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BIGGER STARS, BIGGER MESSSES

Chaotic Celebrity Probate Battles Hold Lessons for All

While living celebrities claim an outsized share of our attention, many keep grabbing headlines long after they die. Among crazy celebrity probate cases, few have made a bigger mess than celebrated entrepreneur Tony Hsieh.

In November 2020, after 20 years of leading the high-flying retailer Zappos, Hsieh died alone without a will at age 46 from injuries caused by a fire he set himself, leaving a \$500 million estate. He had jotted many of his final wishes only on sticky notes, so his family and friends are still battling in court.

After the artist formerly known as Prince died in 2016, no fewer than 700 people claimed to be his descendants. Without a will or named executor, the artist's estate remained unsettled for years as lawyers, bankers, advisers, and heirs haggled over it. It took DNA testing to clear the fog, qualifying his sister and five half-siblings as his rightful heirs.

Relatives of the beloved comedian Robin Williams mounted a long and bitter legal fight over his estate, estimated at more than \$100 million. His widow, Susan Schneider Williams, claimed Williams intended to leave

her an allowance so she could remain in the couple's home. However, his three children eventually inherited the home, and the widow agreed to a settlement in 2015.

Even murkier is the case of Gary Coleman, star of the TV series "Diff'rent Strokes." Coleman died at age 42 after a fall in his home left him in a coma with a brain hemorrhage. Coleman and his ex-wife, Shannon Price, divorced in 2008, and the actor left his estate to Anna Gray, his personal assistant and former girlfriend, in a 2005 will. Price claimed Coleman created a 2007 codicil that left his assets to her, so the battle dragged on for years.

The lesson here? The bigger they are, the harder they fall? Perhaps. But there is also real wisdom to be gained: Don't do as these celebrities did. Seek professional help with estate planning — long after you're gone, your loved ones will thank you for it.



Photo:
Eva Rinaldi



FROM RIVALRY TO RESPONSIBILITY

Siblings' Role in Navigating Parental Care and Estate Duties Together

Siblings can play a profound role in shaping our lives, offering companionship, support, and shared experiences from childhood onward. We are raised together, grow up together, and in many cases, are friends for life. As we celebrate National Siblings Day on April 10, it's a fitting time to reflect on these enduring relationships and their role in caring for parents later on in their lives.

I have only one sibling, a brother, Tom, who is three years younger than me. We bonded through our years of parochial school, national park vacations, and not opening the Christmas presents until our dad suitably captured the scene in film. Now, Tom lives with his family in San Diego. Although we don't see each other as often as we would like, we remain close. His son is six months older than my twin boys, and as they grew up, it was fun to get them together often.

Our relationship has been particularly significant as we navigate the challenges of caring for our mother, who suffers from Alzheimer's disease. While it's not easy, together Tom and I jointly manage her finances and medical care, relying on trust, open communication, and a shared sense of responsibility. Our collaborative approach, aided by shared folders and spreadsheets, ensures we act in the best interests of our mother.

As a trusts and estates attorney, I encounter siblings facing challenges in caring for aging parents and administering the estate or trust of a parent after their passing. In some cases, siblings jointly manage family affairs, and in other cases, one or two siblings take on the leading role. In either case there is a need for open communication and flexibility.

Ideally, siblings should discuss their roles openly, and make informed decisions together to minimize disputes and ensure a smoother transition of assets and responsibilities. Some siblings work together harmoniously, while others unfortunately struggle to navigate what would appear to be relatively straightforward decisions. Many sibling relationships have been strained for years, and the incapacity or death of a parent can bring to the surface hurt feelings and emotions that have been brewing for years. In these circumstances, it can be difficult, if not impossible, to make headway without the assistance of a professional.

Seeking legal guidance early on can help set siblings on the right path for the administration, which can prevent escalation and preserve familial harmony. As an attorney, I often serve as a mediator when tensions start to run high, offering impartial advice and facilitating constructive dialogue to reach amicable resolutions.

Whether siblings work seamlessly together or face challenges in collaboration, the guidance of a knowledgeable attorney can help preserve peace. As we celebrate National Siblings Day, let us cherish the bonds that unite us and strive to support one another through life's journey, knowing that together, we can overcome any challenge that comes our way.

- Angela Klenk

4 Meaningful Pursuits to Explore After Retirement

Retirement is the end goal after decades spent working and saving. Once reached, a common question retirees ask is, “Now what?” There’s a massive gap in your schedule now, and there are countless things you can fill the time with. So, here are four big ideas you can use to take advantage of your newfound freedom.

No. 1 See the World

The world is a vast and beautiful place, and now that you don’t have obligations tying you down, you can finally get out there and see everything on your bucket list. If you ever wanted to experience the breathtaking size of the Grand Canyon or dreamt of dining at French cafes by the Seine River in Paris, then retirement is the perfect opportunity to go on those adventures.

No. 2 Never Stop Learning

Be a lifelong learner. If you’ve always wanted to explore your interests through

education but couldn’t fit it into your schedule, now you can. There are courses available online and in person. Many classes specialize in educating seniors, while others offer highly discounted rates. Some colleges allow seniors to audit their courses at little to no cost with a tuition waiver. Lifelong learning also helps reduce the risk of Alzheimer’s and dementia. So, if you worry about these diseases, continuous learning is one of the best defenses you can have.

No. 3 Help and Advocate

Many retirees find purpose through volunteering. Many organizations need a hand, like food banks, soup kitchens, and animal shelters. Giving them some of your time allows you to support your community, further a cause, and even save lives. Volunteer work also connects you with like-minded people, ensuring you make friends with people who share your values.



No. 4 Retire a Little Less

Some retirees miss the purpose that work gives (as well as the income). Many jobs also keep you on your feet and active. If you count yourself among them, consider picking up a part-time job. Roles like delivery driver, substitute teacher, and dog walker allow you to line your pockets while meeting people.

Retirement is not just the end of work — it’s the start of leisure. You can do and experience many things, from seeing the Mona Lisa to volunteering at an animal shelter. It’s time to take advantage of retirement and seize every opportunity.

TAKE A BREAK



- ARBOR
- ARIES
- BASEBALL
- CHERRIES
- CHOCOLATE
- DAISY
- DIAMOND
- ENVIRONMENT
- GARDEN
- KITE
- RAINBOW
- SHOWERS



Keeper Ledesma Showed Fans a Different Kind of Save

How a Goalie Helped Rescue a Stricken Spectator

The European football pitch is often the scene of bitter rivalries and even violence between fans, but spectators at a 2022 match between the Spanish professional football clubs FC Barcelona and Cadiz CF witnessed an entirely different kind of drama.

The match was suspended when a spectator in the end zone collapsed. As medical staff rushed to help, the goalie for Cadiz broke from his position, raced to his team’s dugout, retrieved a medical kit with a defibrillator, sprinted back toward the scene, and tossed the kit to the medics. Thanks in part to the defibrillator, which medics used to resuscitate the victim, he was safely transferred to a nearby hospital.

Many onlookers credit Cadiz’s goalie, Jeremias Ledesma, with averting a tragedy.

It is hard to tell who will step up in a crisis and who will freeze. People who are normally empathetic may shrink back, while sometimes introverts dive in to help, surprising even themselves.

Those who respond heroically tend to be hopeful people who take charge in difficult situations — traits professional soccer goalies clearly need. People who step up to help others also tend to have a strong sense of responsibility, another requirement of keepers.

The coach of the rival team praised Ledesma’s quick thinking. “We’re talking about a human life, and any human life is above a soccer game,” Barcelona’s coach, Xavi Hernandez, was quoted as saying. Only after the spectator was revived and en route to the hospital did the teams agree to resume the game.

Although Cadiz lost the match 4-0, Cadiz fans went home with a different kind of win — global recognition of their goalkeeper’s good deed. Video of Ledesma’s quick response quickly went viral, earning “massive respect” from commenters and worldwide plaudits for heroism.



Grilled Steak With Chimichurri Sauce

Inspired by TheSpruceEats.com

Ingredients

For the chimichurri sauce:

- 1 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- Salt and pepper, to taste

For the grilled steak:

- 2 lbs steak (flank, sirloin, or skirt steak)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Preheat grill to medium-high heat.
2. Rub the steak with the olive oil, salt, and pepper.
3. Grill the steak for 4–5 minutes per side or until it reaches desired doneness.
4. Meanwhile, make the chimichurri sauce: In a small bowl, mix together the parsley, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, red pepper flakes, and salt and pepper.
5. Let the steak rest for 5 minutes before slicing.
6. Serve the steak with the chimichurri sauce and enjoy!

HOW TO SUCCEED AS AN EXECUTOR

TIPS TO AVOID MAJOR MISSTEPS

If you’ve been named the executor for someone’s last will and testament, you’ve been entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out a person’s last wishes. This honor — and legal responsibility — means you must take care of financial obligations, including paying any outstanding debt or taxes, and then properly dispense the remaining assets according to the directions in the will.

The person who chose you to be executor trusts that you can handle this responsibility, so we’re here to walk you through the process and clear up any questions you may have.

If you are listed as the executor or the trustee in someone’s estate planning documents, you should do a few things immediately upon their passing. First, you must secure their home and any other property as quickly as possible. This involves



maintaining any property until the estate is settled, including changing the locks.

Often, family members will try to go into the house after someone passes away and remove items. As the executor or the trustee, you have to ensure this does not happen,

which is why changing the locks could be crucial if the family situation is contentious.

Next, you should locate all relevant estate planning documents and then determine whether the estate must go through probate. You will need multiple copies of the death certificate for banks, credit card companies, and insurance. Other important documents you will need include insurance policies, credit card statements, investment account and pension statements, and contacts for attorneys and accountants.

Give yourself time to review these documents carefully. Once you understand the estate plan, you can call a meeting with all involved to review the deceased family member’s instructions on how to distribute the assets. Being prepared and proactive will ensure you carry out your duties as an executor with precision and honor the person who entrusted you with this duty.