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ADVISOR SPOTLIGHT:  
Chris Stein

ON THE HUNT WITH  
JIM AND RYAN



*The advisor profile in this issue of the KMG newsletter is Chris Stein.*

## Chris Stein

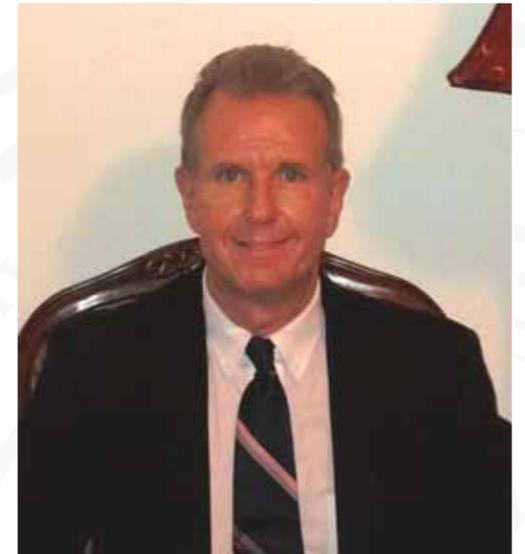
Chris Stein knows the importance of having a good financial advisor in life. He saw firsthand how his mother struggled financially after being widowed at a young age.

“After seeing what my mom went through, I thought it would be nice to be able to help other people going through similar situations,” he said. “And I’ve always had an interest in numbers.”

Chris became an accountant, but after a few years in the field decided to branch out and go into business on his own. In 1986, he joined McCarthy & Associates as a financial advisor. For the past 28 years, Chris has been providing comprehensive investment and financial consulting services to individuals, families and businesses.

“It took awhile to get my business off the ground,” he said. “Cold calling was big back then – advisors were talking people into specific investments. I didn’t feel comfortable advising people on money issues unless I knew their goals and concerns, so I used a consulting approach rather than pushing products. In my second year, we experienced the stock crash and that was another challenge. But we weathered the storm and the business has grown steadily over the years.”

Since 1995, Chris has been a wealth manager and registered securities principal with LPL Financial in Skokie, IL.



Last year, he opened Christopher R. Stein Comprehensive Wealth Management, Inc., and moved his practice into the same building shared by KMG Wealth Management, another LPL Financial partner.

While separate practices, Chris appreciates the work being done by the KMG team. “It’s been great to get to know the team at KMG,” he said. “We have a very good relationship, and I hope my move here will generate opportunities that help make both of our businesses more efficient.”

When Chris, who has one assistant, meets with a prospective client, he uses a three-prong approach. First, he holds an information-gathering session, where he collects data on the client’s needs and provides information about his practice. “The more I know about them, the better job I’ll do in advising them,” he said.

Secondly, he prepares a financial analysis to help address his clients’ goals and concerns. Finally, he begins implementing the program. Chris prefers a slow-growth business model, working with individual referrals as opposed to marketing to a mass audience.

*“If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else.”*

– Yogi Berra



Chris Stein (cont.)

"Devoting my time to a smaller group of individuals works best for both me and my clients," he said.

A majority of Chris's clients are local, with a few exceptions. "My niche is the mass affluent," he said. "These are mostly baby boomers with assets ranging from \$250,000 to \$3 million, who have had long and successful careers."

"I'm a very systematic and organized person," he added. "The key to success is putting systems in place, following up and being diligent. We can service our clients in the methodology that is most comfortable for them. That makes the working relationship much more pleasant. It has to be a good fit for both the client and me. It's like being part of the same team."

When looking for a financial advisor, Chris offers some simple tips. First, visit the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) website [www.finra.org](http://www.finra.org) and use the BrokerCheck feature to check the compliance history of advisors.

Make sure to interview any advisors you're considering working with, and develop a list of questions regarding matters that are important to you. Ask about his or her process, and if they are independent or if they have proprietary products to offer. Independent advisors can choose products and services that work best for the client. "Some financial advisors offer only their company's products," Chris said. "It's important from the client perspective that advisors be independent and be able to offer a full array of products."

There are many changes that have taken place over the years, mainly the sophistication of the financial products. "Now we have hedge funds, hedge fund strategies structured as open-ended mutual funds,

exchange-traded funds, and structured products – none of which were available when I started in the business," he said. "It was only stocks, bonds and cash. Now we have many alternative choices available." Technology has also changed. Note cards have been replaced by client management software, making the process more efficient.

Regardless of your financial position, Chris recommends having someone to serve as a sounding board. "Not everyone needs an advisor. There are people who have the time, knowledge and desire to make their own choices," he said. "But it's not just investment advice that we offer. There are value-added things we can help clients with – whether to refinance your mortgage, to buy a new or used car, or whether you can afford a vacation home. It's good to have a financial advisor in your life."

Chris and his wife, Sarah, have been married for five years. Sarah, a registered nurse, is a professor at Ambria College of Nursing in Hoffman Estates. Chris has three children – Paul and twins Kyle and Taylor. Sarah also has three children – Anthony, Jerrick and Danyell. During their free time, Chris and Sarah enjoy exercising, dining out, movies and boating. A University of Iowa graduate, Chris also attends a handful of Hawkeyes football and basketball games each season.

After spending nearly three decades in the financial industry, Chris said it's the relationships with clients that he enjoys the most. "It's helping the client and having them trust and appreciate the work that you do," he said. "For example, I've been doing this long enough to see college plans that we set up 15 years ago now fully funding the college educations for my clients' children. I like seeing the results of my work positively impact the lives of my clients. That's rewarding."

## On the Hunt with Jim and Ryan



Jim Koliatsis and Ryan McCain are always game for an adventure.

The managing partners for KMG Wealth Management discovered an interesting hobby last year when they took up hunting wild boar.

"We love it," Jim said. "There's nothing like hunting. You're out there bonding with the guys and enjoying nature. It's a great time."

The idea came from Jim's cousin – Tom – an avid hunter. Tom's stories and experiences intrigued Jim enough to convince Ryan that the two should give it a try. They spent a year educating themselves on the sport, purchasing the necessary equipment and practicing at a local shooting range.

"I was a little nervous," said Jim. "I've shot before, but it takes some time to get familiar with the process again."

Ryan agreed. "I had never really been shooting before," he said. "I was somewhat intimidated."

But with enough training, Jim and Ryan were ready for their first hunt. Last spring, they joined a group of 10 guys that included Tom and other good friends for a trip to hunt wild boar on a 16,000 acre ranch east of Oklahoma City.

The trip was anything but forgettable.

First, Ryan encountered a wild ox while sitting in a blind. "He was sizing us up," he said.

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"It was nerve-racking for 15 minutes, but fortunately we got out of there unscathed."

The group also ran into rough weather during their stay, which severely hampered the chance of taking down any boar. "I saw one boar in three days," Jim said. "It rained the entire time. The last night we were there we saw plenty of thunder and lightning." In fact, the day after the group returned home, devastating tornados ripped through Oklahoma City.

Despite the serious weather, the group had a good time. "It was our induction into hunting," said Ryan. "We enjoyed the ruggedness of the Oklahoma culture."

Although they came back empty handed, Jim and Ryan remained passionate about their new hobby. A few months later, they traveled to Michigan for another hunt. This time they each took down a boar and returned home with plenty of meat to store away.

Two weeks later, Jim and his cousin Tom traveled to Wisconsin, where Jim bagged an 8-point buck on his first deer hunt.

Now Jim and Ryan are attending additional safety classes before heading back to Oklahoma City in May for another boar hunt.

"It's safety first, second and third," said Ryan, who's preparing for his first deer hunt and is also interested in pheasant and duck as well.

Hunting has added meaning for Ryan. His grandfather was a hunter, who passed down a 1936 Marlin rifle to Ryan's father. Ryan was able to fire the gun, which hadn't been used for nearly 50 years. "It's in pristine shape," Ryan said. "It's been a chance to reconnect with my grandfather. That's pretty cool."