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# IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,	No. 3:10-CV-08142 JWS
Plaintiff,	
vs.  JOSEPH J. LIPARI, EILEEN H. LIPARI and EXETER TRINITY PROPERTIES, L.L.C.,	CROSS-MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT BY DEFENDANT EXETER TRINITY PROPERTIES, L.L.C.
Defendants.	Honorable John W. Sedwick

The Defendant Exeter Trinity Properties, L.L.C., through counsel undersigned, respectfully moves for summary judgment under Rule 56, FRCP, on the issue of fraudulent conveyance and the allegation that this Defendant was the nominee/alter ego of Defendants Lipari. This Motion is supported by the Response of Defendant Exeter Trinity Properties, LLC, to United States' Statement of Material Facts, by the Statement of Facts In Support of Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment by Defendant Exeter Trinity Properties, LLC, and by the Memorandum in Support of: Response to United States' Motion for Summary Judgment and Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment by Defendant Exeter Trinity Properties, L.L.C., all of which are filed concurrently herewith.

Dated: December 30, 2011.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

/s/ John Friedeman

John Friedeman 5103 E. Thomas Road Phoenix, AZ 85018 Attorney for Exeter Trinity Properties, LLC

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that	t on this December 30, 20	11, I electronically	filed the
foregoing with the Clerk of Cour	t and served the following	g attorney of record	l using the
CM/ECF system:		•	· ·

Charles M. Duffy
P.O. Box 683
Ben Franklin Station
Washington, D.C. 20044-0683

I further certify that on the same day I mailed by U.S. Postal Service the foregoing to the following party who is not represented by counsel.

Joseph Lipari
156 Johnson Hill Drive
Waynesville, NC 28786
Defendant, pro per

### /s/ John Friedeman

## John Friedeman

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JOHN FRIEDEMAN, P.C. (#3607) 5103 E. Thomas Road Phoenix, Arizona 85018 (602) 840-0314 e-mail: john@friedeman.com Attorney for Exeter Trinity Properties

## IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, No. 3:10-CV-08142 JWS Plaintiff, MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF: VS. RESPONSE TO UNITED STATES' MOTION JOSEPH J. LIPARI, EILEEN H. LIPARI and FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT EXETER TRINITY PROPERTIES, L.L.C., and CROSS-MOTION FOR SUMMARY Defendants. JUDGMENT BY DEFENDANT EXETER TRINITY PROPERTIES, L.L.C. Honorable John W. Sedwick

## **Introductory Matters.**

The government has presented only two issues. First, is that the government seeks judgment on the IRS assessments against the Liparis. Because that issue affects only the Liparis, and they have not presented a defense, judgment for the government is a foregone conclusion.

The second issue is whether the government may foreclose on the property in Cottonwood, formerly owned by the Liparis. The government makes two arguments: that the 1992 conveyance of that property by the Liparis was fraudulent and that Exeter Trinity Properties, LLC [hereinafter "Exeter"], is the nominee or alter ego of the Liparis.

"In reviewing a summary judgment, we must view the evidence in the light most favorable to the non-moving party and draw all possible inferences in its favor." Del Madera Properties v. Rhodes and Gardner, 820 F.2d 973 (9th Cir. 1987) The claim of fraud in the instant case centers on the issue of intent, a subjective element that can be difficult to prove.

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The government has implicitly recognized its burden of proof regarding intent, because its Motion includes numerous references to the character of third parties who interacted with the Liparis. It is respectfully submitted that those references do not constitute evidence of intent by the Liparis. Even if a person is motivated to avoid paying taxes, that is not equivalent to proving intent to defraud the IRS. See U.S. v. Reyes, 10-10323 (9th Cir. 10-13-2011), which noted the distinction between motive and intent.

The validity of the transfer of the Cottonwood property to the Ponderosa Trust is clearly shown by the Liparis' acquiescence when presented with the notice of eviction in 2007. They would not have agreed to move from their residence of 18 years, which was free and clear, if they had any right or interest in the property.

## **Brief Review of the Facts.**

- 1. The Liparis purchased the Cottonwood property in 1989.
- 2. The Liparis lived in the house from 1989 to November 2007. During that time Joseph Lipari's chiropractic practice and Eileen Lipari's consulting business were located in the house.
  - 3. On May 14, 1992, the Liparis created the Ponderosa Trust.
- 4. On May 14, 1992, the Liparis signed a deed transferring the Cottonwood house into the Ponderosa Trust. This was done for estate planning purposes and the Liparis were permitted to reside in the house for the next 15 years rent free.
- 5. The Liparis timely filed their return for 1993 and later contested their tax obligations for that year in Tax Court.
- 6. In all of their financial dealings, the Liparis were guided by, and placed blind faith in, Jimmy Chisum. He controlled all of their finances. He directed them to put their house in trust, he created entities through which they operated their businesses and he handled their tax planning and preparation of returns. Their failure to file tax returns for 1994 - 2006 was the result of following his advice.

	7. At the	direction of Mr.	Chisum, the	he Cottonwo	od property	was transfer	red from
the Pondero	sa Trust to	Exeter Trinity	Properties.	LLC, on Ser	otember 1, 1	999.	

- 8. In 2001 the IRS issued the first Assessment against the Liparis for nonpayment of their 1993 taxes.
- 9. In November 2007 the Liparis were "evicted" for failure to pay the property taxes and maintenance for the Cottonwood property. They left without dispute.

## Argument.

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Exeter may prevail if it demonstrates the weakness in the position of the government. As noted in *Comerica Bank v. Mahmoodi*, 1 CA-CV 08-0771, 229 P.2d 1031, ¶ 18 (Ariz.App. 5-4-2010) "a motion for summary judgment involves an assertion by a defendant that the plaintiff has insufficient evidence to meet its burden of production at trial. The well-accepted logic of the argument is that because plaintiff cannot establish a prima facie case worthy of submission to a jury, defendant is necessarily entitled to judgment as a matter of law."

In their depositions each of the Liparis were asked why they agreed to put their house into the Ponderosa Trust. Dr. Lipari considered it necessary to protect the property from his daughter, whom he considered to be vicious. Presumably, he did not want her to inherit it.

Mrs. Lipari stated that she put the property into the Ponderosa Trust so that it would go to their designated charity after their deaths. In that regard she was relying on Mr. Chisum's promise to give the house to charity. (Dr. Lipari joined in this reason when he ratified his wife's statements during her deposition.) Because her comments during her deposition are compelling, they have been quoted at length and are attached as Exhibit "A".

The government claims that a lack of consideration is a "badge of fraud". However, most trusts are created for estate planning purposes and the question of consideration never arises. In this instance the Liparis had genuine estate planning goals

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which were	to be satisfied by	placing the p	roperty in trust.	Accordingly,	consideration	is not
an issue.						

What makes this case different, and what gives the appearance of fraud, was the Liparis' blind faith in Mr. Chisum. Both of the Liparis were adamant in their unreserved trust in him. For example, when asked if he and his wife would do what Mr. Chisum requested, Dr. Lipari stated: "Yes, and to the letter. I mean to the ultimate - to - like God was in the deal with us." (See Joseph Lipari depo at 12: 17-19) Mrs. Lipari reaffirmed her trust in Mr. Chisum many times during her deposition, such as when asked if she would do whatever he told her to do and she responded "Absolutely." (See Eileen Lipari depo at 12:13)

An example of their trust in Mr. Chisum was their expectation they could continue to live in their house, even though the trust agreement made their use of the home discretionary with the trustee.

A primary tenant of fraud is intent, and the government has presented no evidence of a fraudulent intent by the Liparis. They may have been naive, gullible or unaware, but they were not dishonest when they put their house in trust.

Because they ran their businesses out of the Cottonwood property, the Liparis took deductions for expenses related to the house. The government now argues that those deductions show the Liparis believed they owned the house, notwithstanding the deed to the Ponderosa Trust. However, a review of the depositions of the Liparis and their tax returns show they did not understand the law.

First, it should be noted that the Liparis' income tax returns for 1994 - 2007 were all filed in 2007. It is respectfully submitted that documents created in 2007 have little probative value on the issue of fraudulent intent in 1992, when the deed was signed.

The tax returns for 1994 - 2007 all reflect the income the Liparis received from their business activities. The return for 1994 includes a Schedule C for Dr. Lipari's chiropractic practice and each return for 1995 and thereafter includes two Schedules C, one

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for the business of Dr. Lipari and one for Mrs. Lipari's business. The government argues that these deductions show the Liparis believed they still owned the house. However, including expenses in Schedule C merely shows that the Liparis believed their business expenses could be properly deducted, which seems to be a reasonable conclusion, since the income they were reporting was used to pay those expenses. Those deductions do not equate to a claim of ownership.

In every year for 1994 and thereafter the Liparis included Form 8829 in their returns, to deduct expenses for business use of their home. The government again claims that this is evidence that the Liparis believed they owned the house. However, Form 8829 is very general when it references "each home you used during the year". It puts no other limitations on homes that may be used for this deduction. It was reasonable for the Liparis to deduct expenses relating to their home which was used by their businesses, regardless of whether they owned, rented or lived there rent free. Those deductions do not equate to a claim of ownership.

The government may be objecting to the deductions because the expenses deducted were actually paid by the business entities (DD Trust and Morningstar Int'l, PLLC) created for the Liparis by Mr. Chisum. However, from the perspective of the Liparis, they could claim the deductions because they were funding those business entities. In their view it was actually their money being spent. This evidences merely an error in tax law, not a claim of ownership in the Cottonwood property.

Form 8829 also permits taking depreciation, which does equate to a claim of ownership. However, the Liparis were inconsistent in taking depreciation. For years 1994 -1998 they did not claim depreciation, then for years 1999 -2002 they did claim depreciation, but for 2003 - 2007 they again did not claim depreciation. What does this tell us? It is respectfully submitted that this inconsistency merely shows the Liparis did not understand what they were doing. If any factual conclusion can be made, it is that they knew they did not (602) 840-0314

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own the home and should not depreciate it - otherwise, they would have taken depreciation from the beginning, and would not have abandoned the deduction once they started taking it.

Once again, it must be emphasized that preparation of returns in 2007 says little about a person's intent 15 years earlier in 1992. Any errors in their tax returns are merely evidence of ignorance, not fraud. If there has been any fraud, it was in taking depreciation for four years.

The government argues that the Liparis' continued use of the property, after they deeded it to the Ponderosa Trust, and without paying rent, is a badge of fraud. However, the Court is asked to take judicial notice of the fact that there is nothing unusual about trustors continuing to live in a house they have put into trust. It is a commonplace occurrence and it was clearly intended and anticipated by the Liparis when they signed the deed (as demonstrated by Section H in the trust agreement). The government argues both that the Liparis did not receive consideration for the house and that they lived there without paying rent. It is submitted that the government is trying to argue both sides of the same coin, since not paying rent is consideration. The truth is that part of the consideration for putting the house in trust was not having to pay rent, and that was how the Liparis viewed it.

Section H of the Ponderosa Trust (Exhibit 1 to Exeter's Statement of Facts) permitted the Liparis to continue to live in the house, so long as they maintained and protected it. Although their right to occupy the house was discretionary with the trustee, the fact is that they lived in the house so long as they could maintain it, until November 2007.

A trustor's continued use of the property is especially common in situations involving estate planning. Although the conduct of third parties may prevent realization of the Liparis' estate plans, their depositions, which are uncontradicted, demonstrate that the transfer to the trust was, in fact, part of their estate plans.

The timing of events shows that the Liparis did not intend to defraud the IRS. They signed the deed and created the Ponderosa Trust on May 14, 1992. For 1993 they

timely filed their taxes and the government has alleged no impropriety in connection with that return. That filing, which would have occurred about two years after signing the deed, is inconsistent with the government's theory. If the Liparis were intending to defraud the IRS, they should have stopped filing returns in 1993. The Liparis did fail to file their 1994 return, which was due April 15, 1995. However, there is a gap of almost three years between putting the Cottonwood property in trust and failing to file the 1994 return. There is no evidence to suggest the Liparis engaged in such long range planning to commit fraud.

In addition, the key fact in this case is that the Liparis did actually deed away their home. After the home was put in trust their rights were limited to their benefits under Section H of the trust - the trustee, in her sole discretion, could let them stay there if they maintained it and protected it. Beyond that they never treated it as their property, with the possible exception of four tax returns filed in 2007.

The fact that the Liparis believed they no longer owned the home (i.e., that the deed was not a "sham" transaction) is proven by nine separate statements to that effect which are listed in Exeter's Statement of Facts, ¶ 7. However, nothing could be more persuasive on this point than the fact that in 2007 the Liparis, when faced with Exeter's demand that they vacate, concurred and simply moved away. If they believed they had ANY interest in the house, they would have objected, or asked for more time, or consulted an attorney or gone to court, or done something to prevent Exeter from forcing them out. The truth is that they did none of those things, for the reason that they believed they had no interest in the house.

There cannot be a fraudulent transfer when the transfer was genuine and in good faith. The issue is not whether a reasonable man believes the Liparis made a good decision when they put the house in trust. The issue is whether it was a "sham" transaction, and the evidence is overwhelming that the Liparis understood they were putting the Cottonwood property in an irrevocable trust and that they no longer had any beneficial interest in it, other than the option to reside in it with the Ponderosa trustee's consent.

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During their depositions the government suggested to each of the Liparis that the proceeds from a sale of the house should be used for their benefit. However, neither of them expects any benefit from a sale, although they would have liked to have their tax obligations reduced. Once again, the evidence clearly shows that the Liparis believed the transfer into trust was irrevocable and was a legitimate transaction.

The government has repeatedly argued that the Liparis' advisors, such as Mr. Chisum, his wife Donna Chisum and Mr. Wilde, may have given them bad advice and perhaps they did not have the Liparis' best interests at heart. Certainly, much of the advice the Liparis received, such as how to prepare and file their tax returns and the suggestion that the house be put in trust, did not work out for them. In fact, the Liparis now regret their association with Mr. Chisum - Mrs. Lipari testified that she now believes Mr. Chisum's intention had been to take away her home. However, following bad advice, without an intent to defraud, is not fraud.

To some extent the government may be arguing guilt by association, suggesting that if the Liparis were acquainted with tax evaders, then they must have intended to defraud the IRS. However, it is self-evident that the Liparis' intent cannot be measured by the conduct or beliefs of third parties. It is equally clear that the government's characterizations of third parties, and the derogatory comments about them, are based largely on conjecture and are not proof. Even comments from judges in other litigation (in which these defendants were not parties) are not proper evidence in this litigation.

The government has suggested that the Liparis may have claims against those that have advised them and perhaps a claim for ownership of the house against Exeter. Those possibilities need not be addressed, because the government is not seeking relief on any grounds except the issue of whether the Liparis' transfer of the Cottonwood property to the Ponderosa Trust was fraudulent. The question of whether the Liparis have claims against

1	third parties is beyond the scope of this litigation. However, it is likely that any such claims,
2	if they ever existed, are now lost through waiver or laches.
3	A.R.S. § 44-1004(A)(1) requires "actual intent" to defraud. The evidence shows
4	that the IRS was not even a factor in the decision to transfer the Cottonwood property into
5	trust. The Liparis were following the advice of their financial advisor with the intention of
6	promoting their estate plan. Liparis did not intend to defraud the IRS.
7	A.R.S. § 44-1004(B) identifies the primary factors, or badges, of fraud. None of
8	them are applicable:
9	The transfer was to a trustee, not to an insider.
10	The Liparis did not retain control of the house. They did retain possession, but it was
11	discretionary with the trustee, and the eviction proved that the trustee's discretion was controlling.
12	The transfer was recorded and was not concealed.
13	The Liparis had not been sued or threatened prior to the transfer. In fact, there is no evidence that the Liparis owed any back taxes when they made the transfer.
14	The transfer was significant, but their ongoing businesses had much more value.
15	The Liparis did not abscond.
16	The Liparis concealed nothing.
17	The value of the transfer included the free rent the Liparis enjoyed for 15 years plus
18	the subjective value of their estate plan. The fact that their estate plan might not succeed was not known when they made the transfer.
19 20	The Liparis were not insolvent at the time of the transfer, nor were they rendered insolvent by the transfer.
21	The transfer did not occur before or after a substantial debt was incurred.
22	The transfer did not involve a lienor.
23	Accordingly, the transfer was not fraudulent under A.R.S. § 44-1004(A)(1). See also Dr.
24	Lipari's discussion of these factors in his Affidavit, Exhibit 10 to Exeter's Statement of Facts
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It should be noted that the government is not alleging that the transfer of the Cottonwood property caused the Liparis to become insolvent or that they would no longer have a significant income. Thus, A.R.S. § 44-1004(A)(2)(a) is not relevant.

The only remaining argument available to the government is under A.R.S. § 44-1004(A)(2)(b), which the government has referred to as constructive fraud. However, in Arizona the statute requires that: a transfer be made without receiving reasonably equivalent value and the debtor "[i]ntended to incur, or believed or reasonably should have believed that he would incur, debts beyond his ability to pay as they became due." The government's claim fails on two accounts:

- 1. The Liparis did receive equivalent value because they enjoyed free rent for 15 years. Also, they were able to create an estate plan, which itself had subjective value. Of course, in 1992 they did not know that the estate plan might fail.
- 2. The Liparis' tax returns for 1994, and thereafter, show that they earned more than sufficient funds to pay their debts as they came due, including their income taxes. Because they had the "ability" to pay their taxes, subsection (A)(2)(b) does not apply.

The government's claim for fraudulent transfer is founded on A.R.S. § 44-1004. Because it cannot be proven that the Liparis had the requisite intent, the government's Motion for Summary Judgment must be denied and the Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment by Defendant Exeter must be granted.

The government has also alleged that Exeter is the nominee or alter ego of the Liparis. The government acknowledges that its argument is "muddied" by the eviction. It is respectfully submitted that the eviction proves that Exeter was not holding the property for the benefit of the Liparis. It has now been four years since the eviction occurred and the Liparis have not received anything from Exeter and the Liparis have had to find replacement housing. In addition, the Liparis have made no claims against Exeter. There is no reasonable basis for

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arguing alter ego - the Liparis could not have been evicted had they not deeded away their interest in 1992.

To employ a "reverse piercing" theory, as the government seeks to do here, "[t]he factors relevant to a finding of alter ego include, but are not limited to: 1. Whether the individual is in a position of control or authority over the entity. . . . " Towe Antique Ford Foundation v. I.R.S., 999 F.2d 1387, 1391 (9th Cir. 1993). However, there is no evidence the Liparis controlled either the Ponderosa Trust or Exeter - the evidence is that they had no control. Therefore, the alter ego theory must fail.

The government has supported its position by the claim that a continuing interest in the house is shown by the Liparis having been allowed to use the house and their tax deductions. However, it has already been demonstrated that the trustee of the Ponderosa Trust (and later the manager of Exeter) had the sole discretion to allow the Liparis to use the house, and then only if the Liparis maintained it and protected it. The force of that clause (see Section H in the Ponderosa trust agreement) was proven by the eviction.

Regarding the tax deductions, it is submitted that tax returns filed 15 years after the fact are scant evidence of the Liparis' intent when the transfer was made. That in 2007 the Liparis might have been desperate to reduce their tax obligations shows nothing about their intent when they signed the deed. The deductions for business expenses seem logical, and in her deposition Mrs. Lipari clearly believed her right to claim them. As to the depreciation of the house, the inconsistency (claiming the deduction in only four out of fourteen years) shows that the decision to take depreciation was based on either a misunderstanding of tax law, or possibly an intention to reduce taxes by taking an unjustified deduction. The tax returns filed in 2007 have nothing to do with proving an interest in the property. In addition, there is no evidence that the Liparis claimed any improper deductions in their timely filed 1993 return.

#### Conclusion.

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It is submitted that for purposes of establishing intent one must look to the conduct of the Liparis in the time-frame of the transfer - May 14, 1992. The evidence shows:

- 1. The Liparis relinquished all interest and control in the Cottonwood property, notwithstanding that the trustee, in her sole discretion, permitted them to continue to live there.
- 2. The Liparis intended that the property pass to their chosen charity and not to Dr. Lipari's daughter.
  - 3. Rather than defy the IRS, the Liparis filed their 1993 income taxes.

The government's claim is based entirely on conduct that occurred years after the deed to the Ponderosa Trust was signed. All available evidence indicates that when they transferred the Cottonwood property the Liparis had no intent to defraud the IRS.

The government also presented a nominee/alter ego argument. Because the transfer of the Cottonwood property was not fraudulent, the nominee argument is not relevant. However, the nominee theory would fail because the Liparis had no control over the owner of the Cottonwood property.

The government has also discussed possible legal consequences of the actions of Mr. Chisum and Mr. O'Neil. However, their conduct is not relevant to a determination of whether the Liparis committed fraud. Therefore, those comments need not be addressed.

For the foregoing reasons, it is requested that the Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment by the Defendant Exeter Trinity Properties, LLC, be granted and that the government's Motion for Summary Judgment be denied.

1	Dated: December 29, 2011.
2	RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
3	/s/ John Friedeman
4	John Friedeman 5103 E. Thomas Road
5	Phoenix, AZ 85018 Attorney for Exeter Trinity Properties, LLC
6	CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
7	I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this December 30, 2011, I electronically filed the
8	foregoing with the Clerk of Court and served the following attorney of record using the CM/ECF system:
9	Charles M. Duffy
10	P.O. Box 683 Ben Franklin Station
11	Washington, D.C. 20044-0683
12	I further certify that on the same day I mailed by U.S. Postal Service the foregoing to the following party who is not represented by counsel.
13	
14	Joseph Lipari 156 Johnson Hill Drive
15	Waynesville, NC 28786 Defendant, pro per
16	/s/ John Friedeman
17	John Friedeman
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1	U.S. v. Lipar	ri and Exeter Trinity Properties 7-08142 JWS
2	140. 3.10-2 4	
3		EXHIBIT "A" to Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment by Exeter
4		Portion of Deposition of Eileen Lipari
5	Page 52	So begins lly you transformed the Cottonwood
6	10 Q 11	So basically you transferred the Cottonwood residence, and the mortgage, a lot of it was
7	12 13 14	already paid down by now. You probably had equity of like 90,000, hundred thousand
8	15 16 A	dollars in the house, something like that, and you didn't get anything in return? I got the ten dollars and the certificates
9	17 18	that showed that it was put into a trust, because it was going to go to charity. So I
10	19 20	assumed that those certificates were the thing that the charity would use to get the
11	21 22 Q	ownership. I don't really know. What about the equity, the 90,000 or how much
12	23 24	equity you had in the house at this time; and I'm talking about Exhibit 13? At the time,
13	25 Page 53	the date of this warranty deed, didn't you
14	1	have any qualms about – you know, did you have any qualms about giving away \$90,000 of
15	$\begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}$ A	equity? I didn't think about it. I thought we were
16	2 3 4 A 5 6 7	giving it to charity. I thought that after our death, this would create a scholarship
17	7 8	fund, and I was okay with that because we weren't giving it to anyone else.
18	9 Q 10	So Jimmy Chisum said he was going to give it to charity?
19	11 A	Yes, he promised us he would. Which charity?
20	12 Q 13 A 14	Originally it was supposed to be a scholarship fund for people who studied chiropractic at
21	15 16	Logan College of Chiropractic in Missouri. That's where my husband graduated from
22	17 18	college, from chiropractic college, was Logan. And he wanted to create a scholarship fund for
23	19 20	students that would study the Palmer technique of chiropractic. And Mr. Chisum said if we
24	21 22	created a letter of wishes, that upon our death that he would see to it that that
25	23	scholarship fund was created and run. And did you believe him?
26	24 Q 25 A	Yes. I did.

Page	e 54	
1	Q	Did you and your husband talk about it?
2	À	Yes, we did.
3	Q	What was the content of your conversations
4 5	_	with your husband?
5	A	Well, we just talked about the fact that we
6		were going to do this. And we were in
7		agreement as to what was going to happen to
8		the property after our death. So we sat there
9		and said well, what kind of charity can we
10		give it to. So we started looking at
11		alternatives and possibilities, and that's
12		when we came up with – that was the
13		discussion over what it was finally going to
14		be.