

"KNOWLEDGE TO HELP, EMPATHY TO CARE"

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**October Update:**

It's October! There's more to it than just Halloween though... the air is getting crisper, days are getting shorter and the leaves are changing! October means "eighth month," as it was originally the eighth month on the ancient Roman calendar!

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**DONALD**  
LAW OFFICE, LLC  
WILLS, ESTATE, VA & ELDER LAW

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## Wills & Trusts: What You Think You Know

As a family estate planning attorney, clients often come to me with ideas about wills & trust that they learned from friends, neighbors, and the internet. I've come to realize that a lot of people think they know about wills & trusts – but they don't.

Unfortunately, most people don't ever find out they don't know, because by the time it comes to light, it's simply too late.

A will is, essentially, your ticket into probate court.

Many people think that if they have a will, they will avoid probate. Probate is the court process of validating the contents of a deceased individual's will.

All property that passes through a will, and therefore through probate court, is subject to any and all debt that you have during your life. I tell my clients, "Probate is a lawsuit you file against yourself, with your own money, on behalf of your creditors." What this means is your creditors, not your family, often get first dibs on your property.

Everything that your will says is completely public. Even worse, any property that passes through a will is public record. This can be bad for those left behind, because even the most sensible people, when in the grieving process, may be vulnerable to predators.

Here at Donald Law Office, we offer a few different ways to help clients to avoid probate in the future. It is costly and time consuming but can be avoided by simply planning ahead.

## Upcoming Workshop

### VA Pension Benefits

Planning to Secure  
Veteran's and  
Medicaid Benefits  
for Assisted Living  
and Long Term  
Care Costs

**November 11, 2015**

2:00pm-4:00pm

**VFW Post 3761**

2155 Reynoldsburg-  
Baltimore Rd. NW  
Baltimore, Ohio 43105

Qualifying for Veterans' Benefits and Medicaid is tougher than ever under anticipated rule changes. Learn how the laws may affect you, and the planning options.

**Discussion Topics:**

- \* Risks of waiting too long to plan and from do-it-yourself planning
- \* Little known, tax-free money to help pay for care for Veterans or surviving spouses
- \* Types of trusts that work in VA and Medicaid planning
- \* How to conserve money for your needs – even

while getting Medicaid or VA benefits

\* Common myths and misconceptions & real life examples

**Call or email to register today!**



## Office Happenings

It seems like we are always saying "it was a busy month last month" but September was a crazy month for us!

As many of you know, Nicole, one of our attorneys, was out of the office for maternity leave and left just Matt to help all of our existing and new clients.

However, we are happy to report that both momma and baby (and dad!) are

doing fine and Nicole is already back to work! Please be sure to welcome her back when you get a chance.

In the upcoming months you will notice some subtle changes and highlighting of the services offered by our office. For example, many of you know that we have an emphasis on Elder Law but did you know we also do a significant amount of estate planning

for younger people as well?

In 2016, you will start to see our office presenting more informational seminars on holistic estate planning, not just elder law.

Our primary area of **emphasis** will, and **always will be**, on **elder law**. However, we will also be sharing with the public how we can help younger clients fulfill their estate planning needs also.

### Quote of the Month:

"Do something today that your future self will thank you for."



## Staff Spotlight

This month's Staff Spotlight will be focused on our Client Services Coordinator and Paralegal, Sarah Gallenstein!

Sarah is originally from Maysville, Kentucky. She attended Morehead State University in Morehead, KY where she received her

undergraduate degree and then completed her Paralegal Certification from Ohio University in May 2015. Sarah relocated to Ohio in mid-2014 and currently resides in Canal Winchester.

She always wanted the opportunity to work with

the elderly and be able to serve them in some way, so she is glad she works in a field that lets her do just that. Sarah loves to travel and really would like to do it more. She also loves spending time with her two dogs, Reeses (a beagle mix) and Biscuit (a dachshund and chihuahua mix.)

At Donald Law Office, we guide you through your entire estate planning and long-term care journey!

**Our Mission is to provide peace of mind to you and your loved ones.**

## Matt's Message

Fall is by far my favorite time of the year. The leaves are turning and falling to the ground, the kids are finally back into the swing of school, and of course, there is football!

I think though my favorite thing about the fall is it gives us one more chance to get things done that we need to do around our house before winter arrives.

Sometimes estate planning

reminds me of the seasons. For example, during the summer we are all so busy with vacations, cook outs, and family visits that we really don't have time for much else, especially planning for our estate. In the "summer of our lives" we are busy raising children, working, etc.

With the children grown and off on their own, we finally get a chance to reflect on things that need

to be done before the "winter of our lives" arrive.

Take this opportunity to help prepare you and your family for those times when things might get tough.

I hope that things never get tough for you in your "winter" but I know this for sure, better to be prepared now than wait until winter gets here. It's like gathering firewood, better to do it in the fall than in the winter.



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