

Family Law Conference

for Alabama Practitioners

This conference features Jefferson County Circuit Judge Patricia Stephens and a faculty of leading Alabama family law attorneys discussing the latest changes and decisions of critical interest to your successful practice.

HIGHLIGHTS

- » Custody and time-share issues – from a judicial perspective
- » Discovering assets and income in divorce cases
- » Military divorces – parenting issues, child support, military pension, and continuing health care
- » Handling social media, e-mail, video, and other ESI
- » The latest e-discovery precautions, risks, and advice
- » Same-sex marriage – asset division, custody issues for divorcing same-sex couples, dissolution alternatives, and more
- » Ethical considerations such as conflicts of interest and attorneys changing firm affiliations
- » Case law update from Alabama's appellate courts on termination of parental rights, adoption, child custody modification, and alimony
- » A panel discussion on “hot topics” in Alabama family law



WHEN Friday, May 8, 2015

WHERE Birmingham Marriott



Speakers

Charles Dunn

Boyd, Fernambucq & Dunn, P.C., Birmingham

Stephanie Hunter

Hunter Law Firm, P.C., Bessemer

Gwendolyn Thomas Kennedy

Law Office of Gwendolyn Thomas Kennedy, Montgomery

Laura Montgomery

The Crittenden Firm, P.C., Birmingham

Donna Wesson Smalley

Donna Wesson Smalley, P.C., Jasper

Judge Patricia Stephens

Jefferson County circuit court, Birmingham

Joan-Marie Sullivan

Law Office of Joan-Marie Sullivan, Huntsville

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WHEN

Friday, May 8, 2015

Registration begins at 7:30 A.M. The conference begins at 8:00 A.M. and concludes at 4:45 P.M.

(There will be morning and afternoon breaks, and attendees will have 1 hour and 15 minutes for lunch on their own)

Price: \$327 for program, \$247 for additional attendees from the same firm, \$147 for materials

\$50 early bird discount until March 27

WHAT MAKES THIS SEMINAR UNIQUE?

- » **Outstanding faculty.** The faculty includes seasoned speakers who are recognized as the best in their areas.
- » **Judge's perspective.** Attendees will hear from Jefferson County Circuit Court Judge Patricia Stephens on child custody and time-share issues.
- » **Valuable updates.** A top authority will update attendees on recent case law developments in family law.
- » **Practical topics.** Attendees will get practical tips on how to make electronic discovery usable in the courtroom.
- » **Current topics.** Attendees will get an in-depth treatment of issues arising in military divorces and same-sex marriages.
- » **Useful resource.** Attendees will receive a binder of the materials covered during the seminar.
- » **CLE.** Attendees can satisfy over half of their annual CLE requirement, earning 6 hours of GENERAL credit and 1 hour of ETHICS credit.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Family law update
- Child custody and time-share issues
- Military divorces
- Same-sex marriages
- E-discovery precautions
- Handling social media
- Discovering assets and income
- Conflicts of interest

Agenda

Family Law Update

8:00 A.M. TO 9:15 A.M.

Joan-Marie Sullivan

Law Office of Joan-Marie Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan, editor of *Alabama Law Weekly*, will review family law cases from Alabama's appellate courts, dealing with such issues as:

- » Whether, in the absence of any showing that father presented any harm to the child, maintaining the status quo was a viable alternative to termination of his parental rights
- » Whether mother could have impliedly consented to adoption when custody of child was removed from her by court order
- » Whether an action to modify a divorce decree based on a material change in circumstances can be filed even though the original divorce remains on appeal
- » Whether an award of alimony was excessive
- » Whether another state had jurisdiction in a child custody matter even though the children had been temporarily absent from that state during the six-month period prior to the filing of the action
- » Whether the Americans with Disabilities Act applies to proceedings for termination of parental rights
- » Whether the fact that the husband's signature was submitted electronically affected the validity of an agreement

Same-Sex Marriages

9:15 A.M. TO 10:00 A.M.

Charles Dunn

Boyd, Fernambucq & Dunn, P.C.

- » Same-sex marriage: A national perspective
- » Same-sex divorce: Jurisdiction and asset division
- » Custody issues for divorcing same-sex couples
- » Dissolution alternatives
- » The future of same-sex marriage

10:00 A.M. TO 10:15 A.M.
(MORNING BREAK)

Electronic Evidence

10:15 A.M. TO 11:15 A.M.

Laura Montgomery

The Crittenden Firm, P.C.

- » The latest e-discovery precautions, risks, and advice
- » Handling social media, e-mail, video, and other ESI
- » Making your electronic evidence usable in the courtroom

Ethical Considerations for Alabama Attorneys

11:15 A.M. TO 12:15 P.M.

Stephanie Hunter

Hunter Law Firm, P.C.

- » Attorney speech – what lawyers can and cannot say
- » Conflicts of interest: Recent developments
- » Attorneys changing firm affiliations

12:15 P.M. TO 1:30 P.M. LUNCH
(ON YOUR OWN)

Panel Discussion of "Hot Topics" in Domestic Relations

1:30 P.M. TO 2:00 P.M.

Panelists, led by Joan-Marie Sullivan, will discuss some of the problems and issues they have encountered. Attendees are invited to ask questions and present their own scenarios for discussion.

Custody and Time-Share Issues

2:00 P.M. TO 3:00 P.M.

Judge Patricia Stephens

Jefferson County circuit court

Judge Stephens will discuss what issues come before the court in child custody cases and what factors courts consider in resolving those disputes.

- » Is a joint custody arrangement feasible?
- » What is in the child's best interest?
- » What will be the child care arrangements?
- » Are the parties willing to cooperate with the other parent?
- » What about holidays and vacations?

3:00 P.M. TO 3:15 P.M.
(AFTERNOON BREAK)

EARN
ETHICS
CREDIT

Asset Discovery

3:15 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

Donna Wesson Smalley
Donna Wesson Smalley, P.C.

A fair result in the division of marital property depends on complete financial information. Take the guess work out of your negotiations by getting tips on how to discover all of the parties' assets and income.

Special Issues in Military Divorce

4:00 P.M. TO 4:45 P.M.

Gwendolyn Thomas Kennedy
The Law Office of Gwendolyn Thomas Kennedy

- » Statutory changes and current case law
- » Rules of practice and procedure for family court
- » Parenting issues
- » Child support
- » Military pension, retirement, and benefits
- » Survivor benefit plan for retired military personnel
- » Military reservists' retirement benefits
- » Survivorship and military disability benefits
- » Continued health care
- » Contempt

Now is your chance to network with and have your questions answered by a judge and your state's most prominent family law attorneys.

Meet your faculty



Charles Dunn, with Boyd, Fernambucq & Dunn, P.C. in Birmingham, concentrates his practice in the areas of divorce, matrimonial law, family law and child custody.

Since his graduation from law school and admittance to the State Bar that same year, Mr. Dunn has been a practicing attorney at the firm and became a shareholder in January 2006. He is a member of the Birmingham Bar Association and serves on the Entertainment Committee. He is a frequent lecturer on family law issues. He teaches Family Law as an adjunct faculty member in Samford University's Paralegal Studies Certificate Program.



Stephanie Hunter is an attorney with Hunter Law Firm, P.C. in Bessemer, where she focuses on probate law, family law and personal injury. Ms. Hunter

has worked in the legal field for more than 10 years and has held a number of leadership positions with various organizations. She is a frequent seminar instructor and is currently on the board of the Alabama Lawyers Association. Ms. Hunter earned her J.D. from Miles Law School, her B.S., in criminal justice, from Virginia College, and her AAS degree in paralegal studies from Virginia College (Birmingham location).



Gwendolyn Thomas Kennedy, with the Law Office of Gwendolyn Thomas Kennedy in Montgomery, received her J.D. with Honors from Howard

University School of Law in Washington D.C. In 1985, she relocated to Montgomery and worked with Dr. Joe L. Reed at the Alabama Education Association where she was the Special Assistant for Legal Affairs to more than 60,000 members statewide. In 1988, she began private practice in family law and personal injury. She was appointed Deputy Chief of Consumer Protection for the State of Alabama Office of the Attorney General in 1992, where she remained until 1995. She reentered private practice, continuing to assist families and to recover large settlements for personal injury victims.



Laura Montgomery is with The Crittenden Firm, P.C. in Birmingham. Ms. Montgomery began working at The Crittenden Firm as a family law attorney

in September 2010. Professionally, Ms. Montgomery is a member of both the Alabama and Tennessee Bar Associations and is actively involved in the Birmingham Bar Association family law section and young lawyers section. She is also a member of the American Bar Association.



Donna Wesson Smalley is with Donna Wesson Smalley, P.C. in Jasper. Ms. Smalley is recognized throughout the state for her family law and mediation knowledge and

expertise. She was named to *National Trial Lawyers Top 100* in 2013. In 2009, she was named to *Super Lawyers by Birmingham Business Journal*. She was named in the 2008 *Who's Who in American Law*.



Judge Patricia Stephens became a Jefferson County circuit court judge, Domestic Relations, in January 2013. She is a graduate of Auburn

University and the Miles College School of Law, where she graduated *cum laude*. Prior to taking the bench, Judge Stephens served as a prosecuting attorney for the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office. She represented litigants in criminal and civil defense, family law and personal injury. Judge Stephens is a member of the Alabama State Bar Association, the Birmingham Bar Association, the Magic City Bar Association, and the Birmingham Inns of Court.



Joan-Marie Sullivan, with the Law Office of Joan-Marie Sullivan in Huntsville, has been in private practice in Huntsville since 1996 and concentrates mainly

on family law and appellate matters. She previously practiced law in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and worked at Lanier, Ford, Shaver and Payne and Wolfe, Jones & Boswell in Huntsville. She has served as editor of *Alabama Law Weekly*, a weekly publication summarizing appellate court cases, since 1996. She is certified by the Alabama Center for Dispute Resolution in Montgomery as a mediator in civil and domestic matters.

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REGISTRATION FORM. FOR ASSISTANCE, CALL 800-727-5257.

☒ **YES!** I want to get up-to-date information on the latest and most significant developments affecting my clients and my practice. Please reserve my spot at the **Family Law Conference for Alabama Practitioners**. My registration includes the one-day conference, pages of valuable course materials, morning and afternoon snacks, and up to 7 hours of CLE credit. If I am dissatisfied, I am entitled to a complete refund of my registration fee. Fee: \$327 for program (**\$277 before March 27th**), \$247 for additional attendees from the same firm, \$147 for materials only.

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CLE: 7 hours of CLE

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Cancellation Policy

- A \$50 processing fee applies to ALL conference cancellations.
- Registrants are responsible for the entire program fee for a cancellation made after 5:00 p.m. three weeks prior to the event (whether or not you attend the program or fail to cancel).
- An alternate may attend in place of the original registrant.

Dynamic Interaction:

Unlike other one-way presentations, you'll be encouraged to ask questions and present your own situations for discussion, while interacting with both the speakers and your peers.

Quality Presenters:

Your presenters are all authorities in Alabama family law. Their experience, skill, and familiarity with issues of specific concern to Alabama attorneys make this the perfect learning event for attorneys who practice in the domestic relations area of the law.

Attorneys will learn:

- » The latest rulings from the Alabama appellate courts on parental rights, adoption, child custody modification, alimony, and more
- » What Jefferson County Circuit Judge Patricia Stevens believes are key considerations in resolving custody and time-share disputes
- » What special issues must be considered when one or both parties are in the military
- » The latest on same-sex marriage and same-sex divorce
- » How to handle social media, e-mail, video, and other ESI

- » How to make electronic evidence usable in the courtroom
- » How to discover assets and income in a divorce case
- » What concerns come into play when an attorney changes firm affiliations

What your colleagues said about last year's seminar:

"The seminar covered current law, and useful practice tips were presented straightforwardly."

"Great turnout and very relevant information."

"Very practical information presented with ideas I can use."

"The handouts were quite helpful."

"The speakers included a mix of trial attorneys, appellate attorneys, mediators, and an active judge."

"Panel discussion was very good!"

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