

# WEEKLY MARKET COMMENTARY

For the Week of March 3, 2014

## THE MARKETS

Stocks rose Friday, pushing the S&P 500 to another record close while all three major indexes ended the month with strong total gains. The Dow saw its best monthly percentage gain since January 2013, and the S&P had its best since October 2013. For the week, the Dow rose 1.42 percent to close at 16,321.71. The S&P gained 1.30 percent to finish at 1,859.45 and the NASDAQ climbed 1.05 percent to end the week at 4,308.12.

Returns Through 02/28/14	1 Week	YTD	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year
Dow Jones Industrials (TR)	1.42	-1.07	19.01	13.04	21.47
NASDAQ Composite (PR)	1.05	3.15	36.32	15.69	25.61
S&P 500 (TR)	1.30	0.96	25.37	14.35	23.00
Barclays US Agg Bond (TR)	0.48	2.02	0.15	3.83	5.13
MSCI EAFE (TR)	0.65	1.31	19.28	6.63	17.60

Source: Morningstar.com. \*Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Indexes are unmanaged and cannot be invested into directly. Three- and five-year returns are annualized. The Dow Jones Industrials, MSCI EAFE, Barclays US Agg Bond and S&P, excluding "1 Week" returns, are based on total return, which is a reflection of return to an investor by reinvesting dividends after the deduction of withholding tax. The NASDAQ is based on price return, which is the capital appreciation of the portfolio, excluding income generated by the assets in the portfolio in the form of interest and dividends. (TR) indicates total return. (PR) indicates price return. MSCI EAFE returns stated in U.S. dollars.

**Why Not Three Out Of Three?** – Two out of every three American workers is either saving money for their eventual retirement or their spouse is doing so (source: Employee Benefit Research Institute, BTN Research).

**More Going In Than Coming Out** – An average high income American couple that retired in 2010 will pay \$765,000 of lifetime Social Security taxes but receive just \$693,000 of Social Security benefits, i.e., for every \$1 paid in taxes, the couple will receive \$0.91 in benefits (source: Urban Institute, BTN Research).

**We're Spending A Lot** – Total retail sales in the U.S. in calendar year 2013 were \$5.085 trillion, up 4.2 percent from the total in 2012. That's equal to \$203.5 billion of additional retail sales in 2013 (over 2012's result) or \$1 million of additional retail sales nationwide every two and a half minutes (source: Census Bureau, BTN Research).

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## WEEKLY FOCUS – Protect Yourself From Identity Thieves This Tax Season

It's that time of year again, when you start gathering for your accountant all the tax paperwork that has been trickling in over the past two months. But what do you do when you suddenly realize something is missing? The obvious answer would be to call around and ask why it was not sent to you in the first place, but you may soon find yourself in the middle of a much larger issue. Unfortunately for taxpayers, the tax season is a prime time for mail thieves and fraudsters looking to steal your most valuable personal information.

The Federal Trade Commission logged 290,056 reports of identity theft in 2013, or about 14 percent of all complaints, making it the top consumer complaint source for the year. W-2s and other tax forms include Social Security numbers, birth dates, addresses and salaries that fraudsters can use to open credit card or bank accounts, apply for loans, make purchases and apply for jobs. Also, with a single W-2, thieves can file their own tax return, potentially receiving a refund deposited into their own bank account within days.

If you receive your W-2s electronically, you are not necessarily safe from thieves either. By using spyware software, thieves can gather information from your computer without your knowledge and can record everything you enter online.

To prevent tax-time thefts, you access your electronic tax information only on trusted computers that are secured with anti-spyware software. Also, you should print, burn to a CD or transfer sensitive information to a USB drive and remove it from the hard drive of your computer or laptop immediately after use. Securing all crucial information in your home, preferably in a locked location, will help prevent thieves from accessing it. Make sure to check your courier mail daily and as soon as possible after delivery. If you plan to be on vacation, place your mail on hold, rent a post office box or ask a trusted friend to pick up your mail for you.

Protecting your personal information is important to us. We will never send confidential information such as account numbers, balances or statements to you by unsecured e-mail. If you would like more information about identity theft and protecting your confidential and important information, please contact our office.



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\* The Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P 500) is an unmanaged group of securities considered to be representative of the stock market in general. The Dow Jones Industrial Average is a price-weighted index of 30 actively traded blue-chip stocks. NASDAQ Composite Index is an unmanaged, market-weighted index of all over-the-counter common stocks traded on the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotation System. The Morgan Stanley Capital International Europe, Australia and Far East Index (MSCI EAFE Index) is a widely recognized benchmark of non-U.S. stock markets. It is an unmanaged index composed of a sample of companies representative of the market structure of 20 European and Pacific Basin countries and includes reinvestment of all dividends. Barclays Capital Aggregate Bond Index is an unmanaged index comprised of U.S. investment-grade, fixed-rate bond market securities, including government, government agency, corporate and mortgage-backed securities between one and 10 years. Written by Securities America. SAI#870193