

The Bucket List

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Member **Kathy Conklin** (New Orleans) was interviewed in “The Bucket List,” a feature in the November Edition of *New Orleans Magazine*. Kathy discusses wills and estate planning as well as hang-ups and strategies she employs to make the process more streamlined.

“If they start worrying about who gets the piano and the ring, they never finish the will. They get caught up in their own mortality. It stops them cold,” she said. However, when it’s a formula that they can grasp and they don’t think about individual items, they can sign off on it and know that the most important things are taken care of. And, as she points out, ultimately the executor of the will can handle the details that you may not want to consider while enjoying the here and now.

“Most of the next generation doesn’t want most of our stuff anyway,” she said. Sometimes, the family prefers going through an estate sale company for this reason, as well as to avoid some of the emotional complications of going through all the memories left behind. An estate sale company organizes the items left by loved ones, conducts the sale, and then distributes the money to the family. If this sounds cut and dried, it is. As John Lennon sang in the “Ballad of John and Yoko,” “when you’re dead, you don’t take nothing with you but your soul.” Try not to worry about what will happen to your stuff. If that’s impossible, talk to someone you trust in the family to become executor of the will so they can worry about that for you. You will probably inherently know who is best suited to this task. Go with your gut. Keeping the will as simple and clear as possible will be better for you now, and better for everyone else later.

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Kathy Conklin