



STRATEGIC  
PLANNING GROUP  
Wealth Management Specialist

# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020





# CONTENTS



Ryan Craner  
reminds us  
of American  
tradition. pg. 3

pg. 3

**Remember Resolve,  
Remember the Sleeping Giant**

**pg. 3-4**

## **Remember Resolve, Remember the Sleeping Giant**

by Ryan Craner

Ryan looks back at the past 20 years of events. Can we rise up from this pandemic?

**pg. 5-6**

## **How Bad is It?**

by John Park

John shares some knowledge and advice as we work through a bear market correction.

**pg. 7-8**

## **Your Kids Aren't Poor**

by Tom Craner

Tom teaches some ways to help your children be financially successful.

**pg. 9-10**

## **Too Old for Games?**

by Heather Cunningham

Enjoy some word games while reminiscing about your childhood games and activities.

**pg. 11-13**

## **Bloomberg Businessweek**

Strategic Planning Group was featured in Bloomberg Businessweek.

**pg. 14-15**

## **Meet the Team**

Introducing the new members of the office.



# Remember Resolve, Remember the Sleeping Giant

By Ryan Craner

Taking the client advocate and consumer approach, Ryan has always viewed every client as a long-term and very important relationship.



It's the year 2020 and we start out with a hope-crushing, scary pandemic crisis and a 5.7 magnitude earthquake in Utah, followed by dozens of powerful aftershocks that last over a month. I want to remind you that it was just 20 years ago that we faced down another mysterious crisis, famously known as Y2K. The inevitable 2-digit year vs 4-digit year coding "problem" that was to occur in all computer chips and software at the turn of the century. There was panic and concern that machines and computers would mistakenly think it's the year 1900 instead of the year 2000. There were predictions that your bank accounts would disappear, planes

would fall from the sky, and toasters would burn your toast. Digital mayhem was to ensue at the stroke of midnight on January 1, 2000. It may seem trivial now, but there were people hiding in bunkers and many prophesied the "end of the world" was at hand.

If you recall, in years leading up to Y2K, every man, woman, and child on the planet, every corporation, every government, every organization all bought new software and computers in order to solve the problem. It must have worked because the predicted disaster never happened. What did happen was that every man, woman, and child, every government, and every organization

suddenly stopped spending on computers and software once the year turned 2000. With disaster averted, there was a sudden halt to spending and this did create a very real crisis, the largest tech crash in history. Tech stocks cratered in March of 2000 and dread and anxiety enveloped the markets. If that was not enough, several short months later America was entrenched in an election dispute. Remember the Hanging Chads in Florida? We all went out and voted in the presidential election between George W. Bush and Al Gore, but we didn't know who won until late December after many re-counts and a supreme court ruling. This made the already recessionary economy even more uncertain. Ultimately, George W. Bush was sworn into office on January 20, 2001.



Eight short months later, America sustained its worst terrorist attack in history on September 11, 2001. Many of you may recall that feeling of crisis and doom, we were attacked. We were in recession. Planes were not flying, fear was in the air, and markets were closed and tumbling. Nobody felt safe.



## We recovered and our society, while shaken, returned to normal.

I remind you of this time period, not just to reminisce, but to highlight the fact that we recovered and our society, while shaken, returned to normal. America adapted and overcame those huge challenges. We flew on planes again, people traveled, the economy recovered, our psyche recovered. The Nation recovered.

Looking back through the decades of our country's history, there are many examples of American exceptionalism and that amazing human spirit. It is easy to see the way Americans triumph over adversity, time

and time again. When challenged and crisis ensues, we have an uncanny way of responding and defeating great peril and hardship. I will always remember the comment about America after the attack on Pearl Harbor, from our enemy at the time, Admiral Yamamoto of the Japanese Naval Forces. He said, *"I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve."* That quote perfectly demonstrates the nature of the American people.

Another example of American greatness is the story of Jonas Salk, a New Yorker and an amazing Patriot. His brilliant research and resolve brought us the polio vaccine, which effectively stopped a terrible disease and changed the world.

I think of NASA and the American Space Program and the truly miraculous stories of deadlines, setbacks, and the amazing sounds and images. On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong uttered those long-awaited words, *"Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed."* Hundreds of NASA engineers and tech staff in Houston jumped up and down and cheered! Six and a half hours later, Neil Armstrong became the first man to step foot on the moon and we heard those famous words, *"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."*



I want to remind all of you that those uniquely American examples of human spirit and the accomplishments of invention and perseverance are not gone. The American tradition of compassion and RESOLVE is alive and well.

## The American tradition of compassion and RESOLVE is alive and well.



Looking back to all those events, and specifically Y2K and 9-11, just 20 years ago, it encourages me and comforts me with the knowledge that we will beat the COVID-19 crisis. We are Americans and we will rise up stronger than we were before and return to the country and society we have always known, strong, resilient, and full of RESOLVE.

## ...Strong, Resilient, and Full of RESOLVE.

President Andrew Jackson once said, *"Americans are not a perfect people, but we are called to a perfect mission."* Our country has a mission in front of us now. American ingenuity will prevail and soon this crisis will be yet another human triumph!



# How Bad is It?

By John Park

From Investments to complicated retirement strategies, John works to educate and advise his clients on making smart financial decisions.



**A**s you are aware, we have been dealing with a bear market correction for several weeks now. The coronavirus has caused quite a scare. At first it seemed overreacted to and there wouldn't be much of an economic impact, however, it eventually turned into actual economic impact, which we are still dealing with.

There has been a consistent barrage of negative news, especially when it comes to the markets. We mostly hear about the Dow Jones market index, and boy it has been quite a ride! In March we would be down over 2,000 points in one day, up again the next, and back down again. It was very volatile and dramatic. I started wishing for days where the market would only be negative a few hundred points instead of a few thousand. As of May 8, 2020, we have had a Dow 52-week

range of a high of 29,568.57 and a low of 18,213.65. That is a peak to trough drop of 38.40%! The S&P 500 dropped 35.41%. The NASDAQ dropped

This has been understandably stressful to us and to our clients. It is not fun to see this kind of a bear market. Here is some good news though: as of writing this article, the Dow is sitting at 24,331.32. It has almost recovered half of the drop. Even better, the NASDAQ and S&P 500 are more than halfway back from their lows. We have definitely made some progress, but we are not quite back all the way.

As we have discussed in the

**Our investment models are designed to fair better than the general indexes.**

Ryan Reports and one-on-one with many of you, our investment models are designed to fair better than the general indexes. By favoring certain sectors, such as healthcare, communications, and technology, we believe our conservative, moderate, and growth models are well positioned to accomplish this goal.

During this bear market, I have seen some people have







nature of your investment portfolios. When you follow our advice of diversifying into quality, hand-picked investments, you own tangible assets which are chosen for their growth potential and/or ability to produce income over time. You are not holding some vague instrument which has an artificial value that may or may not go away. You own assets.

You worked hard for them. Do not give them away in a "fire sale." I believe this simple concept and mindset are what separates wise investors from foolish investors. Those who are wise, make wise decisions. Even the wisest investors may be fearful or stressed at times. Checking those emotions and making good choices helps make the difference.

the wrong perception of the nature of an investment portfolio. Some do not quite understand that an investment portfolio is not a nebulous value which mysteriously goes up and down. They also think the point is to get "lucky" by cashing out more than you started with. This is a way to view gambling or speculation, not investing!

I believe you should be possessive with these assets. I want you to acquire as many of them as possible and hang on to them. It may not be wise to sell them when they drop in value. If anything, you may want to buy more! If you cannot buy more, then hang tight when the value is down. Be possessive!

**If you are stressed,  
Just remember, it is  
not as bad as you  
might think.**

This correction can still be short-lived. No matter how long it takes, be possessive and wise with your investments. If you are stressed, just remember, it is not as bad as you might think. Please do not hesitate to call if you would like an individual report on your accounts. We are always here to help!

I would like to remind you of the accurate, real-world

It is during our working years we sacrifice to set money aside and buy investment assets.





# Your Kids Aren't Poor

By Tom Craner

With client relations and customer service experience going back nearly a decade, Tom has a proven track record of genuine care for his clients.



**K**ids. We have them while we are young and just figuring things out ourselves. We are figuring out how to navigate the world and how to provide, teach, and care for our kids. We are figuring out the difference between discipline and punishment, between negligence and allowing them to learn a valuable lesson. As we grow older, our kids do too. Before long, they are wanting to break free from our providence. For most parents, these bitter-sweet moments come too soon.

Allowing children who have grown into independent individuals to leave your care is a great sacrifice for parents. That individual stands before you, a benefactor of all the wisdom, knowledge, and guidance you have offered

and they no longer need your help. In fact, in many ways, they no longer benefit from it.

One way parents can damage their adult children, as well as themselves, is through giving them too much financial support. As their parent, it has been your job to make them secure for almost two decades. Now, when the stakes are highest, it can feel like you have no choice except to help them when they ask for money. I am here to tell you that you are not doing them any favors.

If you have experience with a child who has struggled to cut their financial dependence, you may have already thought about this dilemma. The question is usually *how*? How do you tell your child that you cannot help them with their financial woes, when you can? How do you explain to them that not helping them with money is how you can help them the most?

**Not helping them with money is how you can help them the most.**

How you handle this situation all depends on the context. There are three phases of adult child dependency. The first is the Golden Moment, the second is the Intermittent Phase, and the third is the Consistent Phase.

During the Golden Moment, your child has not yet, as an adult, begun to ask for money, but because of their naivety, they will very likely make a financial mistake that leads them into dire straits. When they come asking for money, tell them you are happy to support them and help them, but they will owe you. Have them draw up a loan contract and charge them interest. Alternatively, tell them that they are welcome to move back home.



The truth is, they are likely encountering the first financial panic they have ever felt. They think they need your help because you have always been there. In reality, they just need to sleep on it, wake up the next morning and work an extra shift, donate plasma, sell something they own, or simply

go overdue on a payment and work it out from there. By taking this approach during the Golden Moment, your child will understand that they are truly on their own and they need to act accordingly.

Some of you might have missed the opportunity in the Golden Moment and entered into the Intermittent Phase. This is when your child calls every few months asking for money. At this point, they have it in their head that if they get into financial trouble, they are one panicked phone call away from solving their problem.

**Like anything in life, they will figure it out through necessity...**

The solution here is to wait until they call exclaiming they are up to their eyeballs in debt, with no money to cover the bills. At this point you must be stern like you once were with them as a teenager. Tell them they will have to

pay the late fees, eat rice for dinner, sell something, and cancel their Netflix and Hulu subscriptions. Like anything in life, they will figure it out through necessity and ultimately, be more effective with their finances.

Follow up with them, help advise them, but make it clear they are now financially independent. They might be stressed, but in the end they will understand and accept it. Before long, they will thank you for it.

The third phase is the Consistent Phase. During this period, they have already been asking for money for years. Now they are simply relying on you to pay part of their rent or mortgage. Their car maintenance is always your concern and they "really just need a little extra this month", every month. In this situation you must sit them down. Tell them you are unable to continue supporting them for much longer and set a date where the money stops. Set another date, further out, where they

are to be removed from any other financial support(phone bills, insurance, etc).



**Don't let them think, not even for a second, that their financial mistakes are your financial responsibility.**

Set the expectation that if they get into trouble and they have more debt and bills than they can handle, that bankruptcy will be their only recourse. This way they never again will make the mistake of thinking they can come to you regarding extra money.

Of course, during their hardest times, you can offer your children support in other ways. Invite them to come for dinner each night, offer them advice and ideas on how to lower the bills, send them job referrals, and always be willing to talk it through. Just don't let them think, even for a second, that their financial mistakes are your financial responsibility. Billions of people live on less than two dollars a day in this world. Your child can go without a smart phone and avocado toast for a while until they sort out their finances.







# Too Old for Games?

By Heather Cunningham



As a young child, running around without a care in the world was fabulous. When we look back to those days, there are many events that tend to flood our memories. Playing games would certainly be a top contender. Depending on the era that each of us were raised in could change the types of games that we played. They could be anywhere from hopscotch and jacks to Nintendo and Tetris.

One thing that most of us probably had in common, regardless of the era we were raised in, was the desire

to be grown up and older. As a child though, understanding the reality of what being a grown up meant was a foreign concept and not one that was easy to understand. Bills, yard work, careers, repairs, responsibilities, and more are not generally what we had in mind.

Now that we are grown up, are we too old for games? Certainly not. Let's not forget to bring back the inner child in us. Here is a word game to get you started. Enjoy!

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ is only as strong as its weakest link
2. Absence makes the \_\_\_\_\_ grow fonder
3. As clean as a \_\_\_\_\_
4. As \_\_\_\_\_ as a cucumber
5. You made your \_\_\_\_\_, now lie in it
6. The pen is mightier than the \_\_\_\_\_
7. Don't put all your \_\_\_\_\_ in one basket
8. Don't throw the baby out with the \_\_\_\_\_ water
9. All that \_\_\_\_\_ is not gold
10. A friend in \_\_\_\_\_ is a friend indeed

1.chain 2.heart 3.whistle 4.cool 5.sword 6.bed 7.eggs 8.bath 9.gilltters 10.need



The Strategic Planning Group Team (back row, left to right): Angeleah Jensen, John Park, Ryan Craner, Tom Craner, Alex Craner, and Kelsie Hanks (front row, left to right): Kelsey Park, Adrienne Prince, Jackie O'Shea, Heather Cunningham, and Jena Olney

G	N	I	N	N	A	L	P	C	I	G	E	T	A	R	T	S	S	T	T	K	K	C	X	N
R	E	M	E	M	B	E	R	R	E	S	O	L	V	E	H	R	T	B	E	N	L	O	R	D
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N	T	E	T	S	R	S	R	T	G	O	L	D	E	N	M	O	M	E	N	T	T	E	M	C

Ryan Craner  
Strategic Planning  
Investments  
John Park

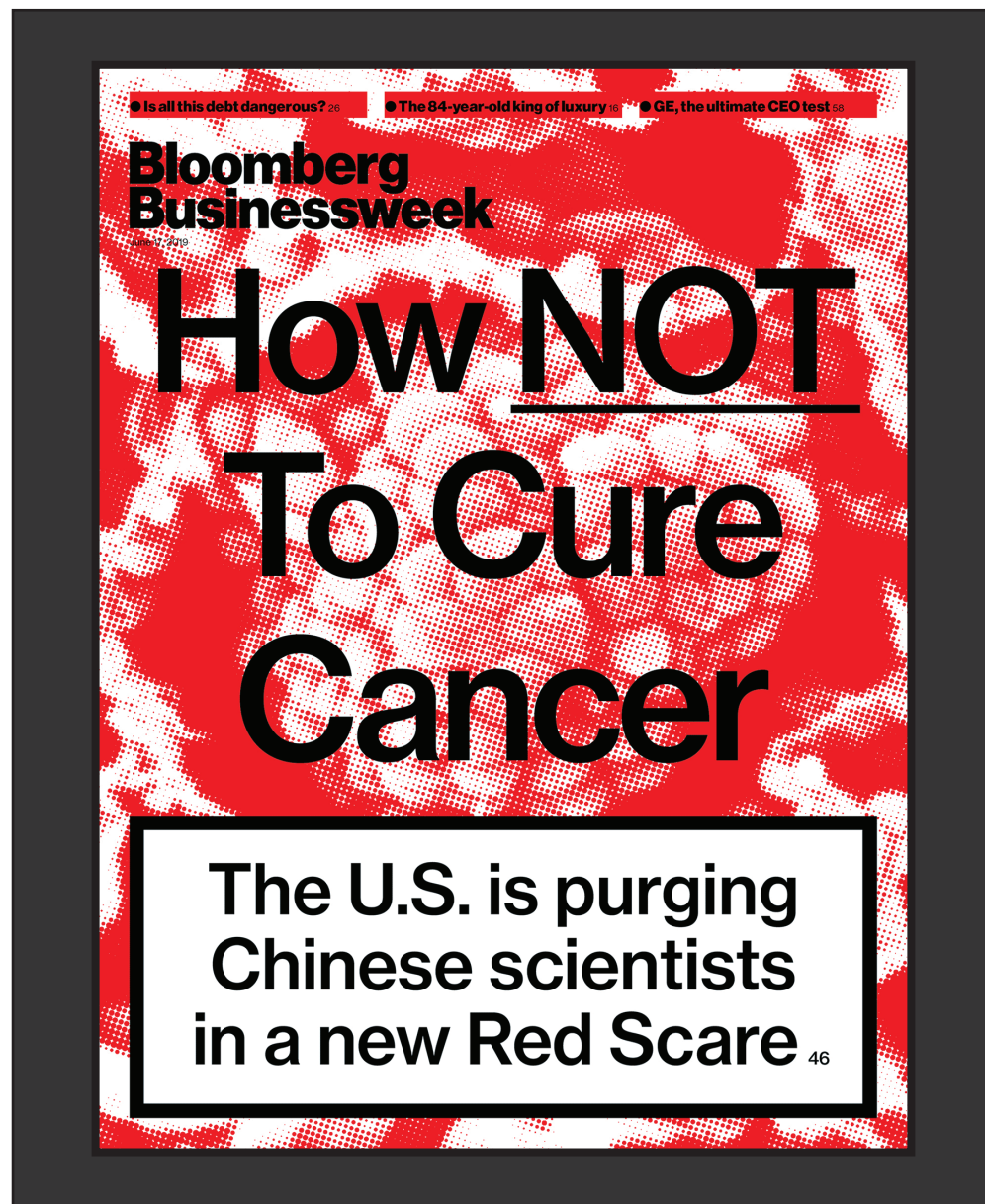
Retirement  
Stock Market  
Client Advocate  
Remember Resolve

Be Possessive  
Golden Moment  
Perfect Calendar  
Client Services

Tom Craner  
Tax Reduction  
Dow Jones  
Thank You



# Now We Have Appeared In Bloomberg Businessweek



The article will also be available on our blog:  
[www.spgutah.com/blog](http://www.spgutah.com/blog)

# A Detailed Plan for Wealth — and Lifestyle

In 1985 Ryan Craner got his start working in his father's insurance agency. His father, James L. Craner, taught him well and mentored him on the importance of ethics and honesty. He was taught how to connect with clients and demonstrate that the client always comes first.

At that time, the whole financial planning industry was going through many changes, and even though his father taught him well, Craner realized that there was a disconnect in being paid by commissions instead of directly by the client. He went to his father and various supervisors at insurance and investment companies and told them that he wanted

to start his own firm and become a fee-only advisor. Doing this would help remove any conflicts of interest and ensure the clients best interests were first and foremost.

These supervisors literally laughed at the concept of starting an independent investment firm and changing from a commission model to a fee-only model. They asked, "How will

you ever survive and compete against big institutions like us?" Craner's answer came in the form of spending the next 10 years (aside from barely surviving with very low revenue at first) building a wealth advisement firm that aligned with his principles—something he could be proud of and that would make a powerful difference in his clients' lives.

Today, Strategic Planning Group is a proudly independent, hometown wealth management firm with a global reach, managing nearly \$250 million in assets for about 450 client households. The company boasts a transformative approach—the creation of a two-part Strategic Plan™ for each client family, a comprehensive blueprint charting the best possible course to financial security.

The firm offers a wide variety of wealth management services, including investment strategies, retirement planning, tax reduction, family legacy planning, estate tax elimination, consumer education and consumer protection, mentoring children and grandchildren, family mediation, and estate liquidation.

## Getting Started

Whether working with young wealth-builders who are just starting

**For the forward-thinking advisors of Strategic Planning Group, what is financial security without a vision for savoring it fully?**





out or folks nearing retirement who are unsure about next steps, Craner and his team take their time to learn first-time clients’ hopes and dreams—and what’s keeping them up at night. “Our goal from the very beginning is to create a long-term client-advisor relationship with a hands-on, personalized focus,” says Craner. “We employ a fiduciary, fee-based model rather than relying on sales commissions. Most importantly, we manage clients’ assets in-house; there is no middleman.”

A comprehensive financial path is crafted to dovetail with clients’ needs. When warranted, the firm coordinates directly with the client’s tax accountant and estate planner. But even then, the work is still only half done.

### Second Steps, Second Opinions

“Some people call it retirement; we call it the Perfect Calendar,” says Craner. “Visualizing life after a career can be stressful, particularly for people who’ve loved their working lives. It’s important to clearly define this new life stage, and our Perfect Calendar document does just that.”

When couples neglect to set an intention for life in retirement, he adds, they can unwittingly become free daycares

### Strategic Planning Group has a long history of hands-on, proprietary investment portfolio management. The heavily focused, fiduciary, fee-only, registered advisory firm uses rigorously tested and proven methodology combined with state-of-the art institutional resources to achieve clients’ long-term financial goals. All wealth management is handled in-house. There are no third parties and no middlemen.



(Left to right): John Park, Ryan Craner, Tom Craner, and Alex Craner

for their grandchildren or fall into activities and routines that simply don’t fulfill them. Craner works carefully with clients to craft a clear, detailed, written version of their unique Perfect Calendar.

Strategic Planning Group also has a long history of advising clients on consumer protection and awareness. “Fraud and scams are at an all-time high in Utah and nationwide,” says Wealth Management Advisor John Park, who joined the company in 2015, drawn to the firm’s commitment to consumer education and advocacy. “It’s our responsibility to help clients be diligent and discerning. To that end, we offer a no-questions-asked S.O.S. Second Opinion Service where clients can get an analysis of any kind of proposal or sales pitch they may have received outside our firm.”

### A Cautionary Tale

Ron and Alice (not their real names) had been Strategic Planning Group clients for many years and had large, pre-tax/taxable balances in IRAs and 401(k)s. One day, Alice called the office almost in tears.

“She was so anxious,” recalls Craner. “A trusted family friend had introduced them to a so-called ‘tax and retirement expert’ who had nearly convinced them to liquidate all their taxable assets—totaling well over a million dollars—then pay tax on the entire balance and put the net proceeds into a large, expensive, illiquid, and heavily commissioned life insurance policy with one insurance company. This had red flags all over it. But at first, I just listened.”

The woman said they’d been promised a substantial tax-free income from the policy. What they’d actually be getting, Craner explained to her, would be a much larger tax bill, a 10-year delay in retirement income, and a low rate of return

that would expose them to inflation risks. “I invited the couple into the office, conducted a comparative mathematical analysis, and went over the plan with them point by point. There was so much they didn’t realize,” he says.

Craner helped his clients understand that the questionable contract would deliver a large portion of their life savings to just one insurance company, in one contract, with no diversification, no liquidity, but with an extremely high cost. Their portfolio with Strategic Planning Group was a better, safer way forward: diversified, liquid, and low cost. Ron and Alice declined the salesman’s offer, grateful for their advisor’s time and care.

Despite his long-ago supervisor’s nay-saying, Craner stuck with his principles and made them work. The result? An ethically solid company based on hometown values but with access to worldwide markets as well as hundreds of satisfied clients, many of whom he regards as friends. “Some of my newest clients are the children—and even grandchildren—of my original clients. It’s a great feeling being part of a legacy.”



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# MEET THE TEAM

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The people of Strategic Planning Group work closely as a team to foster an unambiguous and clear path forward. Our team is integral to ensuring that our principles towards investment planning and management of your estate are effectively implemented. You can trust that the combined decades of experience shared by our advisors will always be utilized by our staff to ensure success in your Strategic Plan.



**RYAN CRANER**

President & CEO

Ryan founded Strategic Planning Group to help consumers avoid piecemeal planning and simply buying products and instead create an all-inclusive written Strategic Plan™. A Strategic Plan™ is to your financial life what a blueprint is to building a home. This custom approach which began as a simple idea has grown Strategic Planning Group into a trusted and established firm.



**JOHN PARK**

Wealth Management Advisor



**TOM CRANER**

Wealth Management Advisor





**JACKIE O'SHEA**

Client Services



**JENA OLNEY**

Client Services



**ADRIENNE PRINCE**

Client Services



**HEATHER CUNNINGHAM**

Client Services



**KELSEY PARK**

Client Services



**ALEX CRANER**

Client Services



**KELSIE HANKS**

Client Services



**ANGELEAH JENSEN**

Client Services

**"Great things in  
business are never  
done by one person.  
They're done by a  
team of people."**

**Steve Jobs**



# STRATEGIC

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# STRATEGIC

PLANNING GROUP

Retirement Planning Specialists

Advisory services are offered through Strategic Planning Group, a Registered Investment Advisor with the SEC. Securities offered through Purshe Kaplan Sterling Investments, Member FINRA/SIPC.

