

**Eighth Judicial Circuit Family Law Advisory Group (FLAG)
Minutes of January 26, 2009**

The FLAG met at the Alachua County Family and Civil Justice Center. Present were: Ruth Angaran, Glenna Auxier, Harvey Baxter, Mary-Ellen Cross, Judge William E. Davis, Randi Dincher, Pebbles Edelman, Bill Farley, Travis Garland, Steve Giunta, Beverly Graper, Arlene Huszar, Myrna Neims, Bob Perchalski, Judge Frederick D. Smith, Toni Spoliansky, Cynthia Swanson, and Jean Westin.

Myrna Neims announced that, at our next meeting, Bill Farley would be taking over from her as Chair of the FLAG.

Old Business

The issue of parenting plans is still the subject of much discussion. There are no Florida Supreme Court approved forms yet. The version of a parenting plan developed by the Florida Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (FLAFCC) is under revision. The FLAG version is on the www.circuit8.org website.

Based on their research, FLAFCC will put on workshops around the state about how to develop a parenting plan. Information will be on their website, www.flafcc.org.

Plans are well underway for our March meeting of the FLAG which will be our Domestic Violence training presented by retired Judge Ray McNeal from Ocala. We are applying for credits for Continuing Legal Education, Continuing Judicial Education, and Continuing Education Units from the Florida Psychological Association.

New Business

There will be a meeting with Judge Mark Moseley, Administrative Judge of the Family Division, on February 2, 2009 to discuss plans for the FLAG.

Program

Our program was about the parenting classes that parties involved in paternity cases or dissolutions cases involving children are required to attend. Bill Farley provided us with a handout outlining the history of no-fault divorce and a summary of articles about the effectiveness of the 4-hour class.

Glenna Auxier and Bob Perchalski put on a presentation about the class they teach. Glenna noted that the class offers hope to people by giving them skills. They put on a role-play in which each of them played a parent and Bill played their 7-year-old child. They demonstrated how having parents acquire communications skills can benefit the children in the family.

There was a discussion of the use of internet parenting classes. The providers of local classes do not think internet classes are as effective. Glenna pointed out that there are programs online from which a person can obtain a certificate of completion without even looking at the materials. Eighth Circuit Administrative Order 5.1120(E) provides that *“Correspondence or internet courses will only be accepted for those living in counties in the state which do not have providers, for out-of-state residents, or on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the judge.”* Judge Smith raised the question of how a judge was to know if a certificate is from a local provider or from the internet. Glenna offered to provide the judges with copies of the certificates from the providers.

The next meeting of the FLAG will be Monday, February 23, 2009.

Submitted by Arlene C. Huszar, Family Court Manager.