



CHERYL RICE - READY TO SERVE



Since you are perusing KBA's DICTA, chances are you already know KBA's President-Elect, Cheryl Rice. Cheryl has graciously given so much of her time and talents to the Knoxville Bar Association over the years, that I expect most KBA members have already had the pleasure of getting to know her on some level. I have been fortunate to work with Cheryl at Egerton, McAfee,

Armistead & Davis for twenty years now. I know with certainty that the KBA membership is very fortunate to have her taking the helm of KBA this December.

I have also enjoyed getting to know Cheryl's husband, Bill Rice, and their two beautiful and gifted daughters, Madison and Natalie. Both our families spent a lot of time at Blue Grass Elementary, West Valley Middle School, and Bearden High school watching our kids grow up. While I had some fun coaching Natalie in T-Ball, both Madison and Natalie went on to become excellent basketball players at Bearden High School. Natalie is about to begin her Senior season at Bearden. Madison went on to play four years at Centre College in Kentucky.

Those two apples didn't fall far from the tree. Cheryl's daughters came by their athleticism and love for competition naturally - it's in their genes. Cheryl was a Captain and four-year letterman on George Mason University's women's tennis team. She continued to play competitively after moving to Knoxville as part of a local team that represented Tennessee in the USTA Southern Sectionals. Cheryl has continued her love for tennis by serving on the Steering Committee for the Knoxville Challenger Tennis Tournament that brings exciting professional tennis to Knoxville every year (every year not COVID, that is).

So where did Cheryl grow up? Well, she ain't from these parts. Cheryl and Bill both are actually from A LOT of parts. They both moved around often as kids. While Cheryl lived in various places across Virginia and in West Virginia, she finished high school in Northern Virginia and stayed there to attend George Mason, where she met Bill. After graduation, she went straight to law school at George Mason as the youngest member of her law school class and the first in her family to pursue the legal profession.

In 1991, Cheryl started her legal career in a medmal plaintiff's firm in Fairfax County, Virginia. As a young attorney, she had the opportunity to represent clients from all walks of life, gaining an appreciation for the role lawyers play not only in the justice system, but in people's everyday lives. In the meantime, Cheryl and Bill were blessed with the arrival of Madison.

In 2000, Bill and Cheryl decided to move to Knoxville. They fondly recall their first visit here, and how wonderful they thought life in Tennessee's beautiful river valley could be for their young family. Twenty years later, they are still here and not going anywhere, she says. She and Bill have now lived in Knoxville longer than either has lived any place else. They both say moving to Knoxville was one of the best decisions made in their almost 30 years of marriage. Egerton McAfee concurs, as I

expect many others in Knoxville do as well.

When Cheryl came to Egerton McAfee, she shifted her practice to predominantly business and estate litigation. Bill joined TVA where he works as a Program Manager. Natalie was born in 2002, and Bill and Cheryl continued raising their family while gracefully balancing their demanding and successful careers with their family life. They spent many hours watching church league, middle school, AAU and high school basketball practices and games, as well as other sports the girls tried from time to time. They also watched as their daughters excelled academically. This October, they celebrated by adding a new member to the family when Madison married her Centre College sweetheart, Sam Shelley. The newlyweds are now launching their careers in the DC area.

Somehow, Cheryl managed to balance her busy family life with her commitment to serving the needs of her clients and also generously giving her time to professional, government, and civic organizations. Her service and leadership ranges from the boards of parent-teacher organizations and booster clubs to twice chairing the Governor's Council for Judicial Appointments. She is a graduate of Leadership Knoxville's Class of 2017 and has served on the Tennessee Bar Foundation's IOLTA Grant Review Committee, as President for the Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women and the executive committee of the Hamilton Burnett American Inn of Court. And, of course, she has been an active member of several KBA committees over the years, sitting on the Board of Governors since 2016, and now, as President-Elect. A busy KBA bee. A worker bee.

Always ready, willing, and able to serve.

Cheryl and Bill relax by working in their yard together (although the parts of it they each enjoy are very different - Cheryl loves flowers and gardening- while Bill likes splitting firewood and most anything involving power tools). I know what you are thinking. That sounds more like work than play, but Cheryl also enjoys cooking, reading, and spending time with family and friends. The Rice family enjoys boating, and hiking has become one of Cheryl's favorite escapes. More recently, during the pandemic, the whole family was at their house. In late March, Madison and Sam began working remotely and wanted to get out of the DC area. They asked if they could spend a week or two in Knoxville. Two weeks turned into almost six months, testing the limits of the home broadband but only strengthening the bonds of family with weekend bicycling trips and daily games of table tennis. (I can only imagine the competitive juices flowing around that ping pong table.)

Humble, hard-working, competitive, and giving. Those are the qualities Cheryl will bring to her leadership of the KBA this coming year. A true servant leader. She has consistently shown that in our firm, in our community, and in our profession. That's just who she is and how she rolls. The KBA is poised to have a great 2021 with Cheryl leading the way. Advantage KBA!

