



An Idle Thursday Morning

Contributed by Erin L. Steele, Elder Law Coordinator

My parents purchased a business from my grandparents in 1986 - my dad managed our family, the business and a full-time job for many years. My parents divorced when I was 13. As part of their divorce settlement, they agreed that my dad would keep the business and my mom would keep the home we resided in. The business was solely in his name and remained his livelihood for 33 years.

In the spring of 2018, at 67 years old, my dad decided that it was time to retire and sell his

**EVEN WITHIN OUR FRIENDLY
FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS, THIS
PROCESS HAS BEEN A STRESSOR**

business. Over the next several months, he remained active preparing for retirement. However, in the middle of all this activity, he became ill. The sale of the business and his retirement were suddenly placed on hold.

I once heard Mary Schmich say “Don’t worry about the future, or worry, but know that worrying is as effective as trying to solve an algebra equation by chewing bubble gum. The real troubles in your life are apt to be things that never crossed your worried mind, the kind that blindsides you at 4 p.m. on some idle Tuesday.” For me, the real worry blindsided me at 11:20 a.m. on some idle Thursday in February

2019. I received a phone call to come home, my dad was not expected to live more than a few days. Needless to say, I was completely shocked and left with a deep feeling of sorrow, helplessness and anxiety. That Thursday afternoon, my husband and I took the most dreadful ride of my life, the 5 hour journey home to say goodbye and be by my dad’s side as he passed from this earth.

Still treading through the darkness of this shock, I began thinking about our next steps. I said to my husband, “I wonder if he has a Will or any type of estate plan? He is in the middle of selling his business – what kind of a mess could we potentially be dealing with?”

Fast forward one year. My father did not have a Last Will and Testament to appoint someone to manage his assets or memorialize his wishes of how his estate was to be distributed. The responsibility of those decisions fell to the laws of intestate succession and probate - another thing a healthy estate plan could have avoided. At my father’s passing, he held his business and the real estate where it operated in his sole name. Once more, he was unmarried with two adult children. Although the intestacy laws protect my father’s estate for my

225 High Street
Seaford, Delaware 19973

1519 Savannah Road
Lewes, Delaware 19958

616 William Street
Berlin, Maryland 21811

www.pwwlaw.com



**PROCINO-WELLS
& WOODLAND, LLC**

Continued from previous page...

brother and me and offer us the first right of being his personal representatives, we renounced that right in favor of his life partner.

Due to the delays of probate, his estate may not settle for another twelve months, creating the possibility that two years will pass before things are resolved. This has intensified our grieving process as we are experiencing a nagging distraction regularly calling our attention to timelines and paperwork, when we prefer to be healing. Even within our friendly family relationships, this process has been a stressor, challenging us to collectively agree on certain steps, and to not be offended when our presumption of my father's wishes isn't carried out.

Having a good estate plan not only appoints someone to manage your assets when you are no longer able, but it also expresses your wishes for how your assets are distributed at your death and who will carry out your wishes. It clearly directs your family and assets once you are gone. The anguish is enough of a burden, but the confusion and uncertainty of dealing with an estate with no Will, along with the probate process, challenges families to remain unified. The tension is avoidable with a good plan.

A comprehensive estate plan should always include an Advanced Health Care Directive, Durable Power of Attorney and either a traditional Last Will and Testament or, for the best planning possible, a Revocable Living Trust. Your plan should be designed by an attorney who specializes in estate planning so she can address any complexity specific to your family and accomplish your life goals. An expert attorney can assist you in meeting your

individual objectives and unique needs as well as guide you through the appropriate estate planning process that will take care of your family and legacy after you are gone.

I wish my dad had been able to see the sale of his business and enjoy retirement. I miss him.

ONLINE REVIEWS

It's no surprise that 90% of consumers say that online reviews impact their decision making process. You can help us provide local consumers with a voice of experience by writing an online review on your favorite platform like Google, Facebook or Avvo. Your review can describe your experience as our client, your feedback of an educational event, or a personal recommendation of one of our team members. Any review is helpful in ensuring that families who find our firm online have access to the information they need.

[Click Here to Leave Us a Review](#)

BELLA'S BRIEF

The Office from a Dog's Perspective



My office is now at home with five men. There's not much I can say about it that's positive and no one wants to hear whining right now so I will just tell you this: I am glad I don't need to use toilet paper.

xxo Bella 

TIME OUT!

A forced time out doesn't have to be a bad thing. Here's a list of things you can do while you're at home:

CLEAN OUT YOUR CLOSET

That jacket you are never going to wear again could provide shelter from the elements for someone else.

MAKE A NEW DISH

Reach deep into the freezer and pull out whatever your hand lands on. Then google new ways to cook it up.

GET NAKED

Strip the polish off your toes and let those piggies get some air. What did you think we were talking about?

EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY

Figure out how to use the iWatch you bought 2-years ago.

GO ON A SCAVENGER HUNT

This isn't just for kids. Grab a notepad and pencil and head outside. Write down the first thing you see that starts with an A. Then a B. And so on!

READ A BOOK

Maybe the Bible has been in your nightstand for decades, but you've forgotten your favorite scripture. Resurrect your faith.

CREATE A JOURNAL

Write or voice record something you are grateful for each day.

FINALIZE YOUR ESTATE PLAN

We had to say it!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 6
Apr | The SECURE Act
10:00 - 11:00 am
via Webinar |
| 10
Apr | Offices Closed
Good Friday |
| 13*
Apr | Three-Part Elder Law Series
10:00 - 11:00 am
via Webinar
<i>*Also on April 20th and 27th</i> |
| 4
May | Professional Education Course: Estate Administration
8:30 am - 12:30 pm
via Webinar |

For more information about content or registration, please visit our website or contact Meagan at mls@pnwmlaw.com

LEGAL MUMBO JUMBO

Legal Language in Layman's Terms

INTESTATE ESTATE

An estate of someone that passed away without a Last Will and Testament in place or a Will that was not deemed as valid by the court. The order in which heirs inherit items from the estate is determined by individual state laws.

A note from the attorneys...

What do times of uncertainty make you think about? We are thinking of family - our personal families, our professional family, and our clients' families. We've been using technology to stay connected for years and we continue to be here for you now.



**PROCINO-WELLS
& WOODLAND, llc**

225 High Street
Seaford, Delaware 19973



Planning today to protect your family's tomorrow.



OFF THE CLOCK

We would like to thank our featured referrer of the month:



JASON S. BENTLEY - JANNEY MONTGOMERY SCOTT LLC

302-313-0408

12001 Old Vine Boulevard, Suite 106

Lewes, Delaware 19958

Procino-Wells & Woodland, LLC is a proud member of:



Accredited Attorney



This newsletter is intended for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. For legal advice, consult a licensed attorney. The examples used are simplified for ease of understanding and illustration of general concepts.