

Get Your Ducks In a Row!

Estate & Long-Term Care Planning News
from Carolina Family Estate Planning

May 2018

Even Superheroes Need Estate Plans

Stan Lee was the driving creative force behind everything Marvel. He did two things that had never really been done before in the comic book universe—an industry that goes back to the 1890s! Lee created super heroes with flaws and his comics were aimed at adults. He started with the *Fantastic Four*, added *Spiderman*, and never looked back.

His wife, Joan, pushed him to follow his instincts, break the mold and go ahead with the ideas he had been sketching on the side for years.

The rest, as they say, is history. Marvel dominated the comic book market itself and eventually became part of Disney. *Black Panther* recently broke *Titanic's* record for box office proceeds, and the newest Marvel film, *Avengers: Infinity War*, just broke the all-time opening weekend record.

Stan Lee is now an American icon. He makes cameos in every Marvel movie and is the most sought after person at every comic book convention.

Lee has been paid millions by Marvel, made millions more appearing at conventions, and in his Marvel movie cameos he speaks an average of nine words thereby insuring an actor's residual annuity that will probably outlast the solar system. And, if that weren't enough proof of success, Stan Lee is a neighbor of Leonardo DiCaprio!

Stunning, well-earned success, Lee's net worth is estimated at \$70 million . . . **and it is all at risk.**

Lee, who is 95, was married to Joan for 70 years. Sadly, she died last year. Lee was the creative, Joan the business side. They developed an arrangement when Stan and Joan realized decades ago Stan had no head for business. As a matter of fact, he was susceptible to con men and ridiculous business propositions.

He lost millions over the years, and he would have lost tens of millions without Joan's firm hand and the wise advisors she vetted and hired to assist them.

The Lees have one child, a daughter, now 67, with issues, emotional and financial. They set up a trust for her many years ago; she was singularly unhappy with it, but was held in check by Joan and her cadre of trusted advisors.

Like many elders, Stan and Joan were sure that Stan would die first and Joan would handle the business until . . . well, there's the second problem. Stan and Joan had no planning in place if Joan died first, no planning for Stan as the surviving spouse should he begin to decline – physically or mentally. Joan's death has plunged Stan's life into absolute chaos.

Here's what strikes us: Stan Lee is famous, is wealthy, and is in the same place as everyone who hasn't done proper planning.

The Lees had decades to plan for eventualities. Decades. That's what makes this 'infinitely' sadder. If they had talked to a firm like ours, they need not have ended up in this predicament.

What about your family? Do you have a plan for eventualities and contingencies? If not, or if you have concerns that your planning may be due for an update, please give us a call at (919) 694-4437 to discuss.



Jackie Bedard, Author and Estate & Long-Term Care Planning Attorney

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DESERT DISPATCH: GROWING UNDER THE PHOENIX SUN



Jackie and I just got back from Phoenix, where we attended the April meeting of a group of fellow legal professionals called "How to Manage a Small Law Firm." Sometimes it's hard to explain that even though we get out a little during these trips and spend time with friends, it's never a vacation. It's work. At the conference, we talked about our plans for CFEP for the next 12 months: hiring, advertising, client services, infrastructure. And then we ripped up some of those plans and started over again. And again.

Why do this?

Some people might be wondering--in fact, some people have asked us: why do we bother? The firm was humming along smoothly last spring. Our clients and team were happy enough. Why put in all this extra work?

Because there's more to be done...

Consider this: we believe our approach to estate planning, probate, and long term care is unique. It's not just about the documents. I don't know of any other firms locally that provide the level of service that we do; that provide in-depth trust funding support; that also work on a flat fee basis; that are as organized and "on top of things" as we are. There are clients whose lives we can make better if we can just get the message out to them and scale to serve them. Likewise, there are amazing people who can grow and thrive as members of our team while providing for their own families.

I feel we have a duty to help the clients in our area who want and need our help. We go to groups like "How to Manage a Small Law Firm" so we can help more people, without diminishing our commitment to excellence in legal expertise and client service, in a way that can continue for years and years to come. Thank you for being a part of it!

How our firm operates is one of my favorite subjects! If you have comments, questions, or concerns, please reach out at operations@carolinafep.com.

Dan Bedard, Author & Executive Director of CFEP. Lover of dogs, traveling and efficient systems.

THANK YOU

Thank You For Introducing Your Friends & Family to Our Office!

We're devoted to delivering first-class service to our clients. As a result, our valued clients, partners, and friends refer their family, friends, and associates to us.

John & Betty Bonas

Jenny Bradley, Triangle Smart Divorce

Kellie Corbett, CFEP

Elliot Dole, Buckingham Strategic Wealth

Mitzi Gardner, Triangle Smart Divorce

Denise Gibbon

Ellen Kelly

Scott & Carole Magee

Leroy & Catherine Mickelsen

Philip Miller, Blanchard, Miller, Lewis & Isley

Louis Prosser, New York Life

Arlene Richardson

Brian & Laura Ross

Ray Stancil, Brookdale Cary

Karen Taylor

Dan Thomason, First Citizens Bank

Robert Villareal, Charles Schwab & Co

Linda Ward, Ward Family Law Group

Blueberry Lemon Baked French Toast
From Erin Clarke at wellplated.com

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Loaf of Day Old Bread (Sourdough, Brioche, Challah) Cut into 1 in cubes
- 1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries
- 6 large eggs
- 4 egg whites
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup
- Zest of 1 large lemon
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) Arrange the bread cubes in an even layer in a greased 9 x 13 dish. Sprinkle the blueberries over the top. Set aside.
- 2) In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs, egg whites, milk, maple syrup, lemon zest, lemon juice, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt. Pour over the bread. Cover the pan tightly with plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator overnight or a minimum of 2 hours.
- 3) Bake, uncovered, for 45 to 55 minutes, until lightly golden brown on top and the bread in the center is moist but no longer liquid. Serve hot, dusted with powdered sugar and topped with butter and maple syrup, as desired.

Nalsworth Dogglethorp, III, Esq. here (a.k.a, Nala). My job is to bring you something fun or interesting each issue:



ERIN'S NOOK

Planning for the 2nd Half of Life in these Political and Economic Times...

11 Threats to You, Your Family, and Your Assets

AT THIS SEMINAR, HERE'S SOME OF WHAT YOU WILL DISCOVER:

- How to avoid the common mistakes Baby Boomers make when planning for the second half of life.
- How to avoid having your life savings or retirement plans wiped out by the cost of care as you get older.
- Uncover the secret sources of paying for long-term care costs that may lie hidden in your retirement plan.
- Important differences between Estate Planning and Long-Term Care Planning and how they coordinate.
- How to care for yourself and your spouse and how to maximize the assets you leave to your children...plus how to protect their inheritance from divorce, less than trustworthy spouses, creditors, and similar.

Upcoming Free Seminars: *RSVP required*

Thursday, May 24: 6:30 pm • Thursday, June 7: 6:30 pm • Wednesday, June 13: 10 am

Register by phone: **919-694-4437** or online: **seminars.carolinafep.com**

Can't attend? Call us! Additional dates may be offered based upon demand. We'll keep you updated of future offerings or other resources to assist you.

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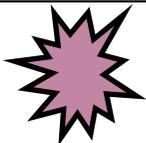
What's New at CFEP

For up to date information and announcements, remember to:

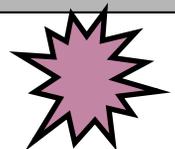


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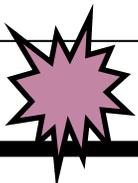
What's New at Carolina Family Estate Planning?



Happy Birthday CFEP!



- ◇ Carolina Family Estate Planning is 9 years old!! Senior attorney Jackie Bedard founded the firm nine years ago this month, and CFEP continues to grow and establish itself as the leading estate planning law firm in the area. Cheers to many more years of serving our community!
- ◇ Happy Anniversary! Executive Director Dan Bedard celebrated his 2-year work anniversary. Dan is a systems guy, helping CFEP establish policies and procedures that help us serve our clients with warmth and consistent excellence. We're grateful for you, Dan!
- ◇ PICTURE DAY! Photographer David Williams and his team stopped by to update our team photo and headshots. Stay tuned to our social media platforms and website for fresh photos!
- ◇ Paralegal Jennifer Mercer snapped a picture of some CFEP neighborhood geese and their spring tribe. Happy Mother's Day to all!



Want to help your parents' group, church group, or community organization "get their ducks in a row"? Contact us at newsletter@CarolinaFEP.com to start planning a special CFEP presentation.