

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Taxpayers Ask IRS

Makes Appointments

This column of questions and answers on federal tax matters is provided by the local office of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and is published as a public service to taxpayers. The column answers questions most frequently asked by taxpayers.

of Commerce Office of Minority Business Enterprise and was named "Businessman of the Year" by the Greater Fayetteville Business League in 1972. He serves on the N.C. Board of Transportation. Harris and his wife, Aronul, have three daughters.

Continued from Page 1
Minority Enterprise Small Business Companies and the N.C. Association of Business Development Organizations. He is also a member of the Board of Governors of the National Association of Small Business Investment Companies.

Q. I am going to sell my home and I have just finished wallpapering some of the rooms. Can the expense be added to my home's cost basis?

You can claim fixing-up expenses only if you are buying another house, and postponing the tax on the gain from the sale of your old residence.

A. Expenses such as wallpapering and painting are considered maintenance expenses, not improvements, and cannot be added to the basis of your home. You may, however, be able to claim the wallpapering as a fixing-up expense if you are attempting to make your home more salable.

For more information, see IRS Publication 523, Tax Information on Selling Your Home, available free at your IRS office.

Q. I own a one-third share of an apartment house and share the maintenance expenses. How much of these can I deduct?

Generally, once you have met the minimum requirements that were in effect when you entered your employment, trade or business, you will still be considered to have met them even if they are later changed. However, if the courses qualify you for a new trade or business, the deduction will not be allowed. In your case, the duties involve the same general work as you usually do, so you are not qualifying for a new trade.

Q. I am a junior accountant. Due to a lack of work in my office, my

\$181,000 Granted
RALEIGH - Governor Jim Holshouser today announced the awarding of State grants totaling \$180,903 to fund 22 research grants aimed at benefiting the State industrially, environmentally, and academically.

For 22 Projects

The grants will be administered by the N.C. Science and Technology Committee, Research Triangle Park.

North Carolina Central University was awarded \$6,500 to Dr. Chantal Marie Shafroth, Mathematics, for development of a system to optimize power generating systems, and \$2,050 to Dr. Charles R. George, Biology, for biological control of the European corn borer, a pest of corn and other economically important vegetable crops in the state.

Lee, a Charlotte native, is senior partner in the law firm of Lee, High, Taylor, Dansby and Stanback. He received his B.S. degree from A&T State University and his law degree from the University of North Carolina. He is founder, president and a Director of the American Federal Savings and Loan Association. His wife is the former Nancy Young.

Hansley established and serves as president of the Forsyth County Investment Company and the Forsyth County Economic Development Corporation. He received his B.S. degree from Temple University. He is a past president of the American Association of

WHAT IS YOUR QUESTION

Dying-Death-Estate Planning

A. J. WOLFE

Dear Mr. WOLFE:
Why do I need so many death certificates? My husband died three months ago, and today I was told that I had to have another one. This makes about nine or ten. I only had to have one birth certificate. This just doesn't make sense.

(Confused)

Dear Confused:
I can understand how frustrating this could be, as well as emotionally upsetting. But the necessity for death certificates is required by laws and company policies for your benefit. They are needed to qualify for Social Security, V.A. Benefits and benefits of Unions, etc., and to redeem life insurance policies. For \$1.00 each you can order Certified copies of the Death Certificate from the Register of Deeds in the county of the death. Usually these are all ordered at one time and usually by the funeral director.

Dear Mr. Wolfe:
I am shocked at the amount of money that was just spent for a relative's funeral. If possible, will you provide me with an itemized, detailed list of all the expenses involved at one's death? In other words, what should one expect to pay, as a minimum cost for funeralizing?

(Middle Class)

Dear Middle Class:
You did not say what the cost was so I don't know what you think is expensive. As I have stated in this column before it depends on what kind of funeral, etc., as to the cost. There is no denying the fact that funerals are expensive...even at minimum.

In 1973 the National Funeral Directors Association said that Americans paid \$1,117 for the "average" funeral. That was two years ago and of course with inflation would be more today. It also reports that 75% of that is for services and 25% for merchandise. Figured into that price is merchandise, property, buildings, parking areas, furnishings, automotive equipment, inventory space, salaries for professional staff which is the largest part of the funeral expense and meeting state-approved requirements for funeral-directing and embalming.

That figure never includes the cost of the cemetery expenses or for memorialization. The average total figure today will easily exceed \$2,000 or \$2,500. Following are the categories of charges that usually make up the cost of the funeral:

1. Charges specifically involving the funeral home; such as professional services, use of facilities and equipment, mdse etc.
2. Charges dealing with the disposition of the body; such as the cemetery lot, opening and closing, or cremation or mausoleum crypt etc.
3. Charges for memorialization; such as a monument or marker, niche for the urn of cremated remains etc.
4. Miscellaneous expenses paid directly by the family or through a funeral director; such as minister's honorarium, flowers, additional limousines, out-of-town transportation of the body, etc.

These figures can vary, depending upon family and local custom and religious and ethnic preferences.

Dear Mr. Wolfe:
Why is it that funeral directors do not let families know about various cemeteries that are available and the differences. The reason I ask is that right after we buried our mother we found a cemetery that was much nicer and more desirable and the cost would have been very little more, but we didn't know about it. I've asked other people and they want to know too.

(Martha and friends)

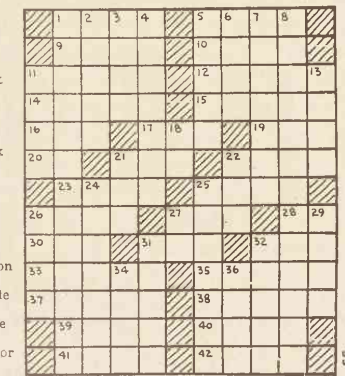
Dear Martha and friends:
I agree that it is unfair that families are not made aware of what is available but then some funeral directors feel that they are doing you a favor by "helping" you with those decisions. Their motive could be sincere or selfish. If they know for a fact that you have a limited amount of money to spend on a funeral then they are doing you a service to help on the pennies.

Often, they will furnish an expensively priced casket, but then will suggest a less than desirable casket for burial. This can be for different reasons. The funeral director may get a "kick-back" from the cemetery, or they may want you to spend less on the plot so that more will be left for the casket and related items. Sometimes they feel that what happens after the funeral is of no importance or that it is of no concern to them. There is no law that says they have to be versed on the advantages of the various cemeteries. This is all the more reason for people to make these arrangements in advance, and to select not only the desired cemetery, but also the right funeral director.

CROSSWORD

40. Hindmost
41. Couple
42. Lair

DOWN
1. War
2. Rub out
3. Shield (var.)
4. Full of grief
5. Silent
6. God of love
7. Sifts
8. Cheaters (colloq.)
9. Armadillo
10. Carnegie or Georgia
11. At home
12. Morsel
13. Electrified particle
14. Province of Canada
15. Attack with artillery
16. Neat
17. Btrmese native
18. Thirst quencher
19. Pointed post
20. Musical instrument
21. Select
22. Not
23. Weather



CONSUMERTIP

Doing simple plumbing repairs yourself can save you big money.

Say your faucet is leaking. Shut off the valve near the faucet. Remove the faucet handle and the stem to which it is attached. Then replace the worn washer and reassemble the faucet.

Minor water pipe leaks can be covered with rubber or plastic patches. And the frozen water pipe problem can be solved by covering the pipes with rags and dousing them with hot water. Be sure to open the faucet so pressure won't accumulate.

Helps Shrink Swelling Of Hemorrhoidal Tissues

caused by inflammation
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TURNIP GREENS 303 CAN 29¢
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