

NEWS

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STEFFENS LAW OFFICE, P.C.

A NOTE FROM BILL

We hired new people this month! Hiring is a challenge because, if you do it right, it takes a lot of time. Sifting through applications, sitting down for interviews, and finding the right people for the job is not a quick process. When you do find the right people, though, it makes it all worth it. One of the best things about new hires is the opportunity to train them, show them how we do our jobs, and watch them become essential parts of that process. Of course, everyone we've ever hired has taught us something as well. That free flow of ideas and talent is rewarding, and it makes us stronger as a law office. While hiring and training are challenges, they're good ones — because we end up with a stellar team who all want the same thing: the outcomes our clients deserve.

AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS *100 Years and Counting*

This August marked the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. Recently, we drove out to Gillette, Wyoming, to support a family friend in the High School National Rodeo competition. When we planned the trip, we said to ourselves, "You know, Yellowstone isn't that far away." I hadn't visited in a long time, and we also wanted to see Cody and Jackson Hole. So after the competition, we entered the park from the north and spent a few days touring.

Of course, you have to see Old Faithful. And we ate a great meal at the Old Faithful Inn, which is one of the oldest buildings in the park. In our tour, we also saw a wolf, a fox, several elk, and many buffalo. It is doubtful, without President Grant's declaration of Yellowstone as a protected area, that we would see those animals and sights in the park today. He set a precedent for future preservations. And while I had to stand in line to take photos in Grand Teton National Park, I understood why it was so important to protect these places.

As a citizen of this country, I feel drawn to the historic places we've preserved. People often shake their heads and wonder where their tax money goes. When I look at the National Park Service and the work it does, I can't imagine a better use for federal funding. You can't visit Mount Rushmore without feeling deeply patriotic, especially after the ranger takes you through the history of this landmark. It almost chokes you up.

I had a similar experience at Ford's Theater in Washington D.C., which is also curated by

the National Park Service. A ranger guides you through the building, which has been beautifully restored and preserved. You can stand under the balcony and look up at where Lincoln was shot, the same view the actors onstage had during that fateful night. History comes to life in that place, and if it wasn't for the Park Service, the building would have been torn down long ago.

When I get out the map to plan any trip, I often start looking for national parks and historic places to visit. Or I'll get out my "Passport" book and read through the list of parks to see if any are close to my destination. That's how we ended up at Fort Sumter on a South Carolina beach trip. A family member pointed out how close it was. So we took the ferry out for the day, not sure what to expect.

The first shots of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter. I stood on the battlements where the first mortar shell exploded directly overhead. Listening to the ranger's description of the siege and looking at the Fort pockmarked with artillery damage, it wasn't hard to imagine cannonballs raining down on the men inside for hours. Once again, history comes to life there.

And when it subsides, you look out over the water to Charleston and realize that it's a beautiful day out. That's the power of these landmarks, and that's why they're worth preserving. I plan to visit as many as I can.

- Bill Steffens

DARE TO DREAM *Build Your Bucket List*

There's No Time Like the Present

You've spent the last 20 to 30 years looking ahead, saving up for retirement, and making smart investments. Now your kids have left the nest, leaving you with more time and disposable income than you've had in years. You're entering a new phase of life, which makes now the perfect time to pick up the long-forgotten dreams you've laid aside for so many years. It's time to make a Bucket List.

Where to Start

This is not about kicking the bucket. You're nowhere near that phase in your life. Your Bucket List is for reassessing and revamping your goals. It's about exploring and embracing your once impractical and now achievable dreams. So where do you start? Throw a Bucket List Party. Gather your friends and family around. Make sure the group is made up of loved ones who believe in you and in each other. Don't forget to

invite that one friend — the one who believes a crazy scheme is just another word for adventure. Supportive friends and family are a major asset when it comes to Bucket Listing.

List Away

Pick something to write in or on. Anything works. From a designated notebook to a party napkin, choose whatever suits your fancy. Then list away. This exercise is about freedom from inhibitions — which is why it's called a Bucket List instead of a To-Do List. Write down anything and everything you desperately want to see or do during your final years. Need ideas? Travel and Leisure's article, "The Ultimate Travel and Leisure Bucket List," is filled with ideas inspired by their employees' Bucket Lists. From taking a food tour in Sicily, Italy, to visiting a traveler-run post office in the Galapagos, you'll find dozens of unique ideas. Or visit www.bucketlist.org, which provides more than 4 million Bucket List suggestions. It also features Bucket List tracking software and the opportunity to connect with like-minded adventurers.



INJURY CLIENT TESTIMONIALS



"Steffens Law Office was wonderfully supportive during my injury. I had a lot of questions and concerns, and they took the time to answer all my questions and put my mind at ease. It was nice knowing I had someone on my side."

– Tammy, North Platte, NE

"I appreciated the help I got from Steffens Law Office on my workplace accident. They answered all my questions, and I knew I could depend on them to keep me informed. They've gone out of their way to help me."

– Rick, North Platte, NE

IS AN AFFIDAVIT YOUR BEST OPTION?

At Steffens Law, we don't believe in overcomplicating things. If your estate is modest, you might not need to go through the long and complicated probate process. In fact, other than acquiring and filing the necessary documents, you might not even need to involve the court at all. If you're eligible, a Small Estate Affidavit is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to transfer your property.

LET'S TALK NUMBERS

What qualifies as a small estate? According to Nebraska Law, an estate doesn't require a probate if it's comprised of less than \$50,000 of probatable property and/or \$50,000 or less of real estate. The size of your estate will also determine your attorney fees. Because the probate process is complex, hiring an attorney to perform one may cost \$2,500 to \$7,500. An

Affidavit, on the other hand, usually comes to around \$250.

HOW DOES AN AFFIDAVIT WORK?

If an estate has only one legal heir, the process is very straightforward. Fortunately, if an estate has multiple heirs, it doesn't complicate things much. In lieu of the formal personal representative required by the probate process, the heirs instead sign an Affidavit in which one or more of them is chosen to collect and distribute

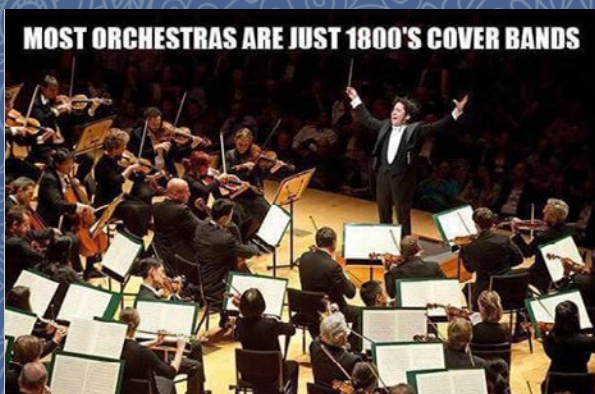
assets. Collection and distribution is simple. Typically, showing the signed Affidavit to property holders is all that's required.

WE CAN HELP

Here at Steffens Law, we believe in choosing the best option for each and every one of our clients. To find out if an Affidavit is your best option, contact Steffens Law Office at **308-872-8327** or visit **www.steffenslaw.com**.



Laugh Out Loud



LEMON CRUMB MUFFINS

INGREDIENTS

Muffins:

- 6 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 cups sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 8 eggs
- 2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream
- 2 cups butter, melted
- 3 tablespoons grated lemon peel
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice



Topping:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold butter, cubed

Glaze:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup lemon juice

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt. In another bowl, combine the eggs, sour cream, butter, lemon peel, and juice. Stir in dry ingredients just until moistened. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups three-fourths full.
2. In a small bowl, combine flour and sugar; cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over batter.
3. Bake at 350 F for 20–25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. In a small bowl, whisk glaze ingredients; drizzle over warm muffins. Serve warm.

Recipe courtesy of Tasteofhome.com.

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THE BATTLE FOR SLEEP

Why your child's sleep pattern is essential to healthy living

Most parents know the struggle of trying to get a child to bed. It's almost as if fighting bedtime is in their very nature and the more tired they get, the more they resist. Yet, it still doesn't change the fact that your kids need sleep.

Why Your Kids Need Sleep

You don't need a scientist to tell you that your kids will be cranky after a particularly late night.

But there's a bit more to it than that. A study out of the National Taiwan University Hospital and College of Medicine found a lack of sleep was linked to hyperactive and impulsive behavior, inattention, daytime napping, and even defiance issues. Their findings essentially find that lack of sleep in children looks similar to ADD and

ADHD — symptoms that can get in the way of your child's success.

Bring on the Sleep

You may be thinking, "That's great news, but how do I actually get my kids to bed, let alone to sleep?" One of the ways you can ease the nightly battle is by helping your kids practice good

sleep hygiene. Don't, for example, put your kids to bed with electronic devices. Studies, like one published by the Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health, have shown this is linked to poor sleep, possibly because it inhibits melatonin production in the brain. Try soothing sounds or read a physical book instead.

