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GUEST COLUMN

Prepare your finances for the election's aftermath

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Delaware County voters will head to the polls this November with a clear idea of where they want to see their community, state and nation four years from now. Those of us in the financial industry have our own wish—that politicians make up their minds about how to solve our retirement and health care issues!

Working with clients from across the financial and political spectrum, the main problem is uncertainty: We just don't know how Washington will address the fiscal cliff this

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year or how it will resolve the larger issues of growing federal debt and health care costs. In a stubbornly tough economy, this makes it very difficult for the average family to plan for retirement—and doubly difficult for those already on fixed incomes.

Whatever your political persuasion, now is the time to review not only the issues and the candidates you'll be voting for this November, but the preparedness of your finances for

what 2013 may bring.

Make it count before you vote: take advantage of 2012's opportunities. With the potential lowering of the estate tax ceiling, many more families should look for ways to gift or distribute assets before the end of this year. While a lame-duck Congress may reduce or delay this change, it's difficult to foresee the status quo continuing indefinitely.

Only play the markets if you can afford to lose: Even the potential for a fiscal cliff will continue to spook the markets and restrain long-term growth. The economic uncertainty in China and the Eurozone only exacerbates these issues. With the last years before retirement acting as such a critical part of the financial calculus, it's the wrong time to place faith in high-risk investments.

Re-evaluate real estate choices: While there are signs of recovery, the local housing market is nowhere near its peak, and neither presidential candidate would tell you otherwise. For many families, particularly those nearing retirement, it means re-thinking the ideal place to spend their golden years.

Fact-check pensions and Social Security: We thought that some things would always be there, but the last few years have shown that company pensions are not beyond the reach of bankruptcy lawyers. That our Congress has not yet shown the will needed to stabilize Social Security



Glen Mills-based Daniel A. White & Associates has been helping families secure their retirement—even in uncertain economic times—since 1987. For more information, please call 610-358-8942.

for the long haul. For example, index annuities have become more appealing alternatives as these traditional pillars of retirement have become less reliable. No matter who wins the presidential election or who is elected to the state and local governmental offices, let's control what we can control: It takes planning to retire in a time of uncertainty. Let's not just throw up our hands on this one. The choices may not be ideal, but securing your future by planning smart, low-risk financial moves is a no-brainer we can all agree on.

Based in Glen Mills, Dan White is the founder and president of Daniel A. White & Associates, a financial planning firm specializing in asset protection and transitional and retirement planning. White is a Chartered Financial Consultant and Chartered Life Underwriter.

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