

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

TED BERNSTEIN, as Trustee  
of the Shirley Bernstein Trust Agreement  
dated May 20, 2008, as amended,

Probate Division  
Case No.: 502014CP003698XXXXNB

Plaintiff,

v.

ALEXANDRA BERNSTEIN; ERIC BERNSTEIN;  
MICHAEL BERNSTEIN; MOLLY SIMON;  
PAMELA B. SIMON, Individually and as Trustee  
f/b/o Molly Simon under the Simon L. Bernstein  
Trust Dtd 9/13/12; ELIOT BERNSTEIN,  
individually, as Trustee f/b/o D.B., Ja. B. and Jo. B.  
under the Simon L. Bernstein Trust Dtd 9/13/12, and  
on behalf of his minor children D.B., Ja. B. and Jo.  
B.; JILL IANTONI, Individually, as Trustee f/b/o J.I.  
under the Simon L. Bernstein Trust Dtd 9/13/12, and  
on behalf of her Minor child J.I.; MAX  
FRIEDSTEIN; LISA FRIEDSTEIN, Individually, as  
Trustee f/b/o Max Friedstein and C.F., under the  
Simon L. Bernstein Trust Dtd 9/13/12, and on behalf  
of her minor child, C.F.,

Defendants.

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**ORDER ON SUCCESSOR TRUSTEE'S MOTION TO  
APPOINT A GUARDIAN AD LITEM; FOR A GAG ORDER TO PROTECT THE  
GUARDIAN AND OTHERS; AND TO STRIKE ELIOT BERNSTEIN'S FILINGS**

THIS CAUSE came before the Court for evidentiary hearing on February 25, 2016, on  
Successor Trustee's Motion for Appointment of a Guardian Ad Litem to Represent the Interests of  
Eliot Bernstein's Children etc. (the "Motion"). The Court, having considered the record, heard  
argument of counsel and being otherwise fully advised in the premises, hereby

**ORDERS AND ADJUDGES:**

1. This Court determined after a trial held on December 15, 2015 that the beneficiaries of The Shirley Bernstein Trust Agreement dated 5/20/2008 (the "Trust") are Simon Bernstein's "then living grandchildren." Under that ruling, Simon's children – including Eliot Bernstein – are not beneficiaries of the Trust. This Court entered a written order dated February 1, 2016, determining Eliot Bernstein lacks standing to participate in this proceeding and striking his individual filings.

2. Eliot Bernstein's three children are among the class of Trust beneficiaries. Eliot seeks to use his role as parent and natural guardian of three trust beneficiaries to give him standing to continue his involvement in this case. The primary issue now raised is whether Eliot Bernstein should be permitted to continuing representing the interests of his minor children, as their parent and natural guardian, in this Trust Proceeding.

3. ~~Despite his status as natural guardian, Eliot will not be permitted to do so, and The~~  Court will appoint a Guardian ad Litem, because there is a conflict of interest between the parent and the children, and because Eliot Bernstein has proven to be an inadequate representative of the best interests of his children.

4. First, as to the conflict, Eliot's position throughout the case and at trial was that he was a beneficiary of the Trust. He continued advancing that position after trial by prosecuting an appeal of the December 16, 2015 Final Judgment. Eliot's individual interests are in conflict with the interests of his children. Under Florida law, a court should appoint a guardian ad litem when a parent's interest conflicts with the interest of her or her minor child. *Mistretta v. Mistretta*, 566 So. 2d 836, 837-38 (Fla. 1st DCA 1990)(best interests of a minor are *not* fully protected when adverse to the interests of the parent); *Florida Nat. Bank & Trust Co. at Miami v. Blake*, 155 So. 2d 798 (Fla. 3d DCA 1963) (court should have appointed a guardian ad litem for minor child when it was

apparent that the interests of the minor conflicted with the interests of the mother and father); *Gilbertson v. Boggs*, 743 So. 2d 123 (Fla. 4th DCA 1999) (guardian ad litem should have been appointed ~~when~~ <sup>when</sup> the parents' interests were adverse to the minor child).

5. Second, Fla. Stat. 731.303(4) provides: "If the court determines that representation of the interest would otherwise be inadequate, the court may, at any time, appoint a guardian ad litem to represent the interests of ... a minor ..."<sup>1</sup> Based upon the evidence presented and the Court's observations at the trial in December 2015 and at the evidentiary hearing on February 25, 2016, and

*✓ 20* based upon the Court's review of various motions filed by Eliot Bernstein since the trial, it is apparent Eliot Bernstein is not an adequate representative of the best interests of his children. *In fact, his actions are adverse & destructive to the children's interest*

6. Eliot Bernstein states that his agenda includes ridding the court system of corruption among judges, lawyers and fiduciaries, regardless of the ~~cost~~ <sup>to</sup> the beneficiaries. He appears to have no interest in the swift and efficient administration of the Shirley Bernstein Trust. He has taken actions to hinder and delay the administration of the Trust, and caused waste of Trust assets to respond to his assertions.

7. To the extent not already covered by this Court's Order dated February 1, 2016, Eliot Bernstein is barred from any further participation in this action, whether individually or as purported parent and natural guardian. Any and all pending motions, claims, or other filings by Eliot Bernstein,

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<sup>1</sup> In addition, under section 744.3025, the court *may* appoint a guardian ad litem to represent a minor's interest before approving a settlement of the minor's portion of any cause of action in which the gross settlement of the claim exceeds \$15,000 if the court believes a guardian ad litem is necessary to protect the minor's interest, and "shall appoint a guardian ad litem to represent the minor's interest before approving a settlement of the minor's claim in a case in which the gross settlement involving a minor equals or exceeds \$50,000." Here, it is likely that there will be a settlement at some point in which each of minors receives a substantial distribution, and it is likely Eliot will oppose any such settlement.

on behalf of his children, <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ hereby stricken from the record, without prejudice to the rights of the Guardian Ad Litem to take whatever actions are deemed appropriate.

8. The parties shall attempt to mutually agree on a guardian ad litem. The Court will appoint whomever the parties agree upon within the next three business days. Eliot Bernstein may participate in such discussions. To the extent the parties, including Eliot Bernstein, are unable to agree on a guardian ad litem, ~~upon notice from the Trustee's counsel the Court shall randomly appoint a guardian ad litem for Ja.B., Jo.B. and D.B. or schedule a further hearing to appoint a suitable Guardian Ad Litem. with the Clerk with courtesy copy to the undersigned, no later than 10 days from this date.~~ <sup>each of the parties shall submit a list of three names of potential Guardian Ad Litem, each of whom has agreed to accept the appointment if selected. These lists shall be filed with the Clerk with courtesy copy to the undersigned, no later than 10 days from this date.</sup>

9. The Guardian Ad Litem will have full power and autonomy to represent the interests of the children of Eliot Bernstein, subject to the jurisdiction and review of this Court. The Guardian Ad Litem will be entitled to petition the Court for an award of attorneys' fees to be paid out of the gross proceeds of any recovery, distributions or inheritance to be received by Ja.B., Jo.B, and/or D.B.

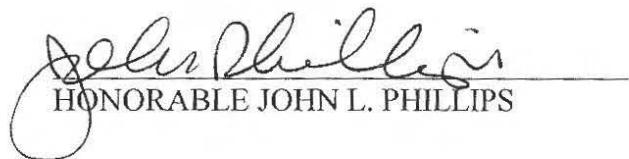
10. To protect the integrity and independence of the guardian, Eliot Bernstein and all persons acting in concert with him: (a) shall ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> make no effort to contact, email or otherwise communicate with the Guardian Ad Litem except at the request of the Guardian Ad Litem; (b) shall make no statement of any kind about the guardian, nor post information about the guardian on the internet in any fashion; and (c) shall not in any way threaten or harass the guardian. This Court alone shall supervise the guardian, and all information concerning this guardianship shall be treated as private and confidential. Any violation of this order may subject the violator to severe sanctions for contempt of court. The Court will use the full measure of its coercive powers to ensure compliance with this Order.

*proposed*

\* Parties shall furnish an Order appointing G.A.L with the lists. The Court will act without further hearing on the appointment, if possible.

11. The Court reserves jurisdiction to enforce all terms of this Order, and to oversee the service of the guardian ad litem appointed.

DONE and ORDERED in Chambers, North County Courthouse on 3-1-16, 2016.

  
HONORABLE JOHN L. PHILLIPS

cc: Attached service list

**SERVICE LIST** Case No.: 502014CP003698XXXXNBIJ

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and Eliot and Candice Bernstein,  
as Parents and Natural Guardians of  
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JOHN L. PHILLIPS  
CIRCUIT JUDGE  
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