

In "The Spotlight" with: Teresa Barrington, Attorney at Law

By Kate Feeks

This October, watch for the next episode of *Law Talk*, hosted by John Celebrezze. This episode features Attorney Teresa Barrington from the law firm of Marco and Marco. Ms. Barrington will discuss issues dealing with divorce and domestic relations matters. This show can be viewed on Wadsworth Cable (WCTV) Public Access, Channel 15, Brunswick Area Television (BAT) Public Access, Channel 21, Armstrong Cable Access, Channel 37 and YouTube.

In 1996, Teresa Barrington was admitted to the Ohio bar and was also admitted to practice before U.S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio. She attended the University of Akron, graduating with a degree in elementary education and her law degree. From 1996-1999, Barrington was a staff attorney for the Medina County Court of Common Pleas, Probate and Juvenile Divisions. Later she served as a magistrate in the Medina County Juvenile Court. Barrington's volunteer work includes; Mock Trial Advisor, Buckeye High School, 2007-2010; Community Legal Aid, Medina County Volunteer Attorney of the Year, 2007. She is a member of the Medina County Bar Association, Ohio State Bar Association and the Ohio Center for Law Related Education. She lives in Medina County with her husband and children.

The majority of the cases handled by Barrington are divorce and domestic relations matters. The current divorce statistics in America for a first marriage are estimated at forty to fifty percent, and the rate of divorce for second and third marriages steadily rises to sixty to seventy percent. Couples with children tend to have a lower rate of divorce. Because it is extremely important to have an attorney assist when dealing with a divorce, Barrington said "It is so risky for people to enter into a divorce without the benefit of talking to an attorney. One of the most difficult consultations is when a prospective client comes in *after* having completed a divorce or dissolution without the benefit of counsel. Almost always, the prospective client requests assistance in making a change to their separation agreement. This is why it is imperative to seek the advice of counsel *before* entering into an agreement."

A divorce attorney will work with a client to explain the process of ending a marriage under Ohio law. Divorce is a civil lawsuit to end a marriage. It arises when the husband and wife cannot resolve their problems, and are asking the court to make the final decision and issue orders concerning property division, spousal support and matters regarding the children. The divorce process can take up to one year or more from the date a complaint is filed with the court. A dissolution of marriage is an action where the parties mutually agree to terminate their marriage. Dissolution is a much easier process and quicker to obtain. Neither party has to prove grounds to end a marriage by dissolution. This action is only started after the husband and wife have signed a separation agreement regarding all property, spousal support and any child-related issues.

"I do a lot of guardian *ad litem* work as well" noted Barrington, who explained that the process of ending a marriage is easier on the family, especially the children, when the couple can communicate. A helpful means to keep couples communicating, and to assist in the decision making process of their divorce, is divorce mediation. In mediation a couple meets with a neutral third party, the mediator, to help work through issues needed to be resolved such as distribution of property, child custody, child support, taxes, retirement and more. "Sometimes you have parties that have started the divorce process and later find they are not that far off in reaching an agreement. Attorneys will sometimes suggest they give mediation a try." explained Barrington.

To learn more about divorce and domestic relations law with Attorney Teresa Barrington, watch for her interview with John Celebrezze on *Law Talk* throughout the month of October.