



“Reflect upon your present blessings, of which everyone has plenty; not on your past misfortunes of which everyone has some.” ~ Charles Dickens ~

“For today and its blessings, I owe the world an attitude of gratitude.” ~ Clarence E. Hodges ~

“Pride slays thanksgiving, but a humble mind is the soil out of which thanks naturally grow. A proud man is seldom a grateful man, for he never thinks he gets as much as he deserves.” ~ Henry Ward Beecher ~

Day To Honor Everyone Who Served!

There are heroes among us. In war and in peace they defend our ideals and on November 11, Veterans Day, we get a chance to thank Memorial Day is a day for remembering and honoring military personnel who died battle or as a result of wounds sustained in battle. While those who died are also thank and honor all who served honorably in the military - in wartime or veterans for their service, to acknowledge that their contributions to our national who served - not only those who died - have sacrificed and done their duty. November 11 was originally called Armistice Day. It honored veterans of World War I on the anniversary of the war's end. In 1954, after considering the tremendous number of veterans of World War II and Korea, November 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars. On October 8, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated: "In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose." To veterans, we say "Thank you." We sincerely appreciate and recognize your sacrifices and your service on our behalf.



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Only A Pawn In Their Game!

Remember Mongo in the movie, "Blazing Saddles"? He was the big dim-witted oaf, played by Alex Karas, the ex-football player. Anyway, when someone asked Mongo about who he was, he responded, "*Mongo only pawn, in game of life.*"

A pretty deep thought for a guy without much in the way of brains, wouldn't you say? Now, that line was pretty funny in the movie, coming from Mongo. But what's not too funny is that for many of us, we are unfortunate pawns in the game called "financial politics", from our friends in Washington D.C.

Let's take a look at this game, and see it from the pawn's eye view...and how we can stop being nothing more than unwilling pieces in the Congress' and administration's games they play with our financial lives?

Imagine this scene in your mind's eye for a moment: You are a game piece standing up on the "GO" square of a "Monopoly" game. You are the shoe, or iron, or whatever. Try to see the game board from the view of the piece, as you sit, waiting to be moved. Staring ahead at the big squares looming in front of you. and, the 90 degree angle you'll be taking somewhere down the path. From where you sit, you cannot even see "Boardwalk", because you are facing ahead. Now the way you move ahead is by someone throwing the dice, and picking you up, usually hopping you along each square, counting the move out loud.

"One, two, three, four..." Each hop lets you land on a square for only a brief instant, and then you are on your way to the final destination for that move. And when you land on the square that will be your home for the next little bit, some result is going to happen to you.

You may add a house or hotel to that square. You'll pay someone else rent for ending up on their turf. You'll get clobbered by some mishap, and have to pay a fine or end up in jail.

All kinds of occurrences are possible. Sometimes you'll be the winner, and end up financially independent. More often you'll end up broke, buffeted by the winds of circumstance that send you out of the game.

Now understand that as a shoe or iron, you are moved by some big hand squeezing you as it picks you up. Each move is dictated by the random fate of the number showing face up on the dice. Your master has no control over where you end up.

He or she does however have total control over what decisions are made, once you've landed on the square the dice forced you to land on!

See, the player has some control over the outcome of the game. If he or she makes the wrong purchases or investments, he or she can end up being eaten alive by another player. But you, as the game piece, are totally powerless. You have no say in how your life is handled. Your master's fate becomes your fate. Not a great way to live, is it?

Just like Mongo, you become nothing more than a pawn in the game of "Monopoly". (Or, in our sense, the game of your financial life.)

Unfortunately this is how so many of us live our lives. We treat ourselves as if we are the shoe or iron, having no say in what squares we end up on, or where we get moved to.

But it doesn't have to be that way. It really doesn't. Your life can be very much under your control! Just like the player who makes decisions on what to do after landing on a "Monopoly" square, you are in the same position. (As a matter of fact, "Monopoly" is the most popular game around, because it does so closely mirror real life!)

See, the random event in "Monopoly" is the roll of the dice. That is what determines where you end up. In real life, the randomness comes from all sorts of things the government, your health, your family, the weather, and so on. Many things that happen to you are determined by fate, or some higher power, or whatever.

The dice of life fall where they may. But you must be like the "Monopoly" player, and make the right decisions based on the rules of the game, and never let yourself be merely the shoe being pushed along!

Every game has it's rules. Our system of government is no different. It too, has rules that must be followed by all of us. Just like some players are better at playing "Monopoly" than others, you must be better than average if you're going to get to your own personal "Boardwalk"!

Many times our clients tell us that their friends can't understand why their financial situation is so much better than their friend's life. We hear stories about people at a cookout complaining about their income taxes, and how shocked they are to find out that their friend (our client) pays several thousand dollars a year less in taxes than they do, legally!

Or how our client's neighbors, with almost identical houses and incomes, can't afford to send their kids to a private college, when our clients can. Or when one of our clients is able to take the company's offer of early retirement, and not have to work; while their co-worker in the same exact situation has to get a job at the hardware store to be able to pay his bills.

Same game. Same rules. Same dice coming up. Yet one family walks away the winner, with others are left behind. Is it the game that is different, or is it the knowledge of the rules, and how to use them that makes the difference?

The bottom line is that you must know the rules!

If you don't take the time to learn them yourself, then you have to get help in how to play the game.

And, as usual, the most common rules that need to be understood relate to:

How To Legally Save Thousands Of Dollars In Taxes...And How To Plan Retirement So You Don't Run Out Of Money, Or Have To Go Back To Work!

See, in the post terrorism, post stock market bubble world, the rules we used to know are all new. They are always

changing. They are more complicated. Investment options and tax laws are so complex, so difficult to understand. Of course, there are still dozens of legal ways to reduce your taxes, buried in all those complicated laws! Of course, there are still sound investment planning options that can help you beat inflation and be able to reach financial independence. It's all still out there. **But, the rules have changed!** What used to work...may not work any more. What used to be safe and secure, now isn't. What goes on in the Middle East now has a direct effect on your wallet and future.

Think about Mongo. Think about how he felt helpless to take control of his life. And think about how important it is for you to take control of your taxes, your retirement planning, your investment planning...to win the game for yourself!

So what's the bottom line? You need to make sure your financial planning is up to date and has conquering inflation, tax reduction, investment and retirement planning built in! **Now** is the time to take action. Don't wait until the end of the year to do planning. Let's get together and review your situation (If you haven't been in for your annual update...we *are* going to find you). REMEMBER – WE WANT YOU TO CONTACT US WITH YOUR “HERE'S WHAT WE'RE THINKING ABOUT DOING QUESTIONS”, NOT YOUR “GUESS WHAT WE JUST DID!” COMMENTS!

Let's Ask A Simple Question About Iraq...Where's The Money Coming From?

Well, we're in for some really trying and difficult times when it comes to the ongoing war on terrorism and the situation in Iraq. (And, in Afghanistan as well, for that matter.)

Now, I don't know what your political affiliations or leanings are, nor does it really matter in regard to the question I'm asking in this newsletter.

See, whether you were supporting the war in Iraq and are still in favor of our troops being in the country, or whether you don't care one way or the other...there is a serious financial impact that can affect all of us. Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, independents...all of us, will live with the same economic fate regardless of our opinions on the war on terror, and the occupation/attempted transformation of Iraq and Afghanistan into democratic countries.

Now as I always do, I want to make absolutely sure that you understand I am not offering political opinions on whether I think the attacks and subsequent occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan are right or wrong, or whether the way things have been handled, have been done poorly or well. As usual, what I AM talking about is the financial impact of the government's actions in the overall war against Arab military apparatus.

As you may know, President Bush recently went on TV, explaining the status of the war on terror, the status of the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan...and the estimated costs of taking care of these situations just for the next 12 months.

As of the day we're writing this, the request to Congress is for 87 Billion additional dollars (yes, that's Billion with a “B”) to pay for the multi-front wars overseas! This new money needed is in addition to the \$79 billion that Congress approved in April. President Bush said the money is needed to

stop terrorists before they can strike again in the United States.

This money is NOT to be allocated for the domestic Homeland Security programs, the Travel Security Administration, FBI, ATF, etc.

No. This 87 Billion is new money needed just for maintaining over 100,000 troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. When you add the two amounts together, you're talking about \$166 Billion dollars to be spent on the wars in less than a year!

That's a lot of extra money to come up with, don't you think? And the next logical question, of course, is...***where are we as a nation going to come up with one-hundred-sixty-six Billion dollars to pay for these new military and reconstruction needs?*** (And, that's assuming these figures are enough. Don't forget that so far, the government's initial requests for money have been way less than the amounts they eventually required. I feel safe betting that this 87 Billion bucks will end up not being enough new money.)

Well, as you may or may not know, our country does not have this extra cash lying around in a savings account, waiting to be used for a “rainy day”, like you or I would have to do.

In fact, since our Treasury has spent way more money than it collected from us in taxes, interest and other sources of revenue, the only way they can come up with the cash is to literally print the money on the government's virtual/digital money printing press. Now, they don't actually physically print all this money, but do the equivalent with electronic transactions by placing the money in the soldiers' paychecks, cutting checks to vendors and weapons suppliers, and so on.

They just authorize the money to be created out of thin air...and then, voila...the cash exists and is there to be spent!

But how can this work? If the government doesn't have the cash to spend, yet spends it anyway...what happens to our financial system? What affect is there when the government places 166 Billion dollars of money that doesn't exist into our economy?

Well, the simplest answer is that you are living through a scenario that has caused inflation to increase many times in the past, when non-existent cash has been flooded into our economy like we're seeing now.

Consequently, like any other item, when you put more of something into the market, the value of all of those items goes down as the supply increases. This basic law of supply and demand works on dollars just like it does with beanie babies or desktop computers. As these items became more and more available, their value (or price) has gone down.

Now, when the value of dollars goes down as their supply goes up, the result for all of us is that the prices for things we buy goes up. Right? When the dollars have less value, the things it will buy goes down, which results in prices going up.

Now many people think inflation has been "licked", and that we won't ever return to inflation rates that are as high as they were in the late 70's and early 80's, for example. (That was when, the country suffered the lash-back of the huge amount of money spent and printed for the Vietnam War..., which eventually led to double digit inflation. Anyone remember what interest rates were in '79, '80, '81, '82...when we had out-of-control inflation? Do 17% mortgages ring a bell?)

Some people even think we are headed for a "deflation", where prices end up *dropping* for goods and services. Is this going to happen? I don't know.

What I do know is that history repeats itself, and I think there is a chance inflation will increase, and will likely be a familiar, but unwanted visitor in the months and years ahead.

I don't think it's a wise move to plan your financial life for a low, or no inflation scenario. For example, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, the overall Consumer Price Index rose at an annual rate of 1.2% through July...if you take out the cost of food and energy. (Which is ridiculous when you think about it. Since you have no choice but to pay for them, how can you ignore them? Especially, when the government says that energy prices, for example, increased at a rate of 10.7 percent in 2002, and increased further at a 13.9 percent rate for the first seven months of 2003!!!)

I THINK THAT THE ONLY PRUDENT THING TO DO IS PLAN FOR A HEALTHY DOSE OF INFLATION IN YOUR RETIREMENT SCENARIO! If inflation is less than I anticipate it could be, then by planning for it, and having more money available, you will be in even better shape...as opposed to not planning for inflation...and finding yourself running out of money too soon. While I fully admit I cannot predict the future, I do think that as your advisor, I would be remiss if I didn't warn you to make sure you take somewhat higher rates of inflation into your planning. If I'm wrong, GREAT. If I'm not...then you won't be left wondering how you're going to maintain your lifestyle and enjoy a worry-free retirement!

So what's the bottom line? You need to make sure your financial planning is up to date and has inflation built into it! **Now** is the time to take action. Don't wait until the end of the year to do planning. Let's get together and review your situation (If you haven't been in for your annual update...we *are* going to find you). **REMEMBER – WE WANT YOU TO CONTACT US WITH YOUR "HERE'S WHAT WE'RE THINKING ABOUT DOING QUESTIONS", NOT YOUR "GUESS WHAT WE JUST DID!" COMMENTS!**

Financial Tips Of The Month...

Your Kid's College Savings Could Be Taxed Big Time!

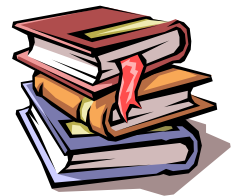
If you have set up any trusts to protect your kid's college money, or to invest for a family member, or for another reason, watch your backside! The Congress established hidden tax laws to nail people who are saving money for college in trusts!

Unfortunately, the law taxes income retained by these type of trusts more highly than any other type of income! If you have money inside a college trust, the tax rates are nothing short of obscene! In fact, the tax rates go to the maximum of 39.6% with as little as \$7,500 of income! (Compare that to the top rate kicking in at \$250,000 of income for individuals!)

I don't know why the government is attacking people who have worked hard to save for college, but they are with a vengeance! If you are thinking about setting up college funds, you may want to use other types of plans to put away the money such as:

- Set up maximum flexibility in the trust for distributing income.
- Change the investments in the trust to provide the kind of income that isn't taxed under this trap.
- Consider placing your kids on your business' payroll.
- Compare the tax consequences of making UGMA (Uniform Gifts To Minors Act) or UTMA (Uniform Transfer To Minors Act) gifts to your kids versus setting up trusts!

As usual, with any legal issue like this, **DON'T TRY TO DO THIS YOURSELF!** We'll be glad to work with you on how to avoid the taxes, and coordinate all this with an attorney! Please keep in mind that this tip is designed to be of help for you, but is not to be relied upon as advice. It is merely a reminder that there are many choices you have available to you, and that planning is the only way to find the right answers for your situation! As with any financial issues, make sure you get the right information before making a decision! If you have any questions, we'll be glad to help you!



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A Costly Tax Mistake You Do Not Want To Make!

Did you know that most people (even when using an accountant to prepare their tax returns) overpay their taxes because of two little known situations that come up quite often. What we're talking about is when you sell shares in a mutual fund that you have owned for a period of time.

Here's the problem. When you sell your shares in a mutual fund, you get x dollars out, which is converted to a number of shares. For example, let's say you sell mutual fund shares now worth \$10,000, which are priced at \$10 a share on the day you sell, which came from an original investment of \$1,000. That would be 1,000 shares sold. On the surface, it looks like you will pay tax on a \$9,000 profit. OK so far?

Now here's one problem. If you had reinvested the dividends and/or capital gains when they were paid to your account, those are paid in the form of more shares. But, *you are paying taxes every year on those distributions, even though they are reinvested, and you don't actually get the money!*

So in our example, if 100 of those 1,000 shares were reinvested shares that you already paid tax on, you would not have to report those 100 shares as taxable income! Thus, your taxable profit is \$8,000, not \$9,000! If you're in the 39.6% tax bracket, that saves you \$396 of needless tax! (We see this, and the next mistake made all the time!)

The next mistake occurs when you sell a partial number of your shares, as opposed to the entire account. You should really keep share-by-share records of stocks and mutual fund investments. When you sell a portion of your holdings, this lets you select particular shares to sell for the greatest tax advantage. For example, if over a number of years you've bought shares in a fund at prices ranging from \$10 to \$30, and now the fund trades at \$25, by selling shares bought at \$30 you can generate a \$5 loss deduction at the same time as you raise cash. Without share-by-share records, the IRS would tax the sale as if the first shares bought were the first ones sold, or by treating the cost of shares sold as the average cost of all shares owned. In either case, a taxable gain would result. (We see this mistake made all the time as well!)

Bottom line: **1. Make sure you get the right information on *anything* you do financially, and 2. Keep good records of everything! If you're not sure about any of this, please ask us, and we'll be glad to help wherever we can!**

Please keep in mind that this tip is designed to be of help for you, but is not to be relied upon as advice. It is merely a reminder that there are many choices you have available to you, and that planning is the only way to find the right answers for your situation! As with any financial issues, make sure you get the right information before making a decision! If you have any questions, we'll be glad to help you!

SUCCESS STORIES OF THE MONTH!

(Note: The details of these stories have been changed to maintain confidentiality, and some compilations are used to accomplish anonymity.)

“People's minds are changed through observation and not through argument.” Will Rogers

A Real Messy Divorce!

Some stories are more fun to write about than others. This is one that falls into the not-so-fun category. Although it turns out OK, it began as a real mess!

The story starts a while ago, when one of our clients called to ask if we could help his son Tim. Tim was 38 years old, and had been married to the same woman, Char, for almost 15 years. They had two kids, a boy who was 14, and a younger daughter who had just started kindergarten. The reason our client was calling was because Tim and Char had some real problems, and they wanted to know if we could help. It turned out that Char had moved out of the house. She is a teacher at a local adult education program, and had moved in with one of her students, a 23 year old.

Tim had no idea anything was going on, and when he came home from work one day, discovered that Char was gone. Needless to say, when he found out Char's new living arrangements, he was crushed. Actually, crushed is a misnomer. He was totally devastated.

Here he was, thinking everything was fine, and not only was it not fine, but the other man was a kid. Tim had to hold up for his kid's sake. Their son was the victim of peer insults at high school. Their daughter was luckier to have the situation not so vocalized by the younger kids.

When Tim's folks called us, they were in a state of shock themselves. Char somehow decided to ask for custody of the kids, besides filing for a divorce. We told Tim's parents that we obviously couldn't do much, and that Tim certainly must get an attorney, quickly if he didn't already have one. They told us that Tim's lawyer was not really a specialist in these kinds of matters, and wanted our recommendations and any suggestions we had.

First of all, we referred Tim to a divorce/child custody attorney. That helped Tim a lot. We were glad to hear Tim tell us that he felt better about the custody issue in particular.

He had been told by the other lawyer that he had a chance of losing the kids because of the bias towards moms in situations like these. Our attorney assured him that there was little chance of Char getting the kids. Possible, but not probable.

The specialist also asked Tim to take a look at what he really wanted to do. Did he want sole custody? Did he want a joint custody arrangement? Did he want to lock Char out of his, and the kid's lives? Or whatever.

We helped Tim look at the financial issues he had to deal with, but couldn't do much until he decided what he was going to do.

We have to give Tim all the credit in the world. As rejected and humiliated as he was at first, as time wore on, he lost those feelings almost completely.

He was able to sort out the fact that the kids' welfare came first. He was also big enough to realize that Char had some major problems, and actually began to feel sorry for *her!* He decided to ask for a joint custody arrangement, where the kids would live at home, and that he and Char would take turns living with them. She was stubborn at first, and held out for sole custody. Eventuality, reality sank into her thinking, and she finally agreed to the shared custody arrangement. They would keep the kids in their house, and Tim would have to find a place to live when Char was there.

We helped Tim work out the financial issues, and worked out a way for him to afford a nearby apartment by showing him how to:

1. Legally save \$498 per month in needless income taxes.
 2. Stop wasting over \$300 per month on an old fashioned, out of date whole life policy. (He was also able to get 4 ¼ time more coverage while saving the 300 bucks each month!)
 3. Restructure his debts and mortgages to save an additional \$276 per month!
- ...thus freeing up the cash to pay the extra rent without making even more radical changes to their financial lifestyle.

It all worked out OK. Not great, but OK. The kids were home. Their mom was there part of the time. Their dad the rest. If we hadn't helped Tim find the extra money he didn't know he had, he would have never been able to afford the apartment, and allow the kids to live at their home!

What a great way to make a living! Helping people solve problems that seem monumental, and helping families reach their goals!

The upshot of all this? You're not going to believe it. A few month's later, Char calls Tim and asks him to take her back. She wanted out of her newfound May-December romance. Tim told us he wasn't going to do anything for now, but would never say never.

Life sure has its way of throwing curve balls at us, huh? At least it's not boring!

How about you?? If you are interested in learning more about how you can save money in taxes, overpriced insurance, or other expenses you might be overpaying for...or want to sit down with us and have your plan reviewed or updated, give us a call! We're here to help you, and to help you keep on track with your planning. Don't be a stranger.

Call us, and we'll assist you in having the best shot possible at reaching your goals, and having peace of mind! Don't wait until it's too late!

A Home Away From Home Finally Achieved!

Chuck and Linda always wanted a vacation home. Chuck loves to fish and occasionally go hunting. While Linda isn't crazy about these types of sports, she loves being in the woods, taking hikes, riding her bicycle, swimming and all kinds of other typical vacation activities.

The area where they had always wanted to get a place and usually go every year for at least a week or two, was in their minds, too expensive for them to be able to afford.

They usually rented their cousin's cabin out there. (He always gives them a good deal). And when they go talking to real estate agents, or check the papers, they get depressed when they see how expensive everything is. Try as they might to save money, they just never seem to get enough together. Something always comes up: braces for their daughter, Julie; wrestling clothes for their son, Jerry; fixing the broken car; new furnace...you all know the story. One thing after another. And in the meantime, their dream of a vacation home stays just as far away as ever.

One night, they were watching TV and saw a special on the news about how vacation home prices were dropping in many parts of the country because of the slow economy and the dot.com/high tech disasters. They looked at each other befuddled because they didn't see the prices dropping where they were looking.

Their cousin, Jimmy, whose cabin they rent, was talking to them at a family holiday dinner a few weeks later. Chuck and Linda asked him how he was able to buy his vacation place, and he mentioned that he had worked with us to help him find ways to afford his cabin.

Chuck and Linda were surprised that Jimmy used a financial advisor. They thought that only multi-millionaires had financial advisors. Jimmy does OK, but is not what most people would call a "millionaire".

Anyway, they were very excited, and called us up. They came in the next week. We discussed their goals and objectives, their feelings on their financial situation...and told them we thought we could put a plan together that would accomplish several things that they wanted.

- Start making sure that they had enough money set aside for Jerry and Julie's educations.
- A plan for reducing what they consider their ridiculous income tax burden.
- Figure out a way to get that vacation home while doing all of the above...and putting money away for their retirement, all at the same time.
- Putting all these plans together while still maintaining their current lifestyle and having enough cash to handle emergencies.

While this may sound like a tall order, that's the kind of thing we do all the time.

We immediately began putting a plan together for Chuck and Linda and found they had several ways of doing what they wanted. It was mainly a matter of them getting an understanding of their options, and making educated decisions. We showed them different ways

they could finance their debts, including their house. They had a first mortgage and a second mortgage they had used to pay down their credit cards and do some remodeling in the house. We showed them several other financing options including some specialized mortgages they could obtain to consolidate the loans so they could get cash out and still have a lower payment than their current combined payments.

We showed Chuck and Linda how to maximize their retirement plan savings at work, and how to get money for doing some additional retirement savings they didn't know they could do. (Their employee benefits person didn't even know these options existed inside their company plans. We find this happens a lot.)

We explained how to qualify for additional college funding for Julie, who was going into school, by repositioning some of their assets, thus maximizing the aid they were eligible for.

We presented ways for the couple to reduce their taxable income by more than \$6,000 a year through replacing taxable interest and dividends with tax deferred earnings, saving them another couple hundred bucks a month.

Plus, we analyzed their insurance situation, and found that they were severely underinsured, (which made Linda very uncomfortable) AND they were paying way, way too much for the coverage they did have. (They had a conglomeration of a bunch of old whole life policies that amounted to only \$63,200 in face value, with \$12,476 in cash values earning an average of 1.5% interest over the last 22 years. Ouch.) We were able to get them the proper amount of life insurance with modern, cost effective policies that saved the family over \$2,600 a year they were flushing down the insurance toilet.

Finally, we saw how the family was financing and insuring their cars, and made suggestions on how to use leasing to reduce their overall costs of financing the autos...plus showed them how to lower their car and homeowner's premiums by more than \$650 a year without cutting any essential coverage.

Chuck and Linda were thrilled they had so many options to improve their financial situation...and that they could get their vacation house without sacrificing their lifestyle or mortgaging their future!

Anyway, just a couple months later, Chuck and Linda were sitting in a title office, closing on their brand new vacation home, paid for, with cash from the financial planning we helped them with. The home isn't some gigantic vacation palace and, in fact, is a rather modest cottage. But it's everything they always wanted. You should have seen the looks on their faces when they came in to see us, bringing copies of the deed and pictures of the house! They were as excited as little kids (actually I think Chuck was more like a little kid than Linda, but that's a whole 'nother story).

For a lot of people, it's hard to imagine being able to rearrange your finances, taking all the raw clay of your financial life, and molding it into an entirely new piece of art. Just like in the hands of an artist, who can turn an ugly lump of clay into a beautiful piece of art...once you know what your options are, you too can create a beautiful piece of financial art out of what may now seem like a big ugly mess!

It's the same old story. You have to know what your options are and how to play the game. We don't like to brag, but if Chuck and Linda hadn't come in to see us, and continued to deal with their financial life the way they had in the past, they never would have achieved any of their goals, especially not their dream of a house in the woods. Knowledge, and *how to apply it*, is the key.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can save money in taxes, or other expenses you might be overpaying for...or want to sit down with us and have your plan reviewed or updated, give us a call! We're here to help you, and to help you keep on track with your planning. Don't be a stranger. Call us, and we'll assist you in having the best shot possible at reaching your goals, and having peace of mind! Don't wait until it's too late!

Did You Know...

(Our monthly feature of tidbits of news and info to make your life easier, your money work harder and so you're healthy all the time!)

Did you know...

1.) What golfers should think of before hitting: nothing! *Researchers at Arizona State University and the University of Chicago have been studying patterns of brain activation in golfers. Surprisingly, they find that the better the golfer, the less brain activity there is before a shot. Sports psychologists in the study say the difference between amateurs and pros is increased brain activity in the left hemisphere. This is the seat of logic, analysis, and verbal reasoning. Professionals decide how to make the shot before addressing the ball. After that, they stay calm and just do it. When asked what they thought about just before hitting the ball, they said they weren't thinking about anything. Amateurs showed more activity and in more areas of the brain. They weren't afraid or anxious, but they were overwhelmed with details and memories of shots they missed in the past.*

2.) Be cautious buying online! *Whether bidding on eBay or another online auction house, it pays to protect yourself. These precautions are recommended by the editors of Fortune:*

- * Use a credit card that will reimburse you if the seller disappears.
- * Be sensible. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- * Avoid a seller who has a string of positive comments and a recent cluster of negative ones. Con artists act fast.
- * Consider an escrow service such as Escrow.com for expensive items. SOS4Auctions lists fake escrow sites.
- * With presale auctions, ask why it takes four weeks and call the supplier if they claim to have one.
- * Avoid anyone who insists that you "send money fast" or have payment wired via Western Union.

3.) Prenuptial agreements protect both partners! The "prenup" is no longer just for the wealthy. As customs change, many people are drawing one, and both partners feel good about it. The agreement has lost it's negative stigma. Arlene Dubin, author of Prenups for

Lovers, a Romantic Guide to Prenuptial Agreements (Villard) says drafting an agreement is not a sign that you don't trust your partner. Actually, it makes many aspects of your financial life easier for your partner. Young couples are making them whether or not they plan to get married. Because people are marrying later, they have assets like retirement accounts and apartments. Often there are credit cards, student loans, and other debts involved. Dubin says everyone considering marriage should have a prenup. Though some couples include such agreements as who will cook and who will clean up, financial planners say it's best to stick to financial matters. In general, they advise covering such issues as who will get what at death or divorce, who will pay which bills, how a stay-at-home partner will be compensated, and how a family business or inheritance will be handled. A survey by the Equality in Marriage Institute shows that 40 percent of people think prenups only protect the partner with the most assets, but the prenup can help both parties.

Health Tips Of The Month...

(These tips are not for everybody and should not be taken as specific recommendations. Before you take any action regarding yours or anyone's health, we strongly suggest you consult a qualified physician!)

November is American Diabetes Month!

There's an epidemic in America today. The number of adults and children who have diabetes is high and still growing. It is the leading cause of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, adult blindness, and non-traumatic amputations.

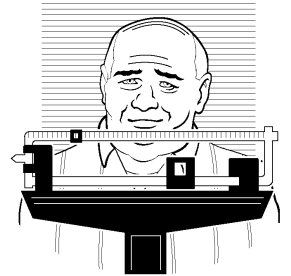
Risk factors for diabetes include being overweight (body-mass index of 25 or higher); having a family history of diabetes, being a Native American, African American, Hispanic, or a Pacific Islander; being older than age 45; having a sedentary lifestyle, and having blood pressure above 140/90.

There are signs and symptoms, such as frequent urination and injuries that are slow to heal, but no one should wait until symptoms appear. People of every age should be checked by a doctor for diabetes and high blood pressure at least once every three years.

Your risk factors can be reduced. A study in the New England Journal of Medicine shows that making a few lifestyle changes can keep high-risk people from developing type 2 diabetes, at least for several years. Here's what they recommend:

- * Overweight or obese people should lose 5 percent of body weight.
- * Limit total fat intake to less than 30 percent of calories.
- * Limit saturated fat intake to less than 10 percent of calories.
- * Increase fiber intake to 15 grams per 1,000 calories.
- * Exercise moderately for at least 30 minutes a day or four hours per week.
- * Eat a variety of whole-grain foods, vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy foods, low-fat meats, and vegetable oils rich in monounsaturated fats such as olive oil.

The doctors recommend having blood sugar tested every three years beginning at age 45. Those with one or more risk factors should be tested earlier and more frequently.



Plan To Stay Well This Winter!

Sniffle season is just around the corner, so make plans now to stay well.

A flu shot is basic. It reduces your chances of getting influenza by up to 90 percent. But, you'll have to do more than that.

On average, people get 1 to 3 respiratory illnesses a year, most are caused by viruses and occur in the fall and winter.

Colds are not directly linked to cold weather. Indirectly they are, because people tend to spend more time indoors and in closer contact to other people and their germs. Respiratory viruses, including those that cause flu are very contagious and will survive for hours on the skin, furniture, telephones, doorknobs, and almost anything else a sick person touches.

Since it's not practical to cut out all contact with people, it's important to wash their germs and viruses off your hands before you get their sickness. The American Academy of Family Physicians says a good hand washing will do more to prevent the spread of illness than anything else.

Washing is especially important after a big family gathering, after shaking hands with a number of people at a meeting or at church, and during and after holiday parties.

Your general physical condition matters too. You are less likely to get sick if you stick to your regular sleep and exercise routine. If you drink alcohol at a party, follow it with plenty of water. Lack of sleep and dehydration lower your resistance to disease.

Client Of The Month

Congratulations to our client of the month, Ice of Las Vegas. This newly opened 17,000 square foot lounge, nightclub and special events center opens nightly at 10:30 pm nightly to people 21 and over. Ice is located at 200 East Harmon Avenue. For more information and a calendar of upcoming events visit www.IceLasVegas.com or for VIP reservations call 702-699-5528. Ice is pleased to offer on-premises catering, professional event planning, a private attended entrance, state of the art sound and lighting, a 4000 square foot Brazilian walnut dance floor, 5 full service bars and valet parking. To plan your next event at ICE call 699-9888.

Trivia Questions – The First with the Most Correct Answers wins a \$20 certificate to Border's Books

1. There is one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends. What is it?
2. Name the only sport in which the ball is always in possession of the team on defense, and the offensive team can score without touching the ball.
3. Where are the lakes that are referred to in the "Los Angeles Lakers?"
4. There are seven ways a baseball player can legally reach first base without getting a hit. Taking a base-on-balls is one way. Name the other six.
5. What made its first appearance in an issue of "The Youth's Companion" magazine in 1892? a-Happy Birthday to You, b-The Pledge of Allegiance, c-The Night Before Christmas, d-The Star-Spangled Banner
6. Electricity was the theme of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition hosted in what U.S. city? a-New York City, b-Chicago, c-7. St. Louis, d-Lake Placid
7. What city completed the first subway in the U.S. in 1897? a-Nashville, b-San Francisco, c-Boston, d-Baltimore
8. Is a canceled check for any charitable donation is acceptable as a receipt to the IRS?

Send all answers to will@nevadabenefits.com or fax to 877-0956. Winner will be announced in the next newsletter.