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The Spooky 'Star Wars' Shortage of 1977

A long time ago ... in October of 1977 to be exact, Halloween was fast approaching and many parents faced a major dilemma. That year, kids didn't want to go trick-or-treating dressed as vampires, witches, or ghosts. The classic costumes simply wouldn't do. That Halloween, almost every child in the United States wanted to dress as their favorite character from the new hit movie, "Star Wars."

Today, you can walk into a Halloween City on Oct. 30 and easily pick up a costume for Rey, Darth Vader, or Princess Leia. But in 1977, less than five months after the release of the first movie in the popular franchise, getting your hands on "Star Wars" merchandise was a bit more difficult. Ben Cooper, a costume company in Brooklyn, had the foresight to license "Star Wars" for costumes right after the movie came out. Unfortunately, they didn't foresee how

great the demand for these costumes would be.

Retailers across the country were selling out of "Star Wars" costumes as fast as they came in. Some stores reported selling more "Star Wars" costumes than pumpkins. Kids who got their hands on an authentic Han Solo or C-3PO costume were considered lucky. But kids who arrived at the store to find the costume shelves empty didn't throw in the towel. Instead, they went and found some brown towels to make their own Chewbacca costumes.

In the current age of cosplay, homemade costumes based on movie characters are commonplace, but in 1977, this was uncharted territory. Kids searched for white dresses to be Princess Leia and bathrobes they could cut short to mimic Luke Skywalker. Moms everywhere broke out their sewing machines and created

costumes using only action figures for reference. It was grueling work, but it showed how much kids wanted to spend Halloween in a galaxy far, far away.

The "Star Wars" costume shortage marked a new era for Halloween — one where making your own costume was just as cool, if not better, than buying it.



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'Bloom Where You're Planted'

JoDeen's Advice on Living Well

Have you ever visited Glacier National Park? It's a spectacular stretch of wilderness that crosses from Montana into Canada, covering more than 1,500 square miles. The National Park Service claims visitors will see "pristine forests, alpine meadows, rugged mountains, and spectacular lakes" — and they're not exaggerating one bit.

The park — and in particular its namesake glaciers — is truly stunning. I grew up here in Southern California, and my initial thought when I saw a glacier in my 20s was, "It looks just like Disneyland!" It didn't actually look like the park, of course (there are no roller coasters in Glacier), but the enormous expanse of bright blue and white ice seemed as unreal to me as Mickey Mouse.

Because of lucky experiences like these, one of the things on my bucket list is to visit as many national parks as possible in my lifetime. I absolutely adore traveling through them, and I've checked quite a few off the list so far. I've gone camping in Yosemite, hiked in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and visited almost every park in California. This summer, I was going to stop in at a few more, but the COVID-19 pandemic got in the way of my plans. Instead of ruining my year, though, the pandemic reminded me of a quote I'd almost forgotten: "Bloom where you're planted."

I might not be able to travel this year, but there is plenty of beauty and interest right here in my own backyard, and even in my office at Preston. I work as the office scheduler, so I have the honor of talking to more or less every single person who calls. It's my job to set up appointments and help gather client information so that our attorneys can give accurate advice. I love my work, and one of my favorite things about it is that I hear so many interesting and amusing stories from clients like you. I'm always honored when people share their lives with me, including the negatives, positives, and everything in between. It goes a long way toward keeping things interesting, and I think that's a key to happiness: staying interested no matter what life throws at you.



"We're all surrounded by an infinite number of interesting things to be discovered — if only we take the time to look for them."

I think looking for interesting things where you already are is the true meaning of "bloom where you're planted."

You can do this just by walking out into your backyard or another bit of nature nearby, watching the bugs, and smelling the flowers. Even if you live in an apartment or a care center, I just know there is something interesting and amazing not far away. My best advice for coping with this pandemic is to look for those things. Come up with a new hobby, read a book you never would have picked off the shelf, or just look at a person or place in a different way. I bet you'll discover something that surprises you.

I'm a grandmother now, and the older I get the more I realize just how much I don't know. We're all surrounded by an infinite number of interesting things to be discovered — if only we take the time to look for them. So, in the absence of travel this year, I'm working on finding new ways to learn more, see more, and hopefully know more.

As part of my quest, I'd love to hear from you. If you get me on the line next time you call the Preston office, tell me something interesting. You might just make my day!

JoDeen Gaasch

3 Great Apps to Maintain Your Mental Health at Home

When you lead a busy lifestyle, mental health often takes a back seat to other pressing matters. Thankfully, there are a number of easy-to-use apps to help address this concern. Even if you're pressed for time, these apps can help you maintain your mental health. And if you're just looking for some simple resources to guide you through mood-boosting exercises, they've got you covered there too.

Moodfit (GetMoodfit.com) Think of this app as a fitness tracker for your mind. The mood tracker allows you to record your



moods and thoughts and follow trends and changes over time. You can look at these trends yourself or set the app to monitor specific areas of your mood. This highly customizable app is packed with tools and resources to help you with your mental health. In addition to the mood tracker, Moodfit offers a range of breathing exercises and a guide to mindfulness meditation.

MoodMission (MoodMission.com) If you're struggling with mental health issues, like anxiety and depression, you may feel like this free, evidence-based app was designed just for you. MoodMission asks you a series of questions to assess how you're feeling, then suggests a series of "missions" you can complete to help you get into a better state of mind. Missions are short, achievable tasks, like taking a walk around the block or cleaning up a room in your home. Of course, like all the apps listed here, it is not a

replacement for professional mental health care, but it offers evidence-based exercises and a level of support that's not often found in smartphone apps.

Talkspace (Talkspace.com) While this app contains a number of mental health tools, its primary purpose is to connect you quickly with one of the company's thousands of licensed and experienced therapists you can message on a regular basis. Unlike traditional therapy where you schedule an appointment and meet in person, Talkspace allows its user to communicate with their therapist through the app's encrypted messaging system. It also allows you to request a check-in from your therapist and provides a place for them to upload your therapy notes. Talkspace is more costly than some other apps, but depending on your specific needs, it may be worth it.

What Will You Be Remembered For?

J.M.'s Thoughts on Leaving a Legacy

This summer, my wife's grandmother passed away after a long battle with dementia. As we attended her funeral (COVID-style, with masks and small numbers), something struck me about the stories her family was telling. Instead of sharing the worldly accomplishments of her life, they focused on the little things.

I listened as they read the love letters she and her soon-to-be husband sent back and forth during World War II. I could tell that the historic war didn't mean nearly as much to my wife's family as the words her grandmother had written to him while he served in the Navy. I heard stories about her sweet sense of humor and how she and her husband raised seven wonderful children. I heard stories about her serving others and helping those in need, even in small ways.

Over the years, I've noticed that I often hear these same things from our clients' family members after they pass away. They often talk about the little things, the moments, the unexpected gifts bought, and the time spent together. While it's easy to get caught up in this busy world we live in, that's probably not what people will remember us for when we're gone.

At the end of the day, no matter how large or small of an estate you leave behind, I'm certain the inheritance won't matter to your family as much as how you treated them and the memories you made together. Personally, I think it's comforting to know that the memories are the things that live on.

Like many of you, I've spent the past several months at home with my family. And while it hasn't all been easy, I feel like I've grown closer to my wife and four children. Hopefully, someday, when life returns to "normal" they'll be able to look back fondly on the memories we've made.

What would you like to be remembered for? As we head into the holiday season, consider that question and whether any priorities need to be shifted to align with your answer. As Ferris Bueller once said, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

-J.M. Preston



Lessons in Trust Administration

Vol. 2: Real Property Transfers

In the March edition of our newsletter, we introduced a series of articles covering some of the steps that need to be taken after a trustor passes away to make sure their wishes are carried out. In that first article, we covered the three things you need to bring into the bank to gain access to a trust account after a trustor's death. This month, we'll dive into the process of transferring real estate to the beneficiaries.

Often clients assume that real estate will automatically transfer after death, but there are actually quite a few hoops to jump through. Typically, when real estate passes from one person to another, it requires dealing with three different county departments: the County Recorder's Office, the County Assessor's Office, and the Parent to Child Department. Each department is unique, and calls for different documents.

The County Recorder's Office: The Affidavit-Death of Trustee

This department is in charge of tracking real property ownership and making sure that the chain of title for each property is accurate. The recorder must be notified when someone on the title passes away so that the property transfer can be recorded and become public record. To do this, an Affidavit Death of Trustee is prepared and mailed to the recorder along with a certified copy of the death certificate. This lets the recorder know that there is a new trustee on title to the property and he or she is now acting on behalf of the trust.

The County Assessor's Office: The Change in Ownership Statement

This department handles the assessment of property taxes. The assessor needs to be notified when someone passes away so that they can determine if the property will need to be reassessed. The Change of Ownership Statement is prepared and mailed in to the assessor. However, before the property is reassessed, the assessor will check with the Parent to Child Department to see if an exception to reassessment exists (see below).

The Parent to Child Department: The Claim for Reassessment Exclusion for Transfer Between Parent and Child

This department decides whether real estate should be reassessed for property tax purposes when an owner passes away. When real estate passes from parent to child(ren), or between spouses, the assessor will make an exception to reassessment. However, the exception is not automatic, and a Claim for Reassessment Exclusion for Transfer Between Parent and Child must be filed with the assessor. The claim must be filed before the property is sold, or within three years from the date of death.

This might seem like an overwhelming process, particularly because there are other documents that need to be filed as well. However, we will be here to help your successor trustee through all of it. Just make sure they know to call us and we'll step in to make sure things go smoothly.

Sudoku

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Solution on Pg. 4

Roasted Rosemary Brussels Sprouts and Potatoes

Inspired by "The Oh She Glows Cookbook"



If you're having trouble getting the kids to eat Brussels sprouts, try this delicious vegan recipe as a side dish. Every vegetable tastes better roasted!

Ingredients

- 1 3/4 lbs fingerling potatoes, halved lengthwise
- 3 cups Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp fresh rosemary, minced
- 4 tsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients. Toss until the Brussels sprouts and fingerlings are evenly coated with oil and seasonings.
3. Spread the mixture on the baking sheet, then bake 35-38 minutes, stirring halfway through. Add more salt and pepper as desired, then serve!