# Armenian Professionals’ Newsletter

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In an effort to give something back to the community that has given us so much to be thankful for, we, the publishers of the Orange County Armenian Professionals Newsletter, want to welcome you to the inaugural issue. Our objective over the coming months and years will be to provide you, our readers, with pertinent and insightful information that you can use in your everyday lives. In each issue will contain articles on the subjects of finance, medicine and law. We will also include a local interest topic that is both interesting and affects your daily lives.

In case you're wondering who 'we' are, allow us to introduce ourselves. Covering the topic of finance is Ara Malazian, CFP®. Ara is a native of the Orange County Armenian Community having been raised in Orange County since the time he was a small child. Ara has been a Certified Financial Planner Designee since 2000 and began his career in the financial services industry with SunAmerica Securities back in 1995. Ara is the author of the innovative personal finance book "The Money Diet: Five Easy Steps to Financial Health". In addition to his background in financial planning, Ara is also a licensed real estate appraiser. His insights into real estate pricing and valuation have proven highly complimentary to helping his clients develop their overall financial plans.

Our legal advice is provided by Raffi K. Kevorkian, Esq. Raffi has been practicing for over 9 years, but in this short time has amassed large verdicts and settlements for those who he has represented and has gained respect with colleagues and even opposing counsel. Raffi began his career with Mardirossian & Associates (in Los Angeles) where he started working from the young age of 16 and ultimately practiced there as an attorney. In 2005 Raffi moved to Orange County where he served as in-house counsel for a Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge dealership and ultimately opened his office in April 2005 in Corona del Mar, California.

Our medical expert, Dr. Kamer Migirdichian, had an early interest in health and was always fascinated by the human body and mind. He attended California State University Fullerton (1988-1991) pre-med and while seeking chiropractic treatment himself for various sports injuries, he realized that chiropractic treatment resonated with his views of health and well being. Dr. Kamer graduated from Los Angeles Chiropractic College in 1996. After graduation Dr. Migirdichian held associate chiropractor positions in North Hollywood, CA and Pasadena, CA. In February of 1998 he began private practice in beautiful Newport Beach, CA.

There will be many more contributors in the issues to come and we'll continue to do our best to provide you with some information regarding their background and how you can contact them should you wish to learn more about any of our topics. We want to thank you for choosing the Orange County Armenian Professionals Newsletter and we look forward to expanding your horizons, broadening your views and providing you with great information you can really use.

*Kamer Migirdichian, D.C., Ara Malazian, CFP®, Raffi K. Kevorkian, Esq.*
Ara is a Certified Financial Planner® Practitioner and an Investment Advisory Representative with National Planning Corporation. He has been a registered representative since 1995 helping people to plan for their life goals and dreams.  

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As we face greater uncertainty regarding the stock, bond and real estate markets I’ve had a number of people ask me about solutions that offer some downside protection without sacrificing market participation. Up until recently, there weren’t too many options available. For many years Certificates of Deposit (CD’s) were the preferred form of investing for those individuals who were looking for a current income stream and safety of principal. Most CD’s offer downside protection in the form of insurance from the FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) on account balances up to $250,000 (Exp. 12/31/2013). The interest earned on the CD would be used to fund current income needs. As interest rates have fallen to lower and lower levels, generating sufficient income from CD’s has become much more challenging. For those focused on the longer term or on retirement planning there is an alternative that has evolved from one of the oldest products around; the Annuity.

Annuities have been around in some form or another for thousands of years. Dating as far back as the Romans, annuities (known as "annua" or "annual stipends"), were purchased by citizens as contracts with one-time payments being exchanged for lifetime payments paid out once a year. In 17th century Europe, annuities were used to raise money to fund wars. Annuities reached America in the 18th century when Presbyterian ministers in Pennsylvania contributed to a fund in exchange for lifetime payments. (Continued on Page 4)

Executive Summary

• With interest rates at historic lows, many people are looking for alternatives to CD’s & Bonds
• Annuity Companies now offer living benefits to protect against market fluctuations during the accumulation phase of retirement
• A number of companies also offer withdrawal benefits that provide for lifetime income options once you begin taking retirement income

Do I Really Need a Lawyer?
The Answer from a Reliable Source

Does one need a lawyer? Would you be surprised if the answer from a lawyer is "No"? You shouldn't be because that is what a true lawyer is supposed to do, which is whatever is in the best interest of his/her client. Let's face it lawyers are ranked among the most hated professionals. Why? Well my theory is that no one ever plans or budgets their personal finances to include legal fees, because no one expects an unfortunate event to occur. After all, it is more often than not only when something negative happens that one requires an attorney. We are called when someone is in jail; has financial problems, i.e. bankruptcy or is being sued; families are splitting apart (divorce or child custody). Well, you get the picture. They are all negative events and sadly most lawyers take advantage of these unfortunate events financially by feeding on the emotional vulnerability of the client and causing this constant hatred. Among all the synonyms for my profession "attorney", "barrister", "prosecutor", and "litigator" my favorite is "counselor". I think there is a reason behind it. We are supposed to walk those whom we represent through this negative situation best we can and show them there is light at the end of the tunnel and while things may seem grim now the future is bright. (Continued on Page 5)
Headaches affect an estimated 50 million people in the U.S. Sometimes neck or upper back pain may also be interpreted as a headache. It ranks among the most common local pain complaints.

Many millions of adults, worldwide, get headaches regularly which can be severe, long-lasting and recurring. Headaches are among the most common physical complaints prompting people to treat themselves or get professional assistance. Headaches can be very distracting, debilitating and account for significant amounts of time lost from work.

What kinds of headaches are there?

More than 90 percent of headaches can be classified as tension-type, migraine or cervicogenic.

By far, most people get tension-type headaches and get them frequently. They typically suffer mild to moderate pain, on both sides of the head, which is often described as tight, stiff, constricting – like having something wrapped around your head and pressing tightly.

Migraines are periodic, severe, throbbing headaches that afflict far fewer people (and more women than men), usually hurt on one side of the head, can cause loss of appetite, nausea and even vomiting, and may involve a visual change called an aura.

Cervicogenic headaches are a musculoskeletal form of tension-type headache (which may also be related to migraines). Many times, cervicogenic headache goes undiagnosed as such due to the relative newness of this classification.

What causes headaches?

While there is no “one” cause of headaches, research has narrowed down some of the most common causes of headaches. Among the most common causes of headaches are: lack of sleep, stress (both of which are often related), anxiety, repressed emotions, clinical depression, food allergies, muscle stress and spinal misalignment.

What should I be concerned about?

If you are a headache sufferer, your obvious concern is to obtain safe, dependable relief. You should avoid making things worse by using drugs – even over-the-counter, nonprescription drugs – that can have serious side effects and dangerous interactions with other medications or supplements you take. You should also be aware that many people experience what are termed “analgesic rebound headaches” from taking painkillers every day, or nearly every day. Watch out! The medicine you take to get rid of today’s headache may give you a headache tomorrow and the days after.

The same can be said for caffeine. Many people use coffee to get their days started or energy drinks (many of which are loaded with caffeine) as a mid-day boost. Eventually a lack of caffeine can lead to a headache with additional caffeine being the only cure.

What can I do about my headaches?

The most important step you can take to minimize your headaches are to get a good night’s rest. Without a good night’s rest your body and more importantly your mind do not have an opportunity to recover from the previous day and prepare you for the next.

(Continued on Page 7)
Annuities basically come in two flavors; fixed and variable. For the remainder of this article we will be focusing on the variable annuity. In May of 1954, University of Arkansas Professors Harold A. Dulan & E.J. Ball along with graduate Lewis Callison, created America's first commercial variable annuity life insurance company marking a transition into the modern era of annuities.

Now there were annuities that didn't just pay a simple interest rate. Investors had the option of creating an investment portfolio that earned market-type returns (both up and down) potentially giving them greater returns than simple interest products over time. This invention led to the huge increase in the number of annuity choices available to consumers today.

Annuities have now taken their next leap forward in innovation; the Living Benefit Rider. Riders are optional benefits that can be added to a variable annuity for an additional cost to help the purchaser meet a particular goal or objective. A concept introduced just a few short years ago, the Living Benefit Rider has taken on a life of its own over the past two years. The benefit comes in three basic forms. The Guaranteed Minimum Accumulation Benefit (GMAB), the Guaranteed Minimum Withdrawal Benefit (GMWB) and the Guaranteed Minimum Income Benefit (GMIB).

The Guaranteed Minimum Accumulation Benefit is designed to offer consumers either their account value or a certain guaranteed rate of return, whichever is greater. For example, let's say that someone invests $100,000 for a period of 5 years. The GMAB is 6% simple interest for 5 years. In this case the annuity would have two valuations to look at; the actual account value and the GMAB value.

If the Account Value is greater, the client receives the account value.
If the GMAB Value is greater, the client receives the GMAB Value.

<table>
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<th>Account Value after 5 years</th>
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<tr>
<td>Example 1 $150,000</td>
<td>$130,000 (6% x $100,000 for 5 Years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example 2 $110,000</td>
<td>$130,000 (6% x $100,000 for 5 Years)</td>
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In many cases the Guaranteed Minimum Accumulation Benefit (GMAB) is coupled with a Guaranteed Minimum Withdrawal Benefit (GMWB). A Guaranteed Minimum Withdrawal Benefit (GMWB) states that the purchaser has the right to withdraw a certain percentage of their account value (or GMAB value, whichever is greater) over a specified period of time. If we use an account value of $130,000 for example, and a GMWB rate of 5%, then:

$$\text{GMWB} = \$130,000 \times 5\% = \$6,500 \text{ per year until account is depleted}$$

In other words, the insurance company guarantees that purchaser can withdraw $6,500 per year for 20 years, regardless of the actual account value. Even if the account value falls to $0 after 15 years, the purchaser will continue to receive $6,500 per year for 5 more years. There are some insurance companies that even offer to make GMWB payments for life, even after the account value reaches $0. In these cases, the purchaser would receive $6,500 for life, even after the initial 20 year period is up.

The primary advantage of the GMWB over the GMIB (Guaranteed Minimum Income Benefit) is that you retain ownership of your principal balance. If you decide after 5 years of GMWB distributions that you want to cash in your annuity and run to the Bahamas, you can do so! Your account value is still yours. (Continued on Page 6)
I digress from my earlier question, which is does one need a lawyer? The answer I still believe is "no". For one thing I hope know one ever needs a lawyer because of the unfortunate events mentioned above and I often tell people I meet who ask me for my card, "Call because you want to do lunch and not because you need me". The fact remains in today's internet world most "legal" questions can be answered on the internet. There are many websites including the courts' website that have answers on the net. Please understand I am not suggesting lawyers have gone by way of the typewriter repairmen, but most of the tasks one once utilized through counsel can be done on the internet, such as forming a corporation, preparing a will, drafting a lease, etc. The Orange County Court (www.occourts.org) specifically the Lamoreaux Justice Center has family law workshops where they have presentations guided by a Court liaison who will assist with complex forms and make divorce easier and more economically feasible, i.e. no attorneys fees.

I should point out that there are times when advice or retaining counsel is invaluable. Now I can only speak from the area of law which is the focus of my practice, which is general civil litigation with an emphasis on personal injury (in laymen's terms often derogatorily referred to as "ambulance chaser"). In this regard insurance companies and/or responsible parties will "throw" money, usually nominal amounts in exchange for their release. In sum, they are trying to buy themselves freedom from their wrongdoing sometimes for pennies on the dollar. A good lawyer will assess the damage and harm caused to the party and research all available remedies available and fight hard to get the maximum recovery they are entitled to. Sadly, there are some in the profession who operate their practice like a mill and take in all cases and accept all low offers. Kind of like a numbers game. Many a times a colleague will ask me, "what is this case worth?" My first response is, "How much money or insurance coverage do they have?" In order to maximize this recovery a good lawyer should be able to illustrate, depict and bring to life the injuries his/her client has suffered to convince either the responsible party or their insurance representative and sometimes 12 jurors to get the one he represents the maximum recovery they deserve.

The key to this I have found is to get to know whom you represent on a friendly basis. Oops! I just made the carnal sin. A wonderful lawyer Charles B. O'Reilly, Esq. I had the experience of working with once scolded me when I used the word "client". He corrected me and said "big firms have clients we represent friends and family. What is his name?" And that has governed the way I practice. Treating persons I represent like my own parents, sister, cousins, etc. with understanding and respect being in constant contact and providing my mobile phone, so they can call me at all hours of the day.

To help you understand a little bit about me and why I practice personal injury I think it would help for you to know how I chose to be a lawyer or this profession chose me. I was very fortunate this profession came to me at an early age. In fact, I was only three when I or I should say my paternal grandmother decided I was going to be a lawyer. My grandmother Khatoun Kevorkian, a survivor of the Armenian Genocide, and like most of these survivors, uneducated and not very worldly decided her grandson was going to be a lawyer. She would ask me in front of her friends what I wanted to be when I grew up and I would say, "Pastapan!" while admiring the smile it brought to her face. Mind you at the time this was the only Armenian word I knew. Well, I followed my late grandmother's desire and embraced this profession.

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Help! Am I Going to be able to Retire?  
(Continued from Page 4)

With the Guaranteed Minimum Income Benefit (GMIB) the payments may be higher than the GMWB, but you must annuitize the account to receive the benefit. When you annuitize the account, you no longer retain control of the principal. The principal balance is taken over by the annuity company who in turn enters into a contract to pay you for a certain period of time (Period Certain), a certain dollar amount (Amount Certain) or for life (Lifetime Income), depending on which option you choose.

How all of this benefits those of you planning for retirement depends on which phase of your retirement plan you are in. If you are in the accumulation phase of your retirement (still building your retirement accounts) the GMAB option can provide a safety net of sorts by offering a minimum accumulation value regardless of actual account performance. This way you have a good idea as to what your ‘worst case scenario’ would be should you choose the GMAB option.

If you are in the distribution phase of your retirement (withdrawing from your retirement accounts), a GMWB or GMIB can take much of the guesswork out of how much you will be able to withdraw from your retirement account(s) over the course of your retirement.

If you are nearing retirement you may want to consider taking advantage of multiple Living Benefit Rider options. By using a GMAB to secure a certain minimum growth rate on your account and a GMWB to plan your distributions, you can add a little more certainty to your retirement and simplify the planning process as you enter your retirement years.

All of the examples provided in this article are purely hypothetical and are not meant to represent a particular product or guaranty a particular rate of return. All rates of return are purely hypothetical. You should always consult a prospectus prior to making any investment decision.

Should you have any questions or if you require additional information, please feel free to contact me at (949) 706-3212 or via e-mail ara.malazian@natplan.com.
Why you don’t have to live with headaches

(Continued from Page 3)

If you are experiencing stress, try some relaxation techniques; meditation, quiet music, massage. If you find that your headaches are directly related to eating a particular type of food, get tested for food allergies to make sure that an allergy is not the cause of your headaches. If your headaches are related to coffee/caffeine, gradually try weaning yourself off of coffee/caffeine drinks and substitute caffeine free herbal tea or water.

Exercise is a great way to not only reduce stress and headaches, but is critical to your overall health. Exercise increases bloodflow and releases natural endorphins (chemicals in the brain) that help you to feel good. Be sure to stay hydrated and dehydration can also lead to headaches.

If you are still experiencing headaches after making these lifestyle adjustments, try getting a chiropractic adjustment.

What can chiropractic care do?

Chiropractors have had considerable success relieving the cause of headache pain and releasing headache sufferers from the dangerous vicious circle of taking ever-larger doses of ever-stronger painkillers that may even be causing new and worse headaches.

Chiropractic adjustments have shown to be as effective and sometimes more effective than medications in reducing the severity and frequency of headaches. Chiropractic is particularly successful dealing with cervicogenic headache. Even though cervicogenic and other tension-type headaches may not actually involve stress or muscle tension, chiropractic’s ability to adjust spinal abnormalities seems to lessen or remove the forces contributing to many individuals headache pain.

Do I Really Need a Lawyer?

(Continued from Page 5)

In my younger years growing up within the Armenian community in Los Angeles I would often be approached by strangers who would hug and kiss me and share with me their sentiment about what a wonderful women my late grandmother was and how she aided all and her arms and doors were always open. Well, it just made sense, my loving grandmother wanted me to be a lawyer and I must do so in the same spirit she lived and intended, with open arms and with the sole intention of helping my fellow Armenians. Personal injury only seemed to be the logical focus, help those injured by aiding them through their medical care, making financial arrangements for the care they cannot afford and ultimately getting them the monetary compensation they deserve for the wrongs caused by others and making them whole.

Please feel free to call or write via e-mail with any of your questions which I welcome anytime of the day. I look forward to serving you.

If you wish to be removed from our mailing list, e-mail your request to info@mymoneydiet.com or write us at
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