



## COURT CONNECTION

### *News and Views from the Cobb Probate Court*

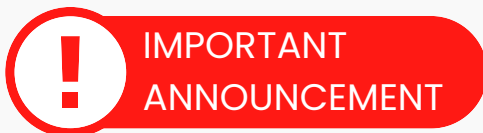


Chief Judge Kelli L. Wolk

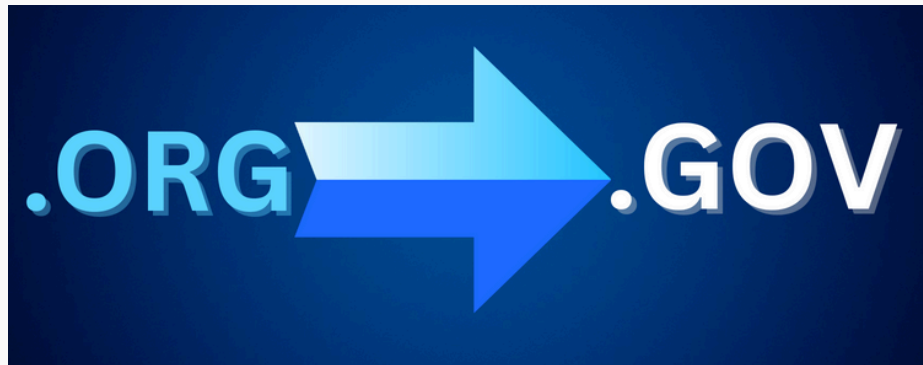
#### **A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF**

The legislative session always provides change and this year was no different. One of the most impactful for our court was HB 36. With this bill we were able to expand the list of professional classifications able to perform evaluations for guardianship matters.

Please review [HB 36](#) for the final version of those additions. Hopefully this will reduce the delays in evaluations – and end courts asking for Petitioners to identify “an independent evaluator” to perform this function.



Beginning June 2nd, Cobb County Government will be embarking upon a county-wide project to migrate from CobbCounty.org to a CobbCounty.gov domain-name. This is part of a nationwide effort from the US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) to migrate all city, county, and state governments to .gov.



#### *(IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT CONT.)*

There is a growing trend of bad actors using similar domains, ex: “cobbcountry.org”, to create sites which are used for profit or cybercrime, like collecting personal information or credit card numbers. .gov domains are managed by CISA, a federal agency, ensuring a higher level of security and oversight compared to commercial domains that anyone can obtain. Only verified, legitimate government sites can obtain a “.gov” address. This reduces the risk of cyber threats and enhances the protection of sensitive information for Cobb residents. When Cobb completes the transition to “.gov”, Cobb residents can trust our official sites by the address.

Migrating our county's website to a .gov domain is an important step we can take to enhance the trust, security, and accessibility of our county's online presence. This will not only impact our website, but our county email addresses as well as various systems which reference cobbcountry.org.

The project is scheduled to begin June 2nd, and will likely take an entire year to complete the migration for the entire county.



All emails sent to cobbcountry.org email address will continue to be forwarded for 1 year after the migration is complete, ensuring important correspondence is not lost in the ether. The same will be true for all county websites.

## INTRODUCING



KRISTIN SCOTT

### Probate Court's Incoming Chief Clerk

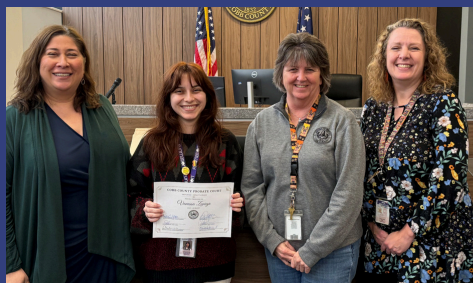
Kristin Scott, Probate's Division Manager, has been chosen to fill the position of Chief Clerk, currently held by Jennifer Ritchey, who is scheduled to retire on September 30<sup>th</sup> of this year. Ms. Scott has worked with the Probate Court since 2002, and has extensive knowledge of court operations.

"I am honored and appreciative of the opportunity to serve in such an esteemed role. I hope to honor Jennifer Ritchey's legacy here, while continuing to find ways to improve upon our processes, and I look forward to the opportunity to serve our constituents with the integrity, compassion, and decency they deserve," said Scott.

"We look forward to the future with Kristin Scott at the helm", said Chief Judge Wolk. "She has worked at every level in the court, in almost every role, and brings excitement and energy for the next chapter as we look toward e-filing and expansion."

## Congratulations

### Employee of the Quarter Award VANESSA ZUNIGA



Congratulations to Vanessa Zuniga, the recipient of our Quarterly Employee Impact Award. Vanessa works in the Guardianship division as a processing clerk. She was chosen for the award because of her calm demeanor, her cheery attitude, her strength of character and integrity, and her ability to problem solve under high stress situations.



Governor Kemp recently issued a proclamation declaring April 2025 "Legal Professionalism Month" in Georgia. Probate Court Hearing Officer, Carlos Vilela,

accepted the proclamation in his capacity as the Vice Chair for the State Bar of Georgia's Professionalism Committee.

Judge Tara Riddle spoke to a group at the West Cobb Senior Center about the primary functions of the Probate Court and answered many questions about common misconceptions with regard to the probate process.



Judge Riddle and Judge Poland attended 'Probate Judges Day' at the Georgia State Capitol on February 20<sup>th</sup> to engage in discussion regarding current legislation impacting Probate Courts statewide.



Chief Judge Wolk, Judge Riddle and Court Administrator Amanda Marshall, attended the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual LiveSafe Resources Tribute to Achievement Gala honoring 15 inspiring women making meaningful impacts in our community. This event also spotlights the incredible work LiveSafe Resources does to support victims of domestic violence. Judge Wolk was selected as a Woman of Achievement in 2018, and Judge Riddle in 2021, for this prestigious recognition.