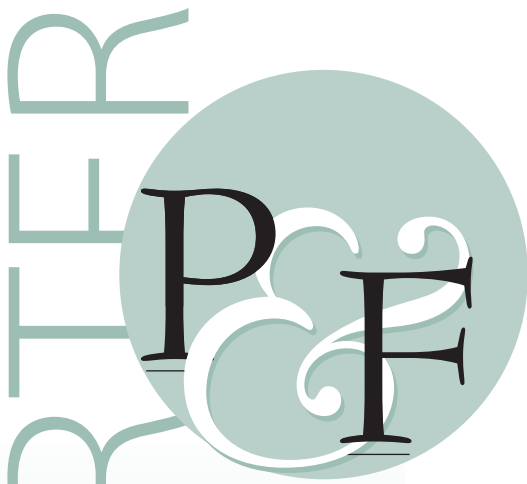


Finding the Right Senior Living Option
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REPORTER

Finding the Right Senior Living Option

By Jason W. Henderson

There's no place like home." Dorothy made this phrase famous in the Wizard of Oz and since then it has been a part of the American lexicon. It comes as no surprise, then, that studies show that older Americans prefer to stay in their own homes if they can, for as long as they can. This means that for most seniors who stay in their homes the care they need and receive is provided most often by family or part time hired help. Yet, many families come to the realization that it is sometimes impossible for an elderly person whose health is in decline and whose independence is waning to remain at home. If you are in this predicament you are not alone. The good news is you have options.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services reports that the older population--persons aged 65 years or older--numbered 36.8 million in 2005 (the latest year for which data is available). They represented 12.4 percent of the U.S. population, about one in every eight Americans. By 2030, there will be about 71.5 million older persons, more than twice their number in 2000. By 2030 the number of people aged 65 or older will grow to about 20 percent of the population.

In the last ten years the market has recognized the needs of the aging population. The result has been an explosion of supportive housing options for seniors. The options are no longer limited to an agonizing choice between staying at home or moving to a nursing home. If your family member does not require round-the-clock skilled nursing care, one of these supportive housing alternatives may be the right choice.

Supportive housing options range from board and care homes to large institutional complexes. Supportive facilities provide food, shelter and personal assistance while encouraging independence and personal dignity. The services offered may include help with activities such as eating, dressing, preparing meals, and shopping, as well as monitoring and other supervision.

The main alternatives are board and care facilities, assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs). These broad categories encompass a huge range of options in terms of services and costs. Generally, the more you pay the more services you get. There is a range of quality as well, with some excellent facilities and others not the sort of place you would want to send a loved one. As with all of life's important decisions, you must diligently research the options before making a choice and ask lots of questions. A few of the options you have to select from are:

Board and Care Facilities

These are group residences that can range in size from as few as two residents to more than 200. They may also be referred to as residential care facilities, homes for the aged, or community-based residential facilities. Such facilities provide room, meals, and 24-hour supervision, as well as help with some of the five activities of daily living -- eating, dressing, bathing, using a toilet, transferring from one position to another -- and the instrumental activities of daily living -- preparing meals, walking outdoors, taking medications, shop-

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D.C. Child Support Law Gets Much Needed Overhaul

By Lucy E. Nichols

The District of Columbia has a new child support guideline which became effective April 1, 2007. The new child support model remains grounded in the fundamental concepts that both parents have a duty to support their child and that the right to child support belongs to the child. Both the old and new child support law say that both parents are responsible for meeting the child's basic needs and for providing additional child support above the basic needs level. Interestingly, the new law deleted language which required the court to consider the relative standard of living in each home and stated that the child should not live at a standard substantially below that of the other parent.

History of D.C.'s Child Support Guideline

In 1984 Congress mandated that all states and the District of Columbia adopt child support guidelines as a condition of receiving federal funding for Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Federal law mandates that application of the guideline be presumptive. In other words, the amount of support resulting from application of the guideline is deemed correct unless a party proves it is inappropriate or unjust.

Prior to the enactment of the first child support guideline in D.C. on September 28, 1987, trial judges had broad discretion in child support cases. In these pre-guideline cases, the court balanced the needs of the child, the child's accustomed standard of living, and the ability of the parents to pay support, particularly in light of the cost to maintain two separate households. The standard methodology, still in place for non-guideline cases, was for the judge to consider each parent's income and the reasonableness of each parent's claimed itemized living expenses. Results were variable, even among similarly situated families, and unpredictable.

What is the child support guideline?

The child support guideline determines support as a percentage of the combined gross incomes of the parents. The guideline provides for a basic obligation combined with mandatory and discretionary add-ons. Child

support guidelines were an important innovation in family law. The use of a percentage of income made results more predictable. The presumptive feature of the guideline eliminated a great deal of the court's discretion in these cases, thereby promoting uniform results for similarly situated children.

Key features of the new child support law

- Support is based on the "income shares" model. This means each parent's presumptive share of the support obligation is his and her pro rata share of the combined gross incomes. For example, in the case of a couple with combined gross income of \$150,000, with one parent earning \$50,000 and one earning \$100,000, their income shares are 33 per cent and 67 per cent.
- The guideline applies presumptively to families with combined adjusted gross income up to \$240,000.00 per year. This is an important change. The old guideline only applied to payors with income of \$75,000 per year or less and had not been updated since its enactment. The new guideline applies to many more D.C. families. A broader application of the guideline should mean less litigation and ultimately more financial resources available for the benefit of children.
- The costs of child care, health insurance and extraordinary medical and dental expenses are added to the basic support obligation and divided in proportion to each parent's income share. Both work-related child care and child care costs to enable a parent to obtain an education are included in the determination of support.
- The guideline provides for an adjustment of the basic support amount when parents have shared physical custody. Shared custody means the noncustodial parent has the child at least 35 per cent of the time. Under the old guideline the noncustodial parent had to have a custody schedule that gave him or her 40 per cent of the child's time.

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ping, housekeeping, using the telephone and handling money.

These facilities generally do not provide any medical services. A board and care home may be unlicensed, and even licensed homes may rarely be monitored by the state. Costs can range from \$350 to \$3,000 a month. For those with very limited incomes, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) may help pay the cost. Medicaid may also reimburse the monthly fee, depending on the state of residence and the resident's Medicaid eligibility.

Board and care facilities are often interconnected with an assisted living facility, independent living residence and/or a nursing home. The combination is known as a continuing care retirement community. The resident can take advantage of the full range of services available and can transfer to a different type of facility as his or her condition and needs change without needing to look for a new facility, relocate, or adapt to a new setting. For example, the resident may begin in the independent living residence, move to assisted living as he or she needs help with activities of daily living, and eventually move to the nursing home as ongoing care becomes necessary.

Assisted Living Facilities

These facilities offer basically the same services as board and care homes, but in a more upscale and homelike environment. Housing is often in a small apartment, there is generally more space and privacy and there are often more recreational options. A premium is placed on retaining as much independence in living as possible and care is more individualized. Despite the emphasis on independence, twenty-four hour a day supportive services are available to provide different levels of help with activities of daily living. There also may be more medical supervision than in a board and care home, depending on the facility. Many facilities also have centers for medical care; however, the care offered may not be as intensive or as readily available to residents as the care offered at a nursing home. Assisted living is not an alternative to a nursing home, but an intermediate level of long-term care appropriate for many seniors.

Most assisted living facilities create a service plan for each individual resident upon

admission. The service plan details the personalized services required by the resident and guaranteed by the facility. The plan is updated regularly to assure that the resident receives the appropriate care as his or her condition changes.

While costlier than board and care facilities, assisted living facilities nevertheless are often less expensive than a nursing home. Assisted living facility residents agree to pay a monthly rent, which can range from less than \$1,000 to \$6,000 a month. According to a 2005 MetLife survey, the average cost of an assisted living facility in the U.S. is \$2,905 a month, or \$34,860 a year.

This rent may cover all services or there may be charges for services above the monthly fee on a per-use basis. Residents generally pay the cost of medical care from their own financial resources. Some costs may be reimbursed by an individual's health insurance program or long-term care insurance policy. Because assisted living facilities are usually less expensive than nursing homes, many state Medicaid programs now provide some type of funding for elderly residents who qualify for the Medicaid program.

How Does an Assisted Living Facility Differ from a Nursing Home?

Nursing homes are designed to care for very frail people who are not able to care for themselves and have numerous health care requirements. Assisted living facilities are designed to assist elderly persons who are able to care for themselves except for a few activities. An assisted living facility is often appropriate when an elderly person needs help preparing meals, bathing, dressing, or performing household chores, or is sometimes confused or experiencing memory problems.

Contract Issues

There are three types of contracts available to a person who wishes to become a member of a board and care facility or assisted living facility: (1) extensive, (2) modified, and (3) fee-for-service. All three cover shelter, amenities, residential services, and any short-term and emergency care. The contracts differ in the amount of entrance fees and monthly fees.

In addition to the costs mentioned above, an extensive contract also covers unlimited

long-term nursing care with no corresponding increase in monthly payments. This is the most expensive contract but may prove to be the most cost-effective in the long run. The modified contract covers a specific amount of long-term nursing care in the monthly payments. Once the specified amount is used, the resident must pay for any additional nursing care. Residents under the fee-for-service contract must pay for long-term care at daily nursing care rates. This is the least expensive plan because all future long-term nursing costs are paid for separately from the contract.

Irrespective of the type of contract chosen the goal of each facility contract is clear: Adapt to the changing needs of each resident to be as flexible as possible. This goal is at the heart of the biggest misconception consumers have when choosing the right contract. Most people believe when entering into these contracts that once their loved one is accepted into one of these facilities, he or she will live there for a very long time – perhaps avoiding a nursing home altogether. This is not always the case. In fact, the United States Department of Health and Human Services reports that the average stay of a resident in assisted living facility is only two years. Why? The reason is often the marketing involved in the sale of the facility contract to the consumer.

The promise by many assisted living or continuing care communities is that the facility will adjust to your loved one's needs, even if they become substantial. However, many contracts contain confusing language that entitles management to kick out an individual who requires too much assistance or who needs skilled nursing. Moreover, even if the facility wants to keep your loved one, state law may require he or she be moved to a skilled nursing facility or nursing home. For example, in many states an assisted living facility with a basic license is not allowed to tend to a resident who is bedridden for more than seven consecutive days – no matter the reason.

So, how can you protect yourself? Read the resident contract carefully and have a lawyer look it over before you sign to be better prepared for an emergency situation.

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D.C. Child Support Law Gets Much Needed Overhaul

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- The court may award retroactive child support not to exceed 24 months prior to filing. The old guideline allowed an award retroactive to the child's birth.
- The age of emancipation for child support remains 21 in the District. By contrast, in Maryland and Virginia the duty to pay support ends when the child reaches age 18, or 19, if still in high school.

The new guideline is much easier to understand and apply. (There is an online guideline calculator to assist in calculating the child support obligation under the new guideline. To view the online calculator, go to <http://csgc.oag.dc.gov/application/main/intro.aspx>). To illustrate how the new guideline works consider a family where there are two children who live primarily with their mother. She earns \$50,000.00 per year and the father earns \$100,000.00 per year. The mother pays annual work-related daycare expenses for the children in the amount of \$9,600.00 and has added the children to her health insurance plan, costing her an additional \$2,200.00 per year. Under this scenario the father's child support obligation is \$2,351 per month. This includes his pro rata share of the daycare and health insurance costs.

Discretionary departures

The amount of support determined under the guideline is presumed correct. This means the judge must order that amount

unless there is a specific reason to depart by ordering payment of more or less. A parent may request a deviation from the guideline when a child has exceptional needs that require more than average expenditures. The court makes this determination on a case-by-case basis. It may be argued that private school, for example, is an exceptional need because of the family's historical emphasis on parochial education, because the private school has an exceptional language program, or because a child has specific educational needs resulting from a developmental disability. If the noncustodial parent is paying for certain expensive necessities for the child, such as tuition, that parent may ask the court to deviate from a guideline award in consideration of payment of this other significant expense for the child.

Above Guideline Families

If the parents' combined gross earnings exceed \$240,000.00 per year, the guideline does not apply presumptively. The court may not award an amount less than the support calculated for income of \$240,000.00 per year; the court may exercise discretion to order more support after determining the child's reasonable needs based on actual family experience. These may include private school, summer camp, tutoring, extracurricular activities and college education.

Private School

One of the most contentious issues is payment for private school. Parents may have

decided earlier in the marriage to send a child to private school for religious reasons or because the public schools do not adequately meet the child's needs. Perhaps the two eldest children attended private school and it was the parents' intent prior to separation that the youngest child would also attend private school. When the family breaks up, the court must now balance competing interests: prior emphasis on the child's private school education with the costs of running two separate households. These conflicts affect families with high earnings as well as middle class families living paycheck to paycheck. Neither the old law nor the new law offers an easy formula to solve this problem.

Modification of existing child support awards

A child support order is generally modifiable when there has been a substantial and material change in circumstances. Parties with a child support order under the old law may be due for a modification. If the application of the new guideline to an existing child support award results in a child support amount that varies by 15 per cent or more from the existing support amount, there is a presumption that there has been a substantial and material change of circumstances warranting a modification of child support.

Tips for Selecting a Facility

Visit the facilities you are considering, talk to the staff and residents, and read through any brochures and information offered. Make several visits at varying times of the day and week in order to get a complete impression of the facility. When you tour a facility, pay special attention to the attitudes and overall friendliness of the staff and residents because they are potential housemates. Find out which state and federal regulations apply, and make sure that the facility properly complies with them. Most importantly, involve loved ones in making the decision.

Here are some things to look for:

Atmosphere/Comfort Level

- Are pets allowed?
- What types of meals are offered by the facility? Consider nutrition, choice, appearance, variety, and taste. Are special meals available for dietary restrictions? Does a dietician approve resident meal plans?
- How big is the facility? Larger facilities may have more organized activities, socialization opportunities, and transportation.
- Can residents bring their own cars?
- What are the facility's visiting hours? What types of accommodations are available for visitors? Are there any restrictions on having guests?
- How clean is the facility in reference to appearance and odor?
- What is the general attitude and appearance of the residents?
- What is the general attitude of the staff? Is the staff friendly and courteous to residents and each other?
- What is the participation level of residents in activities and outings?
- How often and in what manner does the staff interact with the residents? Does the staff recognize all of the residents? Are members of the staff friendly toward the residents?
- What is the resident's and family's involvement in the development of the service plan?
- How often are each resident's needs reassessed?
- What are the admission requirements?

Services and Activities

- Is socialization encouraged and promoted? Is it easy to socialize with other residents? Do lounge areas and a common dining room exist?
- What is the extent, range, and frequency of planned activities?
- Are there a lot of opportunities for transportation? How flexible is the transportation?
- Do opportunities for involvement with the surrounding community exist?
- How flexible is a resident's daily schedule? How much independence is allowed?
- Is the facility licensed by the state?
- Is the facility's administrator licensed by the state?

Equipment/Amenities

- Are exercise facilities available to the residents? What kind of opportunities do residents have to exercise?
- What types of amenities are available to residents?
- Is the facility equipped to support any special needs of the patient?
- Is extra storage space available?
- Is the facility located close to shopping centers and/or entertainment?
- Do the units have a telephone and television? How is billing handled?
- Is there a kitchen with a sink and refrigerator in the unit?
- Are religious facilities available?

Financial Considerations

- What is the monthly cost of the facility?
- What are the trends in rate increases over the past years?
- Is a deposit required? Is it refundable?
- What services are included in the monthly cost? What services have to be paid for separately? What other services are available?
- Are utilities included in the cost?
- What circumstances might force a resident to leave the facility?
- What kinds of opportunities are available for a resident to receive further care as a condition or problem requires?
- Is the facility connected with a nursing home or other kind of facility?

- What types of housing are available? (private/shared, apartment, suite)
- Is the housing furnished? If so, what is included?
- What types and what quantity of personal belongings is a resident allowed to bring?
- What happens if the resident is unable to pay for services?
- When can care services be terminated, and what is the refund policy?
- What are the payment, billing, and credit policies?

Safety Considerations

- Are intercoms installed in each room?
- Is there a 24-hour emergency response system accessible from each unit?
- What is the level of safety in the facility? Is there proper lighting? Are there hand rails, emergency pull-cords, and door alarms? How extensive is the fire system?
- Are exits clearly marked and easily accessed?
- Does the facility have air conditioning?
- Is the ventilation and heating adequate?
- Is the facility's security adequate? Are there lockable doors for each unit?
- Does the facility have handicapped access and accommodations?
- How close is the nearest hospital?
- Is there a doctor or pharmacy on-site?
- How many staff members are on duty for each shift at the facility?
- How long does it take for the staff to respond to a resident's call for assistance?

With so many pitfalls and issues to consider, the selection of the right facility can be stressful and overwhelming. To find the best living option do your homework and seek legal and financial counseling before entering into an agreement with the facility you choose. The investment of your time and money throughout the selection process for this once-in-a-lifetime choice will make the transition for your loved one to their new home as smooth as possible.

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What You Need to Know About Exchanges of Investment Property

by N. Alfred Pasternak

The Starker exchange, tax deferred exchange, 1031 exchange, and like-kind exchange are different names for the same type of transaction.

The concept is found in Section 1031 of the Internal Revenue Code which permits a taxpayer to exchange personal or real property that he or she owns (the relinquished property) for new property and defer paying taxes on the capital gain until the new property acquired in the exchange is sold. This transaction is sometimes referred to as a tax free exchange, although, in truth, it should be referred to as a tax deferred exchange.

The basic rule requires: (1) an exchange of like-kind property and (2) both the relinquished and the new property must be held for productive use in a trade or business or for investment.

The requirement that both the relinquished and the new property be of like kind means, for example, that a piece of machinery cannot be exchanged for land. But the like-kind rules are broad enough that, for example, raw land can be exchanged for an office building or a retail shopping center for a warehouse.

The requirement that the property be held in a trade or business or for investment means that a personal residence is not eligible for this type of exchange. Similarly, property held by a business for sale to customers, for example the inventory of a retail store, cannot be used for a tax deferred exchange, but the building and fixtures can be. Other assets that do not qualify for exchange treatment include stocks, bonds, notes and partnership interests.

For many years, investors assumed that in order to qualify as a tax deferred exchange

there had to be a simultaneous exchange between two owners. That changed with a 1979 Supreme Court decision. The reason this type of exchange is now known as a Starker exchange is that a man by the name of T.J. Starker transferred real estate he owned in Oregon and instead of receiving other real estate from the new owner immediately upon the transfer, Mr. Starker received other real estate a few years later. The Supreme Court decided that this was permitted under Section 1031. Thus we learned that the exchange of property need not occur simultaneously. Since 1979 most exchanges have been deferred, i.e., non-simultaneous, Starker exchanges.

Where there is a deferred, or Starker, exchange, there are some additional rules. First, the investor must identify in writing the new property or properties (up to 3) within 45 days of the settlement on the transfer of the relinquished property, or an unlimited number of properties can be identified whose value does not exceed twice the value of the relinquished property transferred.

Second, the investor must settle on one or more of the identified properties within the earlier of (a) 180 days of the settlement on the transfer of the relinquished property or (b) the due date for filing the tax return for the year in which the relinquished property was transferred (including any extension of the time to file the return). There is no give, whatsoever, in the 45 day and 180 day deadlines, not snow, sleet or federal holidays. Not even death. Failure to meet the deadlines means a loss of the benefit of the exchange.

Third, the investor must work with a "qualified intermediary"—an attorney or escrow agent who has no business or personal rela-

tionship with any party—who will prepare the exchange documents, hold the proceeds from the transfer of the relinquished property on behalf of the investor, and acquire the new property on behalf of the investor to exchange for the relinquished property.

Finally, in order to defer all capital gain taxes, the value of the new property must equal or exceed the value (net of closing costs) of the relinquished property. Any cash not reinvested in the new property or any reduction in debt liability—called "boot"—is subject to the capital gains tax, but does not invalidate the rest of the exchange.

Let's look at an example of an exchange. If you purchased a condominium apartment many years ago for \$100,000 that you rent out and that now is worth \$600,000 and you want to sell it, you will have a \$500,000 gain (assuming you made no improvements, and without taking depreciation and other expense items into account), resulting in substantial federal capital gains and state income taxes. You may sell your condominium using a qualified intermediary to hold the proceeds of sale; you may then acquire for \$600,000, or more, a vacation home at the shore or in the mountains or a warehouse or another condominium apartment that you will rent out, again using a qualified intermediary. Your income tax on the sale will be deferred until you sell the newly acquired property.

As you can imagine, there are many intricate rules involved in an exchange transaction. We have attempted to provide an outline of some of the items you should consider if you are contemplating an exchange. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Spotlight on Jan White

Anne Walker White, known to everyone as Jan (a contraction of “Junior Anne”), was an early member of the Pasternak & Fidis domestic practice group when she joined the firm in 1990. She did not start out to be a family lawyer. As a high school student in Raleigh, North Carolina, she worked as a page in the North Carolina Legislature. That experience got her interested in politics and law.

Jan got her undergraduate degree in Political Science at Duke University, where she was an Angier B. Duke Scholar and graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. She then moved to the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, for a Master’s Degree in Political Science and a job teaching political science to UNC freshman. While spending the summer at Lake Tahoe dealing Black Jack, she traveled to Palo Alto, California, and saw the Stanford campus for the first time. Smitten, the following year she applied to Stanford Law School where she got her law degree. She continued her interest in politics working in Congress while at both Duke and Stanford, including a semester in the office of Senator Alan Cranston of California.

After law school Jan first worked as a legal aid attorney in a small office on Main St., Durham, North Carolina, above a wig shop. She created the first successful lobbying program on behalf of low income legal aid clients in the state of North Carolina. Howard Twiggs, then Chairman of the state House Judiciary Committee and later President of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, was an important mentor at that time.

Choosing to leave her home state for job opportunities in a metropolitan area, she moved to Washington, D.C. to work at the law firm of Hogan & Hartson. At Hogan & Hartson Jan had the opportunity to work on United States Supreme Court and other appellate cases in addition to trial, business and tax matters. She learned the highest intellectual and professional standards from many outstanding lawyers at Hogan & Hartson, who remain friends and colleagues to this day. She then joined the U.S. Department of Commerce as Assistant

to the General Counsel and the Secretary of Commerce, Juanita Kreps, a former Duke professor. There she developed an international trade specialty which took advantage of her litigation skills and her business finance expertise.

While enjoying her work in finance and international trade, Jan began to feel frustrated that her work did not involve helping individuals solve problems. She reconsidered her career direction and looked for a way to use her experience to help people more directly. A friend suggested that divorce law was a perfect fit. There were plenty of problems to solve, and she could use her financial experience. By this time, Jan was divorced herself with two young daughters and understood how much a good attorney can help. She had also developed a side interest in group relations and had received training which she could put to good use as a divorce attorney.

Taking her friend’s suggestion to heart, in 1989, she took both the D.C. and the Maryland bar exams, passed both, and opened a small practice. Because she had no experience in family law, Jan began by teaming up with financial planners, mental health professionals and more seasoned family lawyers to meet client needs. To develop her knowledge base she took as many Continuing Legal Education courses as possible in all three jurisdictions—D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. Pasternak & Fidis partner Marcia Fidis was an early mentor, especially for her expertise in division of retirement benefits and tax issues arising from separation and divorce. At Marcia’s urging, Jan fairly soon began to teach, especially divorce tax and pensions, as well as a popular course, “Family Law Around the Beltway.” Jan’s early inclination to seek assistance from counterparts in other specialties grew into an approach to the practice of family law that continues to this day. She still favors including other professionals as part of a team to help a client get to a resolution of his or her domestic situation. Most recently, she has trained in collaborative law—an approach that Jan says she and her clients have been looking for even before they knew it existed. (See

the article “A New Way to Divorce—Collaboratively,” published in the February, 2007 issue of this newsletter.)

Jan and Marcia Fidis had been dormmates as undergraduates at Duke University. Jan knew Marcia had spent her entire career after law school at P & F and that she loved the firm. Marcia encouraged Jan to join the firm and she did so in 1990. Even though Jan’s family law practice was still in its beginning stages, she was pleasantly surprised to find that many people she had gotten to know over the previous years had enough confidence in her to send her clients. Referrals came from classmates from Duke and Stanford, colleagues from Hogan & Hartson and the Commerce Department, mental health professionals with whom she had studied group relations, neighbors, parishioners at St. Columba’s Episcopal Church where she led a divorce group, and the parents of her daughters’ friends.

Jan is a woman of many interests outside of law, interests she pursues with great energy and enthusiasm. She studies Spanish and is working toward becoming fluent. For several years she has enrolled in a Spanish immersion program in Guatemala and spent winter vacations in Acapulco where she studies Spanish during the day and dances Salsa in the evenings. She loves to read and goes to her beach house in North Carolina whenever she can. A former ballet dancer, Jan loves music and dance. She dances several times a week and goes to rock concerts whenever she can convince someone to go with her. Jan comes from a family of sports fanatics and loves to follow sports, especially football and college basketball. She is an avid Duke and Carolina basketball fan. Jan loves to spend time with her friends and neighbors. Most of all, Jan is devoted to her two daughters, Anne Foley, new recipient of a Master’s degree in private school leadership from Columbia University in New York City and formerly an administrator and teacher of Spanish and History at the Field School in D.C., and Meg Foley, a professional modern dancer and choreographer in Philadelphia.

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N E W S

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Divorce & Family Law Group partner Anne (Jan) White has become a Fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML).

P & F congratulates our Divorce & Family Law Group partner, Vicki Viramontes-LaFree, on her election as Co-Chair of the Family Law Section of the Bar Association of Montgomery County (BAMC).

Associate attorney, Lauren Krauthamer, will be serving on the board of the Estate Planning Council for Suburban Maryland. She will also serve as a volunteer at the DC Bar Probate Resource Center.

Mitchell Alkon, a partner in the Real Estate & Litigation Group, is the author of "Financial Professions and the War on Terrorism: OFAC Compliance," published in the *2007 Legal Review Supplement to The Gazette of Politics and Business*.

In April, Linda Ravdin, a partner in the Divorce & Family Law Group, taught a Continuing Legal Education seminar at the American

Bar Association Family Law Section Spring Conference in Monterey, California entitled "Alimony and Retirement: A Crossroad."

In April, Divorce & Family Law Group partner, Faith Dornbrand, who is a Fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, attended the Matrimonial Arbitration Training Institute. Faith is now certified by the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers as an arbitrator of family law matters.

On April 10, Marcia Fidis, Faith Dornbrand and Jan White, along with R. Jordan Smyth, Jr. of Edgemoor Capital Investments, Inc. gave a continuing legal education seminar for the Montgomery County Bar Association. The training was entitled, "Representing High Net Worth Individuals in Divorce: Special Issues."



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