



RETIREMENT COUNSELING™

— Practical Guidance for Your Ideal Retirement —

Catching up with FFG

FFG Newsletter

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Spring 2016

Improving Technology

by Sean O'Reilly

As Brad always says, "In our modern world, change is no longer inevitable - it is now constant." Just as the world around us is constantly evolving, so are the capabilities and technologies at FFG. Over the past few months FFG has added some notable improvements in our technology to help improve our service to you.

Last year FFG started incorporating a more practical and efficient way for you to schedule appointments with us. Because of the positive feedback we've received on this system, we've expanded the use of online scheduling as an option for all of our meetings. Online scheduling allows you to easily choose your most convenient appointment time based on all available open time slots in our calendar. The scheduler is always available, up to date, and it will even remind you as your appointment with us approaches. Of course Chuck is still always a phone call or email away if you prefer a more traditional way to book appointments.

This year FFG will begin using a new service to more accurately and easily provide you with investment values and portfolio performance. Over the last 6 months we have been performing our due diligence to find the solution that is the best fit. This research is nearly complete and we are expecting to start utilizing the new service within the next 90 days. One important feature in the new portfolio reporting system will be to more clearly compare

investment performance to the assumptions used in your long term retirement plan.

These improvements in technology are just the beginning. We've already started developing a gameplan on how to use technology to provide you with an even better planning experience. In the near future, we will be bringing to you much easier access to your FFG financial plans and investments through your own personal FFG website. Additionally, this personal website and mobile app would allow you to simplify your life by allowing you to consolidate and manage all of your non-FFG investments and bank accounts in one place. Plus, you would have access to all of your scanned financial documents, an up-to-date version of your Finan See All™, and even a personal vault in which you could securely upload and store any other important documents.

At FFG we have always embraced technology when it can positively affect our clients. So please stay tuned as we bring you all of these improvements in FFG technology and much, much more.



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FFG Retirement Counseling is not owned or controlled by VSR Financial Services, Inc.

Important Retirement Milestones

by Brad Foos

Remembering when to take advantage of key, age-based milestones can be daunting and, at times, somewhat confusing. I thought it might be helpful to provide you with a brief overview of the different milestones that impact retirement planning along your path to, and through, retirement.

Age 50 - Certain retirement accounts allow for a “catch-up” contributions. This means you can contribute an additional \$1000 to IRAs and an additional \$6000 to your 401k.

Age 55 - If you’re participating in a Health Savings Account (HSA) at work, you can make “catch-up” contributions of an additional \$1300 to your HSA account, starting in the year in which you turn 55.

Age 59½ - Most retirement accounts can be accessed for any reason without a 10% additional tax penalty.

Age 60 - Those who have lost a spouse become eligible to collect a Social Security survivor’s benefit (assuming the deceased was eligible and the survivor did not remarry prior to age 60).

Age 62 - You become eligible to collect Social Security retirement benefits (individual and spousal, if applicable) the month following your 62nd birthday. Social Security generally recommends applying for benefits three months prior to the month in which you would like them to begin.

Age 65 - You’re eligible for Medicare. Anyone not collecting Social Security should enroll in Part A three months prior to their 65th birthday to avoid a gap in health insurance coverage. Unless covered by an employer-sponsored health plan, an individual must also enroll in Medicare Part B at this time to avoid future penalties.

Age 66 - If you turn age 66 before January 1, 2021, you become eligible to collect your Full Retirement Benefit in the month following your 66th birthday. If eligible, a Full Spousal Benefit may be available in place of your individual benefit if it is a greater amount.

Investment Notification

by Blake Barnett

To all investors that have a direct participation investment (Equipment Leasing Trust, Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) or Business Development Company (BDC):

We would like to remind you of a new rule change associated with the share price shown on investment statements.

In the past, when you purchased a direct participation investment the statements would show the share price as the Public Offering Price (POP). For example, a REIT was being offered at \$10 share the statement would show a share value of \$10.

Starting on your April statement, companies will no longer illustrate the share value as the Public Offering Price. The Securities Exchange Commission approved a rule that now mandates REIT’s and BDC’s to either use a Net investment Methodology (NIM) or an Appraised Value Methodology (AVM) to show the value of each share.

The Net Investment Methodology and Appraised Value Methodology valuations will be lower than the Public Offering Price. This is because they will illustrate the costs and fees associated with the origination of the investment. It is important to point out that the difference in the new price does not reflect any change in performance for the underlying investment.

Age 70 - If you can afford to do so, waiting until age 70 to begin receiving Social Security benefits can be advantageous. At age 70, you are eligible for your Maximum Annual Benefit, which is approximately 32% more than your Full Retirement Benefit (at age 66), and 76% greater than the benefit you are entitled to receive at age 62 (for those born between 1943 and 1954).

Age 70½ - Is referred to as the “first distribution year” and Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from any qualified accounts you own must begin. The IRS allows the first RMD to be postponed until April 1 of the year following the “first distribution year.” However, you are required to take RMDs by December 31st of each subsequent year to avoid penalties.

Colorado Corner

Roxborough State Park

by Kathy Riggs

Ready for some early season hiking but worried that the trails are too snow covered? Try Roxborough State Park, located just a short drive southwest of Denver.

Roxborough is a Colorado Natural Area and a National Natural Landmark for good reason. The park, with close to 4,000 acres, is filled with dramatic red rock formations, distinct plant communities and a host of wildlife ranging from black bears to mule deer.

Visitors can take in all of Roxborough's geological wonders via a series of trails for every level of hiker. The Fountain Valley Overlook is only 100 yards from the Visitor Center and provides spectacular views of several beautiful rock formations. The Fountain Valley Trail is a 2.3 mile loop, rated as easy to moderate, that winds through the Fountain and Lyons rock formations with a moderate change in elevation. The Carpenter Peak trail is a 6.4 mile round trip hike, rated as moderate, which summits at the highest point in the park and provides a spectacular view in all directions.

Not in the mood for hiking? Roxborough offers many other activities for the outdoor enthusiast. The park is designated an Important Birding Area, and is a great place for bird watching. They offer a variety of naturalist guided tours for all ability levels. There are also many education programs, including a native plant walk, homestead hike and orienteering.

For more information on upcoming activities and trail guides, visit:

cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/Roxborough



Simple Seasonal Recipe

by Cindy Yourtz



Warm Snow Pea and Chicken Salad

This would also be tasty served cold. Serves 4.

Ingredients

- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, trimmed
- 14 oz can reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 3 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 3 Tbsp reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 3 tsp toasted sesame oil, divided
- 2 Tbsp tahini
- 1 Tbsp minced fresh ginger
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pound snow peas, thinly slivered lengthwise
- 2 Tbsp chopped cashews

Directions:

● Place chicken in a medium skillet or saucepan and add broth; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to low, and simmer gently until cooked through and no longer pink in the middle, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board to cool. Shred into bite-size pieces. (Cool and refrigerate the broth, reserving it for another use.)

● Meanwhile, whisk vinegar, soy sauce, 2 tsp sesame oil and tahini in a large bowl until smooth.

● Heat the remaining tsp oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add ginger and garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in slivered peas and cook, stirring, until bright green, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to the bowl with the dressing.

● Add the chicken to the bowl with the peas; toss to combine. Sprinkle with cashews to serve.

Catching up with FFG

Planes, Trains and Automobiles

How Do You Prefer To Travel?

by Chuck Read

How are you coping with the multitude of options out there? From the new A line train from downtown Denver to DIA to the various bullet trains in Europe and Asia, it would appear that train travel is on the rise again. The new commuter light rail line from Union Station to DIA debuted in Denver last week. The cost is \$9 per person each way, and the trip takes about 37 minutes to complete. In addition to the new A line rail service to the airport, there will be additional light rail options to maneuver the city in the near future. These routes have been in the planning stages for many years and, when finally completed, train transportation will be available to get just about anywhere in the Denver metro area.

Europe and Asia have been using this mode of transportation for decades to get around different

countries, for business and casual travel. Other parts of the USA have been using trains and light rail systems to avoid having to drive everywhere. For commuting to downtown Denver, our light rail routes make it a breeze to get there without the vehicular commuter traffic backups that seem to always appear when in a hurry. There are a lot more people moving to Colorado and specifically the Denver metro area in recent years, so traffic is only going to get worse before it gets better. Anytime you can opt for other modes of transportation, all the better to relieve stress and aggravation in getting to your desired destination.

With the additional traffic woes on the highways and the headaches at most airports these days, it is nice to see train travel come back into favor as a good option to get from Point A to B. If you do happen to travel frequently by air, you might look into the TSA Pre✓® option for quicker security screening. You get to keep your shoes, belt and light jackets on, which means shorter lines and less waiting. The \$85 application will provide you with a “known traveler number”, which is good for 5 years. Whichever mode of transportation you choose, we wish you happy and safe travels!



Our Core Values

- We counsel our clients on how to reduce their money worries.
- We counsel our clients without consideration of any product sales revenue.
- We provide a proactive, exceptional experience to our planning clients.
- We utilize a team approach to provide every client with multiple, unique perspectives.
- We position each team member to take advantage of their unique talents and abilities.
- We make the complex easy to understand.
- We deliver and expect open, honest communication.
- We continually educate ourselves and our clients.
- We constantly monitor our performance, identify areas for improvement, and implement necessary changes.
- We always treat others as we would want to be treated.
- We make decisions based on doing the right thing, even when it's not easiest or most popular.