**Breakfast Speaker Info**

"Senior Frauds & Exploitation"
Officer Joel Quattlebaum

Breakfast topic this month will be "Senior Frauds and Exploitation" presented by Ofc. Joel Quattlebaum, Senior Services Officer, Problem oriented Unit-City of Largo Police Department. Ofc Quattlebaum serves the entire City as well as assists other agencies with senior-related calls for service which vary from homelessness to exploitation.

Born in Florida, Ofc. Quattlebaum grew up in Largo where he started his career with the City of Largo, Parks Division in 2008. In 2012 he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Reserve and currently is stationed in Orlando, Florida as a Motor Transport Operator. Following his active duty time, while serving in the Marine Corps Reserves, he attended the police academy and was hired on with Largo Police Department. After two years he was selected for the Problem Oriented Policing Unit to carry on the torch of helping Largo’s Senior Citizens after Ofc. Rayshall Poinsette retired from 34 years of dedicated service to the City.

The Fountains has routinely been our January hosts each year so be sure to join us for a great networking event, useful information, great company and always a delicious breakfast!

See you there!
THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT...

As we pack up our Christmas decorations and ring in the New Year, many of us find ourselves thinking about our goals or New Year’s resolutions for 2017. I have just one goal or resolution for myself and for the GAPC. That is, to give back to the community even more than we did in 2016. To accomplish this we must be strong as an Association.

On January 17th we will hold our Annual Meeting where Steve Hitchcock, Esq. will swear in our Officers and Directors. We invite everyone to come out and get to know a few new faces. As a group we will dive into volunteer opportunities; Committee roles and responsibilities; and brainstorm as to how we can make 2017 the best year yet. Please come with ideas and suggestions. Let your voice be heard and help make the Association bigger, better and stronger than ever.

TRACI
samueltraci@yahoo.com
Steve Hitchcock has been our go-to person for any number of things Guardian, including speaking at our regular CEU meetings and at the last two Annual Conferences. He has provided legislative updates for the monthly eNewsletter. Now he will do the installation of new Officers and Board Members at our January Annual Meeting.

A member of the Florida Bar, Board Certified in Elder Law, Steve earned his Juris Doctor Cum Laude, and LL.M from Stetson University College of Law. He has more than 25 years of professional pharmacy practice and consulting. He is head of his private practice, Hitchcock Law Group, member of Lillesand, Wolasky, Waks and Hitchcock, LLC and Adjunct Professor of Disability Law at Stetson, Steve also hosts a local radio show, The Senior Resource Hour, on AM 970 WFLA, Sundays at 5 am.

The Guardian Association of Pinellas County encourages all members and/or vendors to utilize PayPal for all transactions with the GAPC. You do not need to have an account to pay with PayPal.

BECOME A GAPC MEMBER TODAY…

... and reap the benefits of joining a knowledgeable network of professionals. Professional Guardians, Affiliates and Healthcare professionals that join now will be members in good standing through December 31st 2017. In addition to new networking opportunities you receive the GAPC monthly eNewsletter. The eNewsletter is exclusive to members only and only members have access to the Member Directory. Members obtain a reduced fee for the Annual Conference, access a forum to state your concerns and questions and have the convenience of online payment via PayPal. To join or to continue your membership go to our website HERE.
INTRODUCING THE
GAPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President

TRACI SAMUEL is president and owner of Florida Guardianship Services, Inc. She has over 25 years of clinical and healthcare management experience and has devoted her time and career to working with the elderly with a focus on preventing elder exploitation and abuse. Traci became a professional guardian after her grandmother developed dementia. Thereafter, she joined the Guardian Association of Pinellas County and has been an active member in the community. She currently resides in St. Petersburg and enjoys running and traveling in her free time.

Vice President

IRENE RAUSCH has served as professional guardian since 1982, holding a Master’s Degree in Applied Anthropology and earning the National Master Guardian certification in 2000. She served as President of the GAPC (1987, 1988, 2012, 2013); developed and conducted the initial 40 hour training at St. Petersburg College in 1988; served as President of the FSGA (1989, 1990); and coordinated the first state conference in 1989. Irene was elected as charter member of the NGA Board of Directors in 1988, serving for 9 years on the Board of which she served as Conference Chairman for 6 years. While on the NGA board she assisted with the development of the NGA Registered Guardian Handbook, 8 hour training and initial exam for RG certification. Irene has personally conducted 116 40-hour guardian training programs in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties since 1989 and is the author of “A Practical Guide to Guardianship.”

Treasurer

DAVID MENNEKE is owner of Florida Family Cremations, Inc. and has been a member of the Bay Area Marketing Association, Bay Area Senior Education Services, Cremation Association of North America, as well as Better Living for Seniors. Says David, “I would like to be part of this new blood in this Association. The guardians are very important to our seniors who have no family or advocates. I want this organization to be strong and vibrant. I will do all I can to help make it that way”.

Secretary

AMBER WATKINS recently entered the world of Guardianship in hopes of enriching not only her life, but the lives of others. She made the decision to leave her job at a busy dental office to pursue a career in which she can be an asset to her community by helping those in need. “I’m grateful to be a part of this wonderful organization by serving as Secretary on the GAPC Board of Directors and working alongside some of the best people in this rewarding profession.”
LYNNMARIE BOLTZE is a Guardian having worked with seniors for over 40 years. She has been a GAPC member since 2012, having joined the GAPC BOD in 2014; served as President (2015, 2016), Vice President (2014), and Acting Treasurer. She volunteers numerous hours yearly for a number of charities like the Honor Flight of West Central Florida, serving on 3 missions to date. She's been a member of Better Living for Seniors since 2012, serving on the Communication Committee; an Advisory Board Member since 2014 with (RSVP) Pinellas County Retired Services Volunteer Program; and Founding Member and former BOD for the Krewe of Agustina de Aragon (since 1997). LynnMarie says “paying it forward is something my parents taught me at a very young age. As guardians and those in the healthcare industry this is what we do every day in the work of changing lives of those around us. Even if it is only for one brief moment - it works and we all win.”

SUSAN BREHM, a new Guardian, has volunteered in many capacities for different organizations. She has served as an officer on various committees and committee chair; has led membership drives, fundraisers and dynamic programs including Minnie’s Food Pantry, Spread the Love Movement (Founder - Dallas homeless food program), Dallas Urban Housing & Rehabilitation Standards Board, Dallas Metro Diversity Council Chair, National League of Women Voters, Meals on Wheels, and others. She is currently a member of Better Living for Seniors and serves with those working on Elves for Elders. Susan says, “I view the GAPC as my organization which means getting involved, serving, learning and adding value any way I see possible”.

TINA COSTA has been an RN for 30 years, in homecare for the past 26 years and presently Account Executive at ResCare Home Care in Dunedin. "I am well connected in the community. I am driven, organized, ethical and a very hard worker," says Tina. Having been involved with GAPC on some level since 2010, she has developed tremendous respect for the profession and feels she can continue to be a voice in educating the community on how guardians help people in need. She is Founder and President of Professional Speakers Bureau of Tampa Bay (PSBTB) and Bases, Your Source; a member and on BOD of Rotary Club, PCEPC and GAPC as well as Co-chair of the Professional Development Committee of Better Living for Seniors.

TRISHA RANDALL is publisher the Senior Living Guide, the Yellow Book of Senior Living Options. The Senior Living Guide is a resource publication distributed throughout eight counties. As publisher Trisha is responsible for the advertising sales, marketing, production and distribution of the publication. Trisha joined Senior Living Guide in June 2009. Since then she has become very active in the assisted living community serving on boards and committees including the Guardian Association of Pinellas County, Florida Assisted Living Association, Better Living for Seniors.

QUYEN TRUJILLO is an Associate with Charles Rutenberg Realty offers her services to a number of community organizations including Keep It Local Networking Group, Board Member for Oldsmar Code Enforcement, Board Member for Oldsmar Centennial Committee, Grassroots Partner Alzheimer’s Association, as well as teaching classes for Clearwater Housing Authority and featured in several HGTV’s House Hunters episodes. Quyen says, “I can generate excitement and enthusiasm for more participation in the group. Fresh ideas that will catapult this amazing group into another level and create an environment where all guardians will want to not only join but actively participate”.

INTRODUCING THE GAPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BOARD MEMBERS
Membership Meeting
Holiday Party
December 20th at Cypress Palms, Largo
Membership Meeting
Holiday Party
December 20th at Cypress Palms, Largo

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Thursday, January 19th
9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

USF Health
Byrd Alzheimer’s Institute
4001 E. Fletcher Ave., Tampa
First Floor Conference Room

For more info, contact Kara Allen
(813) 396-0659

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(813) 396-0659
Happy New Year! This time of the year tends to force us to review our choices, actions, behavior, and overall goals. It’s a great opportunity to evaluate and organize. In December of 2016 the Elder Law and Disability Forum was held at the Empath Hospice auditorium – the presentation was on Elder Law Basics.

Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Estate Planning, Special Needs Trusts, Advance Directives and Guardianship were all covered. You can link to materials at:


Please feel free to download the materials – many are great summaries and can help you easily access information you may need while managing your cases. Please sign up while visiting the website to receive notification about our next forum in May 2017 focused on Elder Law and Disability updates. Thank you to Irene Rausch for always securing free continuing education credits for all Guardians in attendance.

The new Medicaid SSI-Related Programs Financial Eligibility Standards for 2017 are published and available at http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/access/docs/esspolicymanual/a_09.pdf. This is a handy tool to print and keep out on your desk. Please note the new Income limit for Long Term Care is $2,205, the asset limit for a single individual remains at $2,000 and the new community spouse asset limit is $120,900.

Your client may qualify for their Medicare premium to be paid by Medicaid. If you are working with individuals receiving Medicare benefits and their Income is $1,191 or less, and their countable assets are below $7,280 they can apply for Medicaid benefits and Medicaid will pay their monthly Medicare premium. If their income is below $992, Medicaid will also pay their co-insurance and deductibles. (Please see the Eligibility Standards link above for limits for couples). If their countable assets are greater than the stated limits the excess funds may be deposited into a Pooled Trust enabling the person to be eligible for this benefit and maintain their assets for their use. This can enable your client to have an additional $1,500 per year and save much more!
Finally! After one year of preparation, the new reporting forms are ready for use and can be downloaded from the jud6.org website. The court is requiring use of the new forms effective January 1. The Initial and Annual Plans are in Word format and the Initial and Annual Accounting are in Excel format. If you do not have Microsoft Office, other similar programs will also work such as the free program “Open Office”. For detailed information on how to complete the new forms, visit the jud6.org website and download the “Guardianship Forms Instruction Manual”

INVENTORY AND ACCOUNTING FORMS

The forms are very similar in layout to the previous “Broward County” forms and the schedules are all designated the same (Schedule A is for Income, B is for Disbursements, etc.). The inventory and accounting pages continue to automatically add the items and carry over the totals to the Summary page. Instructions for completing the forms are now included on each page prior to the section to be completed instead of being listed on the jud6.org website. Especially helpful are the numerous examples showing how you should describe the items and there are more pages to list income and assets. A major change however, is that there are no more “worksheets” to fill out prior to completing a new form. You must fill in the information on the ward, attorney and guardian on each form – inventory and accounting. You can save the form and use it again next year without having to retype the information but you will need to “Save as” the new year or you will lose the original when you type over the old information. Another change is that you must now list the original inventory value of non-cash assets in the “carrying value” column. If an asset was acquired after the guardianship was established, you will list the purchase price as the carrying value.

When you open the forms, you need to click on “enable editing” at the top of the page or you will not be able to type into the forms. Areas to be completed are shaded in yellow and there are still some drop-down boxes for choices. The various schedules are shown in a ribbon on the bottom of the screen but you can quickly find the schedule you are seeking by right-clicking on a small triangle on the bottom left of the ribbon. A drop-down box will appear listing all the schedules. You can print each page by holding down the Control and P keys. Although there is an option to print “Active Pages” only, I have not yet been able to get it to work. Documentation should be included behind the appropriate schedule when submitting the completed forms to your attorney. You cannot delete pages that you do not need because the formulas are all linked to each page and it will disrupt the calculations (I tried!).

INITIAL AND ANNUAL GUARDIAN PLANS

These forms are in Word format and as the accounting forms in Excel, you need to click on “enable editing” at the top of the page or you will not be able to type into the forms. There are shaded spaces indicating where you need to type but they will disappear when the form is printed. These forms are quite similar to the old forms but have been simplified and shortened. There is more space in the “Explanation” sections and guardians are encouraged to add details and information about the wards. In particular, the guardian should describe what has been done to assist the ward in recovering or increasing his or her capacity. The form requiring medications has been eliminated. You will need to download the annual physician’s evaluation form separately as it is no longer included at the back of the annual plan form.

I found the forms easy to use. My only complaint, so far, is the type font that appears on the printed accounting forms is a bit small but overall these new forms are a major improvement over the previous forms. A major benefit is that you can contact a local probate court staff person if you need help.
Thursday, January 12th:
Grand Villa of Dunedin will be celebrating their First Anniversary. 4:30 - 7:00 p.m. Champagne, music, cocktails and hors d’oeurves. 880 Patricia Avenue, Dunedin. RSVP to Lori at (727) 200-4178 or mkt.crc.lar@grandvillasenior.net.

Thursday, January 12th:  Seasons Belleair would like you to join them for “Dinner with a Doc”. Dr. Shannon Foster will talk about “Age Related Memory Loss”. 5:00- 6:30 p.m. RSVP (727) 754-9797. 1145 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Belleair.

Thursday, January 19th:  Tampa Bay Research Institute will offer a new women’s health program, Achieving Healthy Skin From the Inside Out. 11:45 a.m. Meet & Greet; 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Presentation. RSVP attendance and reserve lunch at (727) 576-6675 or www.tbri.org/LunchEvents.html. 10900 Roosevelt Blvd., N., St. Petersburg

Linda Burhans, LindaCaregiverConnections.com, announced a new networking group meeting every Tuesday 11:45 a.m., Clover Corner Café, 9520 Seminole Blvd., Seminole. RSVP to Lunch.LCC@gmail.com

A Note from...
Karen Karle Truman, Ph.D.

One of our caregivers has not cooked too much. He decided to make a turkey for one of the holidays. He went to the store and got all of the items he would need for a grand meal. He got out an old recipe book and put the turkey in the pan. This is where he got in trouble. He and his wife really like roasted dark meat – he did not realize he had bought a turkey breast! He looked at the unpackaged turkey in the pan and exclaimed: “It’s got NO LEGS!” So he made soup out of it instead! We are still laughing….

We hope you keep your sense of humor through the new year….we are all going to need some good laughs!

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Although it is often said that nothing is certain except death and taxes, the one tax you may be able to avoid or minimize most through planning is the tax on capital gains. Here’s what you need to know to do such planning:

1. **What is capital gain?** Capital gain is the difference between the "basis" in property -- usually real estate or stocks, but also including artwork and collectibles -- and its selling price. The basis is usually the purchase price of property. So, if you purchased a house for $250,000 and sold it for $450,000 you would have $200,000 of gain ($450,000 - $250,000 = $200,000). However, the basis can be adjusted if you spend money on capital improvements. For instance, if after buying your house you spent $50,000 updating the kitchen, the basis would now be $300,000 and the gain on its sale for $450,000 would be $150,000 ($450,000 - ($250,000 + $50,000) = $150,000). Just make sure you keep good records of any capital improvements in order to prove them in the event of an audit. (The residence exclusion and the step-up in basis are discussed below.

2. **How much is the tax?** It depends, but assume 15 percent federally unless you have either very low or very high income, and whatever your state’s tax is (let’s assume 5 percent, for a total of about 20 percent). Using those assumptions, the tax on $200,000 of gain would be about $40,000. There are three exceptions. First, if you owned the property for less than a year, you would be subject to short-term capital gains tax rates, which are essentially the same rates as for income tax. Second, if your taxable income, including the capital gains, is less than $37,650 for a single person and $75,300 for a married couple (in 2016), there’s no federal tax on capital gain. But beware that the capital gains will be included in the calculation and could put you over the threshold. Third, if your income is more than $415,050 for a single person and $466,950 for a married couple (in 2016), the federal capital gains tax rate is 20 percent, bringing the combined federal and assumed state rate up to just over 25 percent.

3. **The personal residence exclusion.** You may exclude up to $250,000 of gain on the sale of your personal residence and if you’re married you can exclude $500,000. To qualify, you (or your spouse) must have lived in and owned the house for at least two out of the five years prior to the sale. Those two years don’t have to be the same. For instance, if you lived in the house from 2012 to 2014 and owned it from 2014 to 2016, but rented it out, you could still qualify for the exclusion. If you are a nursing home resident, the two-year requirement is reduced to one year.

4. **Carry-over basis.** If you give property such as a family heirloom or real

*continued on page 13*
estate to someone else, they receive it with your basis. So, if your parents bought a vacation home many years ago for $25,000 and now its fair market value is $500,000, if they give it to you, your basis will also be $25,000. If you sell it, you’ll have a gain of $475,000 and no personal residence exclusion, unless you move in for two years first. The combined state and federal tax would be $118,750.

5. **Step-up in basis.** On the other hand, the basis in inherited property gets adjusted to the value on the date of death. In the example of the vacation home, if your parents passed it on to you at death rather than giving it to you during life, the basis would be adjusted to $500,000, potentially saving you $118,750 on its sale. On the other hand, depending on the size of your parents’ estate, it may be subject to estate tax, which would be payable within nine months of their death, while the tax on capital gain would not be due until you sold the property, perhaps decades in the future. President Obama has proposed getting rid of this so-called "step-up" in basis. His reasoning is that it is regressive, benefiting people with property, and the more property they have, the more tax they save. But an argument for retaining the step-up rules is that they can save a tremendous amount of administrative hassle. If you inherited stock from your father that he inherited from his mother, it may be impossible to establish what it was she paid for it. It’s much easier to determine what it was worth at your father’s death.

6. **Offsetting losses.** If during the tax year you realized capital gain through the sale of property, you can offset it with capital losses. Say, for example, you sell your home and realize a lot of gain. You could also sell some stock that has gone down in value, creating a loss that offsets some of the gain on the house sale. In some instances, you can carry over loss from one tax year to the next to offset future gains.

By understanding and considering these rules, you can save on capital gains taxes and avoid a number of possibly expensive mistakes. Talk to your attorney or financial planner today about ways to lower or eliminate your capital gains tax.

The IRS’s **Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program** offers free tax help to taxpayers who are 60 and older. For more information, click here. The IRS also publishes a **Tax Guide For Seniors**.

Robert P.M. Nordstrom is engaged in private practice specializing in estate and medicaid planning, asset protection and elder law and is a member of the St. Petersburg Bar Association and The Florida Bar. You may contact him at (727) 742-2274.

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NEW YEAR, NEW FORMS, NEW PAYMENTS

2017 is here, and with it are other shiny new things! The court approved forms for guardian reports are available on the Clerk’s website: MyPinellasClerk.org. From the home page, click on ‘Get Forms’ at the top of the page. Then from the table of options, click on ‘Guardianship.’

The new forms are in Microsoft Word or Excel format, but can be used with other word processing or spreadsheet programs. They are designed to have a similar layout to the old forms, but will perform more calculations and automatically populate some areas, making them easier to use than the old forms. By the time this article is published, there should also be instructions for the forms, along with helpful hints to get that Order Approving! The forms shall also be posted on the Pasco County Clerk’s website (PascoClerk.com) and the Sixth Circuit’s website (Jud6.org). The court expects guardians to use these forms starting January 1, 2017.

Audit fees are now payable through the Efiling Portal when your report is submitted. You will want to contact your attorney for how they would like you to provide the check information. Please be aware that the Portal charges an additional $5 processing fee for the electronic payment by check. Be sure to include that in the total when adding it to your accounting.

Speaking of fees, the $7.50 fee for maintaining your professional guardian file is due each January, regardless of when you paid it last year! Avoid an Order Disapproving by making sure your payment is in, and that you keep your receipt. This fee cannot be paid through the portal. If mailing in a check, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope to get your receipt sent back to you.

HOW TO CONTACT US: If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Probate office by email: probate@pinellascounty.org or by phone at:

Probate Court Records.................................(727) 464-3321 (main line)
Jerome D. Jordan, Probate Manager............(727) 464-3003

The Guardianship Association of Pinellas County, Inc. does not endorse or recommend any products or services. The views and opinions expressed in articles published in the e-Newsletter do not necessarily state or reflect those of the Association or its members.
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Guardian Association of Pinellas County, Inc.

Membership Request

Membership Year: January 1 through December 31 MEMBERS PAYING NOW ARE GOOD THROUGH DECEMBER 2017!

Membership Application: 
☐ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Date:

By joining the GAPC you are affirming that you have read the GAPC bylaws and the adopted Code of Ethics from the National Guardian Association.

The GAPC Bylaws and NGA Code of Ethics are available on the Association website: www.GuardianAssociation.org

Guardian $45.00 (must be a Guardian or taken the State Guardian Competency Exam) OPPG# ______________

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**Heard about us / Referred by:** (required) ________________________

Category for listing on GAPC website (Please check appropriate boxes and print legibly)

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☐ Assisted Living Facility ☐ Nursing / Rehab Facility

☐ Attorney ☐ Paralegal / Legal Assistant

☐ Care Manager ☐ Finance / Banking

☐ Other ☐ Health Care Agency

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