC Task Force could not get a clear consensus among stakeholders on how parenting coordination should be conducted. While the circuits

experiment with different models, FLAFCC will act as a clearinghouse for information to assist jurisdictions in Florida that are developing parenting coordination programs. The chapter is also considering a forum to exchange information on any ethical dilemmas that arise during the parenting coordination process. These activities are consistent with its role as a convener of groups and ideas and as a neutral expert on family law issues.

AFCC New York Chapter

The AFCC New York Chapter held a Board retreat in Albany, New York on March 9, 2006. The Board planned three events for the remainder of the year and discussed other chapter related business.

The New York Chapter is holding a spring workshop, *The Squid and the Whale: How Do We Keep Parents From Going Off the Deep End*, in New York City, June 14, 2006. A panel of mediators and psychologists are lined up and short clips from the movie, *The Squid and the Whale*, will be shown to prompt discussion.



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ACR Family Section Mid-Year Conference

The Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR) Family Section and AFCC are collaborating to present an outstanding series of workshops specially designed for family mediators at ACR Family Section's third conference, *Making Waves – Breaking Barriers*. The conference will be held July 13–16, 2006 at the Sea Crest Oceanfront Resort and Conference Center on the shores of Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

Presenters from AFCC include AFCC Executive Director, Peter Salem; AFCC President Elect, Mary Ferriter and AFCC former President, Christie Coates. Other family mediation leaders who will be presenting include Robert Benjamin, Marilyn McKnight, Steve Erickson, Clarence Cramer, Becky Magruder, Jim Melamed, Greg Firestone, Zena Zumeta, Diane Neumann and Susan Edwards.

More information on the conference can be found at www.mediate.com/acrfamily/.

Child Custody for Military Families

Continued from page 6

can be greatly compounded when these children are faced with the additional uncertainties of having a parent be deployed for several months. Will their needs be met by the non-military parent who may not share, acknowledge or support the child's feelings about the military parent's absence? Will the extended absence of the military parent result in the loss of significant contact from the military member's extended family? Will the absence of the parent result in changes in school, community, scheduling, or extracurricular groups and activities? These questions should be asked by all parties involved when making plans for the child's care during the military member's potential activation and deployment.

In a case I handled in my private practice, a young army national guardsman acknowledged paternity of a child almost a year old, started paying child support, and received notice of a one-year deployment to the Middle East, all within a few months. His child's mother had been inconsistent, at times hostile, in allowing him parenting time. As he prepared for deployment, he had a strong concern that he might not see his child again before leaving and also feared the damage his absence might have on their relationship. Fortunately, a motion to establish parenting time resulted in an agreement that provided him with court-ordered access to the child with a midweek visit and alternating weekends prior to his deployment, alternate weekends with his parents during his deployment and continued access according to the standard court schedule upon his return. This permitted the child to develop and maintain relationships with his father's extended family and easily reconnect with his father post-deployment.

The military service also claims an interest in the member's domestic situation. The military service's interest

is simple: when a military member is called to service, it cannot afford to have that member's service affected by personal and legal issues and problems that might have been avoided by advanced planning. Because of this, all military services require their members to document for the member's unit that adequate steps have been taken to prepare their family situation for activation and deployment, if and when that should become necessary. Military authorities and service members without knowledge of the legal effects of court-ordered parenting plans have, unfortunately, often accepted as sufficient the naming of a third-party substitute caretaker with a power of attorney for child care. These plans may ignore the rights of the other parent and the requirements of court-ordered parenting plans and may result in disruption of the military mission when parenting disputes erupt on the eve of deployment as a result of that lack of adequate advanced planning.

It is important for family law professionals to be aware of the need to adequately plan for military requirements and contingencies when creating or modifying parenting plans for military families. If either parent serves in the military, confront the issue head-on and plan for the normal duty situation as well as the possible mobilization or deployment of the military member. Consider the needs of the child—physical, educational and emotional—during such periods. Ensure that the plan can be carried out by properly registering the dependent children for benefits and providing powers of attorney, or court orders when appropriate, to non-parent caregivers. A disservice is done to all parties when adequate planning has not taken place and needless family turmoil erupts when the military parent is called to service.

Editor's Note: Gerald Laver, J.D., will present *Special Needs of Military Families for the Family Law Practitioner* at AFCC's 43rd Annual Conference, May 31-June 3, 2006 in Tampa Bay, Florida.

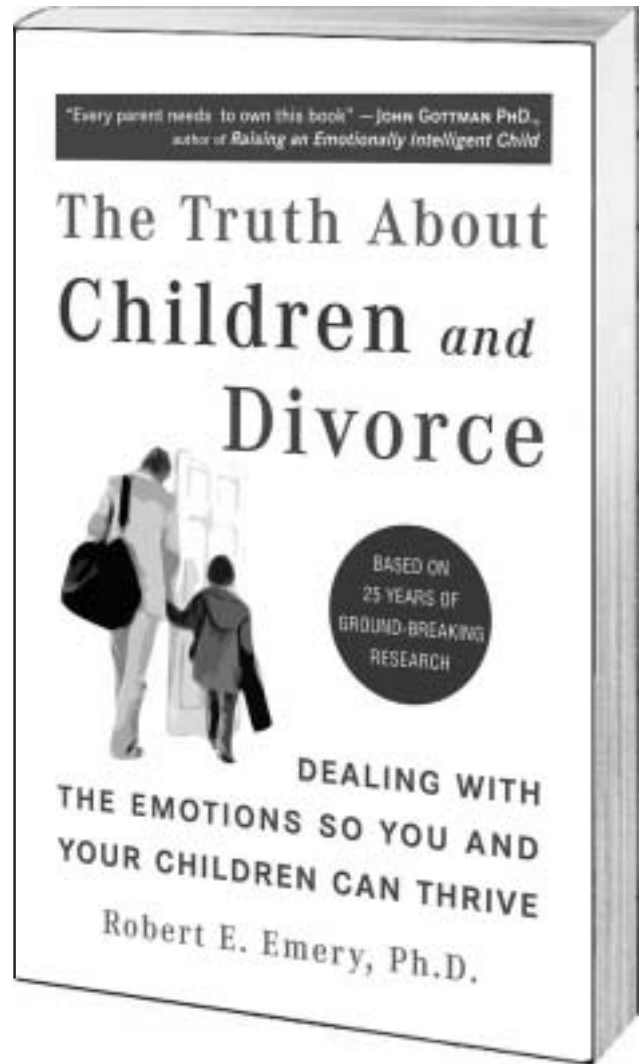
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—**Hon. Arline S. Rotman (ret.)**, former president of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

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Upcoming AFCC Conferences and Trainings

AFCC 43rd Annual Conference

May 31-June 3, 2006
Westin Innisbrook Resort
Tampa Bay, Florida
www.afccnet.org

Parenting Coordination: Helping High Conflict Parents Resolve Disputes

Presenter: *Joan B. Kelly, Ph.D.*
June 26-27, 2006
Loyola School of Law
Chicago, Illinois
www.afccnet.org

Advanced Issues in Child Custody

Presenter: *Nancy Olesen, Ph.D.*
June 28-29, 2006
Loyola School of Law
Chicago, Illinois
www.afccnet.org

Texas AFCC Chapter Conference

September 22-23, 2006
Dallas, Texas
www.texasafcc.org

AFCC Seventh International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations

October 19-21, 2006
Sheraton Midtown Atlanta
Atlanta, Georgia
www.afccnet.org

AFCC Seventh International Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs

October 22-23, 2006
Sheraton Midtown Atlanta
Atlanta, Georgia
www.afccnet.org

AFCC 44th Annual Conference

May 30-June 2, 2007
Capital Hilton
Washington, D.C.
www.afccnet.org

AFCC 45th Annual Conference

May 28-31, 2008
Westin Bayshore Resort
Vancouver, BC, Canada
www.afccnet.org

AFCC 46th Annual Conference

May 27-30, 2009
Sheraton New Orleans
New Orleans, Louisiana
www.afccnet.org

www.afccnet.org

