



FOUNDED IN 1963

# AFCC NEWS

ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS

Volume 25, Number 3

Summer 2006



## AFCC Goes to Atlanta for Seventh International Symposium and Congress

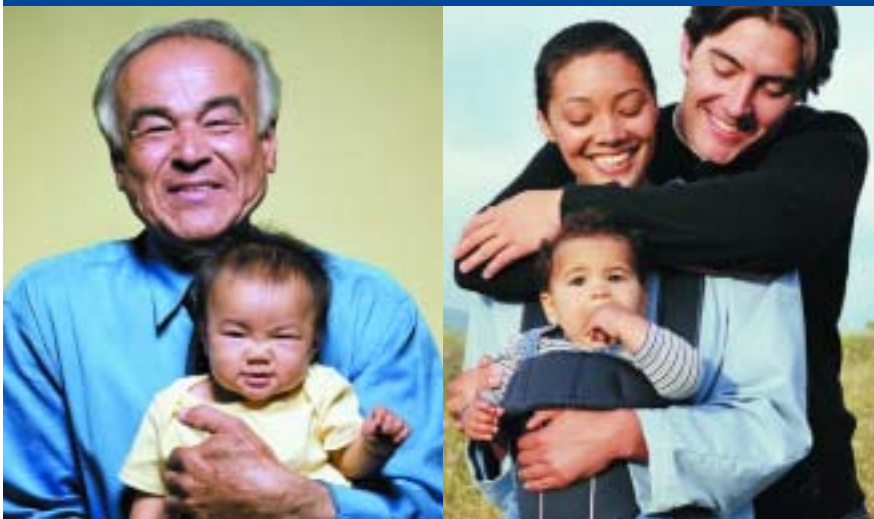
AFCC's *Seventh International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations*, October 19-21, 2006 and *Seventh International Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs*, October 22-23, 2006 are fast approaching. Make plans to join your colleagues at the Sheraton Midtown Atlanta for two unique programs only offered in alternate years.

### Great Debates in Child Custody Evaluation

The *Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations* features three exciting plenary debates that will confront important questions in the child custody evaluation process.

Thursday's opening session, *Are AFCC's Model Standards a Help or Hindrance?*, will examine the contrasting points of view on AFCC's new *Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation* in a debate featuring Mary Connell, Ph.D., Dianna Gould-Saltman, J.D.,

*continued on page 8*



## Washington, D.C. 2007 AFCC 44th Annual Conference *Featuring the Capitol Steps!*



*See the Call for Presenters on page 15*

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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. 3 Summer 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.

### AFCC News Advertising

Advertising copy must be camera ready and payment made in U.S. funds.

	AFCC member	Non-member
Full page (7 1/2" x 10")	\$425	\$600
Half page (7 1/2" x 4 7/8")	\$300	\$450
Quarter page (3 5/8" x 4 7/8")	\$150	\$250

## President's Message

My first foray into the AFCC world was in October 1994 at the *First International Congress on Parent Education Programs* in Chicago. Former AFCC President Arline Rotman, my friend and mentor, suggested that it was imperative that I attend because Massachusetts was about to develop a statewide mandatory parent education. Arline convinced then Chief Justice Mary Fitzpatrick that my attendance was essential. As usual, Arline was right on many levels. Not only did I learn everything I needed to know about starting a parent education program, I learned what was being done across the country. Massachusetts could take what we liked from other venues and meld it into our own program requirements.

Most importantly, with Arline's introductions, I met the wonderful and hospitable people of AFCC. Once I attended that program, I became an AFCC convert. The experience was a unique and rare opportunity to meet like-minded people who not only cared about their professions but were passionate about them. It was a refreshing and rejuvenating experience. I have attended at least one AFCC conference a year since then—thank you, Arline, for the indoctrination into such a terrific organization.

Ten years later (to the month), I flew into Nashville for one day to attend the AFCC Board of Directors meeting. My schedule did not even permit me to attend the 2004 *Symposium* and *Congress* being held that week. At a break in the meeting, then Nominations Committee Chair, George Cuztrin, asked me about my plans for future board service. I was in the last year of my term on the board and in my third year as Treasurer. Still a bit frazzled from my hectic travels, I responded, "Well, it looks like I can go off the board." Little did I know I was about to be asked to consider becoming President Elect of AFCC. Needless to say, I was honored and accepted without hesitation!

That seems so long ago. Now the reality is here. Words truly cannot express how exhilarating and humbling it is to be the President of AFCC. First, how does one follow in the footsteps of such a dynamic personality (not to mention his award-winning ballroom dancing) as Hugh Starnes? Hugh weathered the trials and tribulations of some difficult decisions regarding the New Orleans conference location with grace and caring for all. He has brought AFCC to new heights with an astounding number of new members and, with the hard work of the Custody Evaluation Task Force, he guided the board's passage of the *Model Standards*. Under Hugh's leadership AFCC has flourished.

AFCC has weathered some challenging years through the guidance and foresight of prior presidents. They have paved the way with strategic plans that permit the smooth transition from one leader to another and guide the structure of the association. It is to them that I am forever grateful.

As an association, we could not function without our staff. We are privileged to have a superb and dedicated staff. Candi Walker, Chris Shanahan, Dave Vigliotta, Dawn Holmes, Nola Risse-Connolly, Erin Sommerfeld and, especially, Peter Salem are invaluable to the success of AFCC and words cannot express how much we rely on their expertise and insight. Not only are they professional, courteous and astute but they are AFCC believers and each and every one is infatuated with the goals and aspirations of AFCC. A truly rare experience!

With such a small staff, the association would grind to a halt if it were not for the thousand of volunteer hours contributed by our Board of Directors and members. It is remarkable to me that such talented, dedicated, and spirited individuals can gather on a Board of Directors and accomplish so much. In 2003, we formulated a strategic plan for the association and set out a five-year blueprint. It only took 16 pages to harness our ideas. What is incredible is that we have set our mind to accomplishing them, albeit with a few detours, and have proceeded along the path to reach our goals. Without thousands of volunteer hours in chairing and staffing committees, task forces and special projects, our message would not get out.

Being a part of AFCC is a wonderful opportunity to refresh the spirit and renew the psyche, to leave behind what becomes day-to-day doldrums of practice and to focus on the positive and affirming work that we, as professionals who deal with people in the family court system, are able to accomplish.

I look forward to working with all of you to further the AFCC mission and strategic plan. It is shaping up to be a hectic but exciting year and I am thrilled to be serving as your president during this remarkable time.



**Mary M. Ferriter**  
AFCC President  
Boston, Massachusetts

*Being a part of AFCC is a wonderful opportunity to refresh the spirit and renew the psyche, to leave behind what becomes day-to-day doldrums of practice...*

## MEMBER PROFILE

# AFCC President, Mary M. Ferriter, J.D., M.P.A.

**by Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.)**

Norwich, Vermont

Let me introduce you to our new AFCC President, Mary Ferriter. I have known Mary professionally and personally for the last sixteen years. As everyone who knows her will attest, she is an enormously competent, complex and caring person.

Mary maintains strong family roots in her native city of Holyoke, Massachusetts. She describes the Holyoke of her youth as a blue collar, liberal city where the predominantly Irish Catholic population lived comfortably with other ethnic enclaves. Mary's father, a Holyoke attorney, modeled active involvement in civic and political affairs for her.

*She gives 100% to every project that she tackles, often taking on the work of others along with her own.*

Mary left Holyoke to go to Lesley College in Cambridge, a city certain to broaden horizons and solidify liberal leanings. While a student, she switched her major from special education to human services, graduating *cum laude*. After serving as an intern in the Massachusetts Legislature, and spending a semester at American University in Washing-

ton, D.C. studying criminal justice, the dye was cast. Mary would devote her life to public affairs.

The summer after her college graduation she traveled cross-country, driving a support vehicle for a group of bicyclists raising money for world hunger. After graduation from Suffolk Law School in Boston, Mary spent the next thirteen years working in the Administrative Office of the Massachusetts Probate and Family Court. She worked her way up from a temporary position dealing with foster care review, to law clerk, then as administrative attorney and finally case manager and coordinator for child welfare cases.

I first became aware of Mary's extraordinary work ethic when we were both involved with developing domestic violence guidelines and trainings for Massachusetts judges and court personnel. Mary does not know the meaning of "No, I can't do that now." She gives 100% to every project that she tackles, often taking on the work of others along with her own. She is the personification of the perfectionist. As the staff person representing the Chief Justice of the Probate and Family Court for the interdisciplinary committees that developed a Domestic

Violence Risk Assessment guide (later published and distributed by AFCC) and Supervised Visitation Guidelines and Risk Assessment, everyone learned to rely on Mary to get the work done.

While working in the Chief Justice's office, Mary was once again the person the judges called on to answer legal or procedural questions confronting them. She organized numerous judicial conferences and other educational opportunities. It was because of her strong interest in child welfare cases as well as her superior organizational skills that the Chief Justice created the case manager and coordinator position just for Mary. At that time there were no uniform practices in the Probate and Family Court, and little coordination with the cases that were filed and pending in the Juvenile Court. With Mary's diligence and attention to detail, once again everyone came to rely on Mary to get it right.

When Mary left the Administrative Office to go into private practice of family law, AFCC remained her outlet for working on policy development. Mary has been an AFCC member since 1994. She served on the first Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Chapter, and has been a board member of AFCC since 1999, serving as Treasurer from 2002-2005. When I asked Mary what AFCC means to her, she said "Law school provided me with the necessary technical skills; AFCC taught me about their practical application."

As President Elect, Mary has been involved with the Family Law Education Reform (FLER) Project. For Mary, this is second nature. Although she took a family law course in law school, she says she remembers very little of it. The course she remembers vividly was juvenile law, taught with a different approach. It involved a case study where the class prepared for each phase of the case as it made its way through the court system. Mary excelled in this class and received the American Jurisprudence Award in Juvenile Law. It is interesting that this innovative approach models the approach of FLER.

It seems as if Mary's life has prepared her for her presidential tenure. But lest you think Mary is all about work, let me assure you that Mary also personifies work hard, play hard. She is a charter member of "The Cosmo Queens" as well as a "Wild Woman." I will leave all of you wondering what that might be all about.

What you don't need to wonder about is the direction of Mary's presidential term. She is committed to the growth of chapters, understanding their special needs from her own first-hand experience. She is grateful for the structure provided by the strategic plan, excited about meeting as many AFCC members as possible, and looks forward to spreading the word and work of AFCC as far and wide as possible.

# Message from the Executive Director

## AFCC's Rising Star

Although the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts has been in existence for more than 43 years, we are not exactly a household name. This may be due to our interdisciplinary nature, which makes AFCC difficult to categorize. Or it could be our name, which most tend to abbreviate with the acronym AFCC. Or perhaps it is that the work of AFCC members is conducted under a hodgepodge of overlapping processes, names, statutes and agencies, depending on geography and a variety of other factors.

Whatever the reason, AFCC does not have the Q rating of the 400,000-member American Bar Association, or the American Psychological Association and its 155,000 members. We are less than 2,800, more of a niche group united by certain values and philosophy rather than by profession.

The nature of AFCC is a dream for many of our members, but at times it has made it challenging for us to grow. There are no easy target markets and no single message that seems to work for everyone. An interdisciplinary organization, by definition, has varied interests, needs and ideas. For years the AFCC Membership Committee looked at numerous growth strategies, including developing fancy brochures and mailing 100,000 of them throughout the world, hoping that a fraction of the recipients would be persuaded to join. We interviewed consultants, held brainstorming sessions and studied the strategies of other organizations.

And then we had an idea.

What if we stopped focusing on recruiting more members? Instead of investing our time, energy and hard earned money in consultants, brochures, postage and crafting the perfect message, we would *do* something. We would invest in more projects of substance that benefit our members, the field in which we work and the children and families we serve. That was about three years ago and it coincided with the development of our strategic plan. Since then, the Membership Committee was literally dropped from existence and AFCC can count among its accomplishments:

- Guidelines for Parenting Coordination
- Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation
- The Family Law Education Reform Project
- The publication, *Exemplary Family Court Programs and Practices*
- The development of a family court triage instrument in collaboration with the Connecticut Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division
- A parenting coordinator's group networking email list

- A new journal publisher that provides online access to *Family Court Review* and 43 years of electronic archives
- Multiple new electronic member benefits (including the *AFCC eNEWS* and online conference audio sessions) associated with our new Web site and new AFCC brand
- New training programs and a new regional training conference
- Dramatically increasing the number of conference scholarships offered
- The implementation of the AFCC Innovation Mini-Grant Program
- More staff to better serve our members and support our projects

And much more is in the works. All of this is being done while AFCC remains financially self-sustaining, with no increase in membership dues and with our very limited grant support targeted to specific projects. It is being done with a lot of collaboration and volunteer hours from dedicated and talented AFCC members, far too many to name. The work is challenging, invigorating and important. And as we are doing this work, something else is happening. We are growing.

Since June of 2002, the end of a fiscal year in which AFCC lost members likely due to the economic strains of 9/11, membership has increased more than 70%. These new members include parenting coordinators and custody evaluators who became aware of AFCC through our model standards, guidelines and training programs. They are law professors who learned of us through the Family Law Education Reform Project. They are members of other organizations with whom AFCC collaborates and they are professionals and academics who want a subscription to the *Family Court Review*. They are people who want to be part of this organization and what it represents. And although we will never be 100% certain, I suspect that most were more persuaded by the quality of AFCC's work than they would have been by a glossy brochure.

It is also becoming increasingly clear that AFCC members are recognized as the experts and the leaders in the field. In September 2006, PBS will air a documentary entitled "Kids and Divorce: For Better or Worse." At the request of the PBS producer, AFCC provided behind the scenes guidance and when you watch the show this fall you will see a program in which nine of the 16 experts that appear are AFCC members.



**Peter Salem**  
AFCC Executive Director  
Madison, Wisconsin

*continued on page 9*

# Annual Conference Shines in Tampa Bay

More than 680 professionals from across the globe joined AFCC for its 43rd Annual Conference, May 31-June 3 at the Westin Innisbrook Resort in Tampa Bay, Florida. With more than 65 conference sessions offered, participants enjoyed four days of networking, swimming, sunning and golfing.

The conference, originally scheduled for New Orleans, paid tribute to the Big Easy with a New Orleans-style banquet featuring Cajun food, a New Orleans jazz band and Mardi Gras décor, and Hurricane drinks in the hospitality suite. In addition, a weekend in New Orleans (donated by the Sheraton New Orleans) was auctioned off, with proceeds going to New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity.

The conference was highlighted by three plenary sessions. The audio recordings are available at the Member Center of AFCC's Web site for download.

- *In Whose Best Interests?* featured expert panelists Judge Susan B. Carbon, David Hoffman, Dr. Isolina Ricci and moderator Nancy Ver Steegh and included an exciting discussion of how best interests should be determined and whose definition should prevail when family members have conflicting rights and interests.
- *Juggling for Judges* presented the new roles in the family court system and Barbara Babb, Judge Denise McColley, Justice James Williams and moderator Justice Emile Kruzick explored controversies with a stimulating debate among panelists.
- *What's Wrong with Children's Rights?* featured presenters Professor Martin Guggenheim, Linda Elrod, Dr. Marsha Kline Pruett and moderator Professor Andrew Schepard who examined different perspectives and conflicts between the interests of children and the interests of parents.

The conference also featured six pre-conference institutes including cutting-edge sessions on domestic violence, family mediation and advanced issues on parenting coordination. In addition, the conference offered an excellent opportunity for colleagues in various disciplines to meet and share ideas. Networking opportunities included the Taste of Florida, AFCC's Annual Silent Auction and AFCC's Annual Banquet.

## Thank You

AFCC thanks all the participants, presenters and others who assisted with the relocation of the conference. Special thanks to the AFCC Florida Chapter and members of the AFCC Conference Committee: Co-Chairs Leslye Hunter and Denise McColley, George Czutrin, Mary Ferriter, Dianna Gould-Saltman, Rebecca Magruder, Marsha Kline Pruett and Hugh Starnes. Thanks also to conference shepherds Chris Jones, Nancy Blanton, Peter Brick, Stevie Buck, Roger Frigon, Michelle Glover, Bill Wilensky, Pat Zimmerman and Kristine Zooberg who helped make this conference a success!

## AFCC Thanks Sponsors and Exhibitors

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## Plenary Session Audio Available Online

Plenary sessions from AFCC's 43rd Annual Conference in Tampa Bay are available for free download for AFCC members. You can access these sessions by logging on to the AFCC Member Center and clicking "AFCC Conference Audio." If you were unable to attend the conference, all sessions can be purchased individually or as a complete set online through Convention Recordings International, Inc. at [www.conventionrecordings.com](http://www.conventionrecordings.com) and clicking "Conference Listings."



# AFCC Annual Awards Presented

AFCC members were honored for their accomplishments at AFCC's 43rd Annual Conference Awards Luncheon, June 1, 2006 in Tampa Bay.

## **John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award**

**Christie A. Coates, M.Ed., J.D., Boulder, Colorado**

Christie Coates was honored with the John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award presented by Joan VanDuzer. Ms. Coates served as AFCC President (1998-1999) and continues to be a frequent presenter at AFCC conferences. She chaired the AFCC Task Force on Parenting Coordination, which developed the *Guidelines for Parenting Coordination* that the AFCC Board of Directors adopted in 2005. Ms. Coates has served on the AFCC Awards, Nominating, Membership, Mediation and Conference Committees. She was a member of the Steering Committee for the Task Force on Model Standards of Practice for Family Mediators (1998-2001). Ms. Coates is an adjunct professor at the University of Denver and is a mediator, parenting coordinator, arbitrator, facilitator and trainer. She is also the co-author of two books that were released in the last five years.

## **Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award**

**J. Herbie DiFonzo, J.D., Ph.D., Hempstead, New York and Mary E. O'Connell, J.D., Boston, Massachusetts**

Professors J. Herbie DiFonzo of Hofstra University School of Law and Mary E. O'Connell of Northeastern University School of Law were awarded the Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award for their work as Reporters for the Family Law Education Reform (FLER) Project. The result of their effort was a groundbreaking report emphasizing that the current family law curriculum does not match the needs of practice and clients. The *FLER Report* has been endorsed by many individuals and organizations including the American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution, Association for Conflict Resolution, International Academy of Collaborative Professionals, National Association of Counsel for Children and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## **Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award**

**Christina Jordan, J.D., M.S.W., Olathe, Kansas**  
**The Higher Ground Program**

The Higher Ground Program and Christina Jordan were presented the Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award. To launch the project, Ms. Jordan received a grant from the Office of Judicial Administration in Topeka, Kansas to research educational programs across the country. With the aid of other staff members, Ms. Jordan put together a six session class called Higher Ground. The target families are those that fail at traditional interventions and return to court because they lack the skills to solve their problems.

The Higher Ground Program has completed six classes and close to 300 parents have participated. More than 70% of the families ordered into the program have completed all the classes. A total of 85% of the parents in Higher Ground claim that their co-parenting relationship has improved because of the class.

## **President's Award**

**Leslye Hunter, M.A., Metairie, Louisiana**

Hon. Hugh Starnes presented the AFCC President's Award to former AFCC President Leslye Hunter. As a former AFCC President and chair of several committees, Ms. Hunter, a New Orleans area resident, has made many significant contributions to AFCC. She was acknowledged this year in particular because, in a year that Hurricane Katrina destroyed her private practice and wreaked havoc in her community, she was steadfast in her commitment to AFCC, providing leadership on the Task Force on Model Standards for Child Custody Evaluation, as Chair of the Nominations Committee, Co-Chair of the Conference Committee and a member of the AFCC Executive Committee.

She is a shining example of the indomitable spirit of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast residents who persevered through unimaginable hardship to maintain the fabric of their life and culture.

A history of AFCC award recipients can be found at [www.afccnet.org/about/committees.asp](http://www.afccnet.org/about/committees.asp) and by clicking the "Awards Committee" link.

## **AFCC Partners with the Asia Foundation**

AFCC is delighted to announce its partnership with the Asia Foundation's Books for Asia Program to establish family law libraries in developing nations. The Books for Asia program has distributed books, software and other educational materials throughout Asia for nearly half a century. AFCC members will be invited to join AFCC in donating family law and dispute resolution books to the project.

Further details on this project will be announced in an upcoming edition of *AFCC eNEWS* and on AFCC's Web site. Information on the Books for Asia program can be found at [www.asiafoundation.org](http://www.asiafoundation.org). If you have questions or would like to contribute books, please contact David Vigliotta, AFCC Marketing and Development Manager, at [dvigliotta@afccnet.org](mailto:dvigliotta@afccnet.org) or (608) 664-3750.

## AFCC Goes to Atlanta

*Continued from page 1*

John Harper, LL.B., David Martindale, Ph.D. and moderator Arnold Shienvold, Ph.D.

The second plenary, *Are Custody Evaluations a Realistic Option?*, will take place Friday morning. Clarence Cramer, M.A., Hon. William Fee, Samuel J. Ferrara, Nancy Olesen, Ph.D. and moderator Arnold Shienvold, Ph.D. will examine the challenge of making child custody evaluations available and address the question of whether they are necessary.

The closing session on Saturday morning, *To Recommend or Not to Recommend? Is that the Question?*, brings to life a debate from the *Family Court Review* on whether or not evaluators should make recommendations. Nicholas Bala, LL.M., Lorraine Martin, M.S.W., Timothy Tippins, J.D. and Jeffrey Wittmann, Ph.D. will close the conference with a debate on the ultimate question.

The *Symposium* also includes four pre-conference institutes and twenty workshops on topics featuring psychological testing, testifying and cross-examinations, report writing, interviewing skills, assessing domestic violence and more.

### Parenting After Separation and Divorce

The *Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs* will open Sunday morning with *Children of Separation and Divorce: The Latest Research*. Kathy Clark, Ph.D. will report on research and findings presented at the first *International Conference on Children and Divorce* held in July 2006 in Norwich, United Kingdom.

Workshop themes include non-traditional families, how to keep audiences engaged, quality control, high conflict families and never-married parents. The *Congress* will also examine the role of technology in enhancing or replacing face-to-face educational programs.

All *Congress* registrants are invited to bring materials and information about their programs and services to display in the AFCC Resource and Networking Center at no additional charge.

### Accommodations

The Sheraton Midtown Atlanta is located in downtown Atlanta in the vibrant Colony Square neighborhood. The hotel is a stone's throw from some of the city's best attractions and entertainment.

Conference registrants are responsible for making their own lodging arrangements and will receive the special rate of \$131 per night for a single or double room. Make your reservations early! The AFCC block of rooms will be released to the public for general sale on September 16, 2006. Reservations can be made online at [www.starwood-meeting.com/Book/AFCC2006](http://www.starwood-meeting.com/Book/AFCC2006) or by calling the Sheraton Midtown Atlanta at (678) 553-4279 or Sheraton Worldwide Reservations at (800) 325-3535.

Complete program information and online registration is available at [www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org). For further information, please contact AFCC at [afcc@afccnet.org](mailto:afcc@afccnet.org) or (608) 664-3750.

## New AFCC Staff Members

### Chris Shanahan

AFCC is delighted to welcome back Chris Shanahan as its Business and Administrative Director. Chris has worked with AFCC as a contract accountant since 1996 and previously worked part-time assisting with the management of AFCC conferences. She returns to AFCC on a half-time basis and will continue her private accounting practice on a scaled-down basis.

A native Midwesterner, Chris was born in Granite City, Illinois. She lived in Germany, Italy and a number of states before attending Southern Illinois University, where she met her husband, Mike. In 1982, Chris began her accounting career and opened her own firm a decade later. She has two sons, John and David. John was recently married in Stillwater, Minnesota. Chris recently completed her master's certification in floral design and loves cooking and catering. With wedding planning out of the way, Chris' next goal is to become a pilot or learn Spanish.



**Chris Shanahan**  
Business and  
Administrative Director

### Erin Sommerfeld

Erin Sommerfeld has recently joined AFCC as the Administrative Assistant. Erin graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2004 with a degree in Political Science. In addition to her position at AFCC, Erin will be returning to UW-Madison to finish her teaching certificate. In her free time, Erin enjoys the outdoors and recently returned from a backpacking trip in southern Utah.



**Erin Sommerfeld**  
Administrative Assistant

## Model Standards for Child Custody Evaluation Approved

The AFCC Board of Directors unanimously approved the *Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation*, prepared by the AFCC Task Force for Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation. The twelve-member Task Force worked for two years and reviewed hundreds of comments from two public postings and three open meetings before submitting the final draft to the AFCC Board of Directors at its meeting on May 31, 2006. The *Model Standards* are posted on the AFCC Web site at [www.afccnet.org/resources/standards\\_practice.asp](http://www.afccnet.org/resources/standards_practice.asp).



## Message from the Executive Director

*Continued from page 5*

I know what you must be thinking. What's wrong with the other seven? Well, one had let his membership lapse but a quick telephone call resulted in Iowa mediator Steve Sovern renewing his membership. The other six will be hearing from us soon.

PBS is not the first major media outlet to rely on AFCC members for their expertise. They frequently turn up in national and local news stories on children and divorce related topics. In the last two years *The New York Times* published two major articles related to separation and divorce. One was on the front page and the other on the front page of the Sunday Style Section. An overwhelming majority of experts quoted in both stories were AFCC members.

This is not to say that none of this has ever happened before or that today's AFCC is different from those who preceded us. Quite the contrary, we are continuing in a long tradition of innovation and excellence that started with the AFCC founders in the early 1960s and was carefully nurtured by those who have since led the association. But somehow it feels as though we are really coming into our own.

AFCC has a Board of Directors with the courage and vision to push the envelope and that refuses to get bogged down in minutia. We have talented and energetic members who are chomping at the bit to create positive change, both

working with AFCC and in their own communities, agencies and practices. As a result, AFCC and its members are attracting more and more attention. And while we are a very long way from the size and strength of the ABA or the APA, we are continuing to grow and to influence. So who knows? Maybe it won't be all that long before AFCC becomes a household name.


## AFCC Launches Online Parenting Coordination Network

The AFCC Parenting Coordination Network is a group email networking list for AFCC members who serve as parenting coordinators or are interested in this role. AFCC has taken the lead in the development of this growing professional field through its Parenting Coordination Task Forces, the creation of *Guidelines for Parenting Coordination*, through training opportunities around the U.S. and by workshops and institutes on parenting coordination at its conferences.

AFCC is providing this networking service to help its members connect with each other, ask questions, share techniques and referrals and learn more about the role of parenting coordinators.

Join today! AFCC members can join online by logging on to the AFCC member center at [www.afccnet.org/members/](http://www.afccnet.org/members/) and clicking the "PC Network" link.


NEW FROM THE AUTHOR OF MOM'S HOUSE, DAD'S HOUSE



ISOLINA RICCI, Ph.D.


AN INSPIRING GUIDE FOR ALL CHILDREN ABOUT DIVORCE AND STEPFAMILY LIVING.

For more than twenty-five years, Dr. Isolina Ricci's classic work *Mom's House, Dad's House* has been the gold standard for parents navigating the difficult realities of divorce. Now, in *Mom's House, Dad's House for Kids*, she speaks directly to kids about divorce in language they can understand.




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## Celebrating 25 Years of Family Mediation in the California Courts

by **George Ferrick**

California Administrative Office of the Courts  
San Francisco, California

The April 2006 California Administrative Office of the Courts' annual training for approximately 500 family law and juvenile dependency judges, family mediators and child custody evaluators celebrated a special benchmark this year in Los Angeles. This year marks the 25th anniversary of family mediation in the California courts. A special evening reception commemorated the important development that mediation represents for parents and families. This development and value of offering families the opportunity of being the first and best decision makers for their family and parenting future, spread to all the 58 counties and has also spread to some juvenile dependency courts.

In 1980, I began my family mediation career at the Los Angeles court. As I researched the history of the movement 25 years later, I discovered two major highlights. First, the legislation establishing child custody mediation in California resulted from a marvelous and timely constellation of several influential people and forces. Second, AFCC played a key role in this movement and in the professional growth and development of mediators.

The 25th anniversary reception honored some of the pioneers in California's family mediation history. These leaders included: Justice Donald B. King and Judge Leonard Edwards, visionary judicial officers who saw a better way for the courts to decide family issues; Hugh McIsaac, Elizabeth O'Neill, Jeanne Ames, Murray Bloom and Wally Beasley, representing early mediators and directors of Family Court Services from mental health and probation backgrounds; Maxine Baker Jackson, representing the bridge from family to juvenile dependency mediation; and Isolina Ricci, who brought the spirit and values of *Mom's House, Dad's House* to families and professionals in the California court system.

The AFCC tradition continues in California, as Hon. Jerilyn Borack, Supervising Family Law Judge of the Superior Court in Sacramento County, now serves as president of the California Chapter of AFCC.

## ICCFR Call for Presenters Posted Online

### Join AFCC in Scotland

The International Commission on Couple and Family Relations (ICCFR) is accepting proposals for its 54th Annual International Conference in collaboration with AFCC. *Barriers to Access: Finding Paths to Inclusiveness* will take place June 5-8, 2007 in Edinburgh, Scotland. The deadline for proposals is September 15, 2006. The Call for Presenters is posted on AFCC's Web site at [www.afccnet.org/conferences/](http://www.afccnet.org/conferences/) and by clicking "Conferences of Interest."

## AFCC Workgroup Seeks Research Fellow

AFCC's workgroup that is developing *An Educator's Guide to Working with Separating and Divorcing Families* is seeking a research fellow to investigate policy and legal issues that are covered in the publication. This publication will provide information for educators and school administrators about working with the children of separating and divorcing families in the classroom and for bilateral contact with parents in a school setting. Law students are invited to participate in the research for this project. Please contact Barbara Steinberg, Workgroup Chair, at [bfsteinbergphd@cfl.rr.com](mailto:bfsteinbergphd@cfl.rr.com) for more information.



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## RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

# AFCC Awards Innovation Mini-Grant and Conference Scholarships

AFCC's Resource Development Committee awarded a \$5,000 Innovation Mini-Grant to the Child and Family Services Center for Resolution and Justice and the New York State Unified Court System.

The grant was used to provide a two-day parenting coordination training to form a roster of trained parenting coordinators in Erie County, NY. The trainees committed to provide at least twenty hours of pro bono parenting coordination services.

The Resource Development Committee also granted twelve scholarships to the 43rd Annual Conference in Tampa Bay, which included six conference scholarships, two international scholarships (including a \$1,000 travel stipend), one local scholarship and three \$500 travel stipends for AFCC members from the Greater New Orleans area.

### 2005 Mini-Grant Update

In 2005, AFCC launched the Innovation Mini-Grant program with a \$5,000 grant to *It's Not Your Fault!*, a New Orleans-based arts psycho-educational program for children whose parents are divorcing or separating. With the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the AFCC Board of Directors approved that, if necessary, the money be re-directed to rebuild the organization's program. AFCC was delighted to receive a letter in May 2006 from the program's founder that the program is up and running with a two-month waiting list and is more crucial than ever to the children of New Orleans.

## AFCC Thanks Contributors

AFCC's Annual Appeal for 2005-2006 raised nearly \$26,000. This support allowed AFCC to grant the most scholarships ever to an Annual Conference and continue the Innovation Mini-Grant Program. Thank you for your generosity and support!

### Key Club (\$5,000+)

Joan VanDuzer and the Harbinger Foundation

### Diamond (\$1,000-\$4,999)

AFCC New York Chapter  
Charlie & Barb Asher  
Doneldon Dennis  
Arline & Barry Rotman  
Suzie S. Thorn Family Foundation

### Platinum (\$500-\$999)

AFCC Arizona Chapter  
AFCC Florida Chapter  
AFCC Massachusetts Chapter in Honor of Mary Ferriter  
AFCC Texas Chapter  
Annette Burns

Donald S. Eisenberg  
Esdaile, Barrett & Esdaile in Honor of Mary Ferriter  
Mary M. Ferriter  
Peter Salem  
Arnold Shienvold  
Robert M. Smith  
Philip & Ruth Stahl  
Hon. Hugh Starnes

### Gold (\$250-\$499)

AFCC Missouri Chapter  
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Hon. George Czutrin  
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Wendy Bryans  
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Ian Russ  
Rochelle Scheevel  
Phillip Stahl in Honor of Michael Gunderson  
Hon. Betty M. Vitousek  
Candace Walker  
Jeffrey P. Wittmann  
Zena Zumeta

### Contributors

Mary M. Ferriter in Honor of Hon. Paula M. Carey  
Margaret Gorman  
Mary Kae Heller  
Sidney S. Horowitz  
Leslye Hunter  
Chet Muklewicz  
Claire K. Purcell  
Arline & Barry Rotman in Honor of Hon. Paula M. Carey  
Janet Walker  
Susan Wiggan

# Eighth Annual Silent Auction is a Grand Slam

AFCC's Eighth Annual Silent Auction at the 43rd Annual Conference in Tampa Bay raised more than \$12,000 to support AFCC special projects and initiatives.

Featured items at this year's auction included 20,000 Starwood Points, vacation getaways to New Orleans, Vancouver, Atlanta, Washington, D.C. and tickets to the 2007 U.S. Open Golf Championship in Oakmont, Pennsylvania. Other items included autographed books and sports memorabilia, an Australian boomerang kit, handmade jewelry and a "College Corner" featuring souvenirs from universities across the United States.

This year the funds raised will be used to support the Family Law Education Reform Project, AFCC's Domestic Violence Think Tank and the forthcoming publication, *An Educator's Guide to Working with Children of Separated and Divorcing Parents*.

AFCC would like thank the following volunteers for their work in making this year's Silent Auction a success: John Harper, Dick Altman, Emile and Josie Kruzick, Mary Ferriter, Leslye Hunter, Jake Jacobson, Perri Mayes and Bob Smith. A special thanks to all of those who solicited and contributed to this year's event.

## Organizations:

AFCC Arizona Chapter  
AFCC California Chapter  
AFCC Florida Chapter  
AFCC Massachusetts Chapter  
AFCC Missouri Chapter  
AFCC New Jersey Chapter  
AFCC Texas Chapter  
ABA Section of Dispute Resolution  
American Girl Association for Conflict Resolution  
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Bucky's Locker Room  
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Professional Resource Press  
Publix Supermarkets  
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Sheraton New Orleans  
Starwood Resorts  
Tampa Bay Devil Rays  
The Florida Aquarium  
The Westin Bayshore  
Think Ink and Design  
United States Golf Association  
W.W. Norton & Company  
Wegner, LLP  
Yuengling Brewery

## Individuals:

Dick Altman  
Andrea Anderly  
Nancy Blanton  
Wendy Bryans  
Phil Bushard  
Christie Coates  
Doneldon Dennis  
Robin Deutsch  
Cori Erickson  
Bill Fee  
Mary Ferriter  
Linda Fidnick  
Greg Firestone  
Larry Fong  
Siri Gottlieb  
John Harper  
David A. Hoffman  
Patricia Holmes  
Leslye Hunter  
Emile Kruzick  
Debra Kulak  
Michele MacFarlane

Judy and David Martindale  
Denise McColley  
Ray and Marilyn McNeal  
Woody Mosten  
Graham Mullane  
Kelly Browe Olsen  
Eileen Pruett  
Arline and Barry Rotman  
Peter Salem  
Andy Schepard  
Arnie Shienvold  
Robert A. Simon  
Robert Smith  
Phil Stahl  
Hugh and Judy Starnes  
Betsy Thomas  
Rick and Sue Tomberlin  
Kathleen Townsend  
Jan Tyler  
David Vigliotta  
Candi Walker  
Janet Walker  
Diana Willits

## In Memoriam

**Lynn Jacob**, AFCC member from Evanston, Illinois, passed away on July 8, 2006 of complications related to lymphoma. As a mediator and therapist, Lynn was active as an AFCC member and in the Academy of Family Mediators (AFM) in numerous leadership capacities, including serving as AFM President. She was a significant contributor to the mediation field as a mentor, trainer and writer, recently having written book chapters on mediating with stepfamilies. In recent years Lynn's focus turned to her family, particularly her young grandchildren. Donations may be made in the memory of Lynn C. Jacob to either Jewish Women International (<https://mmm1914.dulles19-verio.com/jwiorg/index.htm>) or the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, (<http://www.leukemia-lymphoma.org/>).

**Danny Sandor**, who died at the age of 45 after a long and courageous battle with a rare form of cancer, was the Senior Legal Adviser to the former Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia, Hon. Alastair Nicholson, who served as AFCC President in 1997-1998. Danny was a person of charisma, optimism, enthusiasm and seemingly unlimited energy. His interests included acting, music, languages, nursing, psychology and law. He played the piano and was fluent in Spanish and Hungarian. As a gay man, Danny worked hard to end discrimination against people of different sexual orientation. He was an instigator of the Victorian Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby and a key player in law reforms instituted by the Victorian government. He was also a member of the National Children's and Youth Law Centre from 2001 and a member of the Victorian Attorney-General's Advisory Committee on Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Intersex legal issues.

# AFCC Board of Directors for 2006-2007

AFCC is pleased to welcome Nancy Ver Steegh of St. Paul, Minnesota to the Board of Directors with the term beginning July 1, 2006. AFCC thanks Stephen Grant and William J. Howe, III who have completed their service on the Board of Directors. Bill will continue to serve on the International Committee. A special thanks to Hon. Hugh Starnes for his leadership and commitment to AFCC while serving as President. Judge Starnes will continue to serve on the board and as chair of AFCC's Nominations Committee.

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# AFCC 2006-2007 Committee Chairs

Contact information for Committee Chairs can be found on AFCC's Web site at [www.afccnet.org/about/](http://www.afccnet.org/about/) and by clicking the "Committees" link.

## Awards Committee

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## Resource Development Committee

Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.), Chair  
Norwich, VT

## AFCC Chapter News

### AFCC Florida Chapter Update

The AFCC Florida Chapter has had a very successful first half of the year. In early 2006, the chapter conducted a membership drive and increased its membership by 44 members.

The Florida Chapter served as a collaborating organization at AFCC's 43rd Annual Conference in Tampa Bay, hosted a membership table in the exhibitor forum and recruited 21 new Florida Chapter members.

### AFCC Massachusetts Chapter Update

The AFCC Massachusetts Chapter hosted its Annual Conference at Regis College in Weston, MA on April 7, 2006. More than 100 participants attended *Six and Under: The Magic Years with Divorcing and Never-Married Parents*. Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D. was keynote speaker.

An informal follow-up to the conference took place April 11, 2006 at a Roundtable on issues concerning never-married parents in Northampton, MA. The Roundtable was attended by approximately 45 participants who practice in the family court and juvenile court, guardians *ad litem* and psychologists. There was lively interdisciplinary discussion about the concerns of never-married parents and their children. Highlighting the Roundtable was Dr. Elizabeth Austin, who spoke about Massachusetts' first mandatory parent education program for never-married parents, *For the Children*, which is being piloted in the Hampshire Probate and Family Court.

### AFCC New York Chapter Update

The AFCC New York Chapter held a program at Fordham Law School on June 14, 2006 entitled *The Squid and the Whale: How to Keep Parents from Going off the Deep End*.

The program used the widely acclaimed movie, *The Squid and the Whale*, as a vehicle for an interactive panel discussion. Panel members included New York Chapter Board members Steven Demby, Lauren Behrman, Steven Abel, Theresa Ombres and Rod Wells. Chapter President, Hon. W. Dennis Duggan, was the moderator.

Judge Duggan has been invited to speak in August at the XVII World Congress of the International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates in Belfast, Ireland. He will be presenting a paper, a version of which appeared in a recent issue of the New York Chapter newsletter titled *Rock, Paper, Scissors: Playing the Odds With the Law of Relocation in America*.

## AFCC Member News

**Harvey Brownstone**, AFCC member from Toronto, Ontario, the first openly gay judge in Canada, married his partner of 21 years, Dr. Morton Caplan, on May 5, 2006. The wedding was officiated by Justice Marjoh Agro of the Ontario Court of Justice, and many members of the judiciary were present, including former AFCC President Justice George Czutrin and AFCC member Judge Judith Kreeger of the Miami Family Court. Justice Brownstone is believed to be the first judge in the world to be legally married to a same-sex partner.

**Leonard P. Edwards**, AFCC member from San Jose, California, was appointed by the California's Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) as Judge-in-Residence for the AOC in June 2006. Judge Edwards retired in May from the Superior Court of Santa Clara County after 26 years on the bench. In his new assignment, he will work with the AOC's Center for Families, Children & the Courts on programs to improve court services for children and families in California. The Judge-in-Residence Program was established this year to provide experienced judicial officers with the opportunity to participate in the work of the AOC to improve the administration of the courts. Judge Edwards is the first participant in the program.

**Denise McColley**, AFCC member from Napoleon, Ohio, was elected to the Board of Directors of the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges. The two-year term began July 1, 2006.

**Andrew Schepard**, AFCC member from Hempstead, New York, was appointed to the American Bar Association's Commission on Youth at Risk by ABA President Karen J. Mathis. The Commission will examine issues concerning juvenile status offenders, youth aging out of foster care, better hearing the voices of youth in the justice system and youth in high conflict divorce.



## AFCC Members Write On

**Janet Conner**, AFCC member from Ozona, Florida, released the third book in the Spiritual Geography series titled, *Spiritual Geography: The Country of War*. Spiritual Geography heals the reader through seven stages or countries from Betrayal to Peace. *The Country of War* is a comprehensive resource to navigate the conflict and struggles of divorce.

**Allison Quattrocchi**, AFCC member from Scottsdale, Arizona, has authored *How to Talk to Your Children About Divorce*, a book for helping children cope with divorce. This book will help parents understand what children may think, feel and need.



# ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS CALL FOR PRESENTERS

## 44<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE May 30-June 2, 2007

*Featuring the Capitol Steps*

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### **Children of Separation and Divorce: The Politics of Policy, Practice and Parenting**

Discussion of the impact of separation and divorce on children often focuses on the role of the parents and ignores the bigger picture. How do policy makers influence practice? Do the politics of practitioners change post-separation parenting? How does research influence policy, politics, practice and parenting? Join AFCC to unravel these complex issues.

*In addition to workshops on mediation, custody evaluation, parenting coordination, parent education, and other professional practice, topics may include, but are not limited to:*

- Working with Legislatures
- Same-sex Parenting
- Tax Basics for the Professional
- The Politics of Child Support
- Kinship Care
- Court Services: The Politics of Survival
- An International Perspective on Children's Rights
- New Dispute Resolution Models
- Unified Family Courts
- Child Support and Military Families
- The Politics of Marriage and Divorce
- International Innovations
- New Research in Family Law
- Domestic Violence and Family Courts
- Politics and Parenting in Military Families
- Judicial Roles in Policy Development
- Gender, Politics, Policy and Parenting
- Innovations in Legal Practice
- Ethical Issues for Professionals
- The Impact of Natural Disasters on Separated and Divorcing Families

AFCC is accepting proposals for **ninety-minute workshop sessions** including, but not limited to, the topics listed above. If you are interested in presenting a workshop, please send the following information: (1) an abstract of 100 words or less describing your proposed workshop; (2) a one-page outline of your proposed workshop; (3) three learning objectives that will be addressed by your proposed workshop; (4) resumes and complete contact information for all proposed presenters; (5) the name of the person who will be coordinating your workshop; and (6) contact information for two professional references. **Maximum of four presenters per workshop.**

*Please note that the deadline for proposals is October 1, 2006. AFCC is unable to guarantee consideration of incomplete proposals or those submitted after the deadline.* AFCC offers a reduced registration fee for conference presenters. AFCC is unable to reimburse travel and related expenses. *Electronic submissions via email are preferred;* however you may also send your proposal to AFCC, Conference Proposal, 6525 Grand Teton Plaza, Madison, WI 53719. Phone: (608) 664-3750; Fax: (608) 664-3751; Email: [afcc3@afccnet.org](mailto:afcc3@afccnet.org) (Word or WordPerfect attachments only please).



## Upcoming AFCC Conferences and Trainings

### **Texas AFCC Annual Chapter Conference**

September 22-23, 2006  
Dallas, Texas  
[www.texasafcc.org](http://www.texasafcc.org)

### **AFCC Seventh International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations**

October 19-21, 2006  
Sheraton Midtown Atlanta  
Atlanta, Georgia  
[www.afccnet.org](http://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](http://www.afccnet.org)

### **Father Involvement: From Infant Overnights to Parental Alienation**

Presenter: *Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D.*  
December 4-5, 2006  
University of Baltimore  
Baltimore, Maryland  
[www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org)

### **Parenting Coordination: Working with High Conflict Families**

Presenter: *Robin M. Deutsch, Ph.D.*  
December 6-7, 2006  
University of Baltimore  
Baltimore, Maryland  
[www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org)

### **Parenting Coordination: Helping High Conflict Parents Resolve Disputes**

Presenter: *Joan B. Kelly, Ph.D.*  
March 27-28, 2007  
Loyola University New Orleans  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
[www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org)

### **Advanced Issues in Child Custody: Complex Family Violence, Alienation, Child Sexual Abuse and Attachment**

Presenter: *Nancy Olesen, Ph.D.*  
March 29-30, 2007  
Loyola University New Orleans  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
[www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org)

### **AFCC 44th Annual Conference**

May 30-June 2, 2007  
Capital Hilton  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org)

### **AFCC 45th Annual Conference**

May 28-31, 2008  
Westin Bayshore Resort  
Vancouver, BC, Canada  
[www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org)

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