



# 2006 NEWSLETTER

Issue #2

## From the home office...

Former AFCC President Leslye Hunter has agreed to take on a half-time contract position with AFCC as Chapter Services and Development Consultant. AFCC has grown dramatically in the last four years, including an increase in membership in excess of 75%. Many of these new members are chapter members, and there is increasing interest in forming new chapters in several states.

developing and providing services to Chapters [...] and will be identifying ways in which services to chapters can be improved and that we can have more consistency and continuity” said Peter Salem, Executive Director.

accomplishments Salem noted Ms. Hunter served on AFCC’s original Chapter Task Force several years ago, alongside former Chapter Presidents Fred Mitchell, Ruth Whitney, Jan Shaw and others. She has been active in AFCC matters as a member of the Executive Committee during a time in which AFCC charted five out of our eight chapters.

Salem noted “I believe that we [are] incredibly lucky to have any person with Leslye’s skills in this position and that we are doubly fortunate because she brings with her a comprehensive understanding of AFCC and its culture.”

Per Salem, “She has a lengthy task list already and is excited to get started.”

Leslie, from those of us in Texas, “Howdy” and welcome aboard!

“[Leslie] will help us become more systematic in

Quoting some of her past

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Pages 3 & 4

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part of the state? Let us  
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## CAFE in Denton County – Not just another cute acronym

*This is the first in a hopefully ongoing series on activities of Chapter members around the state. This month we hear from Jake Jacobson and Peyton Orr about a group of mental health professionals working together in Denton County to help improve the level of court-connected services. - Ed.*

CAFÉ was started in early 2005. Originally the acronym stood for Cute Acronym For Evaluators. No one asked for a long time, but finally in May 2005 one of the judges inquired directly. Shortly thereafter, CAFÉ became **Court Appointed Forensic Evaluators**. Membership is restricted to those on the Denton County providers list, which is maintained by the District Clerk’s office.

### Proposed Purpose of Group

To raise the professionalism of social studies conducted in Denton County.

**Objectives:** To coordinate and communicate effectively with the courts/attorneys regarding standards of social studies in a manner which addresses the needs of clients, attorneys, courts, and maintains professional standards focusing on the best interests of the child/children.

In the Spring of 2005 the group sent surveys to the District Court Judges and the Family Law attorneys seeking their experience with the social studies they saw in their courts and practices. We asked them to describe good and bad

**Continued, see “CAFE” next page**

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reports and to help us identify the characteristics that made a report "good." We also asked them to address some corollary issues, such as psychological evaluations and testimony. Subsequently, each of the Judges has spent a meeting with us, expanding on the questions they responded to in the survey.

The Judges have also sought input from the group on several topics. One of the first was what qualifications should be required of those who were on the official Denton County list. This was also our most divisive topic, and in the end, to honor the varied opinions, we supplemented the official recommendation with various "minority opinions" for the court to consider.

At the request of one judge, and in consultation with local attorneys, CAFÉ also crafted a standard order to replace the hodge podge collection of orders that currently exist in Denton County. The group has also welcomed attorneys to present on their areas of interest. Topics have included:

- a) the new Texas Family Code Parenting Plan and Parenting Coordinator;
- b) Collaborative Law;
- c) Interstate and Jurisdiction;
- and d) Grandparents.

CAFÉ members have also attempted to improve the quality of their work by providing one another with "peer reviews." Members submit 3 de-identified copies of a recent report, which are then distributed to three members to review. The group developed a form to guide the feedback, but it is primarily an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses. This also has helped the group identify additional discussion topics, when members see the work that other members do – "Does everyone else check the vaccination dates for the pets?" "Is a full social history important, and/or potentially bias producing?"

CAFÉ has attended several workshops together in lieu of a monthly meeting, including Team Collaborative Divorce, Attorney Ad Litem training and the AFCC Conference this Fall. The group also maintains a listserv for members.

Dear AFCC Texas Chapter Members,

Below is the slate of officers and directors that are returning to complete unexpired terms or have been nominated to serve on the AFCC-Texas Chapter Board for next year. In order to be counted your vote must be received by December 15, 2006. To vote, mark the ballot below and return it to the 2007 Nominating Committee Chair, Mark Ashworth, via:

**Fax:** (512) 854-9818, **Email:** [Mark.Ashworth@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:Mark.Ashworth@co.travis.tx.us) , or

**Mail:** Mark Ashworth, Travis Co. Domestic Relations, P.O. Box 1495, Austin, Texas, 78767

Thank you so very much for your participation.

2007 AFCC Texas Nominating Committee,  
Mark Ashworth, Chair

**2007 AFCC Nominations for Board of Directors**

**Officers**

*Aaron Robb of Ft. Worth will serve as the President*

*Laurie Nowlin of Round Rock will serve as the Past-President*

**President-Elect:** Martha Musselman, J.D., Houston

**1st Vice-President:** David Eaker, JD , Rockwall

**2nd Vice-President:** Jack Bannin, MS, San Antonio

**Treasurer:** Scott Clarke, CDP, CFP, Hurst

**Secretary:** Louise Lee, JD, Houston

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

**At-Large Directors (serving 2 year terms)**

1. Rocky Deutscher, LBSW, Fort Worth

Term expires 12/31/2007

2. Rosemary Garza, J.D., Houston

Term expires 12/31/2007

3. Susan L. McMillan, Ph.D, Austin

Term expires 12/31/2007

4. Alisa Sherry, Ph.D., Austin

Term expires 12/31/2007

5. Mardi Winder-Adams, M.Ed., Naples

Term expires 12/31/2007

6. Gilda Bowen, MS, Mission (2007-2008)

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

7. Mary Fogel, MS, Austin (2007-2008)

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

8. The Honorable Frank Rynd, Houston (2007-2008)

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

9. Vicki James, MS, Dallas (2007-2008)

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

10. Trevor Townes, MA, Houston (2007-2008)

YES \_\_\_\_\_ Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

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