

In The Spotlight with: Medina County Juvenile Probate Judge, Judge Kevin Dunn

By Kate Feeks

Judge Kevin Dunn will be on the show *Law Talk* with host John Celebrezze to discuss his new position as Medina County Juvenile Probate Court Judge. This show will run throughout the month of July on Wadsworth Cable (WCTV) public access Channel 15, Brunswick Area Television (BAT) public access Channel 21, and Armstrong cable access Channel 37 in Medina County, along with Clear Picture Channels 21 & 22 in Wooster and Massillon.

The Honorable Kevin W. Dunn took his seat as Medina County Probate and Juvenile Judge on August 5, 2013. Judge Dunn is a Medina native. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in political science from Miami University of Ohio, and then earned his Juris Doctorate from the University of Akron School of Law. He also has served as a prosecutor for the city of Medina and his private practice spanned 22 years.

Judge Dunn has been involved with the Medina Rotary, the Medina Area Chamber of Commerce, the Medina County Law Library and the Medina County Red Cross, among other community organizations. He also served as the president of the Medina County Estate Planning Council from 1996 to 1998.

“I love my new job. I get to work with a bunch of great people, I have some very interesting matters that I get to hear. It’s really diverse. It is a lot different than just practicing law.” Judge Dunn said. The juvenile system authorizes him to pass judgment on crimes committed by adolescents who have not attained the age of majority. In most cases adolescents who commit a crime are treated differently from legal adults who have committed similar crimes.

The Medina Juvenile Court deals with numerous drug, driving, and theft related offenses. “Once we find out the kids are offenders, some are diverted into our drug court program, which is a pretty lengthy process. Sometimes they can get their cases sealed. Some youth get put on probation with the Court, community service and/or are assigned other requirements they must satisfy. “A lot of the issues aren’t just the child, it’s the family. We try to attack those items with various programs as well” Dunn explained. Medina County has its own detention center equipped with 30 beds and maximum security. Repeat offenders are placed there to have time to think about their actions. The facility has a school as well for the inmates to complete their education. “It’s very very regimented” Dunn commented.

The probate court also assists in the guardianship and adoption processes. Guardianship is when an individual is not capable of taking care of his or her own affairs. A guardian looks out for the best interest of a person under guardianship. “We have about 700 + guardianship cases pending in our Court and I am the superior guardian on every guardianship case. I oversee to make sure each case is handled correctly...” Dunn noted. Adoptions through the Court take approximately six months to a year to process. Among the many other important details, the court gathers background materials on the family, waivers are created, consent hearings are held, the child is placed in the home and then final approval. “The goal is to put a child in a home that is going to be a permanent ...” Dunn said.

To learn more about the Medina County Juvenile Probate Court watch for the interview with Judge Kevin Dunn and Mr. Celebrezze throughout the month of July on *Law Talk*.