

## Don't Get Ripped Off When Getting Your Taxes Done

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and MF Advisers, Inc.



Every year we talk to some people (either current clients or people we know who aren't clients yet) who tell us that they were swindled out of several hundred dollars (usually for uncomplicated personal income tax returns) by one of the big retail "professional" tax preparation companies (you know who we're talking about). This is ridiculous and must stop! Unless you have a lot of investments, run a business, have rental properties, have a lot of itemized deductions, have a bunch of unreimbursed expenses at multiple jobs, and/or have multiple W-2s/1099s, your relatively standard income tax returns shouldn't be costing you a small fortune.

The so-called tax preparation "experts" who charge you ludicrous rates may have just been trained to prepare taxes in the month before tax season started...how's that for experience?! Perhaps they're stuck in the dinosaur age, prepping tax returns by hand and charging out the wazoo to do it instead of embracing technology to help them become more efficient with their time. To us, time equals money. If we can save time – and get more work done for our clients by being efficient – then we don't need to charge exorbitant prices when doing tax prep work for people and companies. It's just that simple. After all, fair pricing based upon how long it takes to do the work is best for everyone.

Here's the tax preparation rules to follow for this time of the year (a must for those of you who are looking to make tax season less of a pain going forward):

1. If you're not the do-it-yourself type, hire an experienced, professional tax preparer to handle your returns. Stay away from the generic chain tax prep services – they tend to significantly overcharge for preparing returns ... as in charging by the form (which is a rip-off) instead of hourly (much fairer).
2. Make sure you have all needed tax documents. Sounds simple enough but being organized about collecting your tax documents (where did I put that W-2?) makes life much easier for your preparer.
3. Your preparer should ask you lots of questions, especially if it is the first time he/she is preparing your returns. Even after the first year, things can change with your personal/financial situations over time, and any qualified tax preparer will know to ask the important questions (law changes, new possible deductions / credits, etc.) so you don't leave anything on the table.
4. If you work with a CPA, he/she should offer advice for your specific tax situation during and after preparing your returns. This can be very important for not only the current year (can a traditional IRA contribution lower your tax bill?) but the following year as well (should you contribute more to your 401(k) at work?). Offering suggestions that can improve the amount you get back (or help you pay less than you have in the past) can be very valuable for some.
5. Your tax professional should be willing to speak with any other professionals you have hired. There are a lot of reasons why insurance professionals, professional financial advisors, attorneys, etc. should speak to your tax preparer (with your permission of course) to coordinate on issues that may be important and need to be looked at from different perspectives. This way you get the input of trusted professionals on issues that have overlap into several areas of your personal financial / tax situation.

Find an experienced local tax preparer who works for a professional tax preparation firm, earns his/her money from hourly/job fees (NOT charging by the form), believes in helping clients improve their tax/financial situations, and has the heart & demeanor of a teacher, NOT a salesperson, and chances are you've found the right tax preparer to help you with your tax situation. For more information, please visit <http://www.mftax.com>, email [marty@mftax.com](mailto:marty@mftax.com), or call (570) 760-6524.

About MF Tax & Accounting, Inc., MF Tax & Accounting, Inc. is a full-service tax preparation & accounting firm based in PA & FL specializing in tax preparation, tax planning & advice, and accounting services. With 10+ years of licensed experience, over 10 years of professional education, and an unwavering commitment to helping you, MF Tax & Accounting, Inc. is the tax & accounting firm to best serve YOU.

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## Back Mountain Memorial Library Wall Art for April



RJ Tomascik will be the Back Mountain Memorial Library Art Wall artist for the month of April. Tomascik has painted since he was in kindergarten and has been interested in historical and landscape subjects nearly just as long. He is a graduate of Misericordia University with a degree in history and secondary education and holds a masters degree from Wilkes University in special education. Tomascik currently teaches in the Wyoming Valley West school district, creates and markets paintings and collectors prints of American Civil War and Revolutionary War subjects as well as paintings of National Parks. Part of his exhibit will be watercolors of Mount Rushmore, Civil War reenactors, and Northern Cascades National Park. Oil paintings will include Acadia National Park and Antietam National Battlefield. RJ is also a freelance sketch artist with Topps trading cards and Upper Deck Entertainment. His exhibit will continue through the end of the month of April. All are welcome to stop in and check it out!

## Back Mountain Railroad Club plans events

Save the date - Saturday, June 11 from 10am to 3pm., Free Open House, Train and Craft Show

Great time for the Father's Day gift shopper. There is no charge for vendors but they must bring own table. Call Don at 570-704-7309 or Patti at 570-884-2330 for information. Chances are available for our Father's Day drawing of twelve model train prizes. First prize MTH Premier Big Boy #4012, 2nd prize Lionel Mohawk, 3rd prize RailKing UP FEF, 4th prize RailKing SP GS4, 5th prize HO SP War Baby, 6th prize HO John Bull, 7th to 12th prize O scale freight cars. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20.

The club meets the 2nd Monday of the month at the club house at 6:30PM for a fun session which includes running trains, open train store, railroad/trains fellowship and much more. Business meetings are held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Yalick Rd., Dallas on the 4th Monday of the month at 6:30PM. All are invited to attend any of the meetings and see what is going on at the club. New members are always welcome. Model builder enthusiasts and railroad hobbyist are always needed and welcome. For membership call Ron at 570-855-2573.

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