



For the Week of March 29, 2021

THE MARKETS

Stocks rose Friday after February data showed lower price pressures, which eased inflation concerns. Each major index rose more than 1 percent. For the week, the Dow rose 1.36 percent to close at 33,072.88. The S&P gained 1.58 percent to finish at 3,974.54, and the NASDAQ dropped 0.57 percent to end the week at 13,138.72.

Returns Through 3/26/21	1 Week	YTD	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year
Dow Jones Industrials (TR)	1.36	8.58	49.85	13.55	16.28
NASDAQ Composite (TR)	-0.57	2.11	69.85	23.29	23.74
S&P 500 (TR)	1.58	6.20	53.72	16.53	16.58
Barclays US Agg Bond (TR)	0.35	-3.28	1.72	4.88	3.25
MSCI EAFE (TR)	-0.55	3.72	45.16	6.47	9.32

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, NASDAQ 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. (TR) indicates total return. MSCI EAFE returns stated in U.S. dollars.

And in the Next Year — 2020 was the 10th year in the last 70 years in which the U.S. economy contracted. Our nation's gross domestic product shrunk by 3.5 percent last year. Following the nine previous down years, the U.S. economy has rebounded in the next year with positive growth seven out of nine times, growing by an average of 3.3 percent per year for all nine bounce back years (source: Commerce Department, BTN Research).

Money They Will Spend — 42 percent of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, \$800 billion out of the \$1.9 trillion, is direct support that will be distributed to households in the form of stimulus payments, unemployment benefits and child tax credits (source: American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, BTN Research).

Year-Over-Year Improvement — The aggregate earnings per share of the companies in the S&P 500 in the first quarter of 2021 are forecasted to be 21.5 percent greater than the actual aggregate earnings per share of the S&P 500 companies from the first quarter 2020 (source: FactSet, BTN Research).

Weekly Market Notes

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WEEKLY FOCUS – Avoid These Medicare Mistakes

If you're a newcomer to the complex Medicare system, or will be soon, it's wise to research potential options and pitfalls to prevent future regrets. As a starting point, here are a few mistakes to avoid:

Missing Part B deadlines. If you're already receiving Social Security benefits at 65, you'll automatically be enrolled in Part A (hospital insurance) and Part B (doctors' services, outpatient care, and medical equipment). Otherwise, you must apply. Fail to sign up for Part B during the seven months surrounding your birthday, and you risk incurring a late penalty surcharge on all your future premiums. You can delay enrolling only if you have health coverage from your or your spouse's employer, and the company employs 20 or more workers. But if you do, make sure you enroll in Part B within eight months of leaving the company.

Not enrolling in Medigap promptly. It's also wise to purchase a Medigap supplemental policy within six months of enrolling in Part B. Medigap standardized, private insurance plans cover some or most out-of-pocket expenses. Enrolling within that window restricts Medigap insurers from denying coverage or charging higher premiums due to current health or pre-existing medical conditions. Choose your plan carefully because those protections may not be extended if you try to switch later.

Not understanding Medicare Advantage plans. If you're considering a Medicare Advantage plan in lieu of Medicare Parts A, B, and D, look beyond lower premiums and compare deductibles, copayments, and out-of-pocket costs. Bear in mind these plans may have more restrictions. And be sure to compare star ratings provided at Medicare.gov.

Not signing up for Part D. Even if you aren't on any medications, developing one health problem could cause you to regret not getting a drug plan during an enrollment period. And you could incur a permanent late enrollment penalty if you don't have Medicare or other creditable prescription drug coverage for 63 days in a row at any time after your initial enrollment period is over.

Not comparing Part D plans annually. Part D plans vary in the drugs they cover and the copays they charge. Use the Plan Finder program on Medicare's website to compare plans. And once you've signed up, don't put your Part D on autopilot. Check for premium increases and changes in coverage every year.

If you need help determining how health care costs may impact your retirement, please call 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, Copyright March 2021. All rights reserved. Securities offered through Securities America, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC. SAI#3511980.1