Buttonwood Partners, Inc.

December 2020 Quarter 4

Investment Thoughts

Dear Client,

As we prepare (perhaps eagerly?) to say good-bye to 2020, it is remarkable to look back and realize just how little went "according to plan" during the year. To some degree it is a Herculean task just to remember the ambitions for 2020 that we once held back in January. How well can you recall your vision for what you might have had in store, and what percentage of it actually came to pass?

Considering this, why are we dedicating our final newsletter of the year to the topic of planning? Are we really such gluttons for punishment? Quite the opposite, in fact. As we reflect on the past twelve months, we feel that one of the enduring lessons of 2020 is the importance of planning – not for when reality sticks to the script, but precisely for those moments when everything goes awry.

My mother was the most detailed planner I have ever met. The personality trait ran so deep in her that, on one infamous family vacation to Disney World, our day of adventure at Epcot Center was begun with the proclamation, "And now we must walk quickly to France." That phrase is still regularly quoted at family gatherings, often when dealing with the consequences of a lack of planning .

Now on this particular trip, my siblings and I were 13, 11 and 7, so you might imagine how well we managed to stay on track. We each had our own agendas / priorities for the day, and at those ages weren't exactly masters of compromise. Despite all that, I don't ever recall a time where we weren't near the restroom when "an emergency" struck, weren't eating before hunger caused a meltdown, or found ourselves stuck at the end of the longest line in the park. It took me many years to appreciate what allowed that to happen - that it wasn't following the details of the plan that mattered, but being prepared to act when "life happened" and we were forced to deviate from the plan.

Using that lens, I hope you are able to look back at 2020 and take pride in the moments where you were nimble, and were able to adapt to the "curve balls" that life threw your way. While we certainly hope there are fewer such moments in 2021, the probability is extremely low that the number will be zero. If the following pages encourage you to spend some time planning, provide the discipline to stick to the plan as able, and/or successfully pivot to Plan B as necessary, they will have served their purpose.

We wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season, and look forward to the New Year. Another favorite saying within the Rademacher family is, "May the best of the year gone by be the worst of the year to come." While it may not be a particularly high bar to clear this year, it is certainly a worthy goal to aspire to.

Cheers,

Greg, Jodie and Chris







Inside this issue

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Special points of interest

- Not able to make an appointment during the work day? The sidebar on page 9 has alternative times to see Greg and Jodie.
- We've provided some quotes on the bottom of each page to help inspire your planning for the year.
- 2021 IRA contribution limits are located on page 7.

How Covid-19 Will Change Aging and Retirement

By Ann Tergesen November 15, 2020 The Wall Street Journal

As the pandemic wreaks havoc on our mental and physical health, it is also quietly reshaping how Americans will face retirement and old age in the years to come.

The virus is bringing sweeping change, mainly by "accelerating developments already under way," says physician and entrepreneur Bill Thomas. For example, "isolation of older people has long been a problem, but Covid is focusing attention on the issue and adding urgency" to address it.

Some changes in store will be stressful. Rising government deficits and falling bond yields are creating so much uncertainty about financing retirement that most people who can continue to work will—and for as long as possible, says Laura Carstensen, director of Stanford University's Center on Longevity.

"It's going to make people rethink retirement altogether," she says.

Other developments will be welcome. For instance, more people will age at home, where most adults say they want to remain. There will be a boom in innovations improving life in later years. And with Covid giving us a reason to reflect on mortality, we will plan how we want to live and die more deliberately.

Lessons learned from the virus may even help us combat ageism. Surveys and studies indicate that older adults are coping emotionally better than younger generations, says Prof. Carstensen, which may help us "recognize the resilience and strength of older adults."

1. More will age at home

With about 40% of Covid-related deaths in the U.S. occurring in long-term-care facilities, the disease has exposed "how shockingly inadequate our care infrastructure and systems are" and "how essential access to home care is," says Ai-jen Poo, an advocate for caregivers.

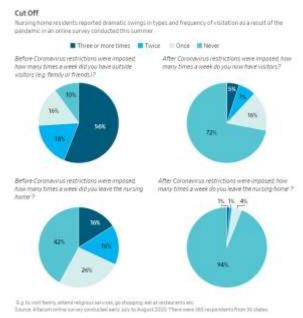
That recognition should have two different but beneficial effects: fewer but better nursing homes, and more resources to help people age at home.

As the government raises regulatory standards on nursing homes, industry watchers are saying 30% or more could file

for bankruptcy, according to Sarah Slocum, co-director of the Program to Improve Eldercare at Altarum, a nonprofit health-care consulting group.

"You will see a lot more focus on aging at home and figuring out how to shift the financial incentives to make that work" says Ezekiel Emanuel, vice provost of global initiatives at the University of Pennsylvania. (After Dr. Emanuel was interviewed for this article he was appointed to President-elect Joe Biden's task force on coronavirus.)

Community-based programs will expand, including the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, a Medicaresponsored service that is currently helping 50,000 people with such needs as medical services, day care, home care and transportation. The program costs Medicare and Medicaid an average of about \$7,000 per person a month,



versus \$9,000 per person for nursing homes, according to Altarum.

Pinchas Cohen, dean of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology at the University of Southern California, predicts that federal or state governments will expand programs, including one under Medicaid, that pay some family caregivers, typically an adult child. Generally, the amount depends on an assessment of the elderly

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individual's needs, as well as the average wage for a home care aide in the state and geographic region in which one lives.

Ms. Poo says that the pandemic has shone a light on the inadequacy of the average \$17,000 annual income of home health aides, many of whom are working "without health care, hazard pay or child care."

The trend toward more aging at home will also favor smaller elder-care arrangements like the nonprofit Green House Project, which was started by Dr. Thomas and promotes senior living in small, homelike cooperative settings. Some 300 such homes in dozens of states house up to 12 residents and typically feature open floor plans, large dining-room tables, fireplaces and porches. Data gathered by the University of North Carolina and the Green House Project show 94% or more of the homes certified to provide skilled nursing care remained virus-free through Aug. 31.

A movement away from nursing homes might prompt Americans to also rethink other forms of age-segregated housing, including 55-plus communities, predicts Marc Freedman, president of Encore.org, a nonprofit working to bridge generational divides.

Age segregation "has not prepared us well for living longer lives," says Mr. Freedman. With relatively little day-to-day contact between younger generations and elders, "each life stage we move into we are utterly unprepared for."

Age segregation, he says, encourages a view that an aging population is "a problem to be solved" rather than "a repository of social, intellectual and community capital."

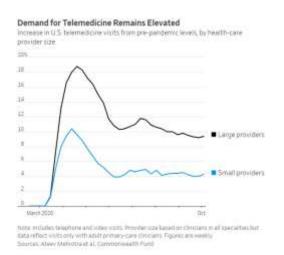
2. Older people will benefit from a technology boom

The pandemic, and the aging of the population, is contributing to a wave of innovation aimed at older adults.

Specifically, the country's experience of quarantining has spurred entrepreneurs to think about what older people will need to age at home, says Katy Fike, a gerontologist

and partner in Generator Ventures, a venture-capital firm focused on aging.

The most dramatic change under way is the growth in telemedicine, facilitated in part by Medicare's decision since March to expand reimbursement to doctors for virtual visits.



Wearable devices and diagnostic tests for home use will provide doctors with key information, including patients' blood pressure and weight, and pave the way for better remote patient monitoring, says Dr. Fike.

Laurie Orlov, a consultant who specializes in technology for older adults, says Amazon's forthcoming Care Hub, free in the Alexa app, uses voice technology to notify an emergency contact if a user asks for help.

Other innovations will take aim at isolation. Already, Discover.Live Inc. provides seniors and others with virtual travel led by guides on live stream. Eldera Inc. and Table Wisdom pair older adults with, respectively, children needing homework help and foreign-born students wanting to practice English. Silvernest Inc. matches older homeowners with roommates who pay rent.

3. Lifespans will decline

With so many people dying of Covid, virus-related deaths are projected to reduce the aggregate life expectancy of Americans age 65 today by nearly a year, according to researchers at Princeton University and the (Continued on page 4)

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University of Southern California.

But Covid-related lockdowns also are likely to reduce the life expectancies of those who avoid or survive the virus, says Philip Pizzo, former dean of Stanford University's medical school and the founding director of Stanford's Distinguished Careers Institute, a program for midcareer professionals transitioning to new acts.

In addition to the long-term physical damage some Covid survivors suffer, the pandemic is undermining our ability to engage in activities associated with better health and longer lives, including socializing, exercising and helping others. "These variables are important at all stages of life and particularly for those in midlife and older," says Dr. Pizzo.

Studies indicate that loneliness may be linked to a greater risk of death, cognitive decline, depression and heart disease.

According to a survey of 365 nursing-home residents conducted by Altarum this summer, only 5% reported having visitors three or more times a week, versus 56% before the pandemic, and 76% said they felt lonelier.

Technology can help overcome some of these problems. But online platforms like Zoom are far from a perfect substitute for the human contact we need, says Dr. Pizzo.

"We are social beings, and we need human contact," he says.

4. We will have a better handle on what we want to do with our time

Working from home can provide a sense for "what retirement might look like," says Dr. Cohen at USC. "Some are saying 'No thanks, I want to continue to work," he says. Others, including Dr. Cohen himself, are exploring hobbies.

Many retirees are frustrated that the virus is interrupting plans to travel and see grandchildren. But the break from routine has also freed up time to assess plans, values and the kind of legacies we want to leave, says George Kinder, founder of the Kinder Institute of Life Planning. As a result, he says more of his clients—and the clients of

financial advisers who train with him—are re-evaluating what's important in their lives and changing their plans.

To prompt clients to clarify their goals, Mr. Kinder asks three questions: What would you do if you had all the time and money in the world? How would you live if you knew you had only five to 10 years left? And what would you most regret if you died tomorrow?

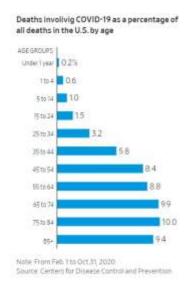
"Covid essentially poses the same questions," says Mr. Kinder.

The virus has enhanced the feeling "that life is short, which is ordinarily something we are aware of occasionally, but this is a collective moment" of reckoning that "the clock is ticking," says Ellen Goodman, cofounder of the nonprofit Conversation Project, which is dedicated to encouraging conversations about end-of-life wishes.

"What matters is finding meaning and doing what really matters to us," she says, whether that is to be good to people or study classical music or make the world better through commitment to a cause.

5. We will plan for death

End-of-life-care planning is something many put off, says Kate DeBartolo, director of the Conversation Project. But thanks to Covid, she says, "it feels more pressing, even for younger people," who are using the website in greater



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numbers.

Traffic and downloads of end-of-life planning material have surged this year, she says.

As difficult as it is to plan for death, experts say it is crucial that people prepare. It can improve not only how we live our last days, but how our loved ones deal with our deaths.



PHOTO: ROBERT NEURECKER

Dr. Emanuel predicts that the experience of living amid lockdowns may cause more people to think about end-of-life care. Some undoubtedly will choose not to receive medical treatment that helps extend life but that also often negatively affects the quality of those extra days, especially if they can't

spend time with their family, he says.

6. We will embrace healthier lifestyles

The older you are, the greater your statistical odds are of dying from the coronavirus. But underlying health problems, including diabetes, heart conditions and obesity, are also significant risk factors, says Dr. Cohen.

Such conditions can be caused by factors beyond our control, including genes. But diet and exercise also often play a role.

The pandemic is helping raise awareness of the concept of "biological age," or the internal pace of aging, says Dr. Cohen. "Age is the No. 1 cause of risk for mortality from Covid, but it's not chronological age, it's biological age," he says.

As wearable devices become more prevalent, more of us will track measures of underlying health, including blood pressure and glucose levels. Medicine may eventually assign patients a biological age to help them make better-informed decisions, Dr. Cohen says.

7. We need to save more to retire

While stocks for now continue to perform well, lower bond yields caused by the pandemic might make it harder to make ends meet on a fixed income.

For years, retirees have relied on the so-called 4% rule, which says you can withdraw 4% from your savings in the first year of retirement, and then give yourself an annual raise to account for inflation, without running a big risk of running out of money.

For someone with a \$1 million portfolio, that formula produced an initial income of \$40,000 and—assuming inflation of 2%—an increase to \$40,800 in year two.

But today's low bond yields mean future returns are expected to be lower than in the past, says David Blanchett, head of retirement research at Morningstar Inc. Mr. Blanchett says his safe-spending recommendation is now between 3% and 3.5%. That means that someone who wants to safely withdraw \$40,000 in the first year of retirement needs to save closer to \$1.2 million than \$1 million.

8. The 401(k) will morph into a multipurpose account

The economic crisis has shown that for many people, the priority should be to build an emergency fund before putting money into a 401(k), where savings can be hard to access before retirement.

David John, a senior policy adviser at AARP, says employers are already starting to use a new kind of flexible savings account that lets workers funnel salary deferrals to more than one goal, including emergencies and retirement. Other future uses could include health-care and college expenses. Mr. John predicts that once the accounts become popular the government will apply the current tax advantage for retirement savings to them.

9. We will work longer

Since the 1990s, the percentage of people 55 and older in the labor force has risen steadily, to 40% in 2019 from 29% in 1993, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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With bond yields low, stock values high and Social Security in precarious shape, the trend will accelerate.

"There's so much uncertainty about the future...most people are going to continue to work as long as they can," says Prof. Carstensen.

With companies embracing remote work and flexible hours and the gig economy expanding, it's easier for many older people to remain employed, says Jack Rowe, a professor of public health at Columbia University.

Of course, not everyone has the ability to work into their 70s or beyond. Some are in poor health, have jobs they can no longer perform or are victims of age discrimination.

"As a society, we will have to provide ways for people who cannot work to receive support," says Prof. Carstensen.

10. Our views on aging will change

Coronavirus has, at least in the short term, reinforced ageist stereotypes, including the notion that older people are frail and should be "segregated and isolated," says Dr. Thomas.

The virus and the economic downturn are also inflaming intergenerational conflict.

Some "younger people see older people as the reason they have to sacrifice," says Prof. Carstensen. At the same time, Ms. Goodman notes, "younger people are being blamed for being irresponsible" with regard to social distancing.

Still, Prof. Carstensen says the pandemic has also unleashed countervailing trends that may ultimately change our views of aging for the better.

It helped fuel the election of Joe Biden, who, at 77, is poised to become the oldest president in U.S. history, a development that contradicts the notion that older adults are weak or frail.

Adding to that view are surveys and studies that show what many are noticing in their own lives: that older adults are psychologically more resilient in the face of the disease than younger people are, says Prof. Carstensen.

As with past crises, including Sept. 11, psychologists are finding that people across generations are focusing on what matters most to them, including relationships, she says.

Amid Covid, Ms. Goodman says, "there are some signs of a deeper understanding of how we need each other."

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Retirement Contribution Limits for 2021					
	401(k), 403 (b), 457	Simple IRA	Traditional or Roth IRA	SEP	
Deferral Limit	\$19,500	\$13,500	\$6,000	N/A	
Catch-Up if age 50+	\$6,500	\$3,000	\$1,000	N/A	
Employer Contributions	Match or profit sharing	Up to 3% match	N/A	25% of salary or \$58,000, whichever is less	

Eligible 2020 contributions may be made through April 15

"Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago." - Warren Buffet

2020 Year End Considerations

- Plan your charitable giving. Year-end is the time many people complete their annual charitable donations. There are numerous ways to give, including gifts of cash or appreciated securities, by utilizing a donor-advised fund (such as Fidelity Charitable Gift or Madison Community Foundation) or through an IRA distribution (called a qualified charitable donation, or QCD). The CARES Act, passed in March, has changed the rules for deducting charitable donations from your taxes, including increasing the limit that individuals and corporations may deduct from their taxes. Before making large charitable gifts this year, we recommend that you reach out to your tax preparer for guidance.
- **Review employer plans.** Many companies only allow changes to employer plans to take place during certain enrollment windows. Now is a great time to review how much you are contributing (be sure to earn 100% of any available match!) and how those funds are being invested.
- Plan any big changes in the new year—home purchase/sale, car purchase, vacation. If you are aware of any large or unusual expenses coming up, let us know! We're happy to help you plan for the budget impact, or to make sure the funds are ready and waiting when needed.
- Review your estate plan. It's amazing how quickly these documents can become out-of-date. Reading through your will, trust, financial and/or healthcare power of attorneys at least annually can help you rest easy knowing that your documents continue to match your wishes. In addition, verifying that all beneficiary designations on retirement plans and life insurance remain current is a critical if often overlooked part of the planning process.
- Review your gains and losses in your taxable investment account. One component of your taxable income is the dividends and capital gains or losses produced during the year. The mutual fund estimates are available and we can provide you with a projection for 2020. Capital gains are the most common culprit for any unpleasant surprises on tax returns. Being aware of this figure is the first step towards a "boring" tax year.
- Is your taxable income this year low enough to consider a Roth conversion?
- If you are saving for college through EdVest or Tomorrow's Scholar and live in Wisconsin, you have until April 15th to make your contribution and receive a deduction on your state income taxes. In many other states, your contribution needs to be made by the end of the year. Contact us for the specific details on your state's plan.

2021 Jumpstart

- Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) are scheduled to return in 2021. The age to start taking RMDs changed from 70 1/2 to 72 last year, but with the requirement suspended for 2020 this will be the first year we see the change in practice. If you were born in 1949 or earlier, please contact us to discuss plans for the timing of your distribution. If you have been taking distributions for many years and have a plan in place, those instructions will automatically kick back in next year.
- **Property taxes are due.** Is it better to pay them in 2020 or 2021? If you are refinancing your loan, should you plan to escrow for taxes and insurance or not?
- Save the year end statements. Better yet, throw them in an envelope and mail them to us. This is the best time of year to review all of your holdings together.
- Create an annual budget. Usually talk of a budget is met with groans; however, this really can be a fun activity! Open a bottle of wine and plan your priorities. After you've covered the basics such as car payments and home maintenance, try to build in the little luxuries such as a monthly date night or a weekend away. If there are any big aspirations, such as that dream vacation, what is the path that will turn it into a reality? Setting your financial priorities now can be great motivation for staying the course throughout the year.

Fictional Family Planning

One aspect of 2020 was having a lot of unexpected free time on one's hands. At first, there was some degree of welcome respite from the usual hustle and bustle. Then there was a period of rediscovering the Great Outdoors (golf courses, campgrounds and hiking/biking trails were more crowded than I've ever seen before) and the enthusiastic embrace of new hobbies (Bread making! Home organization! Hot chocolate bombs!).

But as the days turned into weeks and the weeks into months, it took more planning effort for our family to decide how to fill the extra hours.

For better or worse, with the temperatures dropping and daylight disappearing, that has meant a bit more screen time. We are quickly becoming well-versed in the respective catalogs offered by Netflix, Hulu and Disney+. At the same time, the work-from-home environment makes drawing the line between work and personal

that much more difficult - and that "office stuff" invades my thoughts more than ever while sitting - and help to support and strengthen the Gotham on my couch in the evening. As the old commercial went, "You got chocolate in my peanut butter! - No, you got peanut butter in my chocolate!" (Who can name the product?) It was only a matter of time before I adopted the characters from the silver screen as new "clients." At the risk of violating client confidentiality, here are some of my planning suggestions from recent "meetings." Feel free to incorporate any that might apply to you into your 2021 planning. Or better yet, call to discuss the specifics with us!

"Batman": Bruce Wayne is a single male in his 30's. He's a wealthy business owner and philanthropist -who also happens to fight crime at night. As someone who was orphaned at a young age, one would assume his money is wrapped up in a Trust for his benefit. Is he comfortable that the trust terms provide sufficient access to the money as needed? While the salary from his day job (CEO of Wayne Industries) may not be

necessary, the benefits package (401k plan and especially good health insurance) is a huge plus. Given his side job as a crime fighter, affordable life insurance doesn't seem likely, if available at any price. We would want to see if Wayne Industries benefits package includes term life insurance with the ability to purchase additional coverage without underwriting, especially if a wife or children enter the picture.



Because Bruce clearly isn't risk adverse and has 30 years before retirement, we would likely recommend his 401k be heavily invested in stocks while his trust holdings place a higher emphasis on liquidity - just in case vehicle maintenance and repair costs run a bit high. We'd also want to be aware of the high concentration of company stock within his portfolio. One special area of focus could be charitable giving. Gifts of appreciated securities to charity can help reduce his overall @CSKN-Can Stock Photo Inc. tax bill, avoid taxation of the capital gain on his Wayne Enterprises shares

community so that he might be able to take a "vacation night" down the road.

"The Office": Jim and Pam Halpert are in their 30s, met at the office, fell in love, got pregnant and got married. They currently have one child, but will possibly have a second. They're both aware that their employment situation isn't the most stable – a private paper company can only last so much longer, and both of their salaries and benefits are currently dependent on it. In the short term, maximizing the match on their employer retirement plan and generally saving what they can is the highest priority. But a longer-term goal is to increase their degree of financial security.

Fortunately, Jim got a great deal on their house (bought it from his parents at a steal). However, the interest rate on their mortgage could be better. Refinancing

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Fictional Planning Continued

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can help lower their monthly payments, allowing them each a little freedom to explore the job market. Jim might be able to find an alternate sales job, or perhaps Pam could use her art degree to switch fields, even if it means taking a small pay cut. Because their job situation is a little unstable, additional retirement savings could be directed toward their Roth IRA's. In case of emergency, the cumulative contributions could be withdrawn prior to retirement without the usual tax penalty. If anything remains available for college savings for their daughter CeeCee, a 529 plan could be a great fit, as it would also allow for the beneficiary to be changed and tax-free withdrawals taken if Pam needs to take an additional course or go back to grad school to accomplish that career change.

"Frasier": Dr. Frasier Crane is a divorced psychologist and radio broadcaster who lives with and helps take care of his father. He owns his own business and is also an independent contractor at the radio station. He's not eligible for their retirement plan, but he could start a SEP plan for his own business. A SEP ("simplified employer pension") is 100% employer funded and must treat all employees equally. It's a great opportunity for solo practitioners to save a lot towards retirement, as they are able to contribute 25% of their pay up to \$57,000.

Frasier is divorced, but as long as the marriage lasted 10 years he would be eligible for spousal Social Security benefits if they would provide a larger benefit.

His father, a retired police detective, has a nice pension and medical benefits from the state so financially he's not a concern; however, we would want to discuss the plan should he eventually need a higher level of care than Daphne can provide. Is there any long-term care insurance in place? Are they likely to prefer an assisted living facility or looking for in-home care?

Frasier has a son from the prior marriage, so making a clear estate plan is necessary. Important questions would include how to divide his estate between his son, father and/or brother? Who would he like to be the executor of the estate? And, if he leaves his son's inheritance in trust, would he like Lillith (his ex-wife), Niles (his brother) or a third party to act as the trustee?

It's a lot to consider, but thankfully Frasier has an extremely comfortable couch from which to contemplate his next steps...

It is currently late on a Friday afternoon as I put the finishing touches on this piece. That means it is about time to go watch the latest episode of "The Mandalorian" with my boys. I wonder how much a retirement condo on Tatooine is going for these days...?

"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail." – Benjamin Franklin

Need an After Hours Appointment?

Upcoming opportunities:

GregWednesday Evenings

Available 4 pm, 4:45 pm, 5:30 pm and 6:15 pm

January 20

February 17

JodieSaturday Mornings

Available 9 am, 10 am and 11am

January 16

February 13

Office Closures

Buttonwood Partners Inc. will be closed on the dates below to allow our employees to celebrate with their families.

Thursday, December 24
At Noon
Christmas Eve

Friday, Dec. 25
Christmas Day

Friday, January 1
New Year's Day

Monday, January 18

Greg Rademacher, CFP®, CFA

President (608) 827 6414 greg@btnwd.com Jodie McLellan

Partner (608) 827 6413 jodie@btnwd.com

Chris Bugg

Partner (608) 827 6412 cbugg@btnwd.com

Linda Kwiatkowski

Administrative Coordinator (608) 827 6415 linda@btnwd.com

Katie Kalkofen

Assistant Account Manager (608) 827 6405 katie@btnwd.com

Whitney Cook

Administrative Assistant (608) 827 6408 whitney@btnwd.com

Andrea Widner

Dir. Of Strategic Initiatives (608) 827 6411 andrea@btnwd.com

buttonwoodpartnersinc.com

Buttonwood Partners, Inc.

701 Deming Way, Suite 100 Madison, WI 53717

Phone: 608-827-6400 Fax: 608-827-6407 E-mail: andrea@btnwd.com

