

Smelter City Seniors

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The Anaconda
Leader

Fighting Father Time: Martial arts offers seniors lifelong benefits for the mind, body and spirit

JAMES S. ROSIEN
EDITOR

True as it is that Father Time has never once lost a bout, that doesn't mean we shouldn't go down swinging – or kicking, as the case may be. And that's exactly the approach of a half-dozen senior martial artists in the Smelter City, as they continue to embrace a way of life that has kept them healthy in mind, body and spirit – and they want to encourage others their age to do the same.

The six seniors on this particular fight card with Father Time are John Goldberg, Mikal Richter, Bill Calhoun, Allen Grantham, Dick Allen and their instructor or sensei, Chris Eamon. They come from various walks of life and bring their own range of experiences –



Mikal Richter, left, Bill Calhoun, Chris Eamon, Allen Grantham and John Goldberg are five senior martial artists in the Smelter City who are "Fighting Father Time." Leader photo: James S. Rosien

See FIGHTING on page 4

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SENIORS SHOW THEIR SKILLS



Top left: Chris Eamon, right, leads Allen Grantham, Bill Calhoun, John Goldberg and Mikal Richter in demonstrating a punch. Top right: Grantham and Calhoun, both second-degree black belts, demonstrate and punch, block and counter. Middle right: Goldberg and Richter, brown belts, execute the same move. Above left and right, and middle left: Calhoun, Richter, Eamon, Goldberg and Grantham perform a martial arts form or "kata." Leader photos: James S. Rosien

FIGHTING from Page 2

and martial arts experience – to the mat or the ring, but they’ve found unifying purpose in what they do. Also “do,” a word that in the Japanese language means “path” or “way” and is seen in martial arts forms such as judo (“gentle way”), taekwondo (“kick-punch way”) or karate-do (“way of the empty hand”) as well as the dojo (“the place to practice the way”), which in this case is the Anaconda Martial Arts Academy at 219 E. Commercial Ave. and the Anaconda Boxing Club at 415 E. Park Ave.

But what exactly is the way? Well, it’s a lot of things. It’s a healthy lifestyle – improving balance, flexibility, coordination, strength, mobility, managing one’s weight and relieving stress. It’s a means for improving one’s discipline, self-control and courtesy, as well as goal-setting, teaching and encouraging fellow students, especially new and younger students. It’s learning

and memorizing new techniques and skills, increasing one’s awareness and focus, engaging the mind, listening, meditating, and persevering in fulfilling one’s short-term and long-term goals – including the ultimate goal, which Eamon identified as developing and trying to perfect one’s character.

Or, “like Mr. Calhoun says, martial arts is the harmonious development and ultimate perfection of the human character,” said Goldberg, 66, who started in martial arts 10 years ago so he was already at an advanced age, yet has been able to achieve the rank of brown belt – one step below black belt.

“In martial arts, we practice the golden rule,” Goldberg said, referring to the concept of doing unto others as we would have them do unto ourselves.

“We reach out to each other,” Eamon said. “If someone misses a week, we check on each other.”

Goldberg said he had been

inspired by Eamon when the latter was still teaching classes at Goosetown Health Club. Goldberg took one of those classes and has stuck with it ever since.

“I plan to do this as long as I possibly can,” he added. “I really enjoy it.”

Richter, 65, a fellow brown belt who’s been practicing martial arts for 12 years on and off, said he had met Eamon 47 years ago and had been curious about martial arts, so he went to classes with his older brother, but after a while he stopped going. Then, after retirement, he’s come back to it.

“You gotta keep busy,” Richter said. “I don’t have much flexibility, but if I didn’t do karate I’d have less. ... Because of karate there’s a lot of things I can do.”

“It’s low contact. We do pushups and situps and stretching,” Eamon said. “We don’t kick and punch like we used to, but we can if we have to.”

Richter is one of several senior

students with a background in mental health, having worked as a psych tech, and so he also emphasized the importance of the mental aspects of martial arts.

“You’re always learning all the time. It helps you mentally,” he said.

“If you want to keep your mind and body sharp, come to a class,” Goldberg said. “It strengthens your mind and body.”

“And spirit,” Eamon added. “We don’t do a whole lot of meditation, but we do work to clear our minds.”

Grantham, 64, one of Eamon’s most advanced students with over 40 years on and off in martial arts – he’s attained his second-degree black belt – who also has a background working in mental health, said you’re never too old to start in martial arts.

“Anybody can benefit from taking part in martial arts regardless of their age,” Grantham said. “While everyone should exercise regularly, this need is imperative for older

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Left: Dick Allen, left, punches pads held up by Chris Eamon at the Anaconda Boxing Club. Right: Eamon and Allen do a boxing pose. Courtesy photos.

FIGHTING from Page 4

people to remain healthy and active. There is something for everyone in martial arts."

It's not always easy, he said, but "martial arts is a great way to challenge yourself" and "there are lots of fun things to learn."

"It's a lifelong adventure," he said. "For myself, martial arts is a journey. There's always something different to learn [and] it never stops."

"It keeps you active, and you build a lot of camaraderie," he said.

"We're the mildest bunch of guys you'd ever know," said Calhoun, 65, another of Eamon's more advanced students with over 25 years in

martial arts having achieved second-degree black belt.

A rehabilitation therapist, Calhoun emphasized the movement and the stretching involved in martial arts.

"It keeps you limber," he said.

Allen, 68, another senior student of Eamon's but one who trains in boxing, kickboxing and mixed martial arts (MMA) at the gym rather than in martial arts at the dojo, has been in martial arts for 30 years. He's a third-degree black belt, is a former karate and taekwondo instructor who now trains and coaches other athletes, helping prepare them for boxing,

kickboxing and MMA matches.

"I like doing this to stay in shape," Allen said. "[I like] the challenge and helping younger fighters."

As for Eamon, the 69-year-old fourth-degree black belt with over 40 years in martial arts, well he just

keeps on going, keeping up the fight against Father Time – in the very same building where he first started learning martial arts.

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Friends for life, and beyond: Jim Bellandi shares memories of Kenny Cook, namesake of MT's second-largest car show

JAMES S. ROSIEN
EDITOR

We've all heard the expression "best friends forever," but can a friendship truly last forever? Well if there's ever been an example of that, it's surely the friendship between Jim Bellandi and the late Kenny Cook – a friendship that's been cemented after death with the Kenny Cook Memorial Car Show that Bellandi in just a few years has built into the second-largest car show in Montana.

Yet to ask Bellandi, it's really his late best friend who's done all the work, just by who he was and the lasting memory and legacy he built as a father, as a friend, a car guy, a businessman and as a human being.

"Kenny had a good spirit about him. He was always willing to help," said Bellandi, who was doing auto body work at Nazer's when he first met Kenny.

"Kenny was coming up through high school and he had a big interest in cars. He'd come up [to the shop] getting parts for the truck he was working on, and he wanted to get his stuff painted," Bellandi said. "Right after high school, he went to work at Nazer's in the body shop."

Kenny did his apprenticeship under Bellandi and he proved to be a fast learner.

"He picked it up really fast," Bellandi said, then added with a smile that "it's in all the Puccinellis' blood. They have motor oil instead of blood. He already knew quite a bit, and he picked up on stuff right away. He was always really good."

Bellandi eventually left the business and moved to Portland, Oregon and then Seattle, Washington where he worked as a paramedic, but he kept in touch with Kenny, who himself left the

See FRIENDS on page 7



Jim Bellandi stands at Smelter City Brewing, site of the Pint Night kickoff event for the annual Kenny Cook Memorial Car Show. Leader photo: James S. Rosien

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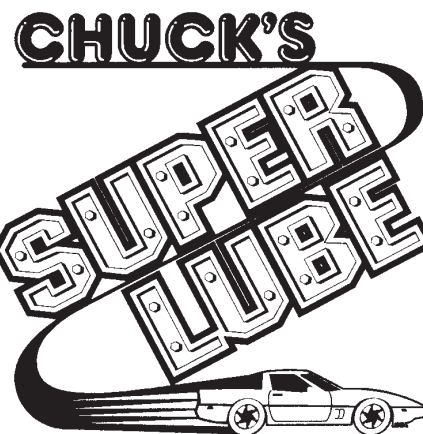
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Jim Bellandi assists with one of the raffles at the Kenny Cook Memorial Car Show at Kennedy Common in 2022. Leader photo: James S. Rosien

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shop as well but only to start up his own – Cook’s Collision. And the name he built in that business – a business his son, Derek Cook, has run since Kenny’s untimely death almost nine years ago at age 52 – is what makes the memorial car show possible.

“It’s easy to do this car show because it has Kenny’s name on it. That’s what sells it more than anything,” Bellandi said.

Thinking back to that fateful day in October of 2014, Bellandi still can’t believe it.

“A young guy like that, healthy his whole life,” he said. “I still refer to the shop as Kenny’s.”

Bellandi himself never worked at Kenny’s shop, even after returning to Anaconda – “the new way of doing stuff [with cars] is completely different,” he said – but it’s still like home. Even if he and his friend didn’t always agree on cars.

“Kenny was a big Pontiac guy,” he said. “I’m more of a Ford guy, even though I don’t have one now.”

Still very much a car guy himself, Bellandi has owned 35 vehicles over the years, though he didn’t exactly get off to an auspicious start with them: His first was a hand-me-down 1962 Rambler Ambassador. And it originally was pink.

“My grandma always liked pink, so [my grandfather] got her a pink Rambler,” he said.

Fortunately for him, by the time he started driving it, his grandfather had it painted green.

His favorite rig? His dad’s 4-wheel-drive Ford.

“I’ve had other four-wheel drives, but just because my dad used to have it,” he said.

Working on cars has been a hobby for Bellandi, but his work on the car show has become quite a bit more than that, particularly since he retired.

“It’s my full-time job,” he said. “It’s a twelve-month-a-year job. I have to get the permits from the

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FRIENDS from Page 7

county and the state, the special event insurance, I have to line up numerous vendors, line up the merchants, and work with the high school on the scholarships.”

Giving out scholarships is the whole purpose of the car show in fact, that and honoring Kenny’s memory – an effort he would’ve supported to give Anaconda and now Butte students a better opportunity in life in the trades.

And it’s been hugely successful, growing every year since the first one in 2018 and is second only to Helena’s in terms of the amount of vehicles that are entered into it each year.

“This year we’re giving away \$8,000 in scholarships,” Bellandi said. “We’re opening it up for Butte as well because we get a lot of donations from Butte.”

There’s also the matter of lining up the volunteers, whose work makes it possible to hold the three-day event encompassing a Pint Night, a golf tournament and the car show itself, which last year had 189

entries.

“We have really, really great volunteers,” he said. “People who are passionate about cars and remember Kenny. It’s not about the work I do, it’s about what Kenny left behind – his legacy.”

It’s a legacy depicted on the ambulance Bellandi converted into a mascot for the car show, nicknamed “Brutus,” and one even marked on Bellandi himself as he’s since gotten the logo as a tattoo.

But it’s mainly a legacy shown through the people Kenny left behind.

“Kenny died so suddenly, so unexpectedly, our friendship meant so much to me that I don’t think I wanted to let go of him, so I thought what could I do to honor him?” Bellandi said.

So he met with Kenny’s family and talked about setting up a memorial scholarship fund, and they embraced the idea, so in 2018 they held their first car show in support of it.

“When I started it, I had no



Jim Bellandi and Derek Cook stand with the Kenny Cook Memorial Car Show’s mascot, “Brutus,” outside Smelter City Brewing. Leader file photo

idea it’d be this popular, but it has nothing to do with what I’m doing. It’s the reputation that Kenny had and his son has,” he said. “He was one in a million.”

In addition to his work with the car show, Bellandi is active with his church where he conducts two very successful programs, one being the annual Men’s Lenten Retreat he started organizing 14 years ago. This retreat for men is always scheduled for the first Saturday before Lent, with an average of 40 to 50 in attendance.

“The retreat helps prepare the attendees for the upcoming Lenten season,” he said.

The other is a monthly meeting titled “Iron Men, A Catholic Men’s

Seminar Series,” a series based on Proverbs 27:17, which states “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” The series includes guest speakers of the clergy who give a variety of presentations, with speakers coming from Butte, Helena, Missoula, Lewistown, Denver and even one from Nigeria. The seminar is held on the second Saturday of each month, is open to all men of all faiths, and is offered at no charge, Bellandi said. Both it and the retreat have been highly recognized by the Diocese of Helena, he added.

As for the car show, you won’t have to wait forever for it: The three-day event will be held from July 20-22 in Anaconda.

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Sisters' act: Senior siblings share their lifelong love of song

NIKKI JOHNSON
REPORTER

Musically inclined siblings are not uncommon, after all, there's the timeless expression 'the apple doesn't fall far from the tree,' and sisters Margaret Ricci and Pat Forsman are fine examples of this.

And there's no sibling rivalry when they described their love of music. Well, almost none.

"I'm older," Margaret said with a chuckle.

Pat responded, "there's four of us all together and she always tells us that she's the oldest and wisest."

For the fun-loving duo, music runs through their veins.

"I play the piano, the organ and the baritone," Margaret said. "I got

started when I took piano lessons way back. I'm a composer. I've written a mass that we use at the Lutheran Church once a month, it's kinda peppy. I sing – not like Pat. I've accompanied Pat nearly her whole life."

The talented sibs used to put on carnivals in their backyard. "I sang Honey in the morning, Honey in the evening, and Sugartime, an old old song," Pat recalled.

The four sisters even played a piano quartet once in *danse macabre* style, a childhood memory that still lingers after these passing years. Danse Macabre, according to Wikipedia, also called the Dance of Death, is an artistic genre of allegory of the Late Middle Ages on the

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Musical sisters Pat Forsman, left, and Margaret Ricci have been performing together since childhood. Leader photo: Nikki Johnson

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universality of death.

Luckily, music was equally as important to their parents, who made sure their talent didn't go to waste.

"Our mother was a fantastic budgeter and made sure that we had piano lessons. I went the band route and played the alto sax all through high school and the oboe in high school. Then, in the '80s, I bought an oboe from France and played in the symphony in Butte for ten years or so. Mainly I've sung my whole life. I was a singer when I was a toddler because, of course, that was before they had tape recorders but I sang Silent Night in my sleep when I was about six," Pat said.

It's not easy to play favorites, but these jack-of-all-trades respectively managed to find their own special niche.

"My favorite instrument is the organ," Margaret said. "They have an old organ at the Episcopal Church that was given to them by Margaret Daly, Marcus Daly's wife."

"I taught piano starting when



Pat Forsman sings at the 2022 March Music concert with accompaniment from sister Margaret Ricci. Leader file photo.

my kids were younger. I don't teach anymore though. I do a lot of accompaniment," Pat said.

Pat's son was a performance major at the University of Montana and was one of those exceptional talents that could play anything. He performed on ships, and luckily, she was able to see him in action. "My younger sister and I went to Italy, and on the last week when we were there, we heard

him sing on the ship," she said.

With these impressive musical chops, it's no surprise that the pair of sisters have both been actively involved in the Anaconda Live! Community Concert Association for many years. While they both have nothing but great things to say about the organization, it's their respect for the musicians that continually resonates with them.

"In the past we had a group that came in second place. The first year they had that a capella show on TV, they came in second, and we had them. So we've had groups that have done really well after. But they're excellent musicians."

Anaconda Live! just concluded its 75th season. Its 2023-2024 season will start this fall. More information will follow as the concerts approach.

New Horizons

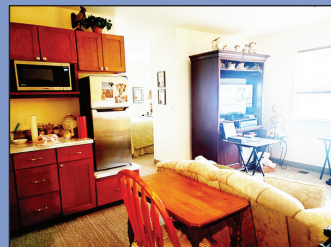
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Students at Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Head Start recently took a field trip to the Metcalf Memorial Senior Citizens Center to have lunch with seniors and sing them songs. Leader photos: Nikki Johnson

Metcalf Center Schedule

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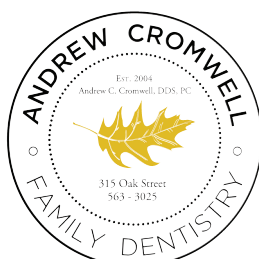
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No one thinks they will need long-term care, until they do

Walking the Beat

JAMES S. ROSIEN
EDITOR

Editor's note: This column originally ran in the May 2017 edition of Smelter City Seniors. It is being reprinted as the issues brought up by it continue to be relevant, both for the writer and from a public policy standpoint.

No one thinks they'll need to be placed into a nursing home, until they do.

No one thinks they'll need to place a loved one into a nursing home, until they do.

This is the two-sided dilemma families face when the reality of the aging process comes crashing down upon them.

We can plan all we want for retirement, set aside money from every paycheck for years and years, make safe investments, set up a health savings account, pay off mortgages, student loans, credit cards and other forms of debt, and live an active, healthy life – and still get hit by an incurable disease that will require round-the-clock care, depleting an entire life's work in the process. No one plans for that.

And no one plans to have to be

the person to break the news to a parent or spouse or, God help you, a child that they have to leave their home and live in a place with a bunch of other people who need just as much care as they do if not more, where even the best, most compassionate, most highly trained staff can't possibly be there for all of them at once – and, worst of all, you can't either. Even the most dutiful, loving and responsible caregivers need to have a life of their own.

Forgive me if I sound like a downer, I'm actually in high spirits after having learned that my family's recent experience down this road is finally taking a turn for the better. That is perhaps why I'm able to write about it now that there's a clear path back to relative normalcy in sight. What's also become clear to me, though, is that our society has much to learn about how to handle aging better, how to handle long-term care better and how to handle caregiving better.

That's not a criticism of any single individual, group or organization, there's incredible work being done every day to help the most vulnerable people in our society, I've seen it myself firsthand. What it is, if anything, is

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a call to action – no, rather a call to an awakening that something is wrong within our social order when decisions that directly affect the quality of life for people who for whatever reason cannot live on their own are taken almost entirely with regard to the bottom line, whether that bottom line belongs to a for-profit or nonprofit corporation or to the state.

Oh but that's the system. A system where good, decent, hard-working people are forced out of a job that they enjoy, taking care of others, because they have a family to feed and they can't do it for barely over minimum wage with irregular hours. A system where people who are elderly and infirm have to lose everything they built, or depend on charity, or have their entire lives opened up to scrutiny, in order to live another day – and do so without their loved ones near them. Why? Because no one ever expects it'll happen to them – until it does. We're not encouraged to think about subjects like our own mortality or who will look after us when we can no longer look after ourselves, so we don't.

Like I said, this isn't intended to be a downer or a specific criticism. My family's experience has I think been a good bit better than most – and very little of it by our own making. We have been very fortunate to have had such warm, caring people around us, to

live in such a generous town, and to have benefited from the skills and knowledge of professionals throughout this trying time. But when I think of the people who have not been so lucky as we have, who have little contact with anyone who lives or works outside of their facility, I cannot help but shudder.

Yet I can't leave it at that. I've been spending a great deal of time lately reading advocacy websites for aging and long-term care services, and I think I've hit on a proposal that could well reverse this societal trend over time. There is another population that isn't able to care for themselves who aren't diminished-capacity elders: young children.

Why can we not address these two care needs in the same place, and at the same time give the new generation a chance to learn from the old and give the old a chance to love and be loved again by a new generation who do so unconditionally? Obviously they have their own needs that don't entirely match up, but there is a good deal of overlap between them and, if we encourage intergenerational associations, there is I think a good chance that the new generation – and maybe even their parents – might learn to start thinking about that last stage of life and how we might better approach it than we currently do.



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New MontGuide covers fiduciary access to digital assets, electronic communications

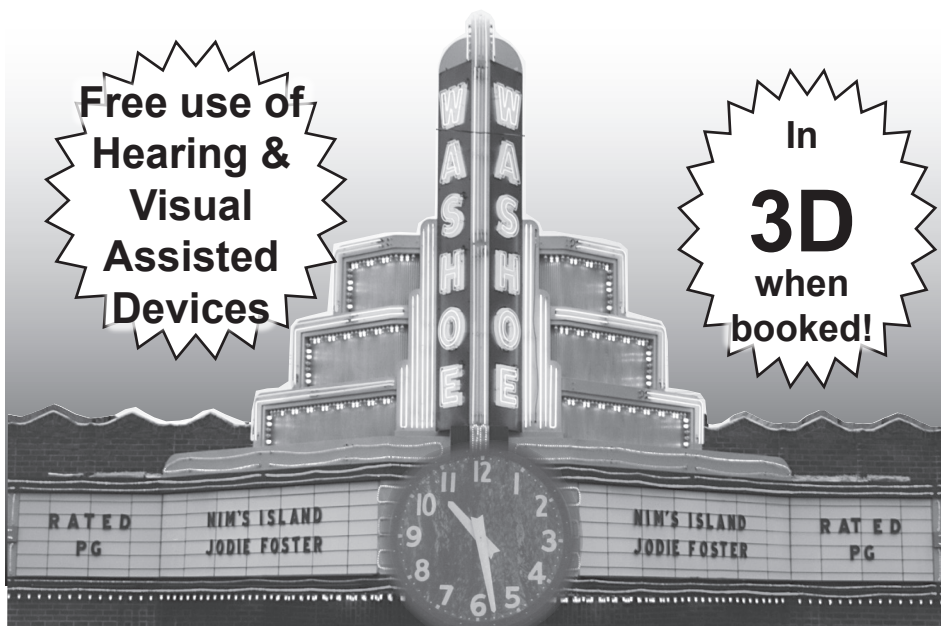
Editor's note: The following is adapted from the Montana State University Extension Agency's newest Family Financial Management MontGuide, "Fiduciary access to electronic communications and digital assets," released last month by Marsha A. Goetting and E. Edwin Eck. Paper copies of all MontGuides are available at the MSU Extension Office on the third floor of the Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Courthouse.

In today's world, methods of communication have changed dramatically. A generation ago, the post office delivered paper mail.

Printed pictures were kept in photo albums. Important documents were stored in file cabinets. Deposits were made "in person" to checking and savings accounts at local banks or credit unions.

Those methods are gone for many of us, some by choice or circumstances and others because of technological changes. Today we store pictures, documents, and communications in digital libraries on computers, servers, and cell phones. We often access them via the internet with our smartphones or

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other electronic devices. And many people keep only electronic copies of communications and documents. As the transition from paper to digital data continues, estate planning for accessing electronic communications and documents has become essential.

This article helps why estate planning for digitally-stored information has become important, and also clarifies what legal documents can be prepared to enable your fiduciary to access the content of your electronic communications. A fiduciary includes the personal representative of the estate, trustee of the trust, or agent named as a financial power of attorney.

Importance of estate planning for electronic communications and digital assets

- Access: To enable a fiduciary to access the content of electronic communications of a deceased or incapacitated person. Some Montanans have chosen to no longer receive paper statements or bills. Instead, they receive them electronically or by logging on to the online account with the bank,

credit union, retailer, or utility provider. If there are no records of specific websites and associated usernames and passwords, finding, paying, and examining a deceased person's accounts to settle the estate could be extremely burdensome and time-consuming. The personal representative of an estate or the trustee of a trust is a fiduciary who needs access to financial documents and accounts to settle an estate or administer a trust. Suppose a living person becomes incapacitated (for instance, because of a form of dementia or a debilitating brain injury from a stroke or accident). In that case, an agent under a financial power of attorney will need access to the content of digital financial assets to efficiently manage financial affairs on a person's behalf.

- Loss prevention: To prevent financial losses to the estate. The fiduciary will need to quickly discover electronic bills so the fiduciary can pay them when due to prevent late fees, cancellations, foreclosures, and repossessions. The personal representative or trustee

may also want to cancel services of the deceased such as cell phones, landline telephones, and automatic payments for health insurance premiums, long-term care, or life insurance policies.

- Legacy: To avoid losing the deceased's personal story. While certain electronic communications are not financially valuable, they may be a treasure to family members who attribute meaning to objects and "words" the deceased left behind. Historically, people kept special letters, journals, and pictures in shoeboxes, scrapbooks, or albums for future family members to view, read, and appreciate. Today, many people store these materials online, on hard drives, and on other electronic devices. Family members with cell phones may never print the photographs they take, only sending pictures to friends and relatives. Facebook, Instagram, personal blogs, and Twitter feeds have replaced physical diaries for some people. For others, emails and texts have replaced handwritten letters. Without alerting family members to

the existence of electronically-stored information, and explaining how to access the information, someone's life story could disappear forever. If using social media accounts, make a conscious decision about what will happen to these accounts at death. There are options to make remembrance pages, or accounts can be deactivated or deleted. Keep in mind that the long-term monitoring of accounts could be time-consuming. Would the responsibility become a burden for the selected family member or fiduciary to check accounts and pages regularly for content? If it is decided to remove an account after death, who will oversee the process?

How does a fiduciary access a digital asset under the act?

To gain access to digital assets, the act requires the fiduciary to send an access request to the custodian by email or on the custodian's website. The fiduciary must provide a certified copy of the documents granting fiduciary authority, such as

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a letter of appointment as the estate's personal representative, a copy of the financial power of attorney, or a certificate of trust. A certificate of trust is a brief document upon which custodians may rely. The certificate provides information about the trust, the trustee, and the power and authority of the trustee to gain access to assets, which, if stated in the trust agreement, can include access to the content of personal electronic communications.

Remember, the appointment of

a fiduciary does not automatically give the fiduciary legal access to the content of electronic communications unless the user expressly consents to such content in a will, trust, power of attorney or online tool. Without express consent, however, the fiduciary has only limited access to digital assets. Although the fiduciary cannot access the content of electronic communications, the fiduciary can access a catalog of the deceased or incapacitated user's communications.

The catalog lists each person or entity to whom the deceased had an electronic communication. Included are the time and date of the communication and the electronic address of the person or entity.

Access to a catalogue of a deceased or incapacitated person's communications may prove helpful when the fiduciary is managing or settling an estate. For example, by reviewing the emails of a deceased person, a personal representative could see monthly communications from a bank. This would alert the personal representative to the possibility that the deceased kept one or more accounts at that bank. Of course, the personal representative could more easily get the information needed to settle an estate if the user had expressly consented to access the electronic communications in the user's will. Such permission would save the personal representative time and probably could save the estate money.

What information should be prepared for a fiduciary?

Would a personal representative,

trustee, or agent know how to access the online accounts? If the answer is no, then now is the time to make a list identifying accounts, usernames, and passwords. Explain to the fiduciary where to find the list. Consider whether a password manager would be right for the situation. There are many useful articles on the web about the best password managers. As an example, PC Mag publishes a Best Password Managers list annually. Evaluate the information to see if one would be suitable at a reasonable cost. Another option is an app in which people can download to put all their passwords in one place. Keep the list in a safe place and update it as sites are added (i.e. usernames and passwords). Always back up the data. Store data to a local computer or a storage device. MSU Extension has a Digital Assets Inventory Worksheet fillable form available (montana.edu/estateplanning/digitalassetsworksheet.pdf). Use the form to list usernames and passwords for personal use as well as for family and fiduciaries.



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Senior spotlight: The Croatian Hall



That's some spread at the St. Peter & Paul Society Lodge 84 of the Croatian Fraternal Union's celebration of Mesopust (Croatian for "Without Meat"), held at the Croatian Hall on the 800 block of East 3rd Street on the Sunday evening prior to the start of Lent. The main event of the year for the St. Peter & Paul Society, Mesopust includes dinner, dancing, singing and a quiz of the events of the past year as a cleansing event before Lent – and preserves Anaconda's Croatian heritage. Leader photo: James S. Rosien

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