

# THE LAW OFFICES OF SAMANTHA K. WOLFE

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## DID YOU KNOW?

1. The Eiffel Tower is taller in the warmer summer months. The famous landmark is mainly constructed of metal which causes it to expand in heat.



2. Lincoln Logs were created by John Lloyd Wright, son of famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright, in the 1920s. They were named after Abraham Lincoln, who grew up in a log cabin.



## SPRING HAS SPRUNG ☺

We would like to Welcome our newest pack member!



### Jessica Blair

I grew up in Greencastle and lived there until I attended Eastern Mennonite University. I graduated with my B.S.N. but was a stay-at-home mom for several years until they started school. When I rejoined the work force, it was in the Fairfield School District until it was time for a change of pace.

I was then asked to join the team here at The Law Office of Samantha K. Wolfe. I have two girls, a wonderful husband, a pet pig, and soon to be puppy. I am excited to be working here, and I am looking forward to this journey.

## 5 fun facts that you don't know about Jessica:

1. I love spending time with my family. It can just be sitting around the table talking, but it only matters that we are together.
2. I have a pet pig at home that is named Jasper.
3. In high school I drove a yellow Volkswagen. It was by far my favorite vehicle.
4. I traveled to Ireland in college, and I would love to go back.
5. I enjoy ice skating and roller blading.

Our Mission is to **provide mindful legal direction for you and your future generations.** We are committed to fulfilling our mission to you, our client, by adhering to the following principles:

**C**-Collaborating with your accountant and financial advisor to create the best team for you.

**A**-Advocating for you and your family in times of crisis

**R**-Reinforcing your estate plan with asset protection strategies

**E**-Ensuring efficient administration upon your death

We **CARE**. We are looking forward to serving you!

## Virtual seminars

We would like to thank everyone for attending the virtual seminars over the past few months. The support from everyone has been overwhelming. We are looking forward to the upcoming topics we will cover during our monthly seminars. We have marked our calendars and hope you do the same. The following dates and topics are:

1. May 4<sup>th</sup> @ 12 pm-1 pm: “Things Your Momma Should Have Told You”
2. June 21<sup>st</sup> @ 12 pm-1 pm: “Adventures in Medicare, My Dads Father’s Day Gift”
3. July 1<sup>st</sup> @ 12 pm-1 pm: “I forgot.....Common Mistakes in Estate Planning”

We hope you can join us. Please note that we always add our virtual seminars to the seminar library on our YouTube channel, so please subscribe to our channel ([www.youtube.com/channel/UCaQWFDV4chTFIqeJxuGU9Pw](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaQWFDV4chTFIqeJxuGU9Pw)) so you know when we post new material. If you are interested in learning more about a certain document or topic, please let us know. In our first newsletter, we provided an overview of the Powers of Attorney documents and why we recommend them. In our second issue, we focused on your Last Will and Testament. If you missed our first three newsletters, please contact us at 717-655-2676 or email us at [meek@skwlawoffice.com](mailto:meek@skwlawoffice.com) to request your electronic copy.

## WE HAVE TWO... YES, TWO GREAT ANNOUNCEMENTS!

**We are super excited to announce that our website is up and running.**

You have had such an impact during our first year and we appreciate you! We started the law firm on July 1, 2020 amidst interesting times in the world. We were a little anxious to step out during such uncertainty. Some of our uncertainty stemmed from our belief that if we did not have a website immediately, people in the community would not know we were here and ready to serve you. As we worked behind the scenes getting our website ready, we hoped that those around us would spread the word that The Law Offices of Samantha K. Wolfe was open and committed to serving our clients. Ten months have passed since we opened our doors, and our website has been slowly coming together. In the meantime, you have been supporting us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube. We want to thank you for all of that support. It has meant so much to us that you have viewed our social media posts, followed us, and liked us. We are humbled and extremely grateful every time you share our posts on Facebook. Please know that we have been delighted every time we get a new follower or like on Facebook, LinkedIn, or Instagram. You have helped us spread the word about our services and our law firm. Thank you! We also appreciate your patience. We have worked hard the last few months and are ecstatic to share with you that our website is ready to launch. The Law Offices of Samantha K. Wolfe is proud to introduce our website. Please check it out. We created it with you in mind: [www.skwlawoffice.com](http://www.skwlawoffice.com).

We appreciate that you have partnered with us these last few months to let the community know we are here, and kindly ask that you continue to do so. Please continue to spread the word on social media by sharing and liking our Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. We cannot wait to hear from you!

**Second, check out our new logo (Please check out the reason for designing our logo as we did on our website under the “Our Logo” heading: [www.skwlawoffice.com/our-history](http://www.skwlawoffice.com/our-history)).**



We would like to say Thank you, Jill at Crawford Designs, LLC, for all her help with our website and logo.



## **Blog from the Boss (Or Basically Sam's Humble Musings): Titling Assets Properly**

By: Samantha K. Wolfe, Esquire, LL.M. in Taxation

One of my favorite toys growing up was a talking Mother Goose. She had a tape cassette player hidden under her one wing. When I would insert a tape into the player Mother Goose would read me a story. I would follow along in the book while she read to me. I love when someone reads to me, so I loved Mother Goose. I received Mother Goose as a gift for my sixth birthday. My younger sister's birthday is the same month as mine, so we usually have a shared birthday party. My younger sister received Teddy Ruxpin the same day I received Mother Goose, at her fourth birthday party. Because I thought Mother Goose was such a great gift, I offered to share Mother Goose with my younger sister if she shared Teddy Ruxpin. My thought was that we could maximize our reading fun if we shared gifts.

Thankfully for me my younger sister didn't want to listen to Mother Goose read her stories very often; she preferred good ole Teddy. But there was that one time that my younger sister decided her story would sound better coming from Mother Goose's beak. I recognize that she probably didn't mean to hurt poor Mother Goose but to this day I remember the devastation when I realized that she had carried Mother Goose around by her neck. Since my sister was used to handling Teddy, she didn't realize that Mother Goose was never to be carried around by holding only her neck. She had no idea she was wrecking Mother Goose's reading capabilities. Mother Goose never worked after that day.

It was hard to be mad at my sister because she was as equally distraught as I was when Mother Goose didn't read any more stories; after all, Mother Goose was half her toy too. I learned my lesson about shared toys, and whenever clients ask me if I think they should add their children's name to the title of an asset I think about Mother Goose and her broken neck.

Occasionally clients come into the appointment with the thought that titling real estate or any other property in both their names and a child's name would be a simple way to accomplish transferring ownership to the next generation. The thought is that adding the child's name will mean that the asset will not need to be probated and the tax burden will be minimal when the clients pass away. Similarly, I thought sharing two toys would be a great idea, but I didn't foresee that my younger sister, one of the joint owners, would make a mistake that cost me my treasured Mother Goose.

Adding a child's name to ownership of property opens up each owner to the mistakes of the other owners. For example, if a father owns a family farm and wants to ensure that the farm is given to his oldest son who actively works on the farm currently, the father may decide to add his son's name to the deed and makes his son a joint owner of the property. What the father may not realize is that by adding his son's name to the title of the farm he is exposing the farm to the son's creditors. Depending on the actual titling of the asset, if the son is sued, the creditor may be able to seek judgment against the jointly owned property.

Anytime you are considering adding another individual's name to the title of the asset remember Mother Goose and consider what you are risking and whether the reward is worth a beloved toy with a broken neck. In many cases there are other ways to transfer the asset to future generations without risking the actual asset. I recommend consulting a professional legal advisor anytime you are titling assets to learn all the options. Sometimes people wait too long before they consult their legal advisor. Some people wait until they are actually in the crisis situation. I recommend that you consult your legal advisor prior to the occurrence of a disaster, so that you can select the best option to transfer ownership and protect assets. Do not wait to long to discuss your planning options. There are always more options planning-wise when you plan prior to actual situation when the planning is needed. Check out my sump pump story next to understand the importance of planning for a disaster.



## **Blog from the Boss (Or Basically Sam's Humble Musings):**

### Plan for disaster: don't plan backwards

By: Samantha K. Wolfe, Esquire, LL.M. in Taxation

Based on my Mother Goose story, you recognize that adding your child's name to your real estate may not be the best option for planning purposes, but what other options do you have? When you plan ahead, you realize that you have many other planning options that you can explore to ensure you are selecting the best option for your situation. One option that maximizes asset protection strategies, is using an irrevocable trust. An irrevocable trust offers a lot of flexibility and protection for families in Pennsylvania. The most important thing to know about utilizing an irrevocable trust is that you have to create and fund the trust prior to the situation in which you need the trust to protect the assets owned by the trust. This concept is best explained by telling you my sump pump story.

I worked at a law firm located in Williamsport, Pennsylvania for 7 1/2 years, and lived about 25 minutes away in Milton, Pennsylvania. Prior to moving to Milton, I had never heard of a sump pump. In fact, when I was viewing the house I eventually purchased, I had to ask my realtor what the contraption was in the garage. She explained to me that the purpose of a sump pump was to pump any excess water from my house if it should flood. She proceeded to reassure me that, although flooding happens in the Susquehanna Valley, because I live on a hill I should never need to use it. That was before September 2011.

One week in September 2011, Susquehanna Valley experienced a lot of rain, and there was horrendous flooding in the area. I arrived home from work earlier than usual and as soon as I pulled into my garage, I noticed that I heard something that sounded like running water. It took me a few seconds to realize what was making that noise. It was my sump pump. I learned really quick the importance of sump pump.

There are two ways to look at someone who decides to install the sump pump: (1) the person is paranoid and overprotective, or (2) the person is planning ahead for disaster. Based on experience I would argue that whoever installed the sump pump knew what he or she was doing. You can't plan backwards. You can't wait for the disaster to occur before you take action.

Similarly, the Alaska case, *Battley v. Mortensen*, Adv. D.Alaska, No. A09-90036-DMD (2011), reinforces this thought: Plan ahead for disaster; don't plan backwards. In the case, Thomas Mortensen executed a trust in order to protect his assets, but he transferred assets without giving thought to maintaining ownership of assets outside the trust to sustain his daily living. Furthermore, Mr. Mortensen was still recovering from the financial devastation of a divorce, had depleting financial resources, and had continually increasing debt.

Mr. Mortensen's strategy was flawed. He wasn't planning ahead for the disaster. He was standing in the middle of the disaster sopping up the water with a water-resistant towel, trying to plan backwards. Sump pumps only work if installed before the flood hits. Likewise, asset protection trusts only work if implemented when there are no creditor issues.

The lesson to take away from this case is to plan ahead for disaster. If you desire to preserve your legacy and provide for future family generations then act as if you know the floods will eventually come and you need to install a sump pump to protect the asset. Consider asset preservation techniques well before the disaster. Sump pumps are installed for a reason. Asset preservation is done for a reason. Plan ahead for the disaster; don't plan backwards. You never know when the next flood may come.

### **Social Media for The Law Offices of Samantha K. Wolfe, LLC**



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**Website:** [www.skwlawoffice.com](http://www.skwlawoffice.com).