One of the ironies of the current low interest rate environment is that some charitable donation arrangements are at their highest deduction value. For example, the deduction for a gift of a home, farm or ranch, with a retained life estate, is at an all-time high.

A retained life estate gift of a lake or winter home is an excellent way to support Bismarck State College while reserving the right to enjoy the property for as long as you wish. Furthermore, you retain the option to lease the property and receive rental payments during your lifetime. It is only at the end of your life—or when you decide that you will no longer use the property—that it fully transfers to the BSC Foundation. These same rules apply to a gift of farm or ranch property.*

Your gift to the BSC Foundation entitles you to a charitable deduction in the year the gift was made. In addition, the gift isn’t subject to capital gains tax. As you can see, a gift of property can be a benefit for you now and a significant benefit for Bismarck State College students in the future.

The BSC Foundation can provide you with a confidential, no-obligation analysis of how to establish a retained life estate with us. Please call Gordon Binek at (800) 272-2586 or (701) 224-5697 to learn more. You can also simply return the enclosed survey and we’ll contact you to discuss your options.

*Note that when gifting a property, repairs, insurance and other normal ownership expenses are still the owner’s responsibility.
A 2013 New Year’s Resolution
Protect Your Estate

Every year, we ritually make resolutions to improve our lives—exercise more, be on time, put more money into our savings accounts. While some resolutions are more critical than others, updating or creating your estate plan is one promise you must keep.

What Happens if You Don’t Have an Estate Plan?
If you die without a will, the laws of the state where you reside will determine how your property is divided among your closest surviving relatives. If you have a spouse and children, they may have to share part of your estate in proportions you wouldn’t have wanted. This can lead to family squabbles and serious financial consequences for your loved ones.

Simply having a will doesn’t mean you can rest easy, though. You must also keep it current. Look over the items listed at right to see if an update is in store. Also, in addition to a will, there are other essential documents you should have to round out your plan (see chart, below).

Next Steps
If you need to have documents created or if major life events have occurred since you last reviewed your estate plan, you should meet with your estate planning attorney as soon as possible.

When reviewing your estate plan, please consider adding a gift to us in your plan. Contact us today to discuss your options.

Do You Need to Update Your Estate Plan?
Here are a few events that may result in a visit to your estate planning attorney:

• You or someone in your family has recently had a change in marital status or welcomed a child.
• A loved one has died.
• You have moved to another state.
• Tax laws have changed.
• Your concerns have shifted from the needs of your young children to long-term care planning for your aging parents or even yourself.
• You would like to use a portion of your estate to support a favorite cause.

Estate Planning Essentials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>What It Does</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>The cornerstone of your estate plan, this document ensures your assets will be distributed exactly as you intend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>You can make special arrangements for the management of your assets for yourself and others. Trusts can shelter assets for a surviving spouse and benefit heirs and charitable beneficiaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living will</td>
<td>This document allows you to articulate your wishes concerning heroic, life-sustaining measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durable power of attorney</td>
<td>You can designate a trusted individual to handle legal and financial matters on your behalf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care power of attorney</td>
<td>If you are unable to make health care decisions, this document stipulates who will make those decisions on your behalf.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Is Your Legacy?

Perhaps you don’t think you are the type of individual who would leave a legacy, but the truth is that anyone can do it and every effort to support future generations helps. Leaving a legacy can be as easy as naming us as the beneficiary of a portion of your retirement plan assets or including a couple of sentences in your will or trust.

What About My Loved Ones?

We realize the importance of providing for family and other loved ones after you’re gone, and helping us doesn’t mean they’ll be forgotten. Consider these options:

1. Include a bequest to us of a percentage of your estate or a percentage of your residual estate to ensure that your gift will remain proportionate to your estate size, no matter how it fluctuates over the years.

2. Name us as a contingent beneficiary so that we’ll benefit only if your other beneficiaries are no longer living.

3. Leave highly taxed assets, such as those from your retirement plan, to us since we receive them tax-free. Then leave other less tax-burdened assets, such as real estate, cash or life insurance, to your loved ones.

4. Stipulate that your gift to us be given in honor of someone you care about, leaving an “inheritance” that your loved one will truly cherish.

Now Is the Time

It’s never too early—or too late—to craft your legacy. Take control of how your assets will be distributed by meeting with your estate planning attorney today to implement tax-saving strategies.

If you are interested in extending your support for our organization into the future, we’d be happy to work with you and your advisors to formulate a tax-wise gift. Contact us to learn more.

FREE Guide!

Avoid confusion and worry by providing your loved ones with a map of where to find key documents and whom to contact in case of your absence. Send for the FREE organizer tool Your Guide to Locating Important Documents using the enclosed survey today!
Emergency Planning 101

When extreme weather or an unexpected emergency comes knocking at your door, the last thing you want to do is spend precious time searching the house for important documents. Consider putting together an evacuation box today.

You can easily organize a lockable evacuation box or small waterproof suitcase—something that is easily transportable. Keep the box in one central location, preferably somewhere you can quickly grab it.

What Goes in Your Evacuation Box?
- Birth certificates and passports
- A marriage license and/or divorce decree
- Social Security cards
- Wills
- Powers of attorney
- Insurance policies
- Property deeds
- A list of current financial accounts and copies of credit cards
- Contact information for your attorney, insurance agent, bank, financial advisor, doctor, friends and family
- Sufficient cash to get you through a few days

Keep It Current
Make sure at least one other trusted individual knows the location of your evacuation box and how to access its contents. Because it’s only good if it’s up-to-date, be sure to revisit your evacuation box each year or when major changes occur.

When updating and organizing your important documents, we hope you’ll consider including a gift to our organization in your estate plan. Contact us to learn more.

Crafting Your Legacy

Next Steps

1. **Request** your FREE copy of *Your Guide to Locating Important Documents* by returning the enclosed 30-second survey.
2. **Visit** our website to learn more about our mission and how you can make a difference.
3. **Contact us** to discuss your options for supporting our organization with a lasting gift.

---

BSC Foundation publishes *Financial Connections* as a service to our alumni and friends. Our goal is to provide timely suggestions that may assist you in your tax and financial planning. The information contained in *Financial Connections* is based on recent court decisions, rulings, federal tax laws and regulations now in effect. To determine how this information applies to your financial plans, you should consult your financial, legal and tax advisors. Gifts to BSC Foundation are tax-deductible.

Bismarck State College Foundation
P.O. Box 5587
Bismarck, ND 58506-5587
(800) 272-2586 or (701) 224-5697
Fax: (701) 224-2493
Email: gordon.binek@bismarckstate.edu
Website: www.bismarckstate.edu/foundation

Gordon Binek
Executive Director