

# FOUNTAIN FINANCIAL ASSOCIATES

BUILDING LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH KEEPING PROMISES

Vol. 14, Issue 2: Summer 2013

## Toward Full Stature



Vinton Fountain

This summer I will be attending my 35th high-school reunion at Virginia Episcopal School in Lynchburg, Virginia. VES is a college preparatory school founded in 1916, nestled on 160 acres beside the James River in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Our school's founder, Robert Jett, challenged all students to strive "toward full stature." The weekend

will provide a return to the days of youthful exuberance and allow us to measure where we stand with Dr. Jett's vision.

Speaking of exuberance, the value of stocks as I write reminds me of the bull market in the late '90s, real estate in 2005, oil in 1998, gold in 2011 and Apple in 2012. We are now in the fifth year of increasing stock prices as confidence in our economy continues to improve due to modest gains in employment, the housing rebound and stronger credit markets. The current market certainly causes any logical person to wonder ... can it go higher?

The quick answer is a resounding and confident, "Yes it can, and it likely will." The next decade should be one of the most prosperous since the '80s due to an energy-led economic revolution that allows the US to become a low-cost provider of energy that will likely drive a manufacturing renaissance. My best investment tip: You do not want to miss this one.

Now, here is the best part. You do not need to pick the bottom or the top of the market to participate in this prosperity. And, most importantly to folks who may like the comfort of holding cash, it is not too late. Our clients are enjoying the rewards from this simple methodology that avoids mistakes caused by

trying to "read tea leaves" or by chasing the hot stock of the day. This sounds pretty sensible right now, but when tomorrow arrives with the scary headlines of the next crisis, we tend to react to the urges of fear, greed and everything in between. That behavioral paradox is the fundamental investor dilemma.

*"Things which  
matter most must  
never be at the  
mercy of things  
which matter least."*

WOLFGANG GOETHE

The markets will go up and down every day for the rest of our lives, but our behavior is 100% controllable, and it links our lives to our investments. I have learned over the last 30 years that the most important contributor to doing well is not losing money. Trying to predict market movements or stock speculation will be harmful to your financial lifestyle and security. Too many investors focus on outlook which unfortunately tends to create speculation and losses.

As I approach my reunion, I am reminded of my senior year in 1978 and the lessons I have learned from teachers, classmates, clients, friends, mentors, colleagues and family. One of those lessons is if you get the big things right, the small ones will likely follow. Wolfgang Goethe tells us, "Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least." I would encourage you to be a part of what is likely to happen in the next decade and make sure to pass the message along to the next generation. Let me hear from you.

Wishing you my best,

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## Words Worth Repeating

*"Success seems to be connected with action.*

*Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes but they don't quit."*

CONRAD HILTON

*"If you ask what is the single most important key to longevity, I would have to say it is avoiding worry, stress and tension. And if you didn't ask me, I'd still have to say it."*

GEORGE BURNS

*"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."*

HENRY FORD

*"Be sure you put your feet in the right place, then stand firm."*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

## A Savings State of Mind



Chris Riley, CFP®

Boundless strategizing about saving for retirement saturates the internet, magazines and national newspapers. It's virtually become its own industry. Wisdom from such notables as Susie Orman, Ben Stein and countless others is easily found wherever you look. Armed with calculators, charts and other tools, we are assured that the solutions are just a click away or at the turn of a page. With Social Security, Medicare and all entitlement programs under the microscope, we continue our quest for answers that will give us peace of mind and allow us to face our futures with more certainty. There is little doubt that implementing a grounded process for savings is important, as we are warned that about half of US households are "at risk" of not having enough to maintain living standards in retirement. When was the last time you heard someone say, "You know, I just have more than I need. I wish I hadn't saved so much"?

We spend countless hours educating ourselves on what investments and rates of return will be needed to stay ahead of inflation and taxes, but the most important thing is commitment to savings. Warren

Buffett reminds us, "Someone's sitting in the shade today because that tree was planted long ago." Putting aside the resources we need to retire comfortably is a lifelong, dynamic process – not a smooth color chart – so it's important to regularly review your progress, assess current priorities and make sound decisions.

*Give up worry and focus on the possible*

Every morning, my wife and I spend time sharing an inspirational message that gives us a good foundation to begin our day. A recent morning provided us with a great message: "Give up worry and focus on the possible!" When it comes to preparing for the future, the possible is largely built on a good process that is simple, consistent and grounded. Think about people that you care about in your life. What do you want for them most of all? Confidence, empowerment and encouragement could be words that come to mind. Whether you are still saving or already enjoying retirement, behavior and communication are your keys to success. Let us know how we can help. Embrace that savings state of mind!

Chris

## For your contact file



The best email addresses to use when contacting our office are listed here for your contact file. Please note, prior email addresses ending in @financialnetwork.com will expire later this summer. Thanks!

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# Estate Planning: Is It Time to Review?

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**Tracy Brown, CFP®**

Our passion at Fountain Financial is to help develop a better life for our clients and their families by providing a supportive relationship, which includes helping to create a road map for the future. Part of that roadmap is the estate plan. The estate plan includes your Will and, possibly, Trusts that handle asset transfers at your death. It also

includes Durable Powers of Attorney, Healthcare Powers of Attorney, HIPAA Releases, and Living Wills that provide guidance in making decisions for you, if you are unable to make decisions for yourself. The impact of such plans can affect many of the closest people in your life.

Estate planning is an ongoing process. As life changes and goals shift, the estate plan should move in line with the new goals. Lack of adequate estate planning can result in financial and emotional burdens to your loved ones. It is a good practice to review your estate plan every 3-5 years. There are also certain life events that warrant having your estate plan reviewed and updated, if necessary.

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## Changes in Your Life

Changes in marital status, financial status, birth or death of a beneficiary or fiduciary, purchase or sale of a business, moving to a new state, or changes in the life of a beneficiary or fiduciary represent good times to review your estate planning documents.

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*Some life events,  
as well as changes  
in law, warrant  
having your plan  
reviewed and  
updated*

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## Changes in Law

The recent American Taxpayer Relief Act, which was signed into effect by President Obama on January 2, 2013, has made permanent the changes to the federal estate tax,

gift tax and generation-skipping transfer tax exemption amounts. In light of these changes, it would be prudent to review your current plan.

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*We believe there  
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Well-drafted estate documents attempt to maximize the value of the estate by minimizing taxes and expenses. A good estate plan also keeps the settling of the estate as simple and efficient as possible. Most importantly, your estate plan should ensure that your assets benefit the people or institutions you choose and that your wishes are met in the event of your incapacity.

One of the greatest gifts you can leave your heirs is an organized estate. We believe there is great value in organizing and clarifying your estate plan to reduce complexity, confusion and cost in the future. The time you spend now will provide you peace of mind that there will be a smooth transition of your estate, leaving the legacy you desire and helping your loved ones in the future.

Please let us know if we can assist you in reviewing your estate plan. While Fountain Financial does not practice law, we can help review and organize your current estate planning documents. We can also provide support, working with your current attorney or making a referral to a new estate planning attorney, if you determine an update is warranted. It is our mission to provide you with a better life and legacy, and we look forward to continuing to assist you.

*Tracy*

# Keeping Promises



# Latest FFA Happenings

## 2013 Valentine's Day Event

Our annual Valentine's Day event was a great success – we had a great turnout! Buck and Vinton provided a market update and perspectives for the year ahead.



Mary Dee and Phil Davis



Mimi and Tom Cunningham



Irene and Bob Seeling



Peggy Temple and Mary Beth Cowper



Chris Riley, Fran Rudolph, Tracy Brown and Peggy Spallek



Jon and Lorraine Mason, with Linda and Henry Brown, and Pat and John Hatcher

## 2013 Earth Day Shred Event

Our second annual shred event was very successful. Thank you to everyone that attended. We shredded and recycled a lot of paper!



The Shred Event Team (from left): Susie, Dana, Clayton, Debbie, Matt, Buck (and Beau), Robbie (from Cintas), Tracy and Vinton



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