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Pet Peeve—

credit card companies who tuck blank cheques inside promotional material in their statements. To prevent these cheques from falling into the wrong hands, it is a good idea to check promotional material carefully, and destroy the cheques by shredding (or burning if you have a wood stove or fireplace). With the widespread problem of identity theft, you must be careful not to throw items that contain your name, address, account numbers, or other personal information into the garbage or recycle bag.

Did you know that...

a portfolio that is diversified by asset class (equities, bonds and cash), sector and region will have more stable returns, because not all investments provide the same returns at the same time, or respond to events in the same way? A well-diversified portfolio geared toward your financial goals and risk tolerance is still the best investment strategy. History has shown that those who remain committed to their long-term investment goals despite short-term volatility will ultimately benefit.

October 2008

Upcoming Event

The 2nd annual Serving Seniors Social
Saturday, November 15, 2008
Holiday Inn Harbourview, Dartmouth
10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Serving Seniors Alliance has a full day planned—entertainment, education, presentations, prizes, and of course, food—free lunch and morning refreshments.

Emcee Frank Cameron will kick off the event at 10:00 am.

Our line up will include performers such as the “Swell Guys” Ken & Alex with special “Swell Gal” Donna; comedienne Judy Savoy; storyteller Clare Dugas; and lots more.

Event sponsors include Democracy 250, Tim Hortons, Audiology Associates, Grey Power Insurance, Seaside FM, O’Regans, and Coady Filliter.

Tickets are \$5 at the door, or FREE by contacting me—a member of Serving Seniors Alliance. Call me at 468-0602 to reserve your FREE ticket.

Investing with a safety net – Part 1 of 2

Would you like to reduce or eliminate probate fees? Have investments with potentially higher returns than GICs (Guaranteed Investment Certificates), but with some guarantees? Well, life insurance savings products might be for you.

Life insurance companies offer savings contracts (daily savings interest, term funds, and segregated funds) and you can designate beneficiaries, not only for your RRSP / RRIF, but also for your non-registered investments. The depositor protection on insurance contracts is similar to that offered by banks and other financial institutions.

Insurance savings contracts have some unique features and are excellent estate-planning tools:

1. Beneficiaries can be designated for non-registered investments—you retain ownership/control of your investments. This reduces the temptation to add someone other than your spouse to your investments in order to avoid probate.
2. Contracts may be joint with right of survivorship—then payable to beneficiaries following the survivor's death.
3. There is no need to probate the estate—funds are paid directly to beneficiaries.
4. There are no delays—simply provide the insurance company with a claim form together with a death certificate.

5. You maintain privacy—insurance savings contracts do not become public record like probated wills.
6. Insurance contracts with preferred beneficiaries (spouse, common-law spouse, parent, child or grandchild) may be protected against creditors.

I recommend that you work with a financial advisor before investing.

In my next newsletter part 2 of 2, will talk about insurance savings products available, and their distinctive benefits.

Disclaimer: Investors should read the fund's Prospectus and/or Information Folder before investing. Mutual and segregated funds are not guaranteed; their value changes frequently and past performance may not be repeated. Segregated funds have guaranteed minimum values at maturity or death. This article is for general information only and is not intended to provide specific personalized advice including, without limitation, investment, financial, legal, accounting, or tax advice. Please consult an appropriate professional regarding your particular circumstances.



An option is nothing more than
two doors that are halfway open.

For more information on these or other topics, visit my web site at

www.checkwithjoan.com