

SEPTEMBER 2023

Piece Of Mind

*In order for you to have peace of mind,
we are giving you our piece of mind.*

PRESTON
ESTATE PLANNING
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION

800.698.6918

PrestonEstatePlanning.com

DID YOU FALL FOR THIS ESTATE PLANNING 'FAKE NEWS'?

*How to Protect Yourself, Your Friends,
and Your Family From Misinformation*



Several months ago, a curious situation took place in our office – we began receiving several phone calls from clients with the same questions: “Is it true that the IRS has eliminated a tax advantage for irrevocable trusts? Should I reconsider having an irrevocable trust?” At the outset, we dismissed this as an isolated case of confusion. Yet, as call after call came in, we found ourselves wondering where this confusion was coming from.

We keep track of any IRS changes that could affect estate planning and we hadn’t heard anything about a significant change to irrevocable trusts, so we were thoroughly puzzled.

Our team of attorneys immediately embarked on a journey through the IRS archives, delving deep to uncover the origins of this intriguing rumor. Eventually, the pieces of the puzzle fell into place.

In March 2023, the IRS issued a revenue ruling concerning a specific type of irrevocable trusts known as Intentionally Defective Grantor Trusts (IDGTs). This unique trust,

which is rarely used by most people, had generated some confusion over the years. Differing perspectives among estate planning attorneys had led to uncertainty about whether IDGTs were entitled to a particular tax benefit.

To clear up the confusion, the March 2023 IRS ruling clarified that IDGTs were not allowed to get the tax benefit, thus settling the debate. This outcome, while normal in its resolution, set in motion a series of events that concerned our clients.

Several prominent media outlets caught wind of the IDGT update and spun it into a story. However, the specific details of the IRS’s ruling eluded these journalists, who lacked the specialized insight of estate planning attorneys.

Regrettably, the news articles misconstrued the facts and erroneously conveyed that ALL irrevocable trusts were losing the particular tax benefit. The crux of the matter lies in the distinction: while all IDGTs fall under the umbrella of irrevocable trusts, not all

irrevocable trusts are IDGTs, akin to how all squares belong to the category of rectangles, yet not all rectangles are squares.

Inadvertently, these news outlets propagated an incorrect narrative, inciting alarm among a lot of individuals!

Alas, such incidents occur more frequently than one might realize. Misinformation pervades the realm of estate planning, seeping in from diverse sources – real estate agents, banks, brokers, and even reputable news channels.

This underscores the significance of relying on experts before making crucial estate planning decisions. The only source of accurate information should be those of us who navigate the intricacies of the law daily.

Often times misinformation stems from a misunderstanding, but it can also come from

Continued on Pg. 2 ...

Get Your Home Fall-Ready

SIMPLE, AFFORDABLE DIY PROJECTS YOU'LL LOVE

Housewares stores are currently full of cute autumn decor, but the cost of refreshing your house's look each season adds up quickly. Fortunately, you can do a lot for less. Many DIY crafts are not as complicated as you might think. In addition to saving money, you'll create personalized charm none of your neighbors can match.

Repurpose your pumpkins.

Small gourds are incredibly versatile. Just sprinkling a few around your dining room table or mantle makes it feel like fall. But you can quickly elevate them using metallic paint to add cute designs, phrases, or names. Another option is to wrap seasonal fabric around them like a pouch, gathered at the stem. If you feel more ambitious, you can also use pumpkins to make succulent planters. Cut a crater in the top of the pumpkin, pop in the succulent and soil, and press the dirt until snug.

Light up the night.

The soft glow of a lantern or candle is the perfect way to get the cozy vibes started. Instead of succulents in the top of your pumpkin, you can set wax and a candle wick to create something unique. If you're bored with pumpkins, try

the same with acorn caps. An even simpler idea involves glazing real or fabric leaves on the outside of mason jars with craft glue. Then add decorative stones and a wax or battery-operated tealight for a seasonal twinkle.



Decorate your door.

Wreaths are a DIY staple for several reasons. They're easy for beginners to make and can set the tone for your home by offering visitors an autumnal focal point. You can buy a variety of starter wreaths at the craft store, so find one that suits your taste. Then pick up other supplies like leaves, pine cones, dried corn, and ribbon. Now you're ready to hot glue to your heart's content and create something distinctive.

If you need further ideas, look closer the next time you shop. Many of the fun fall items for sale aren't very difficult to make yourself with a few minor adjustments and a little creativity.

... continued from Cover

information that doesn't apply to California. We sometimes see brokers and financial advisors affiliated with entities located outside of California apply the laws of other states when giving clients advice.

For example, in California, when one spouse passes away, the cost basis of all community property assets is adjusted to its fair market value at the time of the first spouse's death. As a result, if the surviving spouse sells property, no capital gains tax is owed on the appreciation that occurred up until the first spouse's death. However, we've seen some brokers erroneously advise their clients to

retain property to avoid capital gains taxes when selling could be tax-free.

Remaining vigilant against the spread of estate planning misinformation is not just a personal responsibility – it extends to your close circle of friends and family. We are pleased to introduce a valuable resource that allows you to assist your loved ones.

You may already be familiar with our weekly Monday morning emails, featuring helpful videos. These short videos discuss a specific estate planning problem or area of confusion.

The good news for our Life Plan clients is the issues we discuss in these weekly videos have already been addressed in the Life Plan. So, if you're a client of ours, you don't need to worry.

However, it's possible that your friends and family are not aware of these issues and

could be making decisions based on incorrect information. By sharing these informative videos with them, you can play an important role in dispelling misinformation and fostering peace of mind.

The process is straightforward: when you receive our weekly email video, merely hit "Forward" and enter their email to provide them access.

Through our collective efforts, and with a healthy dose of skepticism, we can hopefully prevent more misinformation from spreading. Your involvement is sincerely appreciated. Thanks for doing your part!

-J.M. Preston

Busting the Most Popular Smartphone Myths

According to research from Zippia, “Roughly 307 million people own smartphones in the United States” — that’s 92% of the country! Because that number is so high, it means many of us will likely encounter the same technical problems and search for easy solutions online. Luckily, there are tons of videos and articles about how to fix your phone issues! But here’s the problem: Many of these “hacks” are complete myths that mislead the general public.

We want to set the record straight, so we’re busting four of the most popular technology myths.

Myth No. 1: More signal bars equals better service.

We aren’t sure how this myth started, but those little bars on the top left or right of your phone don’t show how “fast” or “good” your cell service is. It simply indicates how close you are to the nearest available cell tower. So, even if you have full bars, your service may still be slow if the network is busy.

Myth No. 2: Airplane mode allows your phone to charge quicker.

Technically, airplane mode isn’t charging your phone faster; it’s just making it lose battery power slower. What this means is that if your phone is trying to charge while also running, it will seem like it’s charging slowly. But with airplane mode, certain functions are limited, so the battery doesn’t drain as fast and has less working against it while charging.



Myth No. 3: Closing apps makes your phone operate faster.

In most cases, closing the apps on your phone will actually make it run slower. This is because current smartphones are designed to run multiple apps in the background, and by closing them out, your phone will need to use more power to load them back up.

Myth No. 4: Private browsing is completely anonymous.

While it does prevent your logins and history from being recorded, everything you search in a private browser still goes through your internet service provider. They can see it all!

So, next time you see an article or a video touting some new smartphone hack you have to try, do your research before giving it a go!

Sudoku

9			2	7			1	6
2		7			8			3
	4				3	7		2
		6	3	4		1	2	
						6	7	4
	8	4		6	2	9	3	
4				5		2	8	
8	1						6	
				2		3	4	

Solution on Pg. 4



Spiced Pecan Pie Bars

Inspired by SouthernLiving.com

Ingredients

Crust

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp salt

Filling

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup corn syrup
- 2/3 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 3 cups chopped pecans

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Use baking spray to grease a 13x9-inch pan before lining with parchment paper.
2. In a food processor, blend crust ingredients until a crumble forms. Press mixture into pan. Bake until light golden brown, about 20 minutes (crust will have cracks).
3. In a bowl, whisk all filling ingredients (except pecans) together until smooth. Stir in pecans and pour over crust. Bake until set, around 30 minutes, then let cool completely in pan.

9	5	3	2	7	4	8	1	6
2	6	7	5	1	8	4	9	3
1	4	8	6	9	3	7	5	2
5	9	6	3	4	7	1	2	8
3	2	1	9	8	5	6	7	4
7	8	4	1	6	2	9	3	5
4	3	9	7	5	6	2	8	1
8	1	2	4	3	9	5	6	7
6	7	5	8	2	1	3	4	9

Inside

- 1 Tips for Avoiding Estate Planning Misinformation
- 2 Simple, Affordable DIY Projects You'll Love
- 3 Busting the Most Popular Smartphone Myths
Spiced Pecan Pie Bars
- 4 Keep Yourself Safe While Traveling Alone



Traveling alone can be a memorable and adventurous experience — it's a great way to step outside your comfort zone and continue learning about yourself. While solo travel is chock-full of exciting perks, staying alone in a hotel can be dangerous if you aren't careful to take certain safety precautions. The next time you take a trip by yourself, keep these tips in mind!

Check in the smart way.

When you check in to your hotel, always ask for two room keys — this way, hotel staff and anyone else in earshot will automatically assume someone else is traveling with you. If they ask how many guests will be staying with you, don't admit you are alone. If you have the option, request a room that isn't on the ground floor, as research shows they are the easiest to break into!

Inspect your room.

As soon as you enter the room, make a quick sweep to ensure no one is present in closets, in the shower, or under the bed and that nothing appears to be amiss. It's always best to be safe rather than sorry!

Keep your eyes peeled.

Any time you leave your room, even if it's just to scope out the vending machines, be alert for anyone watching or following you, and always keep your room number discreet. If you ever feel like someone is following you, get off on a different floor and avoid going to your room.

Use the deadbolt.

If the door in your room comes equipped with a deadbolt, use it! This extra safety measure keeps even those with a key from entering your room without your knowing!

Share the hotel information.

Let your family and friends know where you are staying! Provide them with the hotel name, address, and phone number in case an emergency arises!

Traveling solo is a thrilling experience, but it comes with some extra steps to stay safe! Trust your instincts and use these tips to ensure your trip goes down in the memory books as safe and exciting!