



FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

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HAPPY 2010 FOGGY BOTTOM!

New Year's Checklist: *Securing Your Good Life*

As 2010 rings in, for many the exercise of creating goals and making resolutions has begun. However, what may be notably absent from many lists is the “preparing for adversity” — something that in our culture is typically not spoken about despite the pervasive image of Father Time at the New Year and what it implies.

We all seek “quality of life” based on good health and optimal circumstances. However, FB neighbor, Myrna Fawcett, Esq., principal of Fawcett and

Fawcett, informs us that there are three documents *everyone* needs – a will, an “Advanced Medical Directive”, and a power of attorney (POA) – should unforeseen events or adversity deter us from optimal circumstances. The documents will give you or your family members a voice that is heard, assure that your or your family’s assets are protected, and that your children or parents are properly cared for in wake of unforeseen adversity or natural aging.

Fawcett notes that while everyone may be familiar with

the concept of a will, not having one could result in a court appointed administrator – and losing control over the process with someone not wanted.

The “Advanced Medical Directive” is a document that outlines a host of medical decisions should you become incapacitated. These preferences can span the type of medical treatment to the type and duration of medications. Upon recovery, the decision-making returns to you.

The Durable “Power of Attorney” document also helps you manage financial matters should you become incapacitated. The document enables your trusted designee(s) to work with social service and government agencies, including the IRS. You may choose to have one POA for medical matters and another for financial transactions. Having a POA assures that financial matters can be immediately addressed. Without one, no family or other advocate have the authority to represent you or your affairs.

As Ms. Fawcett points out, the POA may be not be on the radar screen for 20- or 30-year-old professionals, yet one unfortunate auto- or sports-related accident may bring temporary or long term impairment. Having a POA – provides that there is a trusted person to negotiate on your behalf. That person can advocate for the best possible services and even make payments for those

services, which for some, becomes foremost in maintaining quality of life.

According to Fawcett, these documents are essential to maintaining control over your, your child’s, or parent’s life and assets. Says Ms. Fawcett, “the goal is to take reasonable precaution to avoid decision-making at a very difficult time – so that you can take care of yourself and have people you trust to manage your affairs to avoid court oversight. As good as courts may be – without these documents one loses control over his or her life – and may result in a stranger administering your interests and life.”

(Note: this article is not a substitute for legal counsel, nor (continued on next page)

New Year's Ruminations

As winner of the Mayor's 2009 Award for “*Innovation in the Arts,*” FBA's “*Arts in Foggy Bottom*” enthusiastically anticipates our second Foggy Bottom Sculpture Exhibit scheduled to launch this May. Once again, the show will be a catalyst for the artistically attuned, the visually gifted, and the aesthetically versed and our historic Foggy Bottom will be a favored destination for the District as well as visitors from near and far.

— Jill Nevius, FBA Secretary and Co-Director, Arts in Foggy Bottom

Detail of *Father Time in the Rotunda Clock (1896)* by John Flanagan, Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building, Washington, D.C.



THE FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

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The *Foggy Bottom News* is published by the Foggy Bottom Association as a service to its members and provides information on FBA and neighborhood news, programs, activities and other events of interest to FBA members. Contributions and story ideas are welcome, but the *FBN* reserves the right to edit or hold pieces as space requires.

The Foggy Bottom Association was formed by a group of citizens in 1955 and was formally incorporated in 1959. Attendance at FBA meetings is open to all residents of Foggy Bottom and the West End.

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New Year's Checklist *(cont'd)*

can all pertinent matters be covered, e.g., what are the consequences of not having the documents, where do you keep the documents, how often are they updated, etc.)

Myrna Fawcett specializes in Elderlaw, representation of families of special needs children, and representation of persons with disabilities.

Ms. Fawcett graduated from Barnard College and Georgetown University Law Center and is a member of the D.C., MD, NY, and NJ bars and of



the National Academy of Elder Lawyers. She has participated in panels on bioethics, elder abuse, and hoarding before professional groups and government agencies.

Ms. Fawcett lives as she works – giving back to the community.

Among her volunteer and pro bono activities are: Sub-

Committee Chair, Estates Trusts and Probate Section, D.C. Bar; Washington Bioethics Network; Director, Washington, D.C. Jewish Community Center; Theater J Council; Board of

Trustees nominee of Barnard College, Columbia University; Board Member, Mitchell Gallery, St. Johns College, Annapolis, MD; Leadership Greater Washington;

Washington Metropolitan Dialogue of Civic Leaders on Faith; Advisory Board of the Hurt Home; Board Member of her Coop serving as Chair for the Legal and Wellness and Support Committees; and member of Ethics Committee of a local nursing home.

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Start the New Year on the Right Foot!

FBA MEMBERSHIP 2009-2010 YOU COUNT!

Visit the FBA website, www.saveFoggyBottom.com to see what we've been up to, peruse the archives of the Foggy Bottom News, and check out the FB/WE merchants who offer discounts to our members. Join Us!

\$15 (tax deductible) per year.

Membership year: August 15, 2009 – August 14, 2010

FOGGY BOTTOM ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

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