

Q&A

Q & A with Steve Gardner



Steve Gardner is a shareholder with Young Wells Williams, P.A. in Ridgeland, Miss. A member of the firm's Commercial Litigation and Creditor's Rights Group, Gardner earned his juris doctor degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. His practice includes commercial litigation, commercial and consumer debt collections, creditor's rights, and bankruptcy litigation, as well as domestic relations law.

Q: Before becoming an attorney, what was your first job?

A: Mostly odd summer jobs while in school.

Q: What motivated you to pursue a legal career?

A: I wrote a college freshman English report about the Sam Sheppard murder case in the 1960s, and I guess my research for that report sparked an interest in pursuing a law degree. I was curious about becoming a lawyer although I never practiced criminal law other than a few pro bono cases.



A University of Mississippi alum and a diehard fan of the Rebels, Steve Gardner posed for a photo with two of his grandsons at an Ole Miss football game.

Q: Who was your chief mentor and how did he or she influence your career?

A: I wrote a college freshman English report about the Sam Sheppard murder case in the 1960s, and I guess my research for that report sparked an interest in pursuing a law degree. I was curious about becoming a lawyer although I never practiced criminal law other than a few pro bono cases.

Q: What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

A: Always be prepared, do your job, and do it the best you can.

Q: What is one thing you would like to learn to do?

A: I've always wanted to learn how to play guitar, but I'm not gifted in that area. It's a struggle for me but I'm trying.

Q: What is your proudest career achievement?

A: I represented a group of senior nursing students who were being denied the chance to graduate due to an arbitrary grading policy change during the middle of their senior year. We filed suit against the university and Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Education. We successfully litigated that case, and the students were allowed to graduate with their class. We earned no fee on that case, and I personally paid the costs of experts. Of all the cases I've handled, that's the one I'm most proud of. Those students were outstanding, with many of them graduating with honors.

Q: What other career path might you have chosen?

A: My undergraduate degree was in banking and finance, so I probably would have worked in a bank or other financial firm. No offense to my banker friends, but thank goodness I didn't.

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Q: What do you do to give back to your community?

A: I joined a volunteer fire department over a year ago and since joining, I have earned my emergency medical responder certification and my volunteer fire fighter certification. Both required substantial classroom work and skills testing. I don't mind saying that at my age (64), the firefighter certification class tested my physical abilities in ways that have not been tested since high school. Since joining the fire department, when home and available for service, I've gone on numerous medical and fire calls. It is and has been an awesome experience and has given me a heightened appreciation for what first responders do and the pride they have in protecting the community.

Q: Can you share a positive referral experience within Primerus?

A: I recently worked with some Primerus lawyers in Arizona that needed help with a bankruptcy issue in Mississippi. We successfully got an automatic stay lifted here so they could pursue state court claims in Arizona.

Q: What is your most treasured material possession?

A: Honestly, I don't think I have a "treasured" material possession. I do have a few items I inherited from my parents that I would not want to part with.

Q: What is your happiest childhood memory?

A: Playing sports in high school, establishing relationships with teammates, and winning state championships in baseball would be some of my happiest memories. Riding bicycles to Little League baseball practice and then going to the local drug store, sitting at the counter, and having cherry cokes with teammates was pretty cool too.



Steve Gardner helped snuff out a field fire during his first year as a volunteer firefighter.



In full firefighting gear, Steve Gardner has served as a volunteer fireman for more than a year.

Q: What is your favorite movie and book?

A: Movie: "Lonesome Dove" (TV mini-series).

Book: I have never been much of a reader, but I enjoy audiobooks on trips. I listened to most of the "Bosch" series of books written by Michael Connelly. Those were good.

Q: What is the most awe-inspiring place you have visited?

A: I don't know if "awe-inspiring" is the right words for this, but if you want to reflect on patriotism, God and country and get a profound sense of what our country went through on 9-11, then make a point to visit ground zero in New York, the memorial at the Pentagon, and that rural field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. My wife and I have visited all three locations. It's not necessarily the locations that are "awe-inspiring," but instead it's the bravery and sacrifice that occurred that day at those locations that is "awe-inspiring."

Q: What are your favorite leisure time pursuits?

A: One can never go wrong holding a cold adult beverage on a beach.

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Q: What is your favorite famous or inspirational quote?

A: From the movie “Shawshank Redemption”: “Get busy living or get busy dying.” ~ *Andy Dufresne*

Q: Who is on your guest list for the ideal dinner party?

A: I have no idea who I would invite to dinner. However, the one I would love to be invited to would be the Champions Dinner at Augusta National Golf Club during Masters week. That would be cool.

Q: What are the top three items on your bucket list?

A: Going to England, Normandy, and Germany to visit many of the World War II battlefield sites. A tour of the Holy Land. Seeing as much of the U.S.A. as possible before this life is over.



All smiles at a birthday party were Steve Gardner, his wife, son, twin daughters, and six grandchildren.



An avid hunter, Steve Gardner is pictured during an outing for whitetail deer in Mississippi.