

e-Guardianship News



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Judicial Corner 2
- The Court Reporter 2
- Community Partnerships 3
- Holiday Greeting 4
- Emergency Intervention 4
- Special Interest 4
- About Our Wards 5
- Guardianship Reminders 5
- Free LSC Learning Seminar 5



Attorney Craig Daniell of *S. Craig Daniell & Associates* kicked off the initial Brown Bag CLE session now being sponsored once a quarter by Judge Claudia Laird.

On September 18, 2015, in the CCL2 Courtroom, Mr. Daniell discussed:

Advocating to Avoid Guardianship Less Restrictive Alternatives to Guardianship & Supports and Services

On December 18, 2015, Attorney Steven C. Earl, partner at *Martin, Earl & Stillwell, LLP* will present:

#wHEIRarethey? How to search for unknown heirs as an Ad Litem

Everyone is invited and FREE CLE credit is available for all licensed attorneys.

Each session will be held in the CCL2 Courtroom and will start promptly at noon.

CCL 2 Launches Quarterly Brown Bag CLE Sessions



Attorney Ad Litem Renewal

Attorneys may submit a 2016 *Verified Application for Attorney Ad Litem Appointments* starting on December 1, 2015.

Applications are available on the Probate page of the CCL2 website and all

completed applications and attachments should be returned to Barbara Nichols, Court Coordinator of CCL 5.

Effective September 1, 2015, Probate attorneys ad litem must have completed a minimum of 4 probate CLE hours within the past 12 months.

Due to the new Guardianship Certification requirements, guardianship attorneys ad litem are no longer required to meet this probate CLE requirement.



The Honorable Claudia Laird
County Court at Law 2

The Judicial Corner ✨

I am just learning, pretty late in life, how tough it is to be a parent. I cannot imagine the added stress of also acting as a financial guardian for your or someone else's child. It is the legal and life complications which lead financial guardians of minors to sometimes misuse their ward's funds.

So many times parents think what's mine is theirs and what's theirs is mine, or that a purchase that benefits the entire family benefits the child too, or that the purchase for the child should be made by the child even though the parent is actually financially responsible for the care of the child.

Then there are those financial hard times when a quick "loan" from the child's funds becomes a permanent "gift". Whatever the reason, often times,

when the funds are gone...they're gone. Then mom and dad are stuck in front of the bench trying to justify their actions. Needless to say, it is an uncomfortable situation for all involved.

Thank goodness for §1355.001! This section of the Texas Estates Codes allows for deposit into the registry of the court amounts owed to an incapacitated person, so long as the amount is under \$100,000.00. I encourage practitioners to recommend this option whenever available for a couple of reasons.

First, it safeguards the funds so there are no "oops" moments, like those described above. Second, the necessity for annual accountings, budgets, investment plans and expenditure requests all go away; along with the

attorney fees which can become costly for a ward.

So my thoughts for the quarter, take a look at §1355.001 and use it as often as possible.

❄️
❄️
❄️
*"take a look at
TEC §1355.001 and
use it as often as
possible"*



Martha Koomar
Court Reporter
martha.koomar@mctx.org
(936) 539-7832

Court Reporter Tips ✨

Regardless of whether you are an attorney or a witness, there are some helpful things you can do to ensure that testimony is accurately recorded:

1. Speak clearly so that you can be heard
2. Respond orally saying

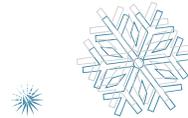
yes or **no** - do not just nod your head or say *uh-huh* or *uh-uh*

3. Read accurately when reading from documents because the record will reflect what is spoken – not what is written on the document

4. Have all exhibits pre-marked and ready
5. Give all exhibits to the court reporter
6. Don't take exhibits with you when leaving after the hearing or trial
7. Order transcripts as soon as possible
8. If an expedited transcript is needed be aware that there will be extra fees



*A special
"Thank you" from
Judge Laird to our
Guardians for all the
love, support, energy
and dedication
given to take such
good care of our
Wards*



County Court 2 Welcomes Sam Houston State University (SHSU) Students as Court Visitors

Judge Claudia Laird is pleased to announce a new CCL2 partnership with Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX beginning with the Fall 2015 semester. This partnership gives the Court an opportunity to offer internships and community service opportunities to students from Sam Houston and enables the Court to better serve our wards, their guardians and our community.

Court Investigator, Jackie Ullom and Assistant Court Coordinator, Juljana Rjepaj, were invited to participate in the Academic Community Engagement (ACE) Showcase co-hosted by the SHSU College of Criminal Justice and the Center for Community Engagement (CCE) Criminal Justice Coordinator, Dr. Magdalena Denham, an Assistant Professor with the SHSU Department of Security Studies, College of Criminal Justice.

The Showcase, held at SHSU on September 22, 2015, jointly celebrated the 50th anniversary of the College and 3rd anniversary of the Center for Community Engagement. The event was sponsored and coordinated by the CCE Executive Leadership - Dr. Joyce McCauley, CCE Executive Director, a Professor with the SHSU Department of Language, Literacy



and Special Populations, College of Education and Dr. Lee Miller, CCE Director, an Associate Professor, Associate Chair of the SHSU Department of Sociology.

CCL2 is embarking on its 3rd year that the court visitor program has partnered with local colleges like Lone Star and the University of Houston Downtown training students to serve as court visitors. Volunteer organizations, like **Help Our County** sponsored by the United Way, have also become an instrumental recruiting resource.

Students enrolled in variety of disciplines such as criminal justice, human services, nursing, psychology, sociology and law find that the CCL2 court visitor program not only fulfills their internship and community service requirements but also gives students a fantastic opportunity to participate in actual guardianship cases.

Students gain excellent time management, case assessment, case management, interview, organizational skills and earn an excellent opportunity to enhance their resumes with practical experience.



Happy Holidays from Our Family to Yours!



Emergency Intervention

As a guardian, what can you do when your ward has put him or herself in danger and refuses to cooperate or follow your instructions?

Generally, if the ward is away from home or you feel that the ward's actions may cause future

harm to the ward or others you may call your local police department, sheriff or other local law enforcement agency to bring your ward home or attempt to stop the ward from hurting himself or others. They may request a copy of your *Letters of Guardianship*.

In situations where you suspect that a disabled or elderly adult is being abused, neglected or exploited you may contact Adult Protective Services (APS) for assistance at:

Texas Abuse Hotline number is 1-800-252-5400 or online at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>

Any adult, whether they are under a guardianship or not, who has a disability or who is age 65 or older that is in a state of abuse, neglect or exploitation is eligible to receive adult protective services. APS will assign a caseworker and open an active investigation to determine alternate options for keeping your ward and other adult victims safe.

Judge Laird Visits Touchstone Neurorecovery Center

Judge Claudia Laird and Guardianship Coordinator, Amber Park, conducted a Guardianship In-Service for the nurses and staff members of the Touchstone Neurorecovery Center, a transitional and residential rehabilitation environment for patients with acquired brain injuries and other neurological disorders located in Conroe, Texas.

The rehabilitation services and programs

offered specifically focus on restoring community and vocational involvement and overall quality of life through individualized care.

At any given time, CCL2 has several wards that either reside or who are being treated at Touchstone and so, Judge Laird was delighted for an opportunity to visit the facility and share more information about guardianships with the Touchstone staff members.



County Court at Law 2
Montgomery County, TX
210 West Davis Street
Suite 300
Conroe, Texas 77301

Phone
(936) 539-7832

Fax
(936) 788-8357

Website
http://www.co.montgomery.tx.us/courts/county_courts/county_court_at_law_2/index.html

JOIN OUR
DISTRIBUTION LIST AND
RECEIVE FUTURE ISSUES
OF
e-GUARDIANSHIP NEWS
Send an email request
jacqueline.ullom@mctx.org

Lone Star College - Tomball
9th Annual Institute on
Learning Differences
Featuring a Thursday evening
session November 19, 2015
(6:30-8:00 PM) This session is
FREE of charge to the public
– but you must pre-register at:
<http://www.lonestar.edu/horizon-conference>
PLEASE SEE EVENT FLYER
(*separate attachment*)

Keep Us Informed About Wards and Guardians

Stay in contact with us and keep the Court informed. We want to learn about the activities and major events in the lives of our Guardians and Wards and will be sharing those stories and photos with others in the community through future issues of

e-Guardianship News.

Please be aware that all submissions will become the property of the Court and will not be returned. We also can make no guarantees as to what can be published but will do our best to share as

many as space will permit.

Submit your Human Interest Stories and Digital Photos *by email only* to:

jacqueline.ullom@mctx.org



Donna Cantrell joins the fun!!!



Donna Cantrell and her sister, Brenda Vaughn, participated in the 55th Annual Highlands Jamboree celebration and

parade held in Highlands, Texas on Saturday, October 3, 2015.

The Jamboree is a function of the Greater Highlands Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce with proceeds going to benefits local projects throughout the year.

Donna Garlene Cantrell's guardian is her eldest sister Penny Freuck, with whom Donna lives. But Donna and Brenda really enjoy being able to share outings like this during their regularly scheduled visitation days, now possible due to recent legislative changes effective September 1, 2015.

Guardianship Reminders.....

Guardianship Coordinator, Amber Park reminds guardians and attorneys that a final report is required to be filed when:

- A Ward dies
- A Guardian resigns
- A minor ward turns 18

Probate Coordinator, Sandy Ledbetter reminds guardians and attorneys that:

- Annual accounting due dates are very important and should be strictly followed
- *Everything* needs Court approval! This includes the *sale of property, attorney fees, investments, etc.*