

Alabama Business Alert: Better Business Bureau Issues Warning About Women's Expo

By: Rutledge & Yaghmai

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Trade shows and expositions can be a great way to network and promote your Alabama business. Unfortunately, in limited cases, they can also be a scam.

The Northern Alabama Better Business Bureau has issued an [alert](#) regarding two Alabama businesses—Expositions & Festivals, Inc. (EFI) and the Alabama Women's Chamber of Commerce (ALWCC)—that are promoting a Women's Expo in Huntsville.

According to the alert, the BBB has determined that the two organizations have established a pattern of scheduling events in various cities throughout the Southeast, accepting exhibitor fees, and then either rescheduling an event on multiple occasions, changing the venue, or failing to pay a deposit to secure the event site.

Other exhibitors, including two North Alabama businesses, have reported that the multiple rescheduling and/or change in venue for shows they signed up to exhibit in has caused them to be unable to participate and they have been unable to get a refund of the money paid to be an exhibitor.

What is most alarming to us is that the contracts used for the events being promoted by EFI and ALWCC stipulate that no refunds are made under any circumstances, even if the show is canceled. The contract also states that the show's management has the right to change the date or location of the show, and no refund will be due to the exhibitor.

When considering the purchase of tradeshow booths, the BBB advises businesses to:

- Check with the venue and confirm the time and location.
- Research the host organization by reading its online BBB Business Review.
- Get all details in writing. Carefully review the terms and conditions, as well as exhibitor options in case the event is canceled or rescheduled.
- Find out if the event has been held before, and if so, ask to speak to other businesses that attended.
- Consider paying for the event by [credit card](#). If the services are not rendered as promised, it may be possible to dispute the charge through your credit card provider.
- Be wary of any websites promoting trade show events that do not list the name and address of the trade show organizer or promoter.
- Ask event organizers about add-on costs, such as fees for electricity and Internet hookup, tables and tablecloths and other charges that may not be included in the booth rental fees.

Of course, when evaluating the terms of a contract, it also advisable to consult with an experienced Alabama business attorney.

Rutledge & Yaghmai is a full service litigation firm that offers more than fifty-seven years of diverse legal experience. The attorneys of [Rutledge & Yaghmai](#) leverage that experience to assist large and small businesses throughout Alabama in achieving their business goals while minimizing their risks.

In addition to offering transactional business services such as Alabama business formation and planning, Rutledge & Yaghmai prides itself on the diversity of Alabama business litigation cases it has handled successfully.

To learn more about the wide range of transactional and business litigation services we offer Alabama businesses, please [contact](#) the attorneys of Rutledge & Yaghmai today.

About Rutledge & Yaghmai <http://rylaw.net/>

Rutledge & Yaghmai (R & Y) is a full service litigation firm that offers more than fiftyseven years of diverse legal experience. Formed in 2006, Rutledge & Yaghmai concentrates on giving each case individual attention as opposed to carrying a mass a number of cases. That way they are able to develop a lifelong relationship with clients.

William Rutledge

William Eugene Rutledge graduated from the University of Alabama in 1960. He graduated from the University of Alabama Law School 1966. Mr. Rutledge served as a Captain in the Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Army and as Chief of Military Justice at Fort Bliss, Texas. He was trial counsel for the United States where he prosecuted several nationally publicized court marshalls. He was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal for his trial work in the Army.

He began the practice of law in Birmingham, AL on August 1, 1966. His early trial practice was a mixture of business litigation and railroad related litigation. He has a strong appellate practice in which he has excelled since the early 1970s and continues that practice till the present time. He has handled over 100 cases in the state appellate system and 80 cases in the federal appellate system.

He specialized through the years of his practice in business formations. He has assisted new entrepreneurs in the formation and strategy of their businesses. Also, he represents companies in business litigation. Cases have ranged from business disputes among members to representing smaller companies against the "larger corporations." Practice memberships include the Bar of the Alabama Supreme Court, the United States District Court for the Northern, Middle and Southern Districts, the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, and the Supreme Court of the United States. He is married to Sherry Crittenden Rutledge and has four children and six grandchildren.

Greg Yaghmai

Greg graduated with honors from The Citadel where he received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration. In 1997, he received his law degree from Cumberland School of Law.

For the first four and half of years of his legal career, Greg served as a Deputy District Attorney for the Jefferson County, Alabama District Attorney's Office. By age 26 he tried his first death penalty case. He went on to try either solo or as lead counsel seven capital murder and six murder cases. He also had the benefit of being the first lawyer in Alabama to be certified by the Alabama State Troopers as a Traffic Homicide investigator. He obtained this after attending a two-week seminar, which required him to live in a closed military base with forty other police officers. He also had the unique experience of being provided alcohol in a controlled setting so he could be utilized by the Jefferson County Sheriff's training academy in officers learning how to administer field sobriety tests. He is a member of the National College for DUI Defense (NCDD) which is a prestigious organization defending those charged with DUI.

He subsequently left the DA's office to become a partner in a forty lawyer civil litigation firm. This firm concentrated mostly on civil defense work, but Greg continued to expand his plaintiff and criminal defense practice.

In 2006, he co-founded Rutledge & Yaghmai. One of Greg's goals was to reduce the number of cases handled to allow for more individual attention to each case. Rutledge & Yaghmai maintains a general litigation practice. Greg focuses on personal injury, business litigation, and criminal defense cases.

Greg has truly handled cases from all sides: criminal prosecution/defense and civil plaintiff/defense. Overall, Greg has tried more than seventy-five jury trials to conclusion. He has significant experience in using visual presentations and present day media applications in presenting cases to jury. His ultimate jury consultant is his wife, Brandi, who he met when she served on the jury of a rape/kidnapping case he tried.

He has recently been asked to teach Trial Techniques for the International Web based site Solo Practice University. There he will share his expertise in trying jury cases.

Greg is licensed in all state and federal courts in Alabama and the 11th Circuit