

# Planting the seeds for our future

By Scott Lebin

In Geneva we are surrounded by wonderful gardens. Spring, summer and fall are seasons where the flowers and gardens change to accommodate the environment and weather, including sun, rain, and time of the year. These beautiful additions to our downtown don't just develop by chance. The various plots of ground including the many "knuckles," are all planted and maintained because of the loving care given by clubs, businesses, and residents of Geneva.

Their dedication to planting and maintaining these gardens is one of the many qualities that make Geneva such a wonderful place in which to live. These gardens thrive because of the tender care and love that is provided by the very special people who give back to their community by donating their time and talents to make the town look spectacular.

Likewise, financial planning for retirement is also a labor of love that will make a productive retirement possible and help add to our ability to flourish and blossom during the stage in life where we often confront a changing season. We too have a spring, summer, and fall and our preparation for each segment of our life builds on a previous period.

It is in the spring when we ask ourselves the important questions: how much money will I need in the future, what happens to my family if something happens to me, how long will I plan to live off my saved money, and when do I plan to stop working at my current job. These questions lead us to the important question, "How long do I think I will need to live on my saved money in retirement?"

The answers to these questions lead us to the summer of our lives where there is the opportunity to save so that we will be able to have enough money to live during the fall of our lifetimes. This will allow us to maintain our lifestyle and live a productive and significant life.

When we plant flower seeds, we aren't always sure what the weather will be or what the final flowers will actually look like. Similarly, the sooner we prepare the soil, plant the seeds, water the ground and fertilize the young plants, the better chance we have of producing something beautiful and appropriate to achieve our own satisfying lifestyle in retirement.

Strolling down the Geneva streets we have the view of gardens that are all different. No one is exactly alike. They have the imprint of the people who planted them.



In the same way that no two gardens are exactly alike, each retirement strategy and implementation has the unique shape and form provided by its owner. Designing a retirement strategy is similar to creating a unique garden. The final product has a unique form, color, and life expectancy that are directly related to the people who created it.

Every year we plant new annuals creating the expectation of new gardens that show subtle changes of placement and color from year to year. Our financial needs can also vary from year to year because our lives don't always follow the same pattern each year. A written financial plan allows us to prepare and make adjustments when they are needed. Our gardens are also supported by an arrangement of perennials that give stability and continuity to our gardens. This stability and continuity of structure is an important part of any financial planning for retirement. It gives us peace of mind to know that there is a core element of strategies that can support our changing financial world. It gives us comfort to know that there is both flexibility and stability to meet all life events that can affect our financial well-being.

As we enjoy our gardens in Geneva, may we be reminded of the beauty of life and the human capacity to achieve both stability where needed and flexibility when change is desired. ●

*Scott Lebin is an Investment Advisor Representative with and Securities and Investment Advisory Services offered through Transamerica Financial Advisors, Inc. member FINRA, SIPC and a Registered Investment advisor. Non Securities products and services are not offered through Transamerica Financial Advisors, Inc.*

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