

WEEKLY MARKET COMMENTARY

For the Week of April 21, 2014

THE MARKETS

Higher-than-expected earnings reports lifted stocks on Thursday, ending a holiday-shortened week. Markets were closed on Friday in observance of the Good Friday holiday. Reports from Morgan Stanley and General Electric lifted the S&P 500 to post its biggest weekly advance since July. For the week, the Dow rose 1.50 percent to close at 16,408.54. The S&P gained 1.75 percent to finish at 1,864.85 and the NASDAQ climbed 2.39 percent to end the week at 4,095.52.

Returns Through 04/17/14	1 Week	YTD	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year
Dow Jones Industrials (TR)	1.50	-0.36	15.00	12.87	18.19
NASDAQ Composite (PR)	2.39	-1.94	29.34	14.40	19.61
S&P 500 (TR)	1.75	1.49	22.72	14.69	18.99
Barclays US Agg Bond (TR)	-0.37	2.21	-0.56	3.69	4.82
MSCI EAFE (TR)	-0.16	0.97	18.23	7.52	14.63

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.

Sign Up – If your 65th birthday is today (e.g., DOB April 21, 1949), you may sign up for Medicare. Your initial Medicare enrollment period is seven months long, running from three months before your birthday month (April in this example) to three months after your birthday month, i.e., the seven months from Jan. 1, 2014, to July 31, 2014 (source: Medicare, BTN Research).

Backstop – There are guarantee associations in all 50 states to protect policyholders in the event a life insurance company becomes insolvent. Most states guarantee life insurance death benefits up to \$300,000 (source: National Organization of Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Associations, BTN Research).

For One Year? – The average private college costs \$40,917 for tuition, fees, room and board for the current school year (2013-14), more than a two and a half times increase over the \$15,795 average cost from 20 years ago (1993-94 school year). If the same rate of inflation (4.9 percent per year) over the past 20 years occurs over the next 20 years, an average private college will cost \$105,996 for the single school year of 2033-2034 (source: College Board, BTN Research).

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WEEKLY FOCUS – Saving Is A Marathon, Not A Sprint

Today more than 35,000 runners – and nearly a million volunteers and spectators – congregated in Massachusetts for the 118th Boston Athletic Association Marathon. After last year's marathon was scarred by the tragic bombings that killed three and injured more than 260, the runners, the nation and the world have returned to Boston to take back the finish line with renewed passion, united under the slogan Boston Strong.

Some runners began their journey with the hope of losing weight, while some may have set their sights on completing a fun run with friends. Others set out with a dream to run a full 26.2-mile marathon, or to qualify for a prestigious race such as the Boston Marathon.

Both runners and retirement investors alike should aim for their finish line goals by viewing them as a long-term effort. In investing, just like in running, the course will have its ups and downs. The past month has seen the stock markets swinging hundreds of points a day in either direction, just as drastic weather adjustments have impacted runners' training schedules.

Gauge your investment progress in intervals of years or decades instead of monitoring your investments continuously to avoid impulse reactions or fatigue. Even elite runners have a bad race from time to time, but that doesn't make them any less capable of running or meeting their goals at their race.

Runners will typically adjust their training plans when facing a life-changing event or injury. Similarly, you should review your retirement plan when experiencing the birth of a child, an empty nest, retirement, divorce, widowhood, illness, disability or the death of a spouse, parent or child. That doesn't mean you give up on your goals; you just readjust them for the next race life hands you.

Model after the pros, stick to strict training schedules and employ a coach to help create a plan that meets your individual goals. If you're looking for one-on-one guidance, call our office today for an appointment or review of your retirement plan. With the right passion, discipline and coach, you'll be well on your way to reaching your retirement marathon finish line.



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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#907322