

# WEEKLY MARKET COMMENTARY

For the Week of March 20, 2017

## THE MARKETS

Stocks began in the green on St. Patrick's Day but slipped by closing. Adobe's strong earnings report supported the S&P tech index. The healthcare sector lagged following a disappointing report on a cholesterol drug and uncertainty over the proposed healthcare bill. For the week, the Dow rose 0.08 percent to close at 20,914.62. The S&P gained 0.28 percent to finish at 2,378.25, and the NASDAQ climbed 0.67 percent to end the week at 5,901.00.

Returns Through 3/17/17	1 Week	YTD	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year
Dow Jones Industrials (TR)	0.08	6.47	22.78	11.54	12.40
NASDAQ Composite (PR)	0.67	9.62	23.58	11.30	14.07
S&P 500 (TR)	0.28	6.72	19.06	10.88	13.52
Barclays US Agg Bond (TR)	0.50	0.15	0.54	2.47	2.27
MSCI EAFE (TR)	2.07	7.29	11.25	1.25	5.53

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.

**Big Change** — The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) would change the funding of Medicaid as of Jan. 1, 2020, from the current open-ended federal matching structure to a single block grant provided to the states by the federal government (source: AHCA, BTN Research).

**Us and Them** — China has a 6.5 percent target for economic growth during calendar year 2017. The United States has achieved year-over-year growth of at least 6.5 percent just once in the last 50 years, i.e., growth of 7.3 percent during calendar year 1984 (source: National People's Congress, BTN Research).

**Both Components Necessary** — GDP growth of 3 percent per year, a goal of the Trump administration, could be achieved with 2 percent productivity growth (output per hour per worker) combined with 1 percent labor force growth (source: Department of Labor, BTN Research).

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## WEEKLY FOCUS – Reaping the Rewards of Age

Whether you're approaching retirement or already there, finding extra ways to save money can help you live within your budget and achieve your financial goals. Taking advantage of special senior discounts is one easy way to spend less while shopping, traveling, dining out and more. Here are a few examples:

**Health.** Certain optical chains offer savings on eyeglasses. Holders of a group retiree or Medicare health plan may be eligible for a free SilverSneakers® membership, which provides access to more than 13,000 participating health facilities. On the first Tuesday of every month, Walgreens gives customers 55 and older a 20 percent discount on most regularly priced purchases.

**Activities.** Several airlines provide senior discounts on full-price tickets. It may even be possible to find a better deal by shopping around. Alamo, Avis, Budget, Hertz and National offer up to 30 percent discounts on car rentals. AARP members frequently save 20 to 30 percent on standard hotel rates. Those 62 and older can obtain the lifetime senior pass to over 2,000 national parks, forests and wildlife refuges for \$10 (\$20 through the mail). Many golf courses, museums and theater chains have special deals for seniors. At AMC theatres, seniors save 30 percent, and many locations give even greater discounts on Tuesdays. Community colleges, public universities and private educational institutions throughout the country give waivers or discounts to older students.

**Restaurants and retail.** Many local and national restaurants have senior discounts, but staff don't typically mention them because of age sensitivity. Grocery stores often discount senior's bills a certain day of the week or month, as do clothing stores like Kohl's, Dress Barn and Banana Republic.

**Miscellaneous.** Thanks to considerable driving experience, spending less time on the road and having good credit scores, older drivers usually receive a discount on their auto insurance when they ask. Some insurers extend a mature homeowner credit on home policies. Jiffy Lube and Midas auto service providers also offer senior discounts.

Price cuts may vary from one location to another, and an AARP membership is required for some savings. To search for local discounts, go to [seniordiscounts.com](http://seniordiscounts.com), use the Sciddy app (learn more at [sciddy.com](http://sciddy.com)) or google the name of a business and "senior discount." When in doubt, it never hurts to ask!

Contact our office today for a review of your current financial situation and an evaluation of your goals. We can help you find a good balance of saving and spending to keep you feeling confident about your finances.

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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 2017. All rights reserved. Securities offered through Securities America, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC. SAI# 1739152.1