

Judge Kenneth Marra

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When Judge Ken Marra is not addressing attorneys and the public on the bench, he can be seen yelling from the sidelines of soccer games. Why, you ask? Well, he still has four children playing soccer that keeps his weekends and night times fully booked. With eight children, varying from ages 22 through 6, Judge Marra is very active in his role as a father to them.

Judge Marra grew up in Queens and was raised with his four younger siblings in a very strong Italian, Catholic family where his father was an accountant and mother was a homemaker. In 1969, when Judge Marra graduated from high school, he enrolled in the State University at Stony Brook where he graduated in 1973 with a psychology major and minor in education.

Following graduation, Judge Marra was a substitute teacher in social studies and ultimately decided to pursue a law degree. He then attended Stetson College of Law from 1975 through 1977 where he was first in his law school class and worked as the research editor of the Law Review.

After he graduated from law school, Judge Marra applied to the Justice Department and became one of the select few hired under the Justice Department's Honors Graduate Program. He worked as a trial attorney in the Indian Resources Section and was one of ten Justice Department lawyers representing Native Americans under federal treaties and statutes. Judge Marra recalls this part of his life as fascinating, dealing with history and treaty disputes relating to the 1800's.

While in law school, Judge Marra met his sweetheart, Louise who after graduating from law school became Director of Legal Aid in Fort Myers. Once Judge Marra graduated, he married Louise and together they went to Washington, DC. Louise volunteered part time for the District of Columbia's Public Defender's Office and soon after had a full time job raising the Marra family!

Following a three-year commitment with the Justice Department, Judge Marra started working for a law firm in Washington, DC representing Indian tribes as well as working on commercial law cases. The Marra family missed the Florida weather and therefore, moved back to Florida where Judge Marra began practicing with the Nason Gildan Law Firm in West Palm Beach in 1984. Before becoming a Judge, he was very active in our state and local Bar Associations and participated on several committees including The Civil Rules Committee of

The Florida Bar and the Judicial Relations Committee and Client Relations Committees of the Palm Beach County Bar Association. He is currently on the Standard Jury Instructions Committee for civil cases. He stayed with the same law firm until 1996 when he became a Circuit Court Judge in Palm Beach County.

In February 1996, Judge Marra took over Judge Stewart's civil division. Since that time, he has sat on the bench in the family division and has been in the criminal division since January 2000. Judge Marra will tell you that the human factor considerations are more challenging in the criminal arena because one needs to be so sensitive to the human element and the repercussions of the decisions made.

With six boys, two girls and a lovely wife, Judge Marra has his hands full at the end of the day. In court, his words of wisdom to young attorneys would be, "Be professional with other lawyers and always be candid with the Court."

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