

ProSe™

Tulsa's Best Source for Free Legal Knowledge

Pro se, a Latin adjective, means "for self". It's applied to one who represents himself or herself without a attorney. *Pro Se Magazine* is a tool to bring you legal knowledge and understanding.

FREE TAKE ONE!
practical legal information you can use!

Learn how to protect your interests...with or without a lawyer!

PROVISIONAL PATENTS EXPLAINED

Pitfalls and what you need to file a provisional claim

“ I made the choice to fight, and hoped for the best. ”

LEGAL MARKETING TIPS

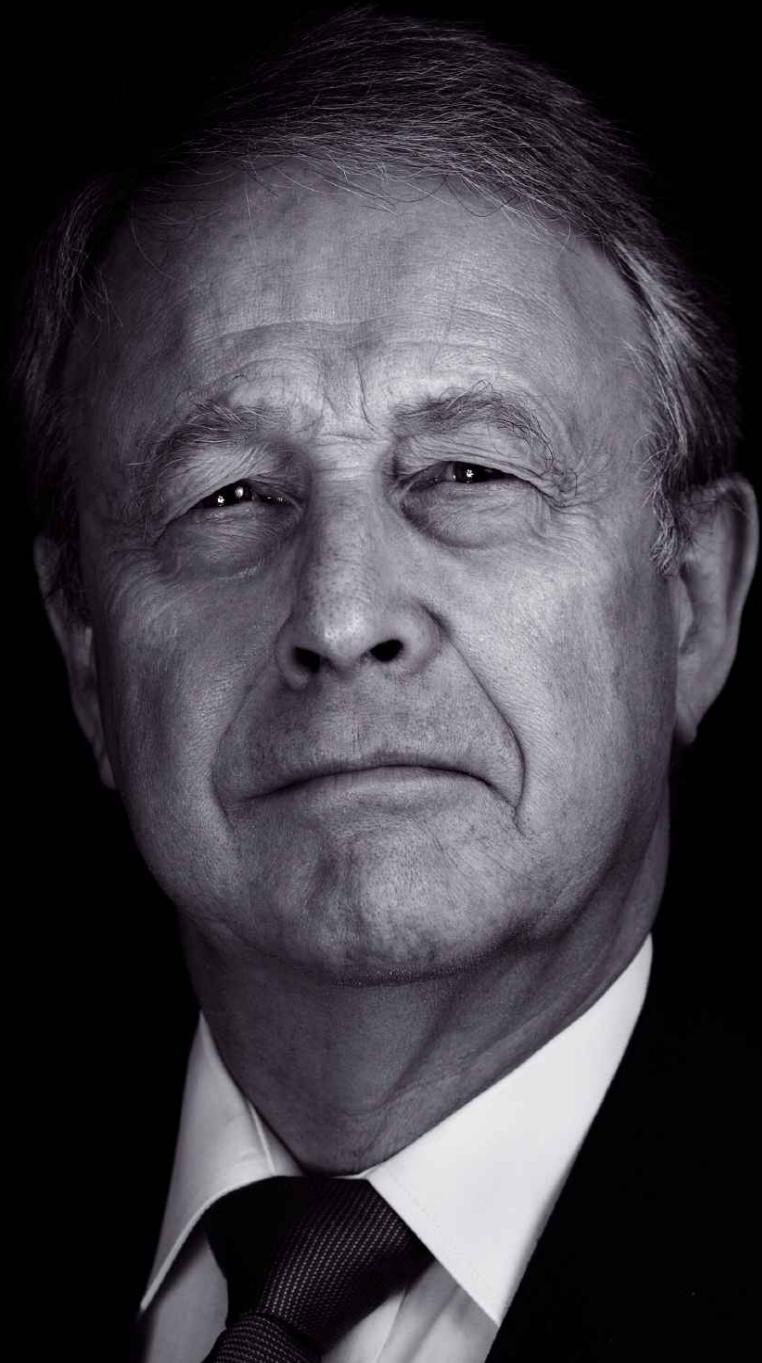
From Guru Larry Bodine

GOOD GUYS CAN WIN

Inspiring true story of one father who fought for custody

JULY/AUGUST 2008

Tested.
Proven.
Trusted.



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Pro Se is dedicated to informing our readers about the law and their place in it.

Real Stories/Real Help

This sample edition of Pro Se features a moving article about a man and his fight for custody of his daughter in Good Guys Can Win. Names have been changed to preserve the peace he's found after a messy divorce and rough marriage, but the reality of his situation is a sobering reminder of the necessity for good family legal representation.

Bob's story immediately grabbed the attention of Pro Se's editorial staff and personified our reason for being in business—we print this man's story in order to educate our readers. This is no fright tactic or a jaded tale from a marriage cynic; it's the real story of a man who never thought to find himself battling for his daughter in court. But nonetheless, he did not only have to endure that fight. He had to win it.

Pro Se is dedicated to informing our readers about the law and their place in it. People like Bob are out there, wondering what will happen to them tomorrow in traffic court or next year if their souring marriage takes a seemingly-unavoidable turn for the worse.

We do not tell our readers what to do—how to get out of the ticket or win the custody case. What Pro Se does, however, is demystify the process, to cut open and reveal the inner workings of the matter. We know that without its imposing miasma of fear, our readers' circumstance will lose much of its hold over them.

Real people are involved in legal issues every day all across this country. By some estimates, over 70 percent of households will have a legal issue during a year's time. Some will face divorce; others, traffic violations. Some will be guilty; others, innocent. Regardless, they are entitled to representation, are innocent until proven guilty, and deserve to know the details of where their lives are headed.

That is why Pro Se is here, and we hope that articles such as the cover story in this sample help real people in Oklahoma and beyond deal with their legal issues with a feeling of confidence and empowerment.

Joshua Lease
Executive Editor
Pro Se Magazine



ProSe
Tulsa's Best Source for Free Legal Knowledge

Pro se,

a Latin adjective, means "for self". It's applied to one who represents himself or herself without an attorney. **Pro Se Magazine** is a tool to bring you legal knowledge and understanding.

There is much to learn from the "trials" of others. We can either avoid repeating someone's errors or to follow an example that solved a similar problem to our own. **Pro Se** will show you real life, real problems resolved.

A.M. Johnson & Associates

4121 S. Denver, Tulsa Oklahoma

918.555.5555

FEEDBACK

LETTERS AND OBSERVATIONS

I was glad I picked up your magazine at the courthouse. I had not really considered fighting my speeding ticket—it was the start of the school year in a school zone, and I thought the judge would throw the book at me! The information I learned about how the prosecutor expedites cases and the fact that I could present information that may prove I was innocent gave me the courage to look into fighting this thing!

Donald Jenkins
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma
Djenkins@sbcglobal.net

My husband and I have decided to get a divorce, but the article we read from the family attorney opened our eyes to what a long, drawn-out legal battle can do to our children. Instead of dragging them to court and testifying, we are going to seek moderation and keep the drama out of this already negative affair. Thanks for the letting me know what my lawyer needed before I even got to her office!

Nancy Martinez
Tulsa, Oklahoma
singleagain@yahoo.com

I've had ideas all my life, but until I picked up your magazine at Mahogany Steakhouse, I never even thought about filing a patent. Now that I know what's involved, I think I may just have to get serious on some of these ideas and find myself a patent attorney! Thanks for inspiring me!

Shane Sievert
Jenks, Oklahoma
Sievertengineer@gmail.com

My husband and I loved your article on real estate scams, but you are three months too late! How can we find out more about what to do after we've been scammed???

Donna Laetnir
Tulsa, Oklahoma
4salebyowner@netzero.com

Donna, I'm sorry we weren't in time to prevent your negative experience. However, I believe I speak for the author when I tell you to seek out legal counsel immediately! If you have a realtor you trust, he or she can probably recommend a good attorney for helping you resolve this problem. – Joshua Lease, Executive Editor

The responses to our stories will be a good gauge for how our readers are affected by legal problems in their daily lives. Small businesses will find a wealth of value in the stories that represent problems affecting them every day.

THE PATENT PROCESS can be drawn out, expensive and confusing, but a good place for many inventors to start is filing a provisional application for patent. Though a provisional application is only temporary, it is comparable to staking one's claim on an invention while pursuing the full patent process. It is important to note that a provisional application will not become a patent if you do not take further steps.

BENEFITS OF A PROVISIONAL APPLICATION

The main motivation for filing a provisional application is to start the paper trail for a future patent. In most cases, the regular application will be treated as if it were filed at the time of the provisional filing. An early filing date can be very helpful in a dispute over who the first inventor was and to protect a patent application from loss of novelty (meaning that it the invention is new and unique).

Once the provisional application is filed, the inventor has 12 months to file a full application for patent, during which the inventor can make the claim "patent pending." This time period does not count against the normal 20 year duration of a patent, and so it is possible obtain benefits for an extra year.

Another benefit that makes a provisional application enticing is cost. Because the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office never examines the application for patentability, the fees are significantly lower (totaling about \$100) than those of regular patent application. An inventor on a small budget can take advantage of the

one-year grace period and low fees to hold place while searching out investors to aid in completing the process.

POSSIBLE PITFALLS

One of the biggest mistakes someone can make in filing a provisional application is not disclosing enough information about the invention. Many inventors hastily draw up a provisional application to get an early filing date, but if it does not sufficiently explain the invention, it is useless. Even worse, if you produce the invention with an insufficient provisional before filing the full application, then you may have lost your claim to novelty. Another concern with provisional applications is that once the 12 month grace period is up, if a full application has not been filed then all claims to the invention are lost. Another provisional application may be filed, but the original filing date has been forfeited.

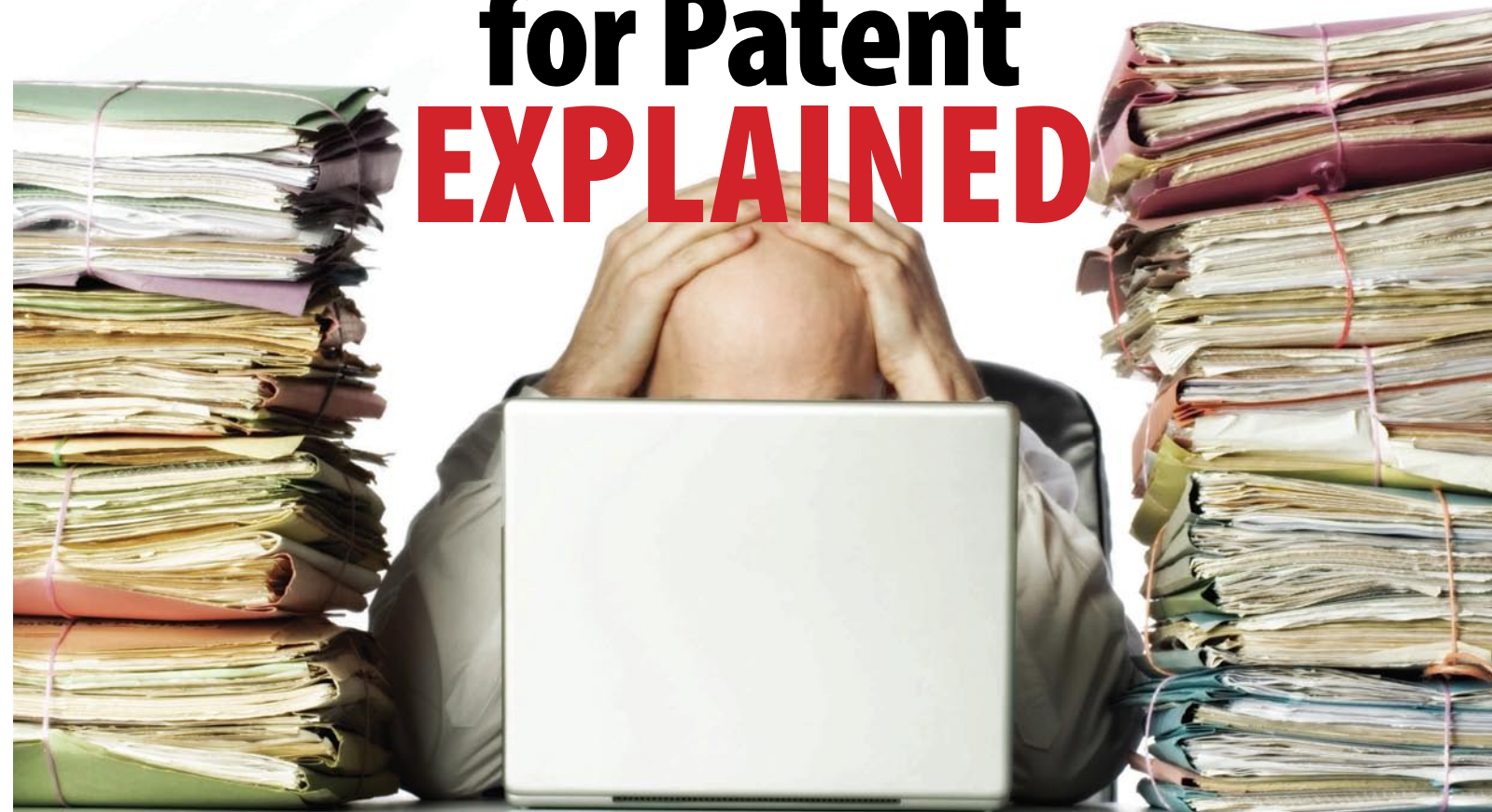
While a provisional application for patent can be a quick and easy tool to help inventors start out in the patent process, it should taken seriously if you want to avoid real headaches later.

WHAT YOU NEED TO FILE A PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT:

- A written description of the invention
- All drawings necessary to understand the invention
- The names of all the inventors
- The application fee
- A cover letter identifying the invention

Phillip K. Walters
Staff writer for
Pro Se Magazine.

Provisional Application for Patent EXPLAINED



Confidence and Trust.

When it comes to you and your family's health, that is how you make a choice. St. Teresa Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center is certified as a facility you can trust to serve your family.

St. Teresa

Nursing Home & Rehabilitation Center

1234 South Ingraham
Tulsa, Oklahoma
555-555-5555

Certificate of Excellence

Find your place to nest.

- Office Space
- Apartments
- Lofts
- Condominiums

Upperlimit Realty
133 W. Detroit, Tulsa OK
918-555-5555

ProSe

Knowledge is Power.
Impressions are key.
Advertise with us
TODAY!


There is no other opportunity like this one. contact us today at:
918.513.2569



PS TULSA'S BEST SOURCE FOR FREE LEGAL KNOWLEDGE
www.prosemag.com

Worried about contract terms?

Chris L. Cord
Intellectual Property
(Copyright, Trademark)
Entertainment/Music
Contracts
Wills/Trusts
Business
Criminal
Small Claims



www.crislcord.com
(919) 555-8004

Good Guys Can Win



"CAN WE JUST GO HOME?"

Alice and Bob had been married just a few hours. They missed their flight, and now, with red-rimmed eyes, Alice pleaded with him to cancel their honeymoon.

And so, without ever really having left, they headed home.

Bob Denton remembers having a sinking feeling in his stomach that day. He did everything he could to fight it off, but in retrospect he admits that maybe his gut knew something that he didn't want to admit with his mind.

Bob, a web designer riding high on the dot-com boom, and Alice, a secretary in a neighboring office, appeared to have a storybook romance fit for the movies. Alice's daughter, Rachel, fit easily into their picture, and Bob remembers thinking that everything seemed perfect.

"It was beautiful—we were that couple that other people looked at and envied," he recounts. Paddleboat rides in the park, feeding the ducks with Rachel, going to fancy dinners—it all seemed to fit, and marriage was the next logical step.

But along with the dot-com boom, everything was not right between Bob and Alice, and personal conflicts and even mental instability were brewing under the surface.

"Everything had been going so well financially," Bob remembers, "that at first I didn't care our house suddenly became so well-decorated. She was nesting, I thought." But by the time the true depth of the spending hit him, he got his walking papers. "[After that] I had that sick, sinking feeling in my stomach every time I thought about how much we owed. Where would I get the money?"

When Bob lost his job with the dot-com bust, his severance package didn't do much to allay his financial worries. Without a new job fast, he wouldn't even be able to make the interest payments on her credit cards. Adding to that, Bob and Alice had recently had a new baby girl, Elaine, the apple of Bob's eye.

Alice's solution to their stress was religion. Bob never felt comfortable at Inspired Word Fellowship, a fiery Pentecostal church with a thundering, charismatic preacher, Reverend Blain Masters. "In fact, sometimes I felt like I was the only one who wasn't under his spell," Bob comments regarding his wife's church. Bob, too, had a history of faith. But this was different. "They weren't snake



*THE INSPIRING
STORY OF
ONE FATHER
WHO FOUGHT
FOR CUSTODY –
AND WON!*

GOOD GUYS CAN WIN...

In this sample edition of Pro Se Magazine, our cover story Good Guys Can Win features the story of a man who faced an uphill fight for custody of his daughter. Names have been changed to preserve the peace he's found after a messy divorce and rough marriage, but the reality of his situation is a sobering reminder of the necessity for good family legal representation.

Bob Denton, as we'll call him, seemed to have a storybook relationship at the peak of the dot-com boom, but he found his marriage going bust along with the dot-coms. After struggling with his wife's depression for nearly five years and trying to make it work, Bob had enough—his wife attempted suicide twice, refused to seek professional help, cheated on him, and even attempted to give their kids away. He filed for divorce and began the traumatic fight for his little girl in a legal system predisposed to giving the mother, even one as unfit as Bob's wife, custody.

Pro Se sat down with Bob to ask questions about his custody fight and victory and to get answers for parents considering fighting for custody of their children. What he had to say may surprise you.

spite the Masters' influence, nothing remedied matters or even prevented a second attempt. This time she cut her wrists while Rachel and Elaine played in the back yard.

When Alice tried to kill herself this second time, it was actually something in Bob that died—the part of him that was committed to the situation and to her. The years of a poor marriage, including an affair Alice had while they were married, piled up, and he simply couldn't take any more. But his first thoughts were of the children.

"He didn't think it would be a problem to get emergency custody of Elaine," Bob said of his attorney, James Rollins. "But he said it was very unlikely I would get even partial custody of Rachel." Bob was taking care of the kids by himself at this point, fighting a losing battle to retain his sanity with the Masters continuing to interfere—even to the point of suggesting they take the children.

"Everybody thinks of the person who attempts suicide—the emotional stress they're under," Bob comments. "But their families are under stress too. I mean, the problems don't happen in a vacuum. And then there's after...after the attempt."

"I couldn't take it any more... I just couldn't do it." Alice's suicide attempts were just the most outward example of the inner troubles in the Denton family, and the emotional stresses had simply taken their toll.

Bob was done; he couldn't handle the emotional stress of Alice's condition or the threat he felt her depression represented to the children. With the marriage crumbled and Alice in and out of the hospital for suicide attempts, Bob finally decided it was time for a divorce. He immediately sought custody of the children.

A judge granted Bob emergency custody of Elaine for the duration of the divorce proceeding and gave Alicia supervised visitation rights. He also ordered them to undergo child custody evaluation.

"I thought it was going to be okay," Bob remembers, but his attorney knew better.

"I told him, 'Bob, you wanted custody of your daughter, now you have to prove it,'" his attorney, James Rollins, recalls. "The court almost never gives custody to the father, even in extreme cases. He had to show that he can do this without any help."

"Meeting with the custody evaluator wasn't so bad," Bob recalls. "The interview is fairly painless; most of the questions are about your work and family." But he knew that he had to show he was the consummate father, able to juggle work and caring for Elaine.

The Dentons met, together with their attorneys, with a mediator, who helped control the emotional timber of the meeting. That first meet came to a head very rapidly when Alice demanded to know why Bob was trying to take her children from her.

"I told her, 'You tried to kill yourself twice, Alice,'" Bob recounts. "I told her I couldn't trust her not to do it again—or something worse." He shakes his head with a rueful grin as he goes on, "She didn't like that much."

The mediator separated them as Alice started to explode, but it was only later, in closed conference with Rollins, that Bob learned there was more to the story. As the mediator ushered them to their separate rooms, Alice was screaming that she'd never done any such

thing. She was trying to deny that the suicide attempts had ever taken place.

"I told him the custody evaluator requested Alicia's medical records some time ago," Rollins says of that first session. "Apparently, she was denying ever having attempted suicide, and he wanted to confront her with the evidence." He shifts in his seat as he says, "I've seen a lot of medical records, and I have never seen a file so thick. There were close to a thousand pages in there. I can't really tell you what I read, but there was a lot about Alice Bob didn't know...Some very sad things."

"I felt like I had never really known her at all," Bob says of learning of Alice's medical files.

That first day of mediation set a tone of denial from Alice, and Bob remembers well a battle within his mind and subconscious—the former arguing that her lies would be exposed, the latter that precedent would be stronger than circumstances and he wouldn't get his daughter. It was an extremely difficult — months, made harder by Alice's attorney's tactic of drawing everything out.

Yet finally their date in court came, and despite all of her attorney's pomp and show, three witnesses—not his planned 60—testified: the custody evaluator, Alice, and Bob. The evaluator's testimony no doubt helped calm Bob's nerves a bit, as his opinion ended up being that Bob should have full custody of the children.

"He said Alice was a troubled woman," Bob remembers of the hearing. "He seemed to agree with me that her denial would only make it harder for her to ever recover...if she ever even sought help."

However, despite the good start, Alice's lawyer grilled Bob for the next hour—one of the worst hours of his life. "He tried to assassinate me!" Bob says, shaking his head in wonder. "Me! I wasn't the one that tried to kill myself!"

Yet, in the end, it was Alice that sealed the case—her testimony lasted four hours, and Bob can only guess how hard it was for her. But Rollins had a mission, and he pursued it single-mindedly as he interviewed her.

"I asked her if she'd ever been diagnosed as bi-polar," he said of the interview. "She said 'no.' That's when I knew I had her—I asked her about the records indicating that she had in fact been diagnosed as bi-polar on several occasions." She didn't have an answer. "I asked her if she'd ever tried to kill herself," Rollins goes on, shaking his head. "Again she denied it. But the records clearly showed she'd tried numerous times since adolescence."

Bob admits, "I did feel bad for her up there." But he did not feel badly enough to keep Rollins from doing his job. "Yet at the same time, it made me sad—sad to know that she was...how she was. Sad to know that I really hadn't known her; I hadn't known this part of her at all."

The judge didn't even wait for closing arguments; he awarded Bob sole custody over Elaine and gave Alice limited visitation rights, but Rachel would stay with her mother in the end.

Now remarried and living happily with Elaine and his second wife, Bob continues to see Alice and Rachel when Elaine goes to spend time with her mother.

When asked how that makes him feel, Bob replies, "She is living with the Masters. Apparently, she's afraid to try to make it on her own. It makes me sad."

Bob knows he did the right thing. When asked what advice he may have for parents in custody situations, his advice is simple: "....."

Bob's case is not traditional—mothers have precedent for custody, particularly in states such as Oklahoma. However, in Bob's case, the evidence was overwhelming. Bob's story is a healthy reminder that the cliché isn't always true: the good guy can come out on top.

THE MEDIATOR
SEPARATED THEM
AS ALICE STARTED
TO EXPLODE

Weren't really
going that fast?

**Chris L.
Cord**

Intellectual Property
(Copyright, Trademark)
Entertainment/Music
Contracts
Wills/Trusts
Business
Criminal
Small Claims

www.crislcard.com

(919) 555-8004



PRO SE ASKS SOME QUESTIONS...

WHAT DID YOU EXPECT OR KNOW ABOUT THE DIVORCE PROCESS?

"I had no clue going into it what to expect. I was scared only of losing my daughter and that she would have to grow up in an environment of unhealthy religious zealotry, demeaning as it was at that church. And also growing up with her mother being a horrible influence and neglecting her as I learned she did to Rachel, her first daughter."

WHAT WAS INVOLVED IN GETTING EMERGENCY CUSTODY OF YOUR DAUGHTER?

"During my initial visit with my attorney, he stated that we should do it immediately. So we went over to the courthouse and filed the paperwork and went before the judge. We went before the judge again with Jenny there 11 days later for her to present her case. The judge maintained that I had emergency custody at that point."

WHEN YOU FIRST MET WITH YOUR LAWYER TO BEGIN THE CUSTODY FIGHT, WERE THERE ANY DOCUMENTS OR PAPERS YOU HAD TO LOCATE OR PREPARE IN ORDER TO BEGIN THE PROCESS?

"He asked for anything like emails or documents and advised me how to best handle finances and what to look out for. He really instilled the fact that the only thing that will help is that which is provable. He said that "he said" "she said" stuff does not fly at all."

CAN YOU DESCRIBE IN YOUR OWN WORDS WHAT A MEDIATOR IS AND WHAT ROLE, BEYOND THAT OF YOUR RESPECTIVE LAWYERS, THIS PERSON PLAYS?

"Mediators, I learned, are an impartial third parties that try to get anything accomplished they can to avoid having to go to trial, such as agreements on finances, debt, custody, alimony, and child support. They only have power to do what both parties agree to. What is agreed to then will be written up by the attorneys and then submitted to the court."

HOW DID YOU AND YOUR LAWYER PREPARE FOR YOUR HEARING BEFORE THE JUDGE TO DECIDE CUSTODY OF YOUR DAUGHTER?

"Really, he just discussed facts that we had uncovered and that if there was anything else that I might have failed to mention. Attorneys are not allowed to "prep" a witness or your testimony. My attorney was top notch and very above board. I liked that."

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PARENTS IN CUSTODY SITUATIONS (PERHAPS FATHERS IN PARTICULAR)?

"Facts—get the facts. It is the only thing that will protect you and help your case. Always tell the truth, even if you're worried that it might look bad on you. The whole process is like living under a microscope where anything and everything will come out during the process."



ProSe

Want to be Seen?

Clients will know you. Advertise with us TODAY!

There is no other opportunity like this one. contact us today at:

918.513.2569



PS TULSA'S BEST SOURCE FOR FREE LEGAL KNOWLEDGE
www.prosemag.com

Now

 that you've have seen just a mere sample of what our magazine looks like, here's more reasons why you should advertise in *Pro Se*:

Pro Se gives the people knowledge...

Pro Se Magazine is a wealth of free information for the consumer, and it is a focused and targeted advertising vehicle for our sponsors.

Pro Se educates readers that they need lawyers. It also prepares clients with the knowledge of what their lawyers will need from them.

...and makes them better customers.

By educating clients, *Pro Se* empowers readers and turns them into better clients for legal services.

By being a part of *Pro Se*, our sponsors and contributing editors reach pre-qualified new clients.

If you are only advertising in the phone book, you're missing out. You need more exposure and better clients. **You need *Pro Se*!**

For more information on *Pro Se Magazine*:

Call us at (918) 513-2569

or drop us an email at legalmag@gmail.com

or you can find us on the web at www.prosemagazine.com





Mercedes-Benz