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Markets Ignore the Politics

FINANCIAL UPDATE - WEEK OF MAY 15, 2017

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Markets tuned out noise from Washington last week and continued to focus on economic fundamentals. Mildly rebounding retail sales and strong consumer sentiment seem to point toward a modestly stronger second quarter.^[1]

After a three-week winning streak, both the Dow and S&P 500 reported slight losses.^[2] The Dow closed with a 0.53% loss, and the S&P 500 reported a 0.35% decline for the week.^[3] The NASDAQ, however, rose 0.34% while the MSCI EAFE reported a modest 0.16% gain.^[4]

MIXED SIGNALS CONTINUE

- **Soft retail earnings**

Consumer retail purchases were up after a first-quarter decline. Sales rose by 0.4% (just shy of the 0.6% consensus), and 9 of the 13 retail categories posted gains.^[5] As expected, early second-quarter gains suggest the first-quarter decline was just a blip.^[6]

- **Continuing concerns over store closings**

A report last month concluded that in excess of 8,600 brick-and-mortar stores could close in 2017 due to poor sales. Last year, at least 2,000

stores shut their doors, while just over 5,000 closed in 2015. The record for store closings occurred in 2008 when over 6,000 stores closed.^[7]

- **Strong consumer sentiment**

Despite modest retail sales, consumer confidence reached a 4-month high.^[8] Consumer expectations are positive regarding job growth, income, and low inflation.^[9] Furthermore, 44% of surveyed consumers expressed optimism in their financial prospects - the highest percentage since 2004.^[10]

- **U.S. consumer prices rise in line with expectations**

The consumer price index rose 0.2% in April, in line with expectations for the month.^[11] However, the medical care and communications sectors saw continuing price weakness.^[12]

LOOKING AHEAD

This week, we will look forward to data regarding the strength of the housing market. Though the highest percent of consumers in over 10 years report positive opinions on selling homes, next week's numbers will give us a better idea of where the markets stand.^[13] Finally, the market will continue to watch oil prices, which steadied this week after three weeks of decline.^[14]

In the weeks ahead, possible corporate tax rate reductions and potential trade policy changes will remain in focus for markets. In addition, markets will remain interested in the Fed's interest rate plans and its plan to reduce its \$4.5 trillion balance sheet.^[15]

As always, we will continue to track the impact of international and domestic political news on the markets and the economy.

ECONOMIC CALENDAR

Monday: Housing Market Index

Tuesday: Housing Starts, Industrial Production

Wednesday: EIA Petroleum Status Report

Friday: Philadelphia Fed Business Outlook Survey

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DATA AS OF 5/12/2017	1 WEEK	SINCE 1/1/17	1 YEAR	5 YEAR	10 YEAR
STANDARD & POOR'S 500	-0.35%	6.79%	15.83%	12.05%	4.73%
DOW	-0.53%	5.74%	17.92%	10.26%	4.60%
NASDAQ	0.34%	13.71%	29.21%	15.85%	9.10%
INTERNATIONAL	0.16%	10.92%	13.52%	5.28%	-1.80%
DATA AS OF 5/12/2017	1 MONTH	6 MONTHS	1 YEAR	5 YEAR	10 YEAR
TREASURY YIELDS (CMT)	0.69%	1.03%	1.11%	1.85%	2.33%

Notes: All index returns (except S&P 500) exclude reinvested dividends, and the 5- year and 10-year returns are annualized. The total returns for the S&P 500 assume reinvestment of dividends on the last day of the month. This may account for differences between the index returns published on Morningstar.com and the index returns published elsewhere. International performance is represented by the MSCI EAFE Index. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Indices are unmanaged and cannot be invested into directly.

The Non-financial Nook...

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



"Go to the edge of the cliff and jump off. Build your wings on the way down."

- Ray Bradbury

RECIPE OF THE WEEK



Spanish Garlic Shrimp



A zesty take on a seafood favorite!

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 2 TBSP olive oil
- 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 2 TBSP garlic, minced
- 2 TBSP lemon juice
- 2 TBSP sherry or water, with 2 TBSP flour added
- 1/4 tsp paprika
- 1/2 lb large shrimp, peeled

Directions:

1. Heat olive oil in large nonstick pan on medium-high.
2. Mix in onion and bell peppers, and sauté for 4 minutes.
3. Add remaining ingredients, except the shrimp.
4. Bring ingredients to simmer, cooking for 2 minutes.
5. Toss shrimp into the pan and cook for about 2 minutes (or until shrimp are no longer transparent), stirring constantly.
6. Serve shrimp dish over saffron risotto or yellow rice.

Recipe adapted from Good Housekeeping^[16]

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TAX TIPS

Department of
U.S. Individual



Tips for Safeguarding Your Passwords*

As we do more of our daily activities online, including filing taxes, we become more vulnerable to security compromises, such as breached data and identify theft. A key item that can put you at risk is the vulnerability of your passwords. Here are tips for taking better steps to safeguard your passwords to protect your important data.

1. Create long passwords

Breaking into a long password is more difficult to do than one with just a few characters and numbers. As such, you should create passwords that have a minimum of 8 characters.

2. Use combinations of characters and capitalization

Characters

Sometimes companies will control what types of characters you can use. When you have the freedom to choose a variety of characters, you can create a secure password using a combination of the following:

- letters
- numbers
- symbols

Capitalization

You also should vary using capitalized and lowercase letters. Be sure to include at minimum one uppercase and one lowercase letter.

3. Avoid personal information

While details such as your children's name or pet can be memorable, they make guessing your password easy for criminals. Avoid using any personally identifying information in your chosen password.

Other details apply, and you can find more information on [the IRS website](#).

* This information is not intended to be a substitute for specific individualized tax advice. We suggest you discuss your specific tax issues with a qualified tax advisor.

Tip courtesy of IRS.gov^[17]



Fix Your Slice: Avoid Parallax

Slicing the ball is all too common for golfers. And when they try to use their instincts to overcome the challenge, they often hit the ball even farther right.

One way to fix your slice is to avoid parallax. Though golfers focus on the target, many actually align to the left. Because of parallax, golfers swing further left, try to pull the ball to hit their target, and end up opening their clubface to the incorrect path at impact. The result? A slice.

You can overcome parallax by having an intermediate target. To do so:

1. Stand behind the ball.
2. Look down your target line by 3 to 5 feet and choose a spot.
3. Square your clubface to your chosen spot.
4. Make your body perpendicular to the face.
5. Put trust into your aim and start your ball just to the right of your intermediate target.
6. Close your clubface at impact by hitting from the inside.

The result from this exercise is a draw and should put your ball correctly on target.

Tip courtesy of GolfDigest^[18]



Tips for Managing a Cough

Trying to keep a cough at bay can be incredibly challenging and debilitating, no matter how intense the cough is. You usually can manage a cough from things like seasonal allergies and common colds at home. Here are some key ways to control your cough and find some relief.

- **Consume enough water:** If you have mucous when you cough, you probably have postnasal drip. You can thin the mucous by drinking more water. Doing so also helps moisten your mucous membranes, which can further help you control your cough.
- **Drink warm tea with honey:** Some clinical research suggests that drinking warm tea with honey will help soothe your throat from coughing.
- **Use a humidifier:** If your home is particularly dry, having a humidifier running can help you add important moisture back into the air. You'll want to make sure you clean it out regularly though, as they can breed fungus, mold, and bacteria, and pump these back into the air.

Tip courtesy of WebMD^[19]



Don't Dump These Items Down the Drain

Pouring leftover items down the drain can be tempting, since it's easy to dump and watch the flow go down. Flushing things down the toilet and pouring liquids into sinks can introduce a slew of toxins into our streams and waterways. You can help the environment by avoiding dumping these common items down the drain:

Greasy foods to avoid in your sink drains

- Meat fats
- Cooking oils
- Butter or margarine
- Sauces
- Dairy products

Other items to avoid in your sink drains and toilets

- Coffee grounds
- Prescription pills
- Flushable cat litter
- Motor oils or transmission fluids
- Nail polish and polish remover

Tip courtesy of Care2.com^[20]

Share the Wealth of Knowledge!

Please share this market update with family, friends, or colleagues. If you would like us to add them to our list, simply click on the "Forward email" link below.

We love being introduced!

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Investing involves risk including the potential loss of principal. No investment strategy can guarantee a profit or protect against loss in periods of declining values.

Diversification does not guarantee profit nor is it guaranteed to protect assets.

International investing involves special risks such as currency fluctuation and political instability and may not be suitable for all investors.

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 average of 30 significant stocks traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the NASDAQ. The DJIA was invented by Charles Dow back in 1896.

The Nasdaq Composite is an index of the common stocks and similar securities listed on the NASDAQ stock market and is considered a broad indicator of the performance of stocks of technology companies and growth companies.

The MSCI EAFE Index was created by Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) that serves as a benchmark of the performance in major international equity markets as represented by 21 major MSCI indices from Europe, Australia and Southeast Asia.

The S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Indices are the leading measures of U.S. residential real estate prices, tracking changes in the value of residential real estate. The index is made up of measures of real estate prices in 20 cities and weighted to produce the index.

The 10-year Treasury Note represents debt owed by the United States Treasury to the public. Since the U.S. Government is seen as a risk-free borrower, investors use the 10-year Treasury Note as a benchmark for the long-term bond market.

Opinions expressed are subject to change without notice and are not intended as investment advice or to predict future performance.

Past performance does not guarantee future results.

You cannot invest directly in an index.

Consult your financial professional before making any investment decision.

Fixed income investments are subject to various risks including changes in interest rates, credit quality, inflation risk, market valuations, prepayments, corporate events, tax ramifications and other factors.

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[1] <http://wsj-us.econoday.com/byshoweventfull.asp?fid=477711&cust=wsj-us&year=2017&lid=0&prev=/byweek.asp#top>

[2] <http://www.cnbc.com/2017/05/12/us-markets.html>

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[3] <http://performance.morningstar.com/Performance/index-c/performance-return.action?t=%21DJ@ion=usa&culture=en-US>

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[4] <http://performance.morningstar.com/Performance/index-c/performance-return.action?t=@CCO>

<https://www.msci.com/end-of-day-data-search>

[5] <http://wsj-us.econoday.com/byshoweventfull.asp?fid=477711&cust=wsj-us&year=2017&lid=0&prev=/byweek.asp#top>

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[6] <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-12/gain-in-u-s-retail-sales-suggests-slowdown-was-temporary>

[7] <http://money.cnn.com/2017/04/22/news/credit-suisse-retail/>

[8] <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-12/four-month-high-in-u-s-consumer-sentiment-to-sustain-spending>

[9] <http://wsj-us.econoday.com/byshoweventfull.asp?fid=477843&cust=wsj-us&year=2017&lid=0&prev=/byweek.asp#top>

[10] <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-12/four-month-high-in-u-s-consumer-sentiment-to-sustain-spending>

[11] <http://wsj-us.econoday.com/byshoweventfull.asp?fid=477394&cust=wsj->

[us&year=2017&lid=0&prev=/byweek.asp#top](#)

[12] <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-12/rebound-in-u-s-consumer-prices-shows-inflation-stabilizing>

[13] <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-12/four-month-high-in-u-s-consumer-sentiment-to-sustain-spending>

<http://wsj-us.econoday.com/byshoveventfull.asp?fid=477675&cust=wsj-us&year=2017&lid=0&prev=/byweek.asp#top>

[14] <http://www.cnbc.com/2017/05/11/oil-stable-on-expectations-of-extended-opecl-led-production-cut.html>

[15] <http://www.cnbc.com/2017/03/15/fed-raises-rates-at-march-meeting.html>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/usa-fed-evans-idUSS8N1F901E>

[16] <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes/a570/spanish-garlic-shrimp-120803/>

[17] <https://www.irs.gov/uac/safeguarding-taxpayer-data-create-strong-passwords>

[18] <http://www.golfdigest.com/story/why-you-slice>

[19] <http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/features/cough-relief-how-lose-bad-cough#1>

[20] <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/what-not-to-put-down-your-drain.html>

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