



CAUGHT COLLUDING: Leaked Video Reveals Family Court Guardians Conspiring to Dox Journalist for Exposing Them

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Guardians ad litem (GALs) have a good thing going in Saint Louis County, Mo., or at least they did before Evita Tolu filed a lawsuit against GAL Elaine Pudlowski and Dr. James D. Reid, psychologist, and others exposing what looks like one of the biggest money-making schemes to ever hit family courts. GALs are usually appointed by judges to represent a child in a custody dispute. The GAL is paid by the parents and in Tolu's case, her GAL was paid \$30,000. ([See part 2 for details of that suit](#))

Shortly after the lawsuit was filed, Saint Louis County GALs held a secret meeting, starring Pudlowski and 37 other GALs, which was leaked to investigative journalist [Michael Volpe](#), who posted it to YouTube. The video gives credence to Tolu's allegations of "ex parte communication" between GALs and judges. In the video, the GALs can be heard discussing friendly judges and judges who want to help them fight the lawsuit against them and their friends. A judge conspiring with a defendant in a case before his court may be obstruction of justice and should be investigated as a criminal matter. When the video was made public, [every judge on the Saint Louis County Circuit Court recused themselves](#).

But perhaps even more shocking is the reason for the clandestine meeting. GALs are attorneys and as officers of the court, they must be familiar with the First Amendment requirements that say citizens have a right to a free press. Despite knowing this, these lawyers plotted together to target and abolish the "Daily Docket News," by hiring a private investigator at \$425 an hour to dox the author of the newsletter. Daily Docket News (DDN) is a newsletter that is sent out by email and has been reporting on what it calls a "Kids for Cash" scheme in Saint Louis County. The scheme allegedly uses children stuck in custody battles, trafficking them and their families through the court system, which enriches psychologists, GALs, and other professionals—anger management companies, mediation companies, and any other company that would profit from a custody case. There are many such companies and persons.

DDN has reported on many cases working their way through family courts that have all the same players, including Pudlowski and Reid. They report:

There is an alleged large network of law firms working in conjunction with each other on the same family court case, each representing one of the parties and allegedly promising to have you and your child's best interest at heart, but the only interest they have is to pit the parties against each other and to drain the party with the smaller financial portfolio prior to reaching a

settlement. Unknown to the party with the smaller financial portfolio, their case will never go to trial, but will drag out as long as they have disposable cash to throw away, which is in the best interest of each attorney involved in the case. In most cases that were reviewed, the party that has the finances to drag the case long enough to drain the opposing party, is awarded the minor children by the family court, regardless of their mental, criminal and/or child abuse history.

Daily Docket News is dedicated to shining light on the grave injustices taking place in the family court swamp, in the state of Missouri. It has been a national scandal for decades in which daily courts in this country systematically failed to protect our children from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse by predatory parents. What is equally scandalous is the silence on the coverage of this unimaginable issue. It is a dreadful reality of child trafficking through family courts in the United States of America... These cases present a clear pattern of child trafficking through the family courts which involve colluding attorneys, guardians ad litem, therapists, and forensic evaluators, who engage in divorce, child custody, adoption, and paternity cases, which coincidentally all involve well to do predatory parents.

If the DDN was far off base, it would seem unlikely that the Saint Louis GALs would go to such lengths to uncover who is responsible for the reports. In fact, they admit in the secret meeting that DDN publishes information they know to be true, but their main concern is not the families who were harmed by this system but how Daily Docket News accessed the information. The GALs say in the secretly recorded meeting that they are willing to spend up to \$10,000 to uncover and dox the author of DDN. Why would a large group of lawyers spend thousands of dollars identifying the author of DDN except to engage in lawfare against him or her and/or to silence, harass, and punish the author for exercising the First Amendment right to report news that is critical of them?

DDN claims to have received hundreds of letters from St. Louis attorneys who did not want to be named because of an atmosphere of extreme intimidation and fear that they too would be retaliated against by this powerful cabal of colluding attorneys and judges. A short excerpt from two of the letters alleges a disturbing pattern.

I find that the family court judges are abdicating their responsibility to make these life altering decisions for children, but instead leave it all up to the ill-trained and biased guardians ad litem like Pudlowski. Pudlowski always determines, at the get go, which parent has more financial resources, then labels that parent as good, and subsequently the other parent as bad throughout the case, shutting down any evidence to the contrary. Vilifying one parent as Pudlowski always does, equipped with Reid's fraudulent reports based on fabrication, hearsay and not on actual evidence together with Van Luven's fake therapy, is complete neglect of children's best interests aimed at siphoning enormous sums of money in profits while destroying the lives of children they are hired to protect. It is nothing else but a legalized scheme of child trafficking through family courts in Saint Louis County. Pudlowski knows exactly what she is doing as the swamp ring master.

Attorney t, Saint Louis domestic relations attorney, 17 years in family law practice.

I have seen case after case where literally no evidence was allowed from one parent to refute false statements by the other parent, that were mere hearsay unsupported by any evidence. The family court judges are pulling their custody decisions out of thin air on the advice of corrupt guardians ad litem like Pudlowski and pseudo psychologists like Reid masquerading as trained

evaluators of family interactions. Reid told my client that he is married to the almighty and powerful Judge Laurence Mooney, who sits on the Court of Appeals, and that my client would be foolish to challenge Reid's opinions. Pudlowski bragged to my client that she is Larry's friend and that they spend holidays together. Pudlowski told my client that if she did not do exactly what she was told, Pudlowski would make sure my client only sees her children for one hour once a month with strict supervision. If this is not child trafficking then what is it? I strike her from my cases immediately.

Attorney E, Saint Louis domestic relations attorney, 24 years in family law practice

DDN has published reams of similar letters purporting to be from whistleblowers. PJ Media has spoken to at least six alleged victims of the scheme who have experiences that match up to the anonymous whistleblowers' accounts. Tolu's lawsuit also alleges similar claims. In *Tolu v. Reid*, Tolu says Pudlowski threatened her to get her to discontinue the legitimate therapy she and her children were receiving in favor of Pudlowski's favored therapists, Reid, Jennifer Webbe Van Luven, and others of Pudlowski's choice.

Pudlowski threatened that if Plaintiff did not terminate Plaintiff's and Child T's therapy at Safe Connections, Pudlowski would consider Plaintiff a 'non-cooperating parent' and recommend that she suffer the total loss of custody of both her children, Child A and Child T.

In the secret leaked meeting, the GALs were notified live that the first judge had recused himself. At minute-mark 2:45, Pudlowski says, "Okay, I just got a note that maybe we are not having a hearing tomorrow. The judge just recused himself. It was Judge [Evan] Wallach." GAL Sarah Pleban of Grant, Miller & Smith, LLC, who appeared to have called the meeting, replied, "I had heard that was probably a good place to be, I mean he studies the law and he does all that."

A long stunned silence filled the Zoom meeting after that.

Pudlowski continued, "So I guess I don't know where that leaves us...my motion to dismiss is about judicial immunity, or quasi-judicial immunity [and] standing."

People who work for the state in any capacity, including police officers, social workers, GALs, court professionals, etc., always claim "immunity" when they are caught doing bad things. They rely on this protection racket where they claim that if they work for the government, then you little people out there have no recourse against them because they were "just doing their jobs." Jay Schweikert of the CATO Institute describes it this way.

Qualified immunity is a judicial doctrine that protects public officials from liability, even when they break the law. The doctrine has no valid legal basis, it regularly denies justice to victims whose rights have been violated, and it severely undermines official accountability, especially for members of law enforcement.

Then the conversation turned to the purpose of the call: silencing DDN.

Pudlowski claimed she's being "cyber-stalked" by the news organization because her neighbors have read it. Unfortunately for Pudlowski, news services reporting about publicly available court documents, or whistleblowers leaking court documents that might implicate her in crimes, do not meet the threshold of "cyber-stalking" even if the news outlet sends its reports to people she knows. It's called "journalism" and it used to be practiced everywhere. Since our news organizations became obsessed with pushing political agendas, no one recognizes actual

journalism anymore. “Cyber-stalking” is an absurd claim, but one that is used quite often by any target of investigative work.

PJ Media reached out to Pudlowski over email, despite the threat of being called a “cyber-stalker,” with questions about the clandestine Zoom call. She did not respond. However, Mike Volpe did get one of the participants, GAL Venus Jackson, on the phone for a short time. Jackson made herself famous in [Part 1 of my investigation](#). She was recorded on the Zoom call saying she doesn’t worry about being sued because her clients “don’t have money.” Volpe’s YouTube page is full of videos of St. Louis County citizens speaking out about the terrible experiences they’ve had in the court system with GALs and therapists.

At minute-mark 7:19 Sharon Remis gets to the crux of their problem with DDN. “They [Daily Docket News] had access to a lot of confidential information, so the question is, what’s the resource?”

“There is a concern that licensed attorneys might be getting this information and feeding it to them,” said Pleban. But if that were the case and the information revealed pointed to criminal activity, wouldn’t those attorneys be whistleblowers and entitled to protection under the law?

“Is it a lawyer? Is it someone in the circuit clerk’s office?” continued Pleban. An unidentified woman piped in, “Or a paralegal! Somebody’s paralegal might be getting it.”

At the 9:14 minute-mark, Remis revealed that she had called Judge Michael Burton to help her identify the leaker. This is the exact kind of *ex-parte* communication that Tolu’s lawsuit alleges. GALs, who are supposed to be representing the children, are communicating with judges behind the scenes to collude against the parents who went to the media seeking help in the family court system. Remis admits that this is what they are doing. Stopping the leak, or hunting it down with the help of judges, only serves to help the GALs in their defense against the parents. Judge Burton is on the record allegedly colluding with the GALs in an email to “help” in any way he can with their defense, and now we hear from a GAL’s own mouth. Remis enlisted his help in tracking down the whistleblower too. Burton is the presiding Judge over the 21st district Judicial Circuit Court of Saint Louis County. Someone should be investigating him immediately. PJ Media attempted to reach every member of the state [Senate Judiciary Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee](#) to question them about the legality of Burton’s behavior and received no response. Republican Tony Luetkemeyer is the chairman.

“I put a call into Judge Burton so he could look into that [Sarah Moehler case]. He hasn’t called me back yet. When I talked to his clerk she said he’s so overwhelmed with everything that, you know—so I have information about that and I can get that to you after the call.”

The GALs also talked about forming an LLC with which to raise funds to pay for the forensic investigator to track down DDN. Within that conversation, they callously mocked the parents alleging that their children’s lives have been sacrificed for cash payments. GAL Greg Brough is heard suggesting they call their LLC “Kids for Cash” to raucous laughter (32:29). They also spent time denying that any of them make any money. This is absurd. Pudlowski lives in a \$700,000 house and drives a Lexus, according to public records and Zillow. Reid and Mooney live in a house valued at over \$900,000, according to the same public records. Each office seen in the Zoom videos is well-appointed, some with expensive-looking art on the walls. They are all surely *far* better off than any of their clients who are now broke, unemployed, and struggling to

survive after being drained of every resource in their years-long battle in family court. The GALs' economic privilege is evident and easily discovered.

Another striking moment was when GAL Amy Diemer wanted to discuss fighting legislation to require GALs to have higher standards. "Has anybody figured out if there's a connection between this and Senate bill 623 that was introduced? [Senator] Doug Libla [former R-Mo.] is the one who constantly introduced bills that were taking away powers of guardians ad litem or adversely impacting our ability to do our work...I think he is a part of that Mad Dad group." The bill she referred to, among other things, aimed to improve standards for children reporting abuse and give priority to family reunification.

1. The division shall develop protocols which give priority to: 2 (1) Ensuring the well-being and safety of the child in instances where child abuse or 3 neglect has been alleged; 4 (2) Promoting the preservation and reunification of children and families consistent with 5 state and federal law; 6 (3) Providing due process for those accused of child abuse or neglect; and 7 (4) Maintaining an information system operating at all times, capable of receiving and 8 maintaining reports.

Every parent who has spoken to PJ Media has alleged that when their children reported sexual abuse to professionals, GALs, therapists, and judges in the Saint Louis County Court system, they were ignored and returned to their accused molesters. According to [LegiScan](#), the bill passed. Whether anyone is enforcing it is uncertain.

None of this would have come to light if the GALs had not called this hasty and ill-advised Zoom meeting, knowing they might have a mole, but doing it anyway. Perhaps the most telling moment of the whole meeting was when Diemert said, "Once they take you down [Pudlowski] we're all next." The whole video is worth watching because there's a lot more that can be analyzed and none of it seems to be about protecting children.

If you or someone you know is a victim of court corruption in St. Louis County please contact communications@pjmedia.com. If you are a whistleblower attorney or court employee, your identity will be protected.