

TRUMP FAMILY VALUES

YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE IT BUT DONALD TRUMP MAY HAVE BURIED IVANA ON HIS GOLF COURSE FOR THE TAX BREAK

We know, it is completely shocking that a man known for years of dubious tax schemes, including ones characterized as “outright fraud,” would do such a thing.



BY BESS LEVIN

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Is the pope Catholic? Does a bear shit in the woods? Does **Donald Trump** strike you as the kind of guy who'd bury his ex-wife on his golf course in order to score a tax break? If you're a person currently employed by the ex-president or for some reason in thrall of him, your answer to that last question is probably "Of course not! How dare you! Donald Trump is a saint and would never dream of such a thing!" If you're at all in touch with reality, the answer is a resounding "Hell yes" and maybe a "I literally can't think of a person more likely to do this" for good measure. And as it turns out, you may be right!

Insider **reports** that "the location of Ivana Trump's grave—near the first hole of the golf course at Trump National Golf Club—may have tax implications for the business owned by the former president." And by "tax implications," the outlet obviously means burying his first wife on the property of his golf club may help minimize Trump's tax bill. While ProPublica previously reported that Trump Family Trust tax documents show the family worked to establish a nonprofit cemetery company in Hackettstown, New Jersey—which, under the state's tax code, would exempt the site from taxes, rates, and assessments, and the company from real estate taxes, rates, and assessments—that's roughly 20 miles away from where Ivana was laid to rest. But according to one tax expert, the 45th president, **who has a long history of getting creative with his taxes**, may have found a way.

"As a tax researcher, I was skeptical of rumors Trump buried his ex-wife in that sad little plot of dirt on his Bedminster, NJ golf course just for tax breaks." Dartmouth sociology professor **Brooke Harrington**, **who wrote a book about how the 1 percent avoids paying taxes**, **tweeted** on Saturday. "So I checked the NJ tax code & folks...it's a trifecta of tax avoidance. Property, income & sales tax, all eliminated." She noted that, according to state rules, there is "No stipulation regarding a minimum # of human remains necessary for the tax breaks to kick in--looks like one corpse will suffice to make at least 3 forms of tax vanish."

Speaking to Salon's **Jon Skolnik**, **Jay Soled**, director of Rutgers masters in taxation program, cast doubt on the idea that Trump would use his ex-wife's burial for such self-serving means, **calling** the idea "a bit overkill." On the other hand, it sounds...exactly like something Trump would do! As Skolnik notes, in 2019, HuffPost **reported** that Trump was able to save nearly \$90,000 a year on taxes by adding goats to the Bedminster golf club, which allowed him to classify the property as a farm. Meanwhile, as *The New York Times* **reported** in 2018, "Trump participated in dubious tax schemes during the 1990s, including instances of outright fraud." In 2019, the ex-president's former attorney **Michael Cohen** **told** Congress that Trump regularly inflated his

assets “when it served his purpose”—like to obtain loans—and deflated them when it would similarly be advantageous—like to minimize his tax bill. In 2020, the *Times* **revealed** that Trump had paid \$750 in federal income taxes in 2016, another \$750 in 2017, and nothing whatsoever—as in zero, zilch, nada—in 10 of the previous 15 years. And earlier this year, the New York attorney general, which is currently conducting a civil-law investigation into Trump’s family business, **said** in court filings that the Trump Organization had used “fraudulent or misleading” asset valuations to obtain loans and tax benefits. (Trump and his attorneys insist the work of the A.G.’s office is politically motivated, which is what they say every time evidence of him doing something shady as hell is uncovered.)

So yeah, there’s always a possibility he didn’t bury Ivana near the first hole for the tax breaks but...it certainly seems right up Trump’s alley!

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