

Calendar of Events

Make your reservations early! A more complete description of each program on pages 4 & 5.

Family Education Program™

Nuts ‘N Bolts I™: Saturday, **June 30**, 9am to noon in Salem, with **Community Builder** to follow. Encourage your Beneficiaries and your Helpers to attend. Everyone who attends can stop by our office for a picnic lunch on us.

Nuts ‘N Bolts II™: Saturday, **November 24**, 9am to noon in Salem and Thursday, September 6 at 6pm in Bloomington. Helpers and Beneficiaries attend so they can understand the paperwork and steps involved when someone becomes disabled or dies with our LifeSpan living trust planning.

Technical Training Program™

Thursday, June 14, 1:00 *and* 6:00pm, Salem

Tuesday, July 10, 6:00pm, *Marshall*

Thursday, July 12, 6:00pm, *Bloomington*

Saturday, July 21, 9:00am, Salem

Community Builder Event

Family Fun Night/Bluegrass music Friday, September 21, 5 to 8 pm. Bring a favorite *lawn chair* and your *appetite!*

3SS Back to Basics Program™

Tuesday, August 7, 6:00pm, Salem

Tuesday, October 23, 6:00pm, Salem

***Truth About Estate Planning™**

Thursday, June 21, 1pm, Salem

Thursday, July 17, 1pm *and* 6pm, Salem

**Call or check our website for a date each month!*



Our New Office!

We are now completely settled into our new location at **919 West Main, Salem**. We couldn't be more pleased with the way it all turned out; clients are constantly praising our decorators, landscapers and designers.

We want to say a big "thank you" to the many of you who welcomed us during the open house. Stop in any time to say "hello!" All of our smaller education programs can now be held right on site, in our **LifeSpan Learning Center** located at the south end of our office.

For a quick drop in, park up front; if you are staying for an appointment or program, please park out back.

Wealth Reception Planning™

Recently the young son of one of our LifeSpan clients was performing his latest piano piece. The little tune, which was obviously written more for fingering skills than musical mystique, had words to help interest and motivate the little guy. Someone read the words to the audience so we could appreciate and enjoy the song like he did:

*I've been wishin' I could go fishin',
Down at the lake with my Uncle Bill.*

*When they're bitin' It's real excitin',
When they are not, it's excitin' still!
Then I can listen to Uncle Bill,
He tells me of things he has done,
until I quit fishin', and just sit wishin'
I'd grow up to be like my Uncle Bill.*

I happened to be in the audience. Those words and the little fellow's playing nearly brought tears to my eyes. My Dad had an Uncle Bill, who died just before I was born; that's where I got my



middle name. My Dad lost his father when Dad was just 10 years old, so Uncle Bill was a big influence on his life.

Some of the ‘Uncle Bill’ figures in our lives—who might be mom or dad, older cousins, aunts, grandparents, older friends at church, dear neighbors—were (or are) a positive influence on us. Others were not so.

But it is indisputable that the older people with whom we closely associate *will have a profound impact* on our beliefs, values, attitudes, faith and character. The interaction shapes our spirit, the real us. You can decide how important that might be to you, but I believe it is the *permanent* ‘us’ that is being formed by these relationships.

The words to this little song describe where Wealth Reception Planning™ starts. Wealth Reception Planning includes intentionally spending time with the younger generation, telling them the stories of what their ancestors have done, teaching them the lessons that were taught to us, helping them learn from the successes and failures of those who’ve gone before them.

Just for little kids? Absolutely not! Clients have shared stories with me of how their relationships with adult children have been renewed, and how those adults have opened up in new ways to the wisdom, dreams, beliefs and values of their elders.

As each of us interacts with other generations we are probably receiving. One might assume that the younger people are doing all of the receiving from the older. But don’t be too presumptuous. We can all still be learning and growing! Wealth Reception Planning may mean, in part, winning the ear of the younger generation by *giving them our attention and listening to their* stories, hopes, dreams and fears. Mary Manin Morrissey wrote:

“Listening is a high art of loving. Ask yourself, ‘When was the last time I really listened to my child? My parent? My brother or sister?’ When someone is ready to share, three magic words amplify your connection, and they are: ‘Tell me more.’”

Maybe the younger generation isn’t listening to us because we aren’t investing the time and energy to love—listen to—them.

Approaching these relationships with the conscious awareness that we are sharing ‘wealth’ with one another can transform the very nature of the relationship...and significantly enhance the value of the exchange.

What does this all have to do with estate planning, you may be asking? For some people, nothing. For others it may mean everything.

We are ‘rich’ if we have much of what we value. If we value the relationships we have, we can multiply our ‘wealth’ by building on the richness of these relationships

A long-time friend was visiting with me about his estate plan, and pointed out that the plan needs to be amended on a regular basis because the charities he wants to leave money to keep changing. His values don’t change; the charitable organizations change. Right before his eyes, he sees changes in leadership, in direction and in the effects of the organizations he intended to endow. “Five years, Curt,” he said. “That’s about how long it takes a charity to completely change.” After that it might no longer be doing anything he wanted to support. So he searches for other charities more in line with his values.

During this conversation it hit me: *the only way we can promote our beliefs, dreams, faith and values over the long term—beyond the 5-year horizon he described—is to instill our values in other, younger people, then entrust them with the material resources we have to give.* That may be the essence of **Wealth Reception Planning™**: the process of assuring that our true wealth—both financial and non-financial—is efficiently transferred and effectively received.

“The next best thing to being wise oneself is to live in a circle of those who are.”

C.S. Lewis

A Stunning Senior Moment

A very self-important yuppie attending a recent football game, took it upon himself to explain to a senior citizen sitting next to him why it was impossible for the older generation to understand his generation:



"You grew up in a different world, actually an almost primitive one," the yuppie said, loud enough for many of those nearby to hear.

"The young people of today grew up with television, jet planes, space travel, man walking on the moon. Our spaceships have visited Mars; we have nuclear energy, electric and hydrogen cars, and computers with light-speed processing."

As the yuppie paused for another drink of beer, the senior citizen took advantage of the break in the student's litany and said: "You're right, young man. We didn't have those things when we were young...so we invented them. Now tell me, what are you doing for the next generation?"

The applause was resounding.

"I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death."
Thomas Paine

Mocha Punch Recipe

Some of you asked for the recipe of the punch we had at our Open Houses...here it is:

Mocha Punch

- 1-1/2 quarts water
- 1/2 cup instant chocolate drink mix
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup instant coffee granules
- 1/2 gallon vanilla ice cream
- 1/2 gallon chocolate ice cream
- 1 cup whipping cream, whipped, optional
- Chocolate curls, optional

In a large saucepan, bring water to a boil. Remove from heat. Add drink mix, sugar and coffee; stir until dissolved. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight. About 30 minutes before serving, pour into a punch bowl. Add ice cream by scoopfuls; stir until partially melted. Garnish with dollops of whipped cream and chocolate curls if desired. Yield 20-25 servings about (5 quarts).

"We don't want to make your life miserable; we want to make your plan work!" Curt Ferguson

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." John F. Kennedy

Annual Family Reunion™

Our Annual Family Reunion™ (AFR) season is behind us: March and April. A large majority of you attended an AFR. We learn from your feedback, and continue to strive to provide you the 'appropriate assistance' necessary to provide you a plan that works and enough information to give you justified peace of mind. The organization of this year's AFR seemed to work well: for the first hour and a half, focused on the 'universal' topics relevant to proper asset titling, cost savings, current estate tax law, and the like; then after the break an 'optional' program for those interested in Wealth Reception Planning (WRP). We are aware of your desire to get what you 'need' and not more, so we are breaking out our programs with more options. We are committed to keeping the core AFR from year to year—which everyone should attend!—at or under two hours.

For those who were unable to attend, you can catch up with everyone who did by buying or checking out the DVD. I urge you to do that; we covered much material that can help your plan work.

Fee Analysis (from AFR)

Some clients may forget that even though we provide much *more* service and education, *more* beneficial results (protected trusts for the heirs, for instance) and other advantages over 'traditional' estate planning, we do it all for a *lower fee* than you would incur for traditional planning.

We reviewed this at the AFR, using a hypothetical couple with a \$1,000,000 estate. On this size case our overall fees—all three steps of planning, including 24 years of updating—total around \$15,000 to \$19,000; whereas with traditional planning their estate settlement fees alone (allowing no plan creation and maintenance fees) would range from \$15,000 to \$35,000.

Bottom line still is this: *we do more for less!*



“Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: if it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it.” *Ronald Reagan*

Client Update Program™

This fall, our ‘odd year’ CUP clients will receive complete updates of their living trusts, as well as other enhancements to their plan they might request during the year. The CUP dates are being set for August and September; exact dates will be announced in July.

Our ‘even year’ clients were provided a **Design Template** in 2006, which provides a summary of the legal-technical foundation of your plan. Clients have indicated that this template is a very useful ‘blueprint’ (flowchart) around which to understand the legal details of their plan. The odd-year CUP clients who have no templates will receive theirs this fall.

In the evening after the Bloomington CUP we will be presenting the full Nuts ‘N Bolts II. Encourage your ‘Helpers’ and Beneficiaries to attend!

“A man should never be ashamed to [admit he was] wrong, which is but saying, in other words, that he is wiser today than he was yesterday.” *Jonathan Swift*

Family Education Program™

NNB-I: June 30, 9am - noon in Salem

NNB-II: September 6, 6pm - 9 in Bloomington and November 24, 9am - noon in Salem.

Also note that a **Technical Training Program is a good opportunity for your family to learn about trust protections.*

Each year we have more experience in settling estates with client families. Sometimes we are working with people who *have been* to our Family Education Programs, sometimes we are working with Trustees/Heirs/Beneficiaries who we have never seen before and who have no pre-training.

The difference is stark!

On one hand, it is more difficult for us, the advisors, to settle the estate with people who are not pre-trained and prepared for their role. But it

is also quite evident that the *family members* who have not been pre-trained and prepared *experience a great deal more stress, tension, uncertainty and fear*; they come to us as a ‘necessary evil’ instead of as a partner and friend in receiving the benefits of the parents’ planning.

Note that **Helper Handbooks™** are given to any helpers who attend these programs. They provide a place to store the NNB handouts, and include a lot of other helpful materials.

Nuts ‘N Bolts I is a broad overview of estate planning the way we do it, introducing families to the benefits of living trust planning, the process of planning and administration, and the benefits they can expect from legal techniques like ‘School Bus Trusts’ and ‘Generation Skipping Trusts.’ We believe your ‘Helpers’ (Successor Trustees, Executors, etc.) should attend for their own peace of mind, and the other Beneficiaries should attend so they will have an idea what to expect.

Nuts ‘N Bolts II is a direct look at the specific steps involved in the settlement of a living trust estate plan. We introduce attendees to the paperwork, forms, timelines, pitfalls to avoid, choices to be made and opportunities available. Again, both ‘Helpers’ and Beneficiaries will benefit from this training.

Community Builder Events

After the NNB I on **June 30**, we would like for as many of the attendees as possible, and their own families, to join us in our backyard; this is our new office backyard, at 919 West Main. We will provide the food and drinks, no charge of course.

Then on **September 21, from 5 to 8pm** we are hosting a **Family Fun Night**, also in our new office backyard. There are swings and monkey bars for kids, a Bluegrass Band for adults, and burgers and brats on the grill for all. Bring a lawn chair to enjoy the early fall outdoors.

3SS Back to Basics Program™

Over the years some clients have for various reasons been unable to attend some of our educational programs. They lose touch with the evolving body of information that everyone else has been learning. Then in a meeting, phrases like



'School Bus Trust' or 'babysitter instructions' or 'IRS Checkout' or 'if he thinks he's Elvis' don't make sense to you. 'Wealth Reception Planning' is not only a foggy notion, but what you have heard about it may even turn you off.

If this sounds like you, then **Three Step Strategy Back to Basics** is designed for you. Come to these small-group meetings and get reconnected to what you originally thought you were getting into: estate planning, with living trusts that would avoid probate and estate taxes and provide some nice added protection for your heirs.

Technical Training Programs™

This is the first time we are repeating the same topics as **Technical Training Programs™ (TTP)**. Some of the pros and cons are better known this year than last, so someone who may have decided against including a technique in their plan last year might want to reconsider.

The three topics for this year are: **Limited Powers of Appointment** (also referred to as 'Hit Parade Flexibility'), **Generation-Skipping Trusts** and the **Poorer Spouse Technique**. This (our third straight year for it) is likely the last time we will offer the 'Hit Parade Flexibility' material.

In 2006 many clients attended the **TTPs**, and well over half of those in attendance chose to change their plans to achieve what they felt would be better results for their families.

NOTE! Family Education Opportunity here! For those of you from 'up north' (*Terre Haute, Peoria, Bloomington, Galesburg, etc.*) please encourage your family to attend the TTP with you (or instead of you, if you already have the three legal techniques covered in your plan) for a good introduction to the benefits of 'School Bus Trust' planning, multi-generation estate tax planning, and so forth. The TTP will not be focusing on the Nuts 'N Bolts *process* of carrying out a plan, but will be a thorough review of many of the key protections that are built into our clients' estate plans *for the benefit of the heirs!* Make a reservation for them ASAP.

"The power to tax involves the power to destroy." *Justice John Marshall*

Education Wrap Up

Gayla Ball, Education Coordinator

Hi everybody. Wow, can you believe summer is here? After a busy school year, my family is taking full advantage of the long summer days.

Here at the Estate Planning Center, we had a very successful Annual Family Reunion season in the Spring. It is always a pleasure to visit and catch up with so many of our clients at the AFRs. For those of you who were unable to attend, you may be interested in taking advantage of our video/dvd library. We have video/dvds of our various workshops, such as the AFR, NNB I, NNB II, and Technical Training Programs available for our clients and/or their helpers who would be interested in 'checking out' or purchasing them.

We are already making preparations for our Client Update Program (CUPs) for those of you who are our 'Odd Year' clients. Remember this is when we update your living trust documents.

As a reminder, anytime you are planning to attend any of our meetings, please make your reservation as soon as possible. This will ensure your name is on the reservation list if we have to limit the number...and we sometimes do!

If you ever have any questions for me, please feel free to call or e-mail.

Remember, place this newsletter under Tab 9 in your black Client Organizer for easy reference.

Be Safe and *have a great summer!*

"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." *Theodore Roosevelt*

Funding Forum

Debbie Robb, Funding Coordinator

Many 'Thanks' for your patience and kindness during the past year! It has been an enormous learning curve for me. You know the saying: 'It's hard to teach an old dog new tricks.'

Please take a few minutes to look at the **Reunion Review** (paperwork given to you at the AFR) to see if there were any assets that still need to be verified. If so, forward any specific paperwork to us...even if you're not sure whether it is correct. If you have any questions, please call me.



Also, during the upcoming year if you open a new account, buy property, take out more life insurance, invest in an annuity, open an IRA, purchase a new vehicle, etc., be sure to set up the owner and beneficiaries correctly. Remember, you have titling instructions in your **LifeSpan Client Organizer™** under **TAB 4**. Then, even after you think you have it set up correctly, *send a copy of the paperwork* so Curt may 'Red Check Review' it for accuracy of owner and/or beneficiaries.

Together, we will update, retitle, and verify your assets...to make your plan WORK! We look forward to serving you!

We Like Clients Like You!

Sarah Rupe, Client Services Coordinator

Our new office has provided many new opportunities for us and I am excited to be able to serve you from our new location! I hope your customer service experience has done nothing but improve over the past year. I am here to be sure your requests (telephone calls, legal document amendments/changes, Docubank changes, etc.) are being met and I hope you will let me know if your needs are not being met to your satisfaction! As we continue to grow, we keep establishing more efficient systems to take care of everyone's needs.

Estate planning is an exciting field of the law and I enjoy getting to know each and every one of you from the beginning as we started your estate planning process all the way through the rest of your life! It's exciting to get to see you (after your plan is initially established) 1-2-3 times each year! It seems like many of you are part of my family and I have to pinch myself to realize you aren't 'really.'

Again, I hope your experience with us has exceeded your expectations and to a point where you would refer your friends and family to us. As I have mentioned before, the first step (as you may recall!) to beginning the estate planning process with our firm is to attend one of our **free Truth About Estate Planning™** workshops.

Call anytime or visit our website for dates of upcoming workshops. Reservations are required. Call 618-548-3729 or 866-900-2878.

Family Education: New Column!

Some clients have suggested that we start a newsletter for the family members who can't seem to get to our Family Education Programs™. We really like this idea. However, at this point, we cannot *practically* do it.

As a temporary substitute, we would like to send a copy of *this* newsletter to your family if you so request. Just call and let us know the name and address of anyone you want to get a copy.

If there are quite a few people who like this idea of Beneficiaries receiving this newsletter, then we may add a *special column to every newsletter*, geared toward the Helpers and Beneficiaries.

Another suggestion for the family: tell them to visit our website. Often the 'kids' are more computer savvy than our clients anyway, so they will be able to get a lot more benefit from the web. Speaking of our website...

www.TLCPlanning.com

As you know, we *do have* a website to help keep our clients and the public informed of upcoming events, planning ideas, and most of all, what it takes to make an estate plan WORK!

The menu works like an outline, so start by clicking on a topic that interests you (on the left side of the screen) and up will pop sub-menus of pages you might want to read.

Encourage your family to take a look. You will find the last several newsletters, various articles about the LifeSpan planning process, and Curt's articles published in Prairie Farmer magazine.

"It is the highest impertinence and presumption, therefore, in kings and ministers, to pretend to watch over the economy of private people." *Adam Smith*

LifeSpan Meeting Reminders

Remember these tips when you are coming to a LifeSpan program:

- If Curt is teaching, the room will probably be cool. Bring a sweater if you're cold-natured!
- We will serve light snacks only...unless we specifically tell you that there will be a meal.



- Bring **Red Books** only to the **CUP**; bring your **LifeSpan Client Organizer™** to all events.
- Helpers with a **Helper Handbook™** should bring it to any meeting they attend.
- Reservations are required. Be sure to let us know if you are coming!

"Have you something to do tomorrow; do it today." *Benjamin Franklin*

This is supposed to be funny...

Don't know where they got the idea, but someone once suggested that Curt sometimes teaches in too much detail, such that people miss the real point of the message. Reminded us of this little story:

A priest and a pastor from the local churches are standing by the road pounding a sign into the ground that reads:

*The End is Near
Turn Yourself
Around Now,
Before It's
Too Late!*

As a car sped past them, the driver yelled, "*Leave us alone, you religious nuts!*" From the curve ahead they hear screeching tires and a splash.

The priest turns to the pastor and asks, "*Do you think the sign should just say 'Bridge Out'?*"

Expanded Audio Visual Library!

Nuts 'N Bolts™ -I (2006)

Nuts 'N Bolts™ -II (2006)

Annual Family Reunion™ (2007)

Truth About Estate Planning™ (2007)

Technical Training Program™ (2006)

For check-out, we charge \$5 shipping & handling, with one set of handouts. With each checkout you get a copy of the powerpoint/handouts. Helper Handbooks are only given out in person. If you would like to *purchase* the video (i.e. to circulate among your family) our supplier charges \$20, delivered to you with handouts.

Tax Repeal Deferred

In May, the new Senate included in its 2008 budget bill an extension of the estate tax until 2012, delaying for two years the 'repeal' of

set for 2010. The Senate passed its resolution for the 2008 budget, including an amendment to preserve the estate tax for two extra years.

The amendment freezes the 2009 status of the estate tax until 2012, extending the \$3.5 million exemption and a top estate tax rate of 45 percent. The Senate passed this amendment by a vote of 97 to 1, rejecting amendments that would have increased the exemption to \$5 million and reduced the rate to 35 percent, and one amendment that would have repealed the estate tax entirely.

This bill must still be reconciled with whatever budget legislation the House passes.

"We do not need more intellectual power, we need more moral power. We do not need more knowledge, we need more character. We do not need more government, we need more culture. We do not need more law, we need more religion. We do not need more of the things that are seen, we need more of the things that are unseen." *Calvin Coolidge*

Share the Wealth of a Lifetime

Those of you who attended the Wealth Reception portion of the AFR this spring got to experience a 'legacy building' exercise. Your feedback was helpful. Many of you requested ideas, tools and resources for passing on 'more than money' to your heirs.

Curt became a Fellow of the Legacy Builder Institute precisely to support you in these efforts. One tool we described was what we call **Priceless Conversations™**. *Review the 'menu' on the back of this page.* Each is an 'interview' designed to help you share stories, values, wisdom, and life lessons. We record the interview onto a gift-wrapped compact disc for you to start a 'legacy library' to be passed on to those you love.

While the *value* is inestimable, the cost ranges from \$245 to \$395, depending on the length of the interview. Please call us if you would like more information about creating one of these priceless heirlooms. *Someone will thank you someday.*

