

AFCC NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 21, NUMBER 4

Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

FALL 2002

AFCC to Celebrate 40th Anniversary in Canada's Capital City

Mark your calendar for May 28-31, 2003 as AFCC's 40th Anniversary Conference promises to be a gala event that you will not want to miss. *Change and Challenge: 40 Years of Evolution in Families, Courts and Communities*, will take place at the Westin Ottawa in the heart of Canada's Capital City.

The Westin overlooks the Rideau Canal and Canada's Parliament. The hotel is just steps away from the European-style ByWard Market, the National Art Centre of Canada and the Museum of Civilization.

AFCC is working with leading national organizations in Canada and the United States and is pleased to include as partners:

American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law
American Bar Association Section of Family Law
American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution
Association for Conflict Resolution
Canadian Bar Association National Family Law Section
Family Mediation Canada
Justice Canada
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
National Judicial Institute of Canada

The conference will feature leading policy makers, practitioners and scholars including Madame Justice Claire L'Heureux Dubé (ret.) Supreme Court of Canada; Hon. Leonard Edwards, President, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges; Peter Jaffe, Ph.D., Center for Children and Families in the Justice System; Phil Epstein, Q.C., Epstein Cole, Toronto, ON; George Thomson, Executive Director, National Judicial Institute of Canada; Hon. Alastair Nicholson, Chief Justice, Family Court of Australia; Professor Annie Bunting, York University; and Robin Deutsch, Co-director, Program on Children and the Law, Massachusetts General Hospital.

Full-day pre-conference institutes will provide an opportunity for participants to begin the conference with an intensive training experience. Institutes will include:

- **Working with High Conflict Families: Child Alienation and Parenting Coordination**
- **Representing Children**
- **Judicial Officers Institutes: Cultural Competence in the Courtroom**
- **Advanced Family Mediation Skills**
- **Issues for Families with Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Members**
- **At the Nexus of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse**

AFCC Members Can Register Early for Discounted Rates

Take advantage of early bird conference registration discounts available only to AFCC members. Save an additional \$30 (\$45 Canadian) off of the conference registration fee by signing up before March 7, 2003. If you have not yet received an early bird conference brochure, it is posted on the conference page of the AFCC website at www.afccnet.org. You may also request a brochure be mailed or faxed by contacting AFCC directly at (608) 664-3750 or afcc@afccnet.org.

Book Your Hotel Room Early

AFCC hotel room blocks have sold out in recent years so please plan ahead and make your reservations early. To assure your space at the Westin Ottawa, reserve your room today by calling 1-800-WESTIN-1 (1-800-937-8461) or (613) 560-7000. Make sure that you mention that you are with AFCC to receive the group rate of \$229 Canadian (approximately \$148 U.S.).

AFCC Selects Executive Director

The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts' Board of Directors voted to appoint Peter Salem as AFCC's new Executive Director at its meeting on November 9, 2002 in Tucson, Arizona. The selection follows a national search conducted during the summer and fall of 2002. Peter first joined AFCC as a member in 1989. He presented at conferences and served as chair of the AFCC Video Committee and co-edited the *AFCC Newsletter*. He served as the part-time project director for the AFCC research project, "The Effective Resolution of Custody and Visitation Disputes Involving Domestic Violence" from 1991-93 and joined the AFCC staff as Associate Director in 1994. Peter succeeds Ann Milne, who served as Executive Director from 1989-2002.

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Executive Director

Peter Salem
Madison, Wisconsin

AFCC NEWSLETTER

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The AFCC Newsletter is a publication of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. The newsletter is published four times a year. Deadlines for news items and advertising are March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1. Advertising copy must be camera ready and payment made in U.S. funds.

Advertising Rates:

Full page (7 1/2" x 10") \$400
Half page (7 1/2" x 4 7/8") \$300
Quarter page (3 5/8" x 4 7/8") \$175

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Jan Shaw
Orange, California

The Tucson weather, the resort, the AFCC members in attendance and the high quality of the conference sessions all converged perfectly to make AFCC's recent *Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations and Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs* a huge success! A special thanks to the many presenters who were so willing to share their subject matter expertise with others. A final note of thanks to AFCC Arizona Chapter favorite Fred Mitchell and President Annette Burns who worked tirelessly in getting the word out about the conferences, helped host the new member receptions and the hospitality suite and were available day and night to cheerfully offer any kind of needed assistance! Other AFCC-Arizona chapter members, too numerous to mention here, also contributed time and energy to the overall success. We couldn't have done it without you Arizona Chapter!

The AFCC Board of Directors met for a full day between the two conferences and our agenda was an ambitious one. The first order of business was to select our new Executive Director. The Human Resources (HR) Committee headed by Judge Arline Rotman (ret.) designed a nationwide recruitment plan that included advertising on the internet, in newspapers and in professional journals. Twelve candidates filed applications. The HR committee rated the applicants and recommended to the board that Peter Salem be selected as our Executive Director. Peter had no equal in comparing the knowledge, experience and skills he brings to AFCC. Your Board of Directors voted unanimously to make an offer to Peter and fortunately for us, he accepted. Peter is excited about helping to shape AFCC's future. I hope you will join your Board in congratulating Peter.

The Board also voted to award provisional Chapter status to Missouri members. Coordinating efforts in Missouri have been enthusiastically led by Andrea Clark, LCSW and Ellen Cowell, MS both Domestic Relations Services staff members in St. Louis County, and Hon. Winston Davis, Family Law Commissioner in Springfield. In their application the co-chairs of the chapter organizing committee wrote, "Missouri

families are in need of change in the method by which disputes are addressed for children. A Missouri chapter would provide our courts and family professionals with much needed information, support and forward-thinking options to deal with families in conflict." AFCC welcomes and congratulates the Missouri Organizing Committee.

Other key actions by your Board of Directors included formalizing policy on personnel, travel, membership and conference related matters. AFCC continues to have a hardworking board and I am grateful to each Board member, committee chair and all the committee members who have joined forces in doing good work in behalf of AFCC. Our association and professions continue to be enhanced because of AFCC's long tradition of respected leaders and the contributions of our members. AFCC members demonstrate in many courts and offices throughout the world that "Kids Can Count on Us!"

Our Chapters in Texas, Florida and New York recently held statewide conferences. I had the privilege of joining the AFCC members at the Texas Chapter conference and was impressed with their passion and commitment to the children of divorce and never married parents. Peter Salem represented AFCC at the Florida Chapter conference and he returned with unqualified praise about the quality of the entire event. Unfortunately, neither Peter nor I were able to attend New York's first statewide conference. The feedback, however, is all positive and New York is busily moving toward meeting the requirements for becoming a chartered chapter.

Program Associate Chris Shanahan will be leaving her position as an AFCC staff member at the end of 2002 returning to her private accounting practice. She will continue to provide accounting services to AFCC through her private practice. We are happy to have Chris with us, even on a very part-time basis. Her contributions managing the AFCC conferences will be missed.

The tragic and untimely deaths of the Senator Paul and Sheila Wellstone, keynote speakers at our annual conference in New Orleans in 2000, saddens many of us, regardless of our political party. Senator Wellstone's leadership in keeping important family issues front and center in the U.S. Congress will definitely be sorely missed.

On a very personal note, I know all of you will join me in extending our heartfelt sympathy, caring, understanding, concern, remembrance and condolences to our immediate past president Denise McColley, her husband Mike and sons Rob and Patrick. Cara McColley, age 16, was killed November 26, 2002 an automobile accident. I had the opportunity to meet and become acquainted with Cara at our annual conference in Hawaii in June. The young life of a bright, vivacious, personable young woman has ended too early and abruptly. I hope that Denise and her family can find some comfort in their wonderful individual and family memories.

AFCC PROFILE

Executive Director Peter Salem

by Jan Shaw, AFCC President,
Orange, CA

As longtime editor of the *AFCC Newsletter*, Peter Salem has interviewed and profiled dozens of presidents, committee leaders and members. It therefore seemed only right that Peter, in his new capacity of AFCC Executive Director, become the subject of such a profile.

Those who meet Peter for the first time are immediately greeted with a smile and a certainty as if he's known you for a long time. I liken to him having a philosophy of "never meeting a stranger." If you've met Peter even once he will, in all likelihood, remember your name and something about the profession you represent or the work you do. He is passionate about AFCC and always looking to recruit new members and share the work of AFCC members in the courts and community with absolutely anyone willing to listen for a few minutes. (In my role as President I've stood at his side and listened often).

Peter was born in Washington, D.C. and lived there until age 10 when his family moved to Evanston, IL. He vividly recalls the scene in the nation's capital on the day Martin Luther King was assassinated. "They closed down the schools and sent us home. They were rioting downtown and there were military patrols in the streets," he said. "I think that was the beginning of my political awareness and my belief in working in a field which reflects the values I learned from my family."

Peter's background is in family mediation and he notes that he is a second generation mediator. His father, Dick Salem, is a well-known community, civil rights and international mediator. Peter proudly tells of his father's work in El Salvador and several African countries, including South Africa during the 1980s. With a smile in his voice Peter said, "It is a real pleasure to work in the same field as my Dad. We have great conversations about the work."

Peter's mother Greta is a political science professor who shaped his political thinking on a range of topics during his formative years. Ultimately Peter majored in political science, graduating in 1982 from McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. His mother earned her doctorate degree while being a "stay at home mom" and parenting Peter and his two sisters. His older sister Susanne is an independent health care quality consultant in Newton, MA. Erica, his younger sister, is Director of Planning for the Chicago Department of Public Health.

Peter has five nieces and nephews, including the newest additions to the family, Erica's twins Sophie and Charlie who were born last February.

You can't spend much time with Peter before he introduces his son Daniel into the conversation. Daniel, a sixth grader, is clearly Peter's pride and joy. On a recent visit to the AFCC office in Madison, Peter picked me up at the airport and I noticed a stack of foot-long, one-inch thick boards in the back of his station wagon. Peter explained that Daniel regularly practiced breaking them—three at a time—as a requirement for his upcoming black belt test in tae kwon do. Daniel is musically inclined, playing both the saxophone and piano. Daniel's parents are divorced and he enjoys equal time with both, with his two homes only five blocks apart. Peter and Daniel's mother are proud of their co-parenting efforts. In July, Daniel will officially gain an eight year old step-brother named Sam. Peter is engaged to marry Susanne Daering, a middle school counselor he met through a mutual friend.

Peter has been working as a mediator for 16 years. Until recently he was chair of the conference planning committee for the Wisconsin Association of Mediators (WAM) Annual Conference on Emerging Issues in Mediation. He also served as WAM President for two years and enjoyed a 10-year stint on the board of directors. Peter's former boss, Ann Milne, says that Peter brought the same enthusiasm, planning and organizational skills to WAM conferences as he has to AFCC.

Prior to working with AFCC, Peter's work in conflict resolution covered a myriad of issues ranging from fair housing to family violence, child custody and visitation. He was a mediator for the Rock County Mediation and Family Court Services program in Janesville, Wisconsin from 1989-1991 and director of the program from 1991-94. He also has experience in producing and writing educational videotapes on subjects including child safety seats, mediation, domestic violence and AFCC's promotional video "AFCC-Kids Count on Us."

Peter's summer love is playing shortstop—especially turning double plays—on his softball team. He bats leadoff and last year led the team in hitting for the first time in 12 years. Winter sports include downhill and cross country skiing (both traditional and skate skiing) and volleyball ("I would need to improve dramatically to become mediocre but it is a good workout because I spend a lot of time chasing the ball").

A couple of "Peter factoids": Worked as a paralegal for a large Boston law firm after college. M.A. in Communication and Media Management, from Emerson College in Boston. Recipient of numerous distinguished service and achievement honors and awards; author and co-author of nearly a dozen articles published in professional journals.

I asked Peter to look ahead to AFCC's future: "There is a lot on our plate," he said, "including the dozens of details to ensure a smooth administrative transition and effective implementation of the new governance structure while at the same time keeping our existing programs moving ahead. But there is a bigger picture. We need to look at increasing both the number and involvement of our members so that we can better fulfill our mission. AFCC members are privileged to work with one another because we all understand and are dedicated to an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to addressing the challenges that families in conflict face. But there are thousands and thousands of professionals out there who don't know anything about AFCC, about the extraordinary work of our members and about the positive influence they can have on the families in their communities. It is our job to expand that sphere of influence so that an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to resolving family conflict is the rule rather than the exception."

Condolences

AFCC members everywhere extend their deepest sympathies to AFCC Past President Denise McColley and her husband Mike on the loss of their daughter Cara, age 16, who was killed in an automobile accident on November 26, 2002. The family has established a scholarship fund in Cara's name for anyone wishing to make a memorial contribution. Donations may be sent to:

Cara McColley Memorial
Scholarship Fund
Henry County Bank
122 E. Washington St.
Napoleon, OH 43545

Florida Family Court Steering Committee and the Unified Family Court History: A Ten-Year Odyssey

by Hon. Hugh E. Starnes, Fort Myers, FL

In 1991 the Florida Supreme Court received a report from the Commission on Family Courts and directed that all circuits should establish a family law division. In 1994, the Supreme Court established the multi-disciplinary Family Court Steering Committee. The establishment of this Committee resulted from a statewide "Family Court Workshop" which consisted of a delegation from each judicial circuit which considered how to construct an effective family law division. The Steering Committee was charged with, among other things, advising the Supreme Court on the progress being made on establishing family law divisions and recommending the characteristics of a "model family court."

Over the next several years, the Steering Committee recommended a set of Guiding Family Court Principles, recommended a form of Model Court with 12 essential elements, prepared a complete set of family law forms for use in self help centers and via the internet for pro se parties, and recommended a comprehensive case management process for the family court. Extensive assessments were conducted in the domestic violence area resulting in recommendations for improvements in policy and management practices. Committee members made innumerable appearances at seminars and meetings to explain and advocate for the changes recommended and a statewide Family Court Summit was held in September 2000. The Committee helped sponsor the AFCC Florida Chapter and co-sponsored its inaugural conference with a substantial financial grant.

A Family Court Trust Fund, funded by an addition to the marriage license fee, was established by the legislature as a result of the work of this Committee. This fund amounts to approximately \$3 million dollars per year for additional family court staff and resources for local courts. It also funded a number of pilot projects. Two \$200,000

grants were given to local courts which planned an adaptation of the Model Court the Committee recommended. One grant was for a "case management" model, using experienced family law attorneys as case managers, and the other was for a "one family – one judge" model.

The case management model was based on establishing a case management conference in all cases within the first 60 days after a case is filed. Subsequent conferences are then held as necessary to ensure the case moves towards a prompt resolution and that all forms of alternative dispute resolution are considered and that appropriate expert referrals are made. The case managers find that they are providing and promoting earlier communication between the attorneys in a more focused dialogue which tends to greatly speed up the resolution of the case. An intake office (family law resource center) was also established to maximize and coordinate referrals to community resources. The intake office is available for walk-in members of the public as well as those parties already involved in a dissolution action. A "high conflict team" composed of representatives of five local child related agencies and a case manager was formed to deal with cases involving children where the parties have litigated extensively without achieving any lasting resolution.

The "one family-one judge" model was based on a plan for a unified family court. Entry to the court is through the dependency and delinquency case filings to ensure that the most needy families were served by the four-judge team. A case management team identifies the cases, reassigns all other related cases to the same judge and monitors and coordinates all the cases. A sophisticated case management information system allows intelligent coordination of the cases. The case management team consists of a family law and dependency mediator, a social service practitioner and an intake coordinator. Another program in an adjoining county operates in a similar

manner in a rural setting with one judge for the entire county. A case coordinator manages the dockets and an early case disposition system has proved successful, based upon the same judge handling all related family cases. The experience of these judges is that many of the issues tend to either disappear or merge into one solution because of the assignment of one judge to all the cases for the family.

Smaller "focus grants" were also made. One grant was for a high conflict parenting program emphasizing improving communication and conflict resolution skills in a rural county setting. Another focus grant was for expanding an array of self-help and mediation services combined with differentiated case management and monitoring, all in a small county setting. The third focus grant was for providing family mediation in Title IV-D child support cases to ensure that parenting issues were addressed.

A complete report on the Family Court Steering Committee's latest work can be found on the web at www.flcourts.org. Click on "What's New" and then "Report of the 2000-2002 Family Court Steering Committee."

Mark Your Calendar

40th Anniversary Conference
May 28-31, 2003
Westin Ottawa
Ottawa, Ontario

Midwest Regional Conference
November 13-15, 2003
St. Louis, MO

41st Annual Conference
May 12-15, 2004
Adam's Mark Hotel
San Antonio, TX



AFCC Wishes Everyone a Peaceful, Happy and Healthy 2003!



Canada's Capital City

Visit Ottawa with AFCC

A FCC will be holding its 40th Anniversary Conference May 28-31, 2003 in Ottawa, ON. AFCC's Canadian members invite those from south of the border and other countries around the world to come discover Canada's beautiful capital city. They also want to assure all of those unfamiliar with Ottawa that that the temperatures will be warm, spring is in the air and the tulips are in bloom.

As the country's capital city, Ottawa is best known as being home to the seat of federal government. But behind that facade lies an architecturally stunning city with a unique combination of urban and rural experiences. From cultural performances at the National Arts Centre to street performers in the Market, the ambiance in Ottawa is ever changing. Festivals, sporting events and exhibits at over 29 local museums present visitors and residents alike with a wonderful menu of things to see and do. The changing seasons offer highlights as well – spring, with over 3 million tulips in bloom, summer, with an action-packed festival and event schedule; fall, with the beautiful changing colors, and in winter, the world's largest skating rink.

Ottawa is famous for the number of activities available, whether cycling along the recreational pathways, challenging the whitewater rapids of the Ottawa River or strolling through By Ward Market and sipping coffee at an outdoor café. If that's not enough to whet your appetite, here are just a few more possibilities.

Top Ten Things to do in Ottawa

- 1 Parliament Hill**
Just steps from the Westin Ottawa, you can stroll the corridors of power and learn about Canadian history.
- 2 ByWard Market**
Canada's oldest, continuously operating farmers market is a charming area with shops and restaurants of all kinds. Located two blocks from the Westin Ottawa.
- 3 Canadian Museum of Civilization**
Trace Canadian history from the Vikings to the present day. Just across the street from ByWard Market.
- 4 Rideau Canal**
The Westin Ottawa overlooks the Rideau Canal. A haven for boaters in the summer, the canal is transformed into the world's longest skating rink in winter. For this conference, leave your skates at home!
- 5 Sparks Street Mall**
Canada's oldest pedestrian mall is perfect for shopping, strolling or taking a break in a café.
- 6 National Gallery of Canada**
Home to the world's largest collection of Canadian art as well as excellent European and American collections.
- 7 Casino de Hull**
Just across the border in Quebec you can try your luck at the region's most glamorous entertainment spot.

- 8 Rideau Centre**
You can enter the Rideau Centre directly from the hotel and there you will find 200 fine shops and restaurants right in the downtown core.

- 9 Canadian War Museum**
See stories of heroes and of the human cost of war, both at home and on the battlefield.

- 10 Notre-Dame Basilica**
Discover Ottawa's oldest surviving church with over 200 statues surrounding the main altar.

For additional information on things to do in Ottawa:

Capital Information Centre 90 Wellington Street (across from Parliament Hill) Tel: (613) 239-5000 Toll-free: 1-800-465-1867



How Can We Develop Evidence That Our Programs Work?

By Irwin Sandler, Ph.D. and Sanford Braver, Ph.D., Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

Society has a tremendous stake in the effectiveness of services that the Courts provide to children and families. For example, divorce increases children's risk for mental health problems, substance use and abuse, school problems and later work and family adjustment problems as adults. Divorce can be seen as a public health issue and like other public health risk factors (e.g., toxins in our food or water) society has a stake in how we deal with them. Yet, there is currently little compelling evidence to answer the question of whether our programs make a difference. For example, none of the 17 published evaluations of court-based parenting programs that we located used a fully equivalent control group, the only comparison that would permit confidence about the actual effects of the program. We know that the public accepts the programs, but we do not know whether these programs actually have the impact we desire.

Given this state of affairs, we'd like to raise three questions. (1) Why does this lack of evidence matter? (2) What are the obstacles? (3) What can we do?

1. Why does evidence matter?

One reason evidence matters is that it can lead to improved programs. If we find that a program is having a desirable effect

we can continue doing it, extend it, and even find ways to make it more efficient. If a program is not having desirable effects, we can (after only a short period of depression) ask why and figure out ways to improve it. A second reason is that evidence of effectiveness can lead to continued or increased funding. We don't fool ourselves into thinking that positive evidence necessarily will lead to increased funding, but it gives us a far stronger argument.

2. What are the obstacles to getting better evidence?

There are two obstacles we've heard particularly often. First, is the belief that we can't really do high quality evaluations. This belief has tremendous power in and of itself. It can be phrased in many ways, e.g., the court will not allow random control groups or we lack the time, expertise or resources. While these reasons currently are true, it does not mean that they have to be true in the future. The medical community uses randomized control groups to evaluate drugs and treatments for cancer and heart disease, and indeed finds that some help, some have no effect and others hurt. Are the effects of the court programs less important? Do we have more confidence in these programs than we do in medical treatments? The medical community has worked out careful and ethical methods of using control groups, so we should be hopeful that we can do this as well. The second obstacle is the lack of resources to do the evaluations. Resources

include technical expertise, as well as funds to collect and analyze the data and to write the reports. There is no magic answer to any of the obstacles but there are possibilities.

3. What can we do to develop evidence on how our programs work?

The most important thing at this stage is to bring together the various people who see the lack of evidence as a problem to figure out how we can move to solutions. We need judges and court administrators, legal scholars, service providers and researchers to work on the administrative, technical and service design issues. We also need to have funding sources as part of the conversation. Since divorce has social costs that reverberate throughout society, we need the support of foundations and government research institutes to ensure that our programs are effective in reducing these costs. Evidence exists that a prevention program for children of divorce reduced long-term problems in mental disorder, substance use, teenage sexual behavior and academic achievement illustrates the potential of such interventions (see Wolchik et al., (2002) Six-year follow-up of preventive interventions for children of divorce. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 288, (15) 1874-1888). We suggest that AFCC as an organization is in a critical position to promote the activities that will enable us to develop evidence that our programs improve the public health and well-being.

AFCC Member News

Michele MacFarlane, Chair of AFCC's Conference Committee, retired as Administrator of Court Counseling Department of the Lucas County Domestic Relations Court at the end of December 2002. Michele has served as a member of AFCC's Board of Directors since 1996 and has been instrumental in the success of AFCC conferences. She will continue as Conference Committee Chair and as an active AFCC member for the foreseeable future.

John Harper, AFCC Board Member from Hamilton, ON, was appointed Chair and CEO of the Consent and Capacity Board

of Ontario as of January 1, 2003. John joined the Board in 1997 and was named Regional Vice-Chair and Senior Member Lawyer and subsequently was named Senior Vice-Chair of the Board. According to Michele Bay, outgoing Chair, "John's service to the Board has been notable because of his wisdom as an adjudicator and his fierce commitment to case management and dispute resolution." AFCC congratulates John on this appointment.

Larry Lehner, Ph.D., has resigned from the AFCC Board of Directors. Larry retired as Chief of the Alameda County of Family and Children's Services Bureau in 2002

and has moved his practice from the Bay Area to southern California. He has served the AFCC Board of Directors and Executive Committee as Secretary and Treasurer.

Larry Fong, Ph.D., was appointed to the AFCC Board of Directors by President Jan Shaw to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Larry Lehner. Larry is a mediator and psychologist in Calgary, AB, is a former President of both the Academy of Family Mediators and Family Mediation Canada and a former member of the Board of Directors of the Association for Conflict Resolution.

AFCC Tucson Conferences Hit the Mark

Nearly 500 participants joined AFCC at the Westward Look Resort in Tucson, Arizona for the *Fifth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations* and the *Fifth International Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs*. The Westward Look was the scene of AFCC's first Custody Evaluation Symposium in 1994 and the enthusiasm, excitement and interest was reminiscent of the inaugural event eight years ago.

The *Fifth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations* was highlighted by three controversial plenary sessions on how to proceed with an evaluation when allegations of child maltreatment and domestic abuse are present. Moderator Jonathan Gould, Ph.D., and presenters Toby Kleinman, J.D., Kathryn Kuehnle,

Ph.D. and Hon. Susan Snow offered a spirited discussion which sparked significant audience response to presentations of "trauma-based" and "traditional" approaches. The Symposium also included more than 20 additional pre-conference institutes and workshop sessions ranging from fundamental skills to advanced ethical and practice issues.

The *Fifth International Congress on Parent Education and Access Program* opened with a look at Programs for High Conflict Families featuring Janet Johnston, co-author of *In the Name of the Child*; Jack Arbuthnot, Professor Emeritus from Ohio University, Athens, OH; and Linda Louie, M.S.W., Division Chief, Family Court Services, Los Angeles County Superior Court. The second plenary program

examined evidence-based prevention programs and explored the challenges of integrating such programs into the court system. Presenters included Irwin Sandler, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Arizona State University; JoAnne Pedro-Carroll, Ph.D., Children's Institute at the University of Rochester; and Barbara Babb, J.D., Director of the Center for Children, Families and the Courts at the University of Baltimore Law School.

AFCC would like to extend a special thanks to the Arizona Chapter of AFCC, including President Annette Burns and former President Fred Mitchell for their outstanding support and assistance along with all of the volunteers whose efforts made the conferences possible.

AFCC Board of Directors Nominations

The AFCC Nominating Committee is seeking the names of individuals to serve on the AFCC Board of Directors. Recommended individuals must be AFCC members and have an interest and knowledge of AFCC and its work.

Nominations must be received by February 1, 2002 in order to be considered by the committee prior to election at the AFCC Annual Conference, May 28-31, 2003 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

If you or another member you know is interested in serving on the AFCC Board of Directors, please forward name, contact information and a resume to:

Denise McColley
Chair, Nominating Committee
c/o AFCC
6515 Grand Teton Plaza, Suite 210
Madison, WI 53719-1048
Fax: (608) 664-3751
Email: afcc@afccnet.org

AFCC to Award Conference Scholarships to Members

AFCC's Awards and Scholarships Committee, in collaboration with the Resource Development Committee, has established a tuition scholarship program. Three scholarships will be awarded to AFCC members for AFCC's 40th Annual Conference, May 28-31, 2003 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Scholarships will include registration fees for the conference and for a full-day pre-conference institute. Scholarship recipients are responsible for funding their own travel, lodging, meals and all other related expenses.

The Awards and Scholarships Committee will make the awards based on (1) the needs of the individual; (2) how the individual will use the information gained to enhance services in their community and (3) how the individual's presence at the conference will add to the diversity of the AFCC community.

Scholarship applications are available on the home page of the AFCC web site at www.afccnet.org. If you do not have Internet access please call AFCC at (608) 664-3750 and request that a copy be mailed or faxed.

AFCC Award Nominations

AFCC is seeking nominees for the following awards, to be presented at AFCC's 40th Annual Conference in Ottawa, Ontario, May 28-31, 2003.

Distinguished Service Award: Presented in recognition of outstanding contribution to the field of family and divorce.

Stanley Cohen Research Award: Recognizing innovative and outstanding research in the area of family courts and family law.

Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award: Presented to an innovative program serving the family court community.

If you would like to nominate someone for one of the above awards, send a fax or e-mail of no more than 200 words to the AFCC Administrative Office. Please specify the award for which you are submitting a nomination. Include your name, address and telephone number along with the same information for the nominee. Please include a brief statement as to why you believe the nominee to be a good candidate for the award.

The deadline for nomination is April 1, 2003. Please forward your nomination to:

AFCC Awards Nomination
6515 Grand Teton Plaza, Suite 210
Madison, WI 53719-1048
E-mail: afcc@afccnet.org

ABA Seeks Award Nominees

The American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service and the Child Custody Pro Bono Project are pleased to request nominations for the second annual Ann Liechty Pro Bono Child Custody Award. This award honors an individual attorney who has enhanced the lives of children by improving or delivering volunteer legal services to children involved in child custody proceedings.

Guidelines and applications are now available at www.abachild-custodyproject.org. The award will be presented to the recipient at the ABA Annual Meeting in San Francisco in August 2003, at a well-attended and nationally-publicized luncheon.

The first annual Ann Liechty Award was presented in August 2002 to Rebecca Rundgren of Denver, Colorado, a volunteer with Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center. More information on Ms. Rundgren is available at www.abachildcustodyproject.org.

New Feature

The AFCC Newsletter will be profiling AFCC Committee Chairs in an effort to better acquaint members with the hard working volunteers behind the success of the Association and the work that they do. This month, we feature Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.) and Leslye Hunter.

AFCC COMMITTEE CHAIR PROFILE

Leslye Hunter, Membership Committee Co-Chair



Leslye Hunter

by Sherry Carver, Orange, CA

The AFCC Membership Committee is co-chaired by Leslye Hunter. Leslye feels that membership, conferences and AFCC's quarterly journal, the *Family Court Review*, are the three backbones of the organization. Leslye defines herself as a people person and is rabidly enthusiastic about the benefits of AFCC membership.

The Membership Committee's co-chair is Shelley Probbler of San Antonio. Committee members include former AFCC President Christie Coates, Pat Ross, John Polanski and Wanda Weber. The Committee has hosted local events to introduce communities to AFCC, sent members to other organization's conferences to promote AFCC, helped AFCC Chapters buy their own AFCC banners and encouraged members to bring in new members. Leslye's goal is for AFCC is to reach and

educate every person in every discipline who is working in the Court with family issues. It would be an added bonus if each of them were also a member of AFCC!

Leslye started out as a child actor, starring on television and Broadway. She attended Professional Children's School with classmates Amy Irving, Carol Kane, YoYo Ma, Gelsey Kirkland and Adam Arkin. She attended Beloit College in Beloit, WI and Long Island University in Brooklyn, NY.

Leslye lives in Metairie, LA and is in private practice at The Custody Center. The Center provides custody evaluation and facilitation, family mediation, individual family and marriage counseling, adoption home studies and birthmother counseling.

Leslye would like to see every jurisdiction have a dedicated "one family-one judge" system where judges are educated, trained and interested in family law matters. She would like to see interdisciplinary teams set up in every community to discuss and problem solve how best to serve our families in need. She feels that quality services must be made available to every family, regardless of their financial status and she would like to see more funding for research in the practical areas that govern our decisions (i.e., how different parenting plans affect children over the long term).

Family: I have a beautiful 19-year-old daughter, Kate Elizabeth, who is working full-time for an attorney and she just bought an adorable 2-pound puppy named Travis. I also have a 90-pound chocolate lab named Snickers who is afraid of the puppy.

Teacher who most influenced me: Stan Norris was a high school political science/history teacher who had served in the Peace Corps and taught us to think. Because of him, I began to read, question and become politically active in the late 60s. He became a great friend with whom I recently reconnected. He is now living in the Washington D.C. area and heads an anti-nuclear weapons think tank.

Proudest personal achievement: The group of wonderful, talented and giving friends that I have been fortunate enough to gather across the world. Everything I have accomplished has been encouraged, instigated or enhanced by these friends. I would truly not be who I am without them.

Personal goals in life: Do no harm and bring some smiles and happiness to those around me.

Favorite book: *Mutant Message Down Under* by Marlo Morgan because I read it during a difficult period in my life and it helped to put everything in perspective for me.

What led to my present career: My own divorce. My ex and I went to mediation – which didn't work, but I got to see the process and its potential, so I became a trained mediator and got involved in doing custody evaluations. Then I became a member of AFCC and really got excited about the field.

Career goals and achievements: I brought the formal concept of parenting coordination (which one of the judges named parenting facilitation) to Louisiana and have co-authored changes in standards and qualifications for custody evaluators that have been unanimously adopted by our state Bar's House of Delegates. My goal is to continue to educate and raise the "bar" in my state – gathering new AFCC members and supporters as I go! My hope is that New Orleans will soon have a Domestic Relations Court (if not a Unified Family Court) rather than having the most junior judges serve by default.

Favorite word: Effervescent

Least favorite word: Can't

Career other than my own that I would like to try: Research librarian or restaurateur.

Career that I would not like: Accountant. Balancing my checkbook and paying bills are guaranteed to invoke a foul mood.

Top 5 changes in family law I'd like to see: Education, Education, Research, Education, Education.

My favorite AFCC memory: When Senator Paul Wellstone made his keynote speech in New Orleans and thanked me for taking such good care of him and his wife Sheila, and for being such a Jewish mother.

AFCC COMMITTEE CHAIR PROFILE

Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.), Human Resources Committee Chair



Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.)

by Sherry Carver, Orange, CA

Arline Rotman is the chair of the newly formed Human Resources committee. Since AFCC's new streamlined governance took shape during her tenure as President, chairing the Human Resources Committee allows her to continue the task of restructuring by focusing on staffing needs and structure. The first task, the search for a new Executive Director, was pure joy for Arline when she found that there is no more competent person for the job than Peter Salem.

Now that the search for the executive director is complete, the Human Resources Committee is charged with formalizing written personnel policies. Members of this committee are Denise McColley, Leslye Hunter, Bill Howe and Fred Mitchell.

Arline was born in Brooklyn, NY, the youngest child of a close extended Jewish family of largely first generation immigrants. The Brooklyn of her youth was a culturally rich society encompassing the high culture of theater, museums and the other performing arts as well as the more bombastic environment of Ebbets Field and the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Arline attended Erasmus Hall High School along with 8,000 other students, but graduated from Forest Hills High School after her parents joined the legions of other families moving up and out of Brooklyn. Her education continued at Brandeis University as a member of the seventh graduating class. Her Brandeis experience has left an indelible impression on her life. In addition to the pioneering spirit that was felt by all students, this small liberal co-ed university had an intellectual excitement that made it a very special experience.

After graduating from college she earned a masters degree in education, married, taught high school until the birth of her first child and joined the League of Women Voters, which she notes was her intellectual salvation. Arline and her husband Barry subsequently had two more children and she enrolled in law school when the youngest entered first grade.

When Arline began her law practice she began to realize how disadvantaged women were at that time. Her focus on family law was purely serendipitous. Opportunities for women were limited and she needed to stay close to home to be on hand for her teenage boys and husband. The decision to go into private practice of law in her hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts, influenced the rest of her life. Women sought her out when faced with divorce because their husbands, the lawyers and judges were all male. Never having taken a family law course, she found a new cause and it was only a short time before her private practice was concentrated almost exclusively in family law.

Arline has been a woman of firsts. As a commissioner on the Worcester Housing Authority, she was the first woman to be appointed to a major Board or Commission in the city. She was the first woman in the county to be appointed as a hearing officer for the Board of Bar Overseers. She organized the Women's Bar Association of Worcester and when she was the first woman appointed to the bench in Worcester County.

"I am proud of my accomplishments while I served as a member of the judiciary." Arline said. "First and foremost, I spearheaded the organization of the Massachusetts chapter of AFCC and served as its first President. Using the interdisciplinary knowledge gained through AFCC, I was involved in the curriculum development for Domestic Violence training in the courts and served on the faculty and formulation of Cooperative Parenting Guidelines for divorced and separated parents. I chaired interdisciplinary task forces that created the Domestic Violence Risk Assessment guide used in custody and access cases, and created a protocol for supervised visitation decisions."

Although she has stepped down from the bench, Arline remains quite active. "Since my retirement I am chairing an AFCC-MA sponsored interdisciplinary task force that has drafted and filed legislation authorizing parenting coordinators and is working on proposed qualifications, training, court rules and protocols for the appointment of parenting coordinators. Another interdisciplinary task force is working on revising the cooperative parenting guidelines to more accurately reflect the current thinking about attachment and the importance of fathers in children's lives. If it weren't for AFCC, my judicial life would not have been so exciting or fruitful. I am incredibly proud and honored by the leadership opportunities that have been afforded me through AFCC."

Proudest achievement: My proudest achievement is my continued partnership with Barry, my husband of 43 years, and our three sons who are wonderful human beings. As I often told litigants who appeared before me, there is nothing we do in life as important as raising our children.

Favorite book: One of the great luxuries of retirement is the time to feed my appetite for reading. My favorite book is now often the one that I have just finished reading. I no longer need to rely on the solace I received from rereading Jane Austin novels.

Favorite word: My favorite word is serendipity. It is the concept that has allowed me to choose unplanned paths, always with positive results.

Least favorite word: My least favorite word (okay, words) are "it can't be done."

Career other than my own that I would like to try: I would love to run the perfect country inn.

Career I would least like to have: Computer engineer.

Top five changes I would like to see in family law: (1) Unified Family Courts; (2) professional and diversified ancillary services attached to each court; (3) restructuring of the Rules of Civil Procedure as they relate to Family Law cases in order to allow courts to more appropriately meet the needs of children and families; (4) legal representation for children in contested custody cases, perhaps recognizing them as parties to such cases; (5) redefinition of family to allow for recognition of committed relationships and de facto parents

Favorite AFCC Memory: It is impossible to cite a single AFCC memory. I would rather single out the experiences and wonderful relationships established during my seven years on the Executive Committee. These were experiences that could never be replicated and that I would not have wanted to miss. It was truly a privilege to know and work with such good and talented people.

AFCC Chapter Update

Missouri Members Gain Provisional Chapter Status

The AFCC Board of Directors voted unanimously to grant members in Missouri provisional chapter status at the November 9, 2003 board meeting in Tucson, AZ. The Missouri Organizing Committee, spearheaded by Ellen Cowell, Andrea Clark and Hon. Winston Davis, holds regular lunch and learn educational sessions, distributes a bi-monthly electronic newsletter and successfully lobbied for AFCC's Fall Regional Conference to be held in St. Louis. The conference is tentatively scheduled for November 13-15, 2003.

AFCC congratulates its Missouri members and extends a warm welcome.

Florida Chapter

AFCC's Florida Chapter held its 2002 Conference October 25-26, in Tampa, FL. The conference theme was *Helping Families in Transition: Challenging*

Times/Challenging Issues. The conference opened with a keynote address by Forrest Mosten and included a plenary session on domestic violence, moderated by board member Sharon Press and closing remarks by Florida Chapter President Greg Firestone and AFCC Executive Director Peter Salem.

The conference included an outstanding array of pre-conference institutes and workshops addressing a wide range of issues including domestic violence, collaborative law, parenting coordination and unbundling legal services.

The Florida Chapter held a silent auction where a myriad of items led to frenzied bidding. The evening concluded with a live auction featuring an authentic Florida voting booth complete with hanging chads.

The Chapter also took time to honor the outstanding work of its members. Hon. Hugh Starnes was presented with the President's Award by Florida Chapter President Greg Firestone. Hon. Ray McNeal and Dr. Kathryn Kuehnle were presented Community Service Awards. Joe Hood, Lea Ann Gates and Anne Fitch were presented with Volunteer Awards, and Greg Firestone was acknowledged with a plaque for his outstanding dedication and leadership as first President of the Florida Chapter.



New York Chapter Conference Debuts



AFCC's newest Provisional Chapter in New York held a one-day conference at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York on November 22, 2002. The conference featured a keynote address by Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman and was attended by New York's leading judges, lawyers, mediators, mental health professionals, domestic violence advocates and academics.

The New York chapter elected its first Board of Directors, led by Co-Presidents Hon. Evelyn Frazee of Rochester, NY and Dr. Lauren Behrman of New Rochelle, Treasurer Teresa Ombres and Secretary Steve Abel. Additional members of the Board of Directors include:

Joel C. Bender, Esq., White Plains
Suzanne Brunsting, Esq., Rochester
Steven Demby, Ph.D., Brooklyn
Hon. W. Dennis Duggan, Albany
Leonard Florescue, Esq., New York City
Cecile Green, Jamaica
Elayne E. Greenberg, Esq., Hempstead
Tracy M. Hamilton, Esq., Rochester
Elaine Kirsch, LL.B, LLM
Hon. Joseph M. Lauria, New York City
Victoria Lutz, Esq., White Plains
Paul J. Meller, Ph.D., Hempstead
Larry Musnik, Merrick
Patrick C. O'Reilly, Esq., Buffalo
JoAnne Pedro-Carroll, Ph.D., Rochester
Andrea Phoenix, Esq., Baldwin
Emily Ruben, Esq., Brooklyn
Professor Andrew I. Schepard, Hempstead
Hon. Jacqueline W. Silberman, New York City
Sydell Sloan, M.A., Bayside
Hon. Elaine J. Stack, Mineola
Eric A. Tepper, Esq., Glenville
Rod Wells, Cornwall



Keep Your Membership Up to Date and Stay On-Line with AFCC!

Having trouble accessing the member section of the website? When your AFCC membership expires the website database automatically removes your listing from the on-line directory and restricts your access to the member section of the website. If you are having trouble getting access to the directory it is possible your membership has expired. To check please contact Dawn Holmes at (608) 664-3750, ext. 11, or email afcc@afccnet.org.

New Jersey Chapter Sponsors Co-Sponsors Interdisciplinary Program

by Ron Silikovitz, Ph.D. Past President, and Phil Sobel, J.D.,
President, AFCC New Jersey Chapter

The AFCC New Jersey Chapter co-sponsored a seminar with the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts and the Matrimonial Section of the New Jersey Bar on November 16, 2002. The featured speaker was Dr. Philip Stahl, Chair of AFCC's Custody Evaluation interest group.

The interdisciplinary seminar addressed the challenges confronting professionals operating under Best Practices rules. Judges Robert Fall, Graham Ross, and Donald Volkert, Jr. discussed how the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts established the 'Best Practices' rules to address public concerns related to the time and cost of matrimonial litigation. Judge Volkert advised that since the implementation of Best Practices, the matrimonial case backlog has declined by 47 percent.

NJ-AFCC Board Members Dr. Sharon Ryan Montgomery and Dr. Marcy Pasternak presented on state-of-the-art therapeutic interventions and brief custody evaluations, designed to provide parties in divorce with assistance that does not require the full expense and impact of a formal custody evaluation.

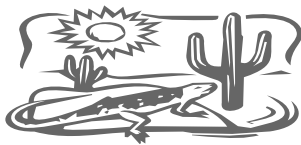
NJ-AFCC President Philip N. Sobel, Esq. and John F. DeBartolo, Esq., presented on how attorneys can best represent parties in divorce in medium and high conflict cases.

William Morrissey, C.P.A., a forensic accountant with a statewide reputation, followed up with some suggestions as to how forensic accountants can be of help in these situations, separate and apart from full-scale business evaluations, including having the accountant assist the parties in setting up a joint budget for their divorce, including specific budgeting for the various professionals to be utilized during the course of the litigation. The seminar concluded with a stimulating case study contrasting the use of adversarial and collaborative techniques.

Special Thanks

AFCC thanks Dr. Ron Silikovitz who is stepping down as NJ-AFCC President after years of dedicated service. Ron attended his first AFCC conference in Washington D.C. nearly five years ago and returned to New Jersey determined to start an AFCC Chapter. Thank you and congratulations to Ron on a great success and best wishes to his successor, Phil Sobel.

Arizona Chapter Conference on the Horizon



Looking for a warm, sunny place to get away during the cold, dreary months of February? How about the AFCC Arizona Chapter Conference? This year the Arizona Chapter will hold its annual conference February 7-9, 2003 in Sedona, AZ. The featured speaker will be Dr. Mavis Heatherington, author of the popular book *For Better or Worse: Divorce Reconsidered*, which examines results of a landmark study of more than 1,400 divorcing families over a period of three decades.

For additional information on this conference check out the AFCC Arizona Chapter website at www.azafcc.org

Massachusetts Chapter Update

The Massachusetts Chapter has announced that it will hold its annual conference on May 2, 2003 in Boston. The conference theme will be *Families in Conflict: Interventions that Work—Education, Mediation, Litigation*. The featured presenter will be Dr. Robert Emery of the University of Virginia.

AFCC Massachusetts Chapter members were saddened by the death of Hon. Sheila McGovern on November 12, 2002. Judge McGovern, a longtime AFCC member, died of a heart attack. She was a leader and founding member of the Massachusetts Chapter and a former member of the International AFCC Board of Directors. She will be missed by her Massachusetts colleagues.



The Child's Voice: A Symposium Presented by the Texas Chapter of AFCC

by Hon. Debra H. Lehrmann,
President-Elect, AFCC Texas Chapter



Judith Wallerstein's controversial publication, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce*, raised the issue of whether children should be directly involved in the divorce process. Her findings suggest that children feel stress over being locked into visitation schedules over which they have no control. Although involving children in the process of developing parenting plans will not give them more control over their lives on a day-to-day basis, it may make their schedules more palatable since it gives them input in the decision making process that results in a plan that will govern their lives.

On the other hand, psychologists have told us for years that children should not be put in the middle of conflict between divorcing parents. The legal profession must take care not to take psychological research indicating that children should be allowed to express their views in a supportive setting to mean that children should be brought into the lawsuit without forethought. Herein lies the difficult issue; that is, how to allow children meaningful input in the divorcing process, without embroiling them in the dispute and causing them harm.

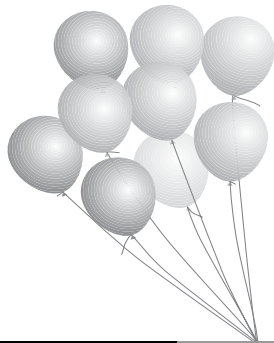
The Texas Chapter of the AFCC hosted a symposium on this timely topic September 27, 2002 in Irving, Texas. Keynote speakers included Nancy Oleson, Ph.D., from the Wallerstein Center for the Family in Transition and Richard Warshak, Ph.D., author of *The Custody Revolution* and *Divorce Poison*. The goal of the conference was to raise awareness and to set the stage for improvements to the process of involving children in divorce litigation. As follow-up, a two-part article entitled "The Child's Voice—An Analysis of the Methodology Used to Involve Children in Custody Litigation" written by the Hon. Debra H. Lehrmann, President-Elect of the AFCC Texas Chapter, will be published in the November and December 2002 issues of the Texas Bar Journal.



Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

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