

From: Caitlin Watson <caitlin.watson@scbar.org>
To:
Date: 5/11/2015 2:33:35 PM
Subject: SC Bar Elder Law Committee Newsletter



May is Elder Law Month, and the SC Bar Elder Law Committee is helping to celebrate!

What do Elder Law attorneys do? According to NAELA (the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys):

Elder Law is a specialized area of law that involves representing, counseling, and assisting seniors, people with disabilities, and their families in connection with a variety of legal issues, from estate planning to long term care issues, with a primary emphasis on promoting the highest quality of life for the individuals. Typically, Elder Law attorneys address the client's perspective from a holistic viewpoint by discussing legal, medical, financial, social, and family issues.

Follow the SC Bar, and like the SC Bar on Facebook, for great information all month long.

IN THE NEWS

Help available for caregivers in Horry, Georgetown, Williamsburg counties

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments has funds available to assist unpaid caregivers within the agency's tri-county region. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

Seniors Patrol

The Kingstree Police Department is offering a seniors patrol wellness check. Any elderly, ill or bedridden residents of the Town of Kingstree who would like for the police department to contact them on a regular basis should call Chief Eric Williams or Police Chaplain the Rev. Harold Jackson. Chief Williams or Rev. Jackson can be reached at 843-355-5435 or come by the police department and leave your name, phone number, and address.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

H. 3768- SC Able Savings Program

On December 19, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Achieving Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act. The ABLE Act will allow people with disabilities (with an age of onset up to 26 years old) and their families the opportunity to create a tax-exempt savings account that can be used for maintaining health, independence and quality of life. These accounts resemble the 529 college-savings plans and will allow people with disabilities to save as much as \$100,000 and still qualify for benefits such as Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

South Carolina is among the states that have already started the authorization process that will enable South Carolina residents to take advantage of the new 529A accounts. The legislation was introduced into the SC House on March 3, 2015, and the SC Senate on May 4, 2015. With approval from the South Carolina Bar Board of Governors, the Elder Law Committee forwarded their suggested amendments to the General Assembly.

We look forward to keeping advised of the progress of this important legislation. Please [click here](#) to see the current version.

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Energy Bill Assistance Programs

Summer is right around the corner and seniors may be able to find some relief. Check out the South Carolina energy and utility bill assistance programs to see if your client qualifies.

First Annual Charleston Senior Information Fair

The City of Charleston Mayor's Office on Aging is sponsoring the First Annual Charleston Senior Information Fair. The

Fair will be held on Saturday June 13, 2015, at the Arthur W. Christopher Community Center at 265 Fishburne Street in Charleston. Cindy Coker, Director of Public Services for the SC Bar, and Franchelle Millender, Elder Law attorney, will be speaking on the legal issues that elders and their families need to address in planning for future long term care.

Physicians from MUSC and USC will be presenting several topics including: dementia, elder abuse, and caregiving. For more information call 843-965-4190.

Aging Gracefully Conference (August 2015)

The South Carolina Bar, in conjunction with the S.C. Medical Association and the S.C. Coalition for the Care of the Seriously Ill, is holding its second annual conference, Aging Gracefully, to address the concerns and questions facing South Carolina's elderly, their families and their caregivers. The conference will take place in August and will be held in Greenville and Florence. More details to follow!

Elder Law Committee is seeking comments

The Elder Law Committee (ELC) is looking at ways to improve the process for the appointment of guardians and conservators in the South Carolina Probate Courts. In cooperation with the South Carolina Association of Probate Judges Article 5 Committee, the ELC has established these goals to be addressed through proposed legislation to improve upon current law. The ELC is seeking comment on these goals and on potential ways to meet those goals from stakeholders and the public.

FREE LEGAL CLINICS

May 11: End of Life Issues

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.; Woodruff Branch Library, 270 E. Hayne St., Woodruff

May 25: Elder Law Issues

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.; Virginia Wingard United Methodist Church, 1500 Broad River Rd., Columbia

For more information about the clinics, or to schedule a clinic for your organization, contact Debbie Morris at debbie.morris@s sbar.org. You can find the schedule [here](#).

Please let us know if you would like to be removed from our contact list by contacting Caitlin Watson at 803-576-3782 or cwatson@s sbar.org.