

JUDGE STANLEY A. KWELLER



Our hearts are heavy with the loss of Judge Stanley A. Kweller, who passed away on October 27th. He served as the Judge of the Fourth Circuit Court from January 2023 until August 2024 after his appointment by Governor Bill Lee following the untimely passing of Judge Phil Smith.

He brought with him 45 years of diverse legal experience, being named *Top Lawyer* by Nashville Lifestyles and included in the *Super Lawyers of the Middle South*.

Judge Kweller also served as a hearing panel member for the Board of Professional Responsibility from 2015 to 2021. His expertise was evident when he was on the bench.

Judge Kweller did an outstanding job during his tenure, tackling the monumental task of resuming the regular operations of the court and adjudicating many matters that were paused during the pendency of the appointment process.

He was an intelligent and deeply kind person, remembered by the Fourth Circuit family as a quick-witted, genuine, and selfless friend and mentor. He was a fierce advocate for the people in his life, especially his family, whom he loved above all else. He was quick to ask how someone else was doing and offer them support in any way he could. We are grateful for the time spent with him. Our thoughts are with his wife, his children and their spouses, his sister and brother-in-law, and his nieces.

“Judge Kweller was a true friend and colleague. He provided support, mentorship, and guidance to me, without judgment and with professionalism and compassion, during one of my most challenging times as an attorney. I also enjoyed the honor of being sworn in by him. I am grateful for the impact he has had in my life, both personally and professionally, and am deeply saddened by his passing. I had the pleasure to visit with Judge Kweller just a couple weeks ago, and although he was struggling physically, his positive outlook and genuine care and concern of others remained steadfast. Let us honor him by embodying his spirit of humility, kindness, integrity, and civility in our dealings with one another as we carry on.”

—Judge Stephanie J. Williams



A CHILLING ENCOUNTER



It was a rainy Thursday morning in October, the clouds hung low, and the sun showed no sign of coming out. Randy gripped the wheel of his car as he drove Clara, his 7-year-old daughter, to her mom's house. It was his week to have his daughter, but today was switchover day. The silence in the car was heavy. In the rearview mirror, Randy saw Clara fidget with her duffle bag strap, eyes downcast. He looked back to the road and sighed, exhausted.

Randy and his ex-wife Camille finalized their divorce a little over one year ago. Randy thought things would be better by now, but they seemed to be worse. Switchover days have become increasingly difficult, often resulting in Clara shutting down. Silent car rides have become the norm, and Randy struggled to connect with his daughter on these days. Despite repeatedly trying, he couldn't figure out what was going through her mind.

As he focused on the road ahead, a memory hit him: last month Camille forgot Clara's soccer cleats on a switchover day. Randy snapped, going so far as to call Camille irresponsible in front of their daughter. Later in the car he muttered to Clara, "Your mom really should be more responsible. If you don't have your cleats how can you play this weekend?"

At the time, Randy was so sure of his reaction to Camille's forgetfulness. Not bringing the cleats impacted his daughter's ability to enjoy one of her favorite pastimes, and this was not the first time Camille had forgotten items on switchover day.

As his car turned onto Camille's road, Randy realized *he* forgot the cleats this time. His stomach dropped. His confidence in his reaction one month ago was suddenly tainted by guilt. A small, internal voice told him he might not have handled that situation as best as he could have.

Clara noticed his face and asked, "What's wrong, Daddy?"

He hesitated, the guilt intensifying. "I forgot your cleats."

Clara went quiet. Not because of the cleats, but because she remembered the last argument.

Randy pulled into Camille's driveway. Clara's lip trembled. "Mom's going to be mad," she whispered. That broke him.

She's not scared about the mistake, he thought, or even sad about potentially missing practice, she's scared of her parents. He flashed



back to how his own words and tone taught her that mistakes lead to blame and hostility, not grace and understanding.

Camille stepped outside, ready to greet them. Randy took a deep breath and stepped out of the car. Before Camille could speak, he said gently, “I forgot her cleats. Totally my fault. I’ll drop them off later.”

Camille paused before speaking. Randy braced himself for her response only to realize Clara was bracing herself, too. “Okay, thanks for letting me know,” Camille replied softly.

The exchange was simple, but the impact was enormous. Clara noticed everything. She smiled, tension lifting. As Randy drove away, he realized that things aren’t easier yet, and maybe they’re supposed to get harder before they heal. But this is how they can make it better: by putting Clara’s peace before their pride. Later that night, Randy texted Camille a short message: “Thanks for being flexible today.”

She replied, “We’ll figure this out. For Clara.”

This simple example of co-parenting highlights how even the smallest interactions have an impact on children. Children are going through life for the first time, so witnessing how their parents handle arguments and how they treat each other is world shaping, for better or for worse. Without realizing it, Randy’s vocalized anger towards Camille sent a strong message to Clara, making her fearful and placing her directly in the middle of her parents’ conflict. With just a simple change in tone and a more compassionate reaction, the impact of the parties’ second interaction had a positive impact on Clara rather than creating fear.

Co-parenting in a healthy manner takes self-awareness and unlearning, which are necessary for the sake of children. You are not alone in learning these tools!



Please continue to visit our webpage for updates and resources on how we are striving to address challenges associated with high conflict divorce and custody cases. We are eagerly working to involve both attorneys and mental health professionals in the solution and provide useful resources to all involved.

To view our Children in the Crossfire resource page click [HERE](#) or scan the QR code.



If you or someone you know has information related to this topic that others may benefit from, please email RebekahLHaralson@jisnashville.gov with your suggestions.



CHAMBER RULES

We are updating our Chamber Rules! These new rules will go into effect the first quarter of 2026. We will post a copy of the new rules soon, so you may familiarize yourself with them before they are implemented. All attorneys who practice in the Fourth Circuit are strongly encouraged to read the new rules once they are published.

TPR & ADOPTION 101

**LIMITED SPACE,
REGISTER TODAY!**

Join the Fourth Circuit Court for a two-day educational event to learn the basics of termination of parental rights and adoption cases. This event provides 11 hours of CLE credit to attorneys, however, paralegals and legal assistants are strongly encouraged to attend. The cost is \$300 (or \$250 for those who are not receiving CLE credit).

For more information please view the flyer at the end of this newsletter. Additionally, you may register by clicking on the following link: [TPR & Adoption CLE](#) or scan the QR code:



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025



On November 20th, following the TPR and Adoption CLE we are hosting Home for the Holidays. We will celebrate adoptions that take place on this day and the amazing attorneys and legal professionals who practice adoption law and take appointments in these types of cases.

Come ready to enjoy holiday treats and pictures around the Christmas tree for a festive, family-friendly celebration.

Adoption is a beautiful way to honor families and provide safe, happy homes for children, and it is something to celebrate. If you are interested in attending, please email RebekahLHaralson@jnsnashville.gov.

HALLOWEEN

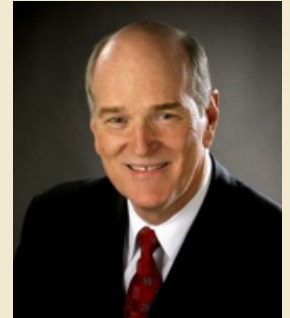


Happy Halloween from the Fourth Circuit Court! We hope you all have a safe and fun holiday and enjoy meaningful time spent with family and friends.

SAVE THE DATE!
DECEMBER 4TH

JUDGE ROBINSON RETIREMENT RECEPTION

Save the Date! Come celebrate Judge Phillip Robinson's retirement from the Third Circuit Court of Davidson County. Judge Robinson has been serving in this role since his appointment in 2012. **You are invited to a reception on December 4, 2025, from 2:30–4:30 p.m. in the hallway directly outside of Courtroom 603.**



CALENDAR

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				6	7	
		11				
	18	19	20			
				27	28	

NOVEMBER

- 11/6:** Special Master's Case Management Docket at 9 a.m. Via Zoom, No Pro Se Docket
- 11/7:** No Motion Docket, Office Open
- 11/11:** Court Closed for Veteran's Day
- 11/18 + 19:** Two-Day Adoption CLE
- 11/20:** Home for the Holidays
- 11/27 + 28:** Court Closed for Thanksgiving

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				4		
15		17		19		
22	23	24	25	26		
29	30	31	1	2		

DECEMBER

- 12/4:** Judge Robinson's Retirement Reception, Special Master's Case Management Docket at 9 a.m. Via Zoom, No Pro Se Docket
- 12/15:** Final Adoption Docket of 2025
- 12/17:** CLE on High-Functioning Depression*
- 12/19:** Final Motion Docket of 2025
- 12/22-1/2:** Court Closed for Winter Holidays

**More info coming soon*

SHARE!



@JudgeStephanieJWilliams

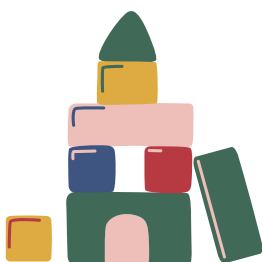


Judge Stephanie J. Williams

Feel free to share this newsletter with anyone who may be interested. To be added to the mailing list, please email RebekahLHaralson@jnsnashville.gov.

TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS & ADOPTION

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF BEST PRACTICE



NOVEMBER 18 + 19, 2025

TOP NOTE, 505 3RD AVE N

A TWO-DAY CLE ON THE BASICS OF TPR AND ADOPTION CASES INCLUDING:

- GETTING YOUR CASE STARTED
- NECESSARY FILINGS AND DOCUMENTATION
- CONTENTS OF PETITIONS
- PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND PRE-TRIAL MOTIONS
- BEST PRACTICES IN ADVOCATING FOR YOUR CLIENT
- TRIAL PREP AND PRESENTATION
- CASE LAW UPDATE
- AND MUCH MORE!

**SPACE IS
LIMITED,
REGISTER
TODAY!**

**SCAN THE QR CODE TO
REGISTER BY NOVEMBER 10TH:**



11.0 CLE CREDITS AVAILABLE

\$300 FOR THOSE RECEIVING CLE CREDIT, \$250 IF NOT*
BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROVIDED

***PARALEGALS AND LEGAL ASSISTANTS ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO REGISTER!**