

# LOIS

## LOTS OF INTERESTING STUFF

BY ROBERT D FLACH

VOLUME 2 – NUMBER 1 - JANUARY 2012

**FEEL FREE TO PASS ALONG THIS ISSUE OF LOIS TO  
FRIENDS, FAMILY MEMBERS, CO-WORKERS, WHOMEVER.  
LOIS IS **FREE** TO ALL!**

### DID YOU KNOW?



After reading my article on TCM's mystery offerings a long-time friend suggested that I do a DID YOU KNOW about actress Margaret Rutherford. After doing some research I discovered why.

I remember Margaret Rutherford from the four films loosely based on the Miss Marple novels of Agatha Christie in the early 1960s (she also appeared as Miss Marple in an uncredited cameo in THE ALPHABET MURDERS), as Grand Duchess Gloriana XIII in THE MOUSE ON THE MOON (in the original THE MOUSE THAT ROARED the role was one of several played by Peter Sellers), and for her 1963 best supporting actress Oscar turn as The Duchess of Brighton in THE VIPS.

Some Miss Marple trivia:

\* While it was thought Agatha Christie did not approve of Rutherford's portrayal of Marple, Christie dedicated her novel THE MIRROR CRACK'D "To Margaret Rutherford in admiration".

\* Joan Hickson, who starred as the retired school teacher in the 1984 to 1992 BBC adaptations of the original Miss Marple novels, played a housekeeper in the first film in which Margaret Rutherford played Marple.

\* Before becoming tv sleuth Jessica Fletcher, also a retired school teacher, Angela Lansbury played Miss Marple in a movie version of THE MIRROR CRACK'D. And Helen Hayes assumed the role in two tv movies.

\* Last spring it was reported that The Walt Disney Company had acquired the movie rights to the Miss Marple character, and is planning a contemporary adaptation to be set in the US with Jennifer Garner as Marple.

Rutherford went into acting rather late in life, making her stage debut at the Old Vic in 1925 at age 33. She achieved West End prominence as Miss Prism in THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST at the Globe Theatre in 1939. In 1941 she was the bumbling medium Madame Arcati in Noel Coward's BLITHE SPIRIT at the Piccadilly Theatre, a role which Coward wrote for her. She was also in the film adaptations of THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST and BLITHE SPIRIT.

She was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1961 and was raised to Dame Commander (DBE) in 1967.

What makes Margaret Rutherford a topic for DID YOU KNOW is not her professional career but her personal life and family history.

Her father, William Rutherford Benn, suffered from mental illness. During his honeymoon he had a nervous breakdown and was confined to an asylum. In March of 1883, after being released on holiday, he bludgeoned his father, Congregational minister Julius Benn, to death with a chamber pot. He later tried to kill himself by slashing his throat with a pocketknife. Benn was confined to the Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum. Several years later he was released, reportedly cured of his mental affliction. He changed his name to Rutherford and returned to his wife Ann.

Margaret Rutherford was born in 1892 in Balham, the only child of William Rutherford Benn's second wife Florence. As an infant Margaret and her parents moved to India. She returned to England when she was three to live with an aunt in Wimbledon after her pregnant mother committed suicide by hanging herself from a tree. Her father also returned to England and was confined once more to Broadmoor in 1904.

She married character actor Stringer Davis in 1945 and the couple appeared in many productions together, including all the Marple movies and THE MOUSE ON THE MOON. They were happily together until Rutherford's death. Davis nursed Rutherford through periods of depression, often involving stays in mental hospitals and electric shock treatment. In the 1950s, Rutherford and Davis unofficially adopted the writer Gordon Langley Hall, then in his twenties. Hall later had a sex-change operation and became Dawn Langley Simmons, under which name she wrote a biography of Rutherford in 1983.

Rutherford suffered from Alzheimer's disease at the end of her life and was unable to work. She died on May 22, 1972, at age 80.

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## 2012 STANDARD MILEAGE ALLOWANCE RATES

The Internal Revenue Service issued the 2012 optional standard mileage rates used to deduct the use of your car for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2012, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 55.5 cents per mile for business miles driven
- 23 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

The rate for business miles driven is unchanged from the mid-year adjustment that became effective on July 1, 2011. The medical and moving rate has been reduced by 0.5 cents per mile.

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile by independent contractor Runzheimer International. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs as determined by the same study, but without depreciation.

The rate for charitable driving is set by Congress. The idiots have not increased this amount to reflect reality in years.

The rules for deducting the use of your car for business are discussed in my special report ITEMIZED DEDUCTIONS: A COMPLETE GUIDE TO SCHEDULE A (2011 EDITION).



**ITEMIZED DEDUCTIONS: A COMPLETE GUIDE TO SCHEDULE A: 2011 EDITION**  
**by Robert D Flach, the internet's WANDERNG TAX PRO.**

A comprehensive report that discusses just about everything that is, and is not, deductible on the Schedule A, updated for tax year 2011. It discusses -

**Deducting Medical Expenses, Deducting Taxes,  
Deducting Interest,  
Deducting Contributions,  
Deducting Casualty and Theft Losses, and  
Deducting Miscellaneous Deductions**

The report, which will be sent as a "pdf" email attachment, includes a special section on Keeping Track of Business Expenses, Keeping Track of Gambling Activity, and The Dreaded Alternative Minimum Tax, and 14 forms, schedules and worksheets to help document 2011 deductions.

***SPECIAL OFFER FOR READERS OF LOIS - \$4.95 (\$2.00 discount)!***

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PMB 304 - 72 VAN REIPEN AVENUE  
JERSEY CITY NJ 07306-2806**



**SURFING USA**

[www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov)

The federal government has created a new online tool to help families predict whether they'll qualify for federal financial aid modeled on the official aid application known as the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The forecaster will estimate a family's expected contribution to college costs and determine if it will qualify for the federal Pell grant program, allowing families to plan ahead for the cost of college.

To use the tool parents will need to enter their child's Social Security number plus their own tax and financial information. It is easy to transfer the information from the forecaster to the FAFSA on the Web online application form, which will make the experience of applying for federal student aid a lot easier.

<http://www.ringling.com/TextContent.aspx?id=11738&parentID=348&assetFolderID=352>

Every child born during the past 12 months and living in the continental United States is entitled to his or her first ticket to "The Greatest Show on Earth" absolutely free under the "Baby's First Circus" program!

Go to this page to sign up for a voucher for a free ticket to any Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey performance, anytime, anywhere - there is no expiration date, and a very special personalized baby certificate, printable online!

[www.thrillingdetective.com](http://www.thrillingdetective.com)

This is an extensive site with just about everything you always wanted to know about your favorite private eye or other tough guys or gals, from Tony Aapt to Trixie Zurbo (literally). It has information on conventions and fan events, "word on the street", reviews, bibliographies, links, and lots more.

## THE FRUGAL OFFICE

I am always seeing fancy looking organizers on home improvement shows and in the aisles at STAPLES. It appears that some are rather expensive.

I get all my business and personal organizers absolutely free!

I have found that the various containers that food and household products come in are perfect organizers for holding different sized paper and binder clips, various sizes of sticky pads and smaller lined paper pads, stamps, pens and pencils, erasers, and other office and household supplies.

For one, there is the plastic containers that many "tv dinners" come in (the aluminum ones are no good). And the brown container that holds three crême-filled cupcakes in a package. They provide multiple sections for organizing clips.

The green, blue, and black containers that hold the Swiffer wet pads, or the generic alternative, come in several sizes and have many uses in the kitchen, bedroom, and office.

The round plastic containers that contain potato or macaroni salad from the supermarket or Blimpie are also good for holding small supplies.

I even make use of the metal Altoids containers.

Not only am I saving money, but I am recycling as well!



**Become a regular visitor to my blog THE WANDERING TAX PRO for -  
up-to-the-minute advice, information, resources, and commentary on federal and  
NJ state income taxes and the NJ property tax rebate programs;  
updates on federal and state tax legislation, IRS and NJ Division of Taxation  
rulings and regulations, and federal and NJ tax court decisions;  
insights and observations on operating a tax preparation practice, and  
information on other online tax planning and preparation resources.  
Hope to "see" you soon at <http://wanderingtaxpro.blogspot.com>**

## 200 STATIONS AND NOTHING ON!

My COMCAST cable subscription provides me with access to over 200 broadcast and cable stations. Often I find that, to expand on Bruce Springstein's musical observation, there are 200 stations and nothing on. This is especially true with the proliferation of that steaming pile of excrement we erroneously call "reality tv".

I have turned to Netflix (both online and mailed DVDs) and the internet to find alternatives, just as I have turned to the internet for streaming radio options. In my "wanderings" I have come across TV-Links.com. Here are some of the treasures I have found here -



WONDER WOMAN ([http://www.tv-links.eu/tv-shows/Wonder-Woman\\_26493](http://www.tv-links.eu/tv-shows/Wonder-Woman_26493))

David E Kelley and Warner Bros Television recently shopped a pilot for a new television version of WONDER WOMAN, in which the classic comic book heroine is more of a female Paul Kersey or Bernie Getz. The major networks all turned down the series, with NBC being the most recent.

The pilot starred Adrienne Palicki as Diana Themyscira (the name of the island home of the Amazons in the DC comic), who does not try to hide her identity as WONDER WOMAN. She is the head of successful Themyscira Industries, which markets WONDER WOMAN merchandise to raise money to fund the super-heroine's crime-fighting activities. The pilot hints at her Amazon heritage. She also maintains a Diana Prince secret identity, and there is a Steve Trevor, a Justice Department official who appears in flashbacks and at the end.

I enjoyed watching the pilot, apparently revised and edited from an earlier version. I am sorry it was not picked up.

Kelley is apparently not finished with the character. It appears that former Lois Lane Erica Durand will be appearing on Kelley's series HARRY'S LAW as a woman who's "not all there", and retreats into the persona of WONDER WOMAN to go against domestic abusers.



#### CITY HOMICIDE

([http://www.tv-links.eu/tv-shows/City-homicide\\_11382](http://www.tv-links.eu/tv-shows/City-homicide_11382))

I recently finished watching the entire run of Australian cop show CITY HOMICIDE.

The show, which appeared on Australia's Channel 7 from August 2007 to March 2011, chronicles the cases of a homicide squad in a metropolitan police headquarters in Melbourne, with occasional glimpses of the personal lives of the detectives. Each episode begins with the following statement - "No greater honour will ever be bestowed upon an officer, than when they are entrusted with an investigation into the death of a human being."

The police detectives are dedicated - and have cool accents. And it seems a police procedural is not much different regardless of where it takes place.



#### THE SAINT

If watching classic British tv one would expect giant monsters to be attacking DR WHO and his companion(s). While his contemporaries on THE AVENGERS deal with science fiction, Simon Templar, aka THE SAINT (as played by Roger Moore) is more used to battling thieves, spies and murderers.

I came across an episode of THE SAINT that I had seen over 40 years ago as a teen-ager, and have been looking for ever since, at TV-Links. It is "The House on Dragon's Rock" ([http://www.tv-links.eu/tv-shows/The-Saint\\_29971/season\\_6/episode\\_9](http://www.tv-links.eu/tv-shows/The-Saint_29971/season_6/episode_9)) first shown in November of 1968.

The Saint has been summoned by the local doctor to a Welsh village to look into strange activity. Simon discovers a research laboratory at nearby Dragon's Rock, run by the secretive Dr. Sardon. Sardon's niece Carmen is herself very worried and the Saint joins her to investigate. Carmen is attacked by a large creature whose tracks lead to Sardon's laboratory. He is breeding a giant ant, whose eggs are ready to hatch.

The episode was directed by Roger Moore and written by Harry Junkin, from an original story by The Saint's creator Leslie Charteris. Written as "The Man Who Liked Ants" the story appeared in "The Happy Highwayman", a collection of short stories by Charteris featuring The Saint that was first published in 1939.

The site has tons of television shows, current, recent, and classic, from the US, England, Australia, and New Zealand. FYI, it also has the RETURN OF THE SAINT series. You actually do not watch the episode on the site. You must subscribe to a subscription service, which usually allows for 72 minutes of free viewing, like Videobb, Gorillavid, Modpod, Videozer, etc (I use Videozer).

Another alternative source of entertainment has been my Netflix subscription. I have enjoyed watching DVDs of the first 4 seasons of the BBC legal drama "Judge John Deed" (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/drama/judge>), about the life, loves, and trials of a High Court judge. It stars Martin Shaw as the judge and Jenny Seagrove as a barrister and Deed's love interest (one of them). It also features the wonderful Donald Sinden as Deed's former father-in-law, an Appeals Court judge. The show ran from January 2001 to January 2007.

While some of the legal aspects of the series have been questioned (a real British judge issued a warning to a jury not to let the series influence their view of trials), it is a great show, and a good tv drama. I especially enjoyed the episode "Popular Appeal", which certainly hit the nail on the head when it comes to the steaming pile of excrement known as reality tv (which began in England and Europe before infecting American airwaves).

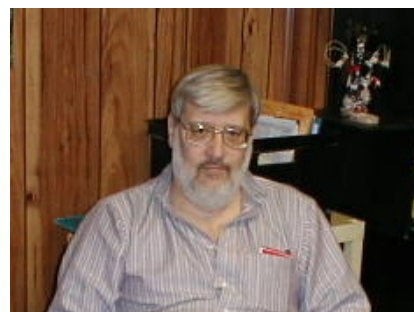
Netflix = [http://movies.netflix.com/WiMovie/Judge\\_John\\_Deed/70157374?trkid=2361637](http://movies.netflix.com/WiMovie/Judge_John_Deed/70157374?trkid=2361637).

Netflix members who like police procedurals should check out the MIDSOMMER MURDERS and INSPECTOR FROST series.

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**RAMBLINGS (OF A RELATIVELY SANE MIND)**

+ There is a line in the musical GYPSY that says if a vaudeville act plays burlesque their career is over.

The same can be said for actors, musicians, singers, athletes (who once evidenced actual talent) who appear on reality tv shows (I am NOT talking about DANCING WITH THE STARS).



Take for example the latest piece of excrement titled CELEBRITY WIFE SWAP. You have got to be really desperate for attention and exposure, and unable to get work elsewhere, to appear on such crap. To be honest, I have never heard of most of the "swappers" anyway.

I dare anyone to name a once legitimate actor, actress, or performer whose career improved, or respect within the industry did not diminish, after appearing on a reality tv nonsense.

When will the great unwashed masses finally get tired of this garbage?

+ Here, for your information, are some of the things I would like to see happen in 2012:

(1) I would like to see Mitt Romney as the Republican candidate for President.

While I do expect BO to win re-election, Romney is the only moderate in the pack, even though he seems to be pandering to the Republican extreme right at times. Just in case there is an upset, I would certainly not want to see any of the other wannabes in the White House. I expect they will all eventually cancel each other out as the primaries progress.

(2) I would like to see the President and the idiots in Congress begin a serious discussion of real tax reform. But we all know that ain't going to happen.

I would at least like to see the idiots in Congress pass the inevitable extender bill (which would include extending the "Bush tax cuts" and the AMT patch) before October.

(3) I would like every single current member of Congress who is running for re-election to be voted out of office.

There is little doubt that the current Congress is by far the worst in the past at least 50 years. Unfortunately, as observed by a British panel member on BBC America's cable tv version of NPR's radio quiz WAIT, WAIT, DON'T TELL ME, we all recognize the idiots in Congress for the idiots they are, but we still vote for them.

(4) I would like to end the tax filing season (April 17th) with no more than 10 GD extensions, half of which I can have in the mail to the client by the end of April.

(5) I would like to ask a morning show host or evening news anchor, who has interviewed presidents, kings, true entertainment giants, and common man heroes, how he/she feels being forced to interview the self-absorbed brain dead no-talent sluts and skanks (who contribute absolutely nothing to society) that populate the steaming pile of excrement we erroneously call "reality tv" (i.e. Kardashians, Jersey Shore, Real World, and Big Brother members, Bachelors and Bachelorettes, to name only a few).

And, along the same lines, I would like to see such hosts and anchors ask the sluts and skanks they are forced to interview how it feels to abandon all self-respect and make total fools of themselves on television.

How about you?



### **STARTING THE YEAR OFF RIGHT**

Now is the time to start work on your 2012 Form 1040. You read that right - I said your 2012 Form 1040!

Tax planning is a year-round process that begins on January 1st and continues all year long. To make sure that you will pay the absolute least amount of federal and state income tax possible for 2012 it is important to start the year off right.

Begin the year right by setting up a good system for maintaining tax records and receipts. You MUST keep good, contemporaneous records of all your income and deductions in the manner prescribed by the IRS and the Tax Code.

Some deductions require special recordkeeping or additional information, such as business meals and entertainment, business use of "listed property" (automobiles and computers), charitable donations, and gambling losses.

Here is what you should do -

Go out and buy an accordion file folder. Label the first pocket "2012 Income Tax Returns". This is where you will put the copies of your completed 2012 federal and state income tax returns.

Label the second pocket "Information Returns". As you begin to receive Form W-2s, 1099s, 1098s, K-1s, etc next January and February put them in this pocket.

The remaining pockets should be labeled in the various types of deductible expenses - such as

- Education Expenses
- Retirement Plan Contributions
- Medical Expenses
- Taxes
- Interest Expense
- Contributions
- Moving Expenses

- Employee Business Expenses
- Investment Expenses
- Gambling Losses
- Child Care Expenses

During the year put acknowledgements, receipts, statements and other forms of documentation for deductible expenses in the applicable pocket. These items will be the back-up for entries you make on the various forms, schedules and worksheets in this package.

I also recommend that you get a 2012 pocket date book to use as a "travel diary" to record deductible mileage and other expenses for which you do not get a receipt (i.e. parking meters, tolls, pay phone calls, tips).

If you drive to a doctor's appointment on January 5th, write on the space in the date book, for example, "Dr. Mehta, Jersey City, 6 miles, \$1.80 parking".

If you drive to the Board meeting of a charity on March 21st, write in the date book, for example, "Art Center Board Meeting, Summit, 24 miles".

If you are looking for a job and have an appointment with a potential employer on June 2nd, write in the date book, for example, "Schering Plough job interview, Madison, 39 miles, 70 cents Parkway tolls".

You get the idea.

At the end of the week, or the end of the month, sit down with your date book and transfer the information to the appropriate Mileage Log Worksheet from my Schedule A Guide.

Keep records of deductible expenses during the year as if you are going to be audited by the IRS. If you are unfortunate enough to be one of the relatively few returns chosen for an audit by Uncle Sam, or your state, you will be well prepared. If you are not audited you will at least know that you took full advantage of all the deductions to which you are entitled - and paid the absolute least amount of federal, state and local income tax possible!

**CLASSIFIED ADS**

LOIS will print your classified text ad (up to 75 words with online links) for **10 issues** for only \$25.00!

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Send your check or money order for \$25.00 payable to "Taxpro Services Corporation", along with your 100-word description and web "url", to "LOIS SPONSOR" at the address listed above for Classified Ads. As with Classified Ads, I reserve the right to reject your request.

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### **ALWAYS LEAVE 'EM LAUGHING**

Ever since I was a child I have always had this fear. So I decided to see a psychiatrist.

"I've got a problem. Every time I go to bed I think there's somebody under it. I'm scared. I think I'm going crazy," I told him.

"Just put yourself in my hands for one year," said the psychiatrist. "Come talk to me three times a week and we should be able to get rid of your fear"

"How much do you charge?" I asked.

"Eighty dollars per visit," replied the doctor.

"I'll sleep on it," I said.

Six months later the psychiatrist met me on the street.

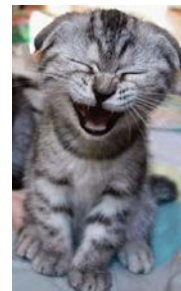
"Why didn't you come to see me about those fears you were having?" he asked.

"Well, eighty bucks a visit three times a week for a year is an awful lot of money! A bartender cured me for \$10. I was so happy to have saved all that money that I went and bought me a new car!"

"Is that so?" With a bit of an attitude he said, "And how, may I ask, did a bartender cure you?"

"He told me to cut the legs off the bed. Ain't nobody under there now!"

The moral of the story - Forget about psychiatry. Go have a drink and talk to your bartender!



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Do you have a question about anything in this, or any other issue, of LOIS? Is there a topic or subject you would like me to write about? Is there a tax question you would like answered? Send me an email, with LOIS COMMENT in the subject line, at [rdftaxpro@yahoo.com](mailto:rdftaxpro@yahoo.com).

If you have a question about any of the tax topics discussed above I suggest you consult your tax professional.

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