

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
SECTION ANNUAL REPORT**

Bar Year: 2009-2010

Section Name: Family Law Section

Mission Statement: The Family Law section of the State Bar of Michigan provides education, information and analysis about issues of concern through meetings, seminars, our website, public service programs, and publication of a newsletter. Membership in the Section is open to all members of the State Bar of Michigan. Statements made on behalf of the Section do not necessarily reflect the views of the State Bar of Michigan.

Officers and Council Members:

Officer	Name	Address	Telephone	Email
Chair	Barbara Kelly 30912	Washtenaw County FOC P.O. Box 3645 Ann Arbor, 48103	734-222- 3050	kellyb@ewashtenaw.org
Chair-Elect	Amy Yu 53273	30300 Northwestern Hwy Ste 114 Farmington Hills, MI 48334	(248) 932- 0100	ayu@amyyulaw.com
Corresponding Secretary	Traci Rink 45214	Oakland County FOC 230 Elizabeth Lake Rd Pontiac, MI 48341	(248) 858- 1840	rinkt@oakgov.com
Treasurer	Connie Thacker 49784	Rhoades McKee PC 161 Ottawa Ave NW Ste 600 Grand Rapids, MI 49503	(616) 235- 3500	cthacker@rhoadesmckee.com
Recording Secretary	James J. Harrington, III 3198	23875 Novi Rd Novi, MI 48375	(248) 347- 9620	jjh@jjharringtonlaw.com

Member	Term	Member	Term
51460 Lorne B. Gold, Bloomfield Hills	9/3/2010	63873 Robert Charles Treat, Jr., Woodhaven	9/30/2011
14625 Jules Hanslovsky, East Lansing	9/3/2010	12080 Neil M. Colman, Sterling Heights	9/30/2012
39425 Donna E. Mobilia, Grand Rapids	9/3/2010	67570 Elizabeth A. Kitchen-Troop, Ann Arbor	9/30/2012
36474 Antoinette R. Raheem, Bloomfield Hills	9/3/2010	37150 Anne L. Argiroff	9/30/2012
60154 Erika Leuffen Salerno, Kalamazoo	9/3/2010	56418 Kristen L. Robinson	9/30/2012
35075 Carol F. Breitmeyer, Detroit	9/30/2011	30891 Kent L. Weichmann	9/30/2012
25664 Hon. Richard B. Halloran, Detroit	9/30/2011		

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38819 Philip B. Navarre, Jackson	9/30/2011		
37160 Rebecca E. Shiemke, Ann Arbor	9/30/2011		
65728 Liisa R. Speaker, Lansing	9/30/2011		

Council Meeting Schedule:

Please attach any additional information needed regarding Council meetings as an addendum.

Meeting Type	Date	Location
Council meeting	October 3, 2009,	Grand Rapids, Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park
Council meeting	November 7, 2009	Lansing, University Club of MSU
Council meeting	December 5, 2009	Novi, Doubletree Hotel
Council meeting	February 6, 2010	Ann Arbor, Weber's Inn
Council meeting	March 6, 2010	Lansing, University Club of MSU
Council meeting	April 10, 2010	Grand Rapids, Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park
Council meeting	May 1, 2010	Novi, Doubletree Hotel
Council meeting	June 5, 2010	Ann Arbor, Weber's Inn
Annual Meeting and Council meeting	September 30, 2010	Amway Grand, Grand Rapids

General Budget Information: The Section's primary income is member dues, but in addition it earns income from advertising in the Family Law Journal, seminars, and publications. The Section expenses include publication of the Family Law Journal, meetings, and lobbying activities. The Section has operated within its budget for the last several years and maintains a fund balance.

Events and/or Seminars:

Please attach any additional information needed regarding events and/or seminars as an addendum.

Event or Seminar Title	Date	Location
Family Court Forum	June 4, 2010	Ann Arbor
Family Law Institute in cooperation with ICLE	November 2009	Northville
Mid Winter Seminar	January 2010	St. Johns
Mid Summer Seminar	July 15 through 18 2010	Traverse City

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Legislative issues: The Family Law Council reviews all legislation affecting the practice of family law. We continued to retain the lobbying services of Bill Kandler, at Cusmano, Kandler & Reed, and he effectively assisted us with advocating our policy positions.

The detailed statement of position on particular legislation is available on the Section's page of State Bar web site under Advocacy. Although Council has taken numerous positions over the year, of note are positions opposing HB 4197, providing for great-grandparenting time, HB 5114, mandating equal physical custody, HB 5949, et seq., implementing "covenant marriages", and SB 1127, requiring fault grounds for most divorces. We helped revise the Friend of the Court Act amendments, and opposed the shifting of costs to the parties, the elimination of spousal support enforcement, and the limitation of income withholding.

Council found some worthy bills to support; SB 197, providing standing to biological fathers of children born in wedlock in limited circumstances, SB 568-9, revising the Domestic Relations Arbitration Act, HJRL, repealing term limits and HJRNN repealing the prohibition of same gender marriages.

Committee Activity:

The Section has many active committees, most of which meet by phone conference. The dates and times of Committee meetings are available on the Section calendar viewable from the Family Law web page on the State Bar web site. Some of the significant committee activity this year follows:

Alternative Family – Co-Chairs Carol Breitmeyer/Connie Thacker – the committee has met monthly and is gathering informational material to put on the Section web site.

Amicus – Co-Chairs Liisa Speaker/Erika Salerno – Filed amicus briefs in the following Supreme Court cases: *Tkachik v Mandeville* (Docket No 138460), *Pierron v Pierron* (Docket No 138824), *Friend v Friend* (Docket No 139165), *Wolkowitz v Wolkowitz* (Docket 139872)

Court Rules - Co-Chairs Jim Harrington/Anne Argiroff - a very active committee that meets monthly by phone conference. This year the committee successfully obtained support from the State Bar Representative Assembly for a proposed change to the Court Rules or the Rules of Professional Conduct prohibiting lawyers from contact the defendant in recently filed family law cases for 14 days after filing, or service of the complaint whichever is sooner. The committee is also working with various parties to revise the court rules regarding default judgments.

Domestic Violence - Co-Chairs Rebecca Shiemke/Donna Mobilia – this committee helped organize an ICLE seminar on "Domestic Violence in Child Custody Cases" scheduled for July 13, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. live in Plymouth. A webinar of the seminar will also be available. The

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committee also finalized a power point on domestic violence issues in family law cases that will be posted on the Section's web page and available as an educational tool to attorneys.

Family Court Forum – Chair Barb Kelly- the committee planned the 11th annual interdisciplinary seminar to be held June 4, 2010. This year's seminar will focus on parenting plans and at this time 197 people are signed up to attend.

Family Law Journal - Co-Chairs Lorne Gold/Antoinette Raheem – the Section continues to explore the possibility of making the Journal available to members electronically as an alternative to a paper copy.

Legislation - Kent Weichmann/Barb Kelly- this very active committee meets monthly by phone conference and reviews all legislation in this area of the law. See comments above on legislation for more detail.

QDRO/Taxation - Co-Chairs Joe Cunningham/Bob Treat – the committee has provided training to various legal aid attorneys throughout the State and members of the private bar who are willing to draft QDROs pro bono, providing a much needed service to the population of clients who cannot afford these critical orders.

Technology – Chair Liz Sadowski- continues to manage the Family Law ListServ, a very helpful online resource on family law issues.

Parenting Coordination – Co-Chairs Kent Weichmann and Richard Halloran – the committee includes section members and mental health professionals working in this area. The committee has reviewed various statutes from around the country and is working on proposed legislation for Michigan.

Other Information: Section membership was reduced this year, but it remains one of the largest Sections of the Bar with approximately 2200 members. At this year's annual meeting there will be two proposed changes to the by-laws presented to members; the first to clarify elections to Council in the event of a mid-term vacancy and the second to clarify election of Officers by Council. The Section continues to try to provide services to its members to assist in their practice and to that end held two member forums with local bar associations seeking input.

Reports must be submitted before May 31, 2010 to:

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