



# THE ANCHOR

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM ANCORA WEALTH PARTNERS

## January 2024

**We want to wish everyone a Happy New Year!  
May it be filled with love, joy, happiness and prosperity.**

### Holiday Hours:

**Our office will be closed Monday January 1<sup>st</sup> and Monday January 15<sup>th</sup>**

*Angie, Melissa, Kyle & Kasey*

### Market Recap for December 2023

Index	12/30/22	12/29/2023	Monthly Change	Monthly % Gain/Loss
DJIA	33,147.25	37,689.54	1,738.65	4.61%
NASDAQ	10,466.48	14,955.37	729.15	4.88%
S&P 500	3,839.50	4,769.83	202.03	4.24%

Index	2023 YTD Change	2023 YTD % Gain/Loss
DJIA	4,542.29	12.05%
NASDAQ	4,488.89	30.02%
S&P 500	930.33	19.50%

*The information contained in this email does not purport to be a complete description of the securities, markets or developments referred to in this material and does not constitute a recommendation. The Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA), commonly known as "The Dow" is an index representing 30 stocks of companies maintained and reviewed by the editors of the Wall Street Journal. The S&P 500 is an unmanaged index of 500 widely held stocks that is generally considered representative of the U.S. Stock market. The NASDAQ composite is an unmanaged index of securities traded on the NASDAQ system. Keep in mind that individuals cannot invest directly in any index and index performance does not include transaction costs or other fees, which will affect actual investment performance. Individual investors' results will vary. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Investing involves risk and investors may incur a profit or a loss.*

### Trivia Questions:

1. Which blood type is a universal donor?
2. Which country artist threw javelin while attending Oklahoma State University?
3. What president was a licensed bartender?

*Answers on page 5*



## FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS FOR 2024

*Saving money can be hard so why not make it a game and challenge yourself.  
Try one or all of these tricks and see how much you can save.*

- **52-Week Saving Challenge**

Start by depositing \$1 on week one, \$2 week two, \$3 on the third week and so on. Keep the funds you save in an interest-bearing savings account. By week 52, you'll have saved \$1,378. You can try it in reverse as well. If you received money for Christmas, start by depositing \$52 week one and decrease by one dollar per week. You'll save the same amount by the end of the challenge.

- **26-Week Saving Challenge**

Similar to the 52-week challenge, you'll start by saving \$3 on week one and increase the contribution by \$3 each week; \$6 week two, \$9 week three and so on. By week 26, you'll have saved \$1,053.

- **Dollar Saving Challenge**

Set up an automatic transfer for \$7 per week into your savings account. It may not sound like a lot of money, but \$365 along with any other savings challenge you choose, adds up!

- **The No-Spend Saving Challenge**

This challenge is highly customizable but here's the gist of it. You'll turn saving into a game by setting tight restrictions on all the spending you do, limiting yourself to only basic necessities: housing, bills and groceries. You'll cook at home, find free things to do and challenge yourself to see just how frugal you're capable of being. Then, pocket the money you save and direct it toward building long-term financial stability.

- **Round-Up Saving Challenge**

For every purchase you make, round up to the nearest dollar and pocket the difference. At the end of the day, put that change in a "change jar". Then, at the end of the month, take it to your bank and put it in your savings account.

If you get a bonus, tips or birthday money...PUT IT IN SAVINGS!!!!

Source:Experian.com

# MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR

*January 15*

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a scholar and minister who led the civil rights movement. He had a seismic impact on race relations in the United States beginning in the mid-1950s.

Among his many efforts, King headed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLS). Through his activism and inspirational speeches, he played a pivotal role in ending the legal segregation of African American citizens in the United States, as well as the creation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

King won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, among several other honors. He continues to be remembered as one of the most influential and inspirational African American leaders in history.

After his assassination, he was memorialized in 1983 by President Ronald Reagan with the creation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was first celebrated in 1986 and in all 50 states in 2000.

Just a few quotes:

- Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.
- Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.
- Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude.
- I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.
- In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

*Source: biography*

## 2024 RETIREMENT PLAN CONTRIBUTION CHANGES

**The IRS released the retirement contribution limits for 2024.**

**Make your retirement contributions count.**

For the 2024 tax year, you can contribute up to \$7,000 to either a traditional or Roth IRA. If you're age 50 or older, you can contribute \$8,000. Contributing as much as you can, as early as you can, allows those assets more time to potentially grow and compound. And remember, contributions generally must be made before you file your tax return the following April.

You may also contribute up to \$23,000 to applicable 401(k), 403(b) and most 457 plans, as well as the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan. The Catch-up contribution limit for those age 50 or older remains \$7,500 for these retirement plans. Employee contributions to qualified plans generally must be made by December 31.

Additional changes are increasing the deductible limit on charitable distributions from \$100,000 to \$105,000 for 2024. Also added is a deductible limit for a one-time election to treat a distribution from an individual retirement account made directly by the trustee to a split-interest entity. For 2024, this limitation is increased to \$53,000 up from \$50,000.

*Source: IRS*

## Treatment of Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease

Untreated gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) can lead to the following serious complications:

- Esophageal ulcers (mucosal defects that won't heal)
- Esophageal strictures (scar tissue)
- Barrett's esophagus (a disorder of the cells lining the esophageal mucosa, which may lead to cancer)
- Esophageal cancer

Treatments for GERD include lifestyle measures, medication, and surgery.

**Lifestyle measures:** Avoid large meals that can increase pressure in the stomach and cause reflux. Stay away from fatty foods, acidic food, mints, chocolate, cinnamon, carbonated beverages, coffee, tea and too much salt. And most important...DON'T SMOKE!

The American College of Gastroenterology recommendations are to lose weight if you are overweight or have recently gained weight. Avoid high-fat meals within 2 to 3 hours of bedtime. Try raising the head of your bed 6 to 8 inches at night with blocks or a foam wedge if you suffer from nighttime reflux. Using pillows can cause an unnatural bend in the body and increase pressure on the stomach. It is also helpful to sleep on your left side, avoid tight-fitting clothes and, when reaching down, bend at the knees as opposed to the waist.

**Medication:** If lifestyle modifications don't help, your doctor may recommend medication to neutralize or decrease acid production in the stomach. And if that doesn't control your symptoms, you may need to take an over-the-counter **antacid** (Gaviscon, Gelusil, Maalox, Mylanta) to quickly neutralize stomach acid after a meal. You can also try an **H2 blocker** (Tagamet HB, Pepcid AC) that has a longer effect on gastric acid than antacids. They usually need to be taken twice a day. A combination antacid/H2 blocker, Pepcid Complete, may also be more effective at relieving symptoms than H2 blockers or antacids alone. And last, but not least, are **proton pump inhibitors** (PPIs) such as Nexium, Prevacid, Prilosec, Protonix, AcipHex, Dexilant and Zegerid. (All have generic brands that are more affordable.) They are the strongest suppressors and only need to be taken once a day. Besides providing the most effective heartburn relief, PPIs are good at healing inflammation of the esophagus caused by GERD. Keep in mind there are concerns over long-term suppression of gastric acid using proton pump inhibitors. The main concern is that it could lead to bone fractures and infection. PPIs should be taken for about two weeks for uncomplicated GERD. Such a course of treatment can be repeated for control of occasional symptoms. It is important to discuss the need for long-term use of PPIs (more than two weeks) with your doctor. Endoscopy and pH monitoring should usually be performed before committing to long-term use. If ongoing, PPI use is found to be appropriate or necessary to control GERD or the complications of GERD (like Barrett's Esophagus), the benefits should outweigh the potential risks.

**Surgery:** Lifestyle measures and medications are so effective at controlling reflux symptoms that few people need to undergo surgery. However, there is increasing evidence to support a surgical approach when medical therapy fails. There can be complications so talk to your doctor to see if surgery is right for you.

Source: RxWiki

## **JANUARY and a smidgen of FEBRUARY HOLIDAYS AND FUNDAYS**

January 04: National Spaghetti Day – *it's what's for supper*

January 07: Feast of the Epiphany-Three Kings, Old Rock Day

January 08: Bubble Bath Day

January 10: National Take the Stairs Day, Peculiar People Day

January 11: Step in a Puddle and Splash Your Friend's Day

January 13: Make your Dream Come True Day, Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>

January 15: Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday, National Hat Day

January 16: Appreciate a Dragon Day, National Nothing Day

January 17: Kid Inventors Day, Ditch New Years Resolutions Day – *if you even made any*

January 20: Penguin Awareness Day

January 21: National Hugging Day, Squirrel Appreciation Day

January 23: National Handwriting Day, Measure Your Feet Day – *But why?*

January 24: Compliment Day, Global Belly Laugh Day

January 25: Opposite Day

January 27: Chocolate Cake Day, Punch the Clock Day

January 28: Data Privacy Day, National Kazoo Day

January 29: Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day

January 31: Inspire Your Heart with Art Day, Backward Day

February 01: National Freedom Day, Spunky Old Broads Day

February 02: Ground Hog Day – *PLEASE don't see your shadow!*

February 03: The Day the Music Died – ***Buddy Holly, Richie Valens and the Big Bopper died in a plane crash in 1959.***

*Source: Holiday Insights*

### **Local Company Spotlight**

#### **Eithiel Estes - Double E Real Estate**

Services of Keller Williams  
www.eithiel.com  
2280 S Church St. Ste. 206  
Burlington, NC 27215  
336-223-4873

### **Trivia Answer**

1. O Negative
2. Garth Brooks
3. Abraham Lincoln

## WANT TO KICK PHONE ADDICTION?

*Believe it or not, there's an app for that.*

Our phone dings with a notification. After checking, we find ourselves scrolling through social media or playing a game. App makers have gotten clever at not only keeping us interested but keeping us wanting more. Once notifications activate our curiosity, we then want to check our messages, news stories and entertainment. It's been found that we unlock our phones up to 108 time a day.

Enter Focus apps. These actually discourage us from using our phone. Some have productivity timers designed to keep our eyes off our phone by offering virtual rewards. For example, when we open **Forest** (\$4), we can grow a tree in the app while a timer counts down. When we close out to use other apps, the tree withers away. With **Focus Dog** (free), the longer we stick with our timed focus session, the more points we get, represented by cartoon doughnuts fed to a cute dog.

Other apps, such as **DTCH** (\$10/month) makes our phone vibrate when we unlock it and sometimes won't stop until we've put it down. And **Offscreen** (\$4.50/year) tracks how many hours we spend on our phone and how often we unlock it. **Offscreen** also lets us schedule time during which it will block distracting apps. But these apps have limits. They can grow frustrating over time, making them easy to ignore or delete. We can retrain our brains though. Starting with 15 minutes with our phones in another room so we can't see them or hear notifications. And work towards being away from our phones for longer periods of time. Eventually, we'll stop checking it so frequently, even when it's on us.

Source: AARP

## HOW GOOD IS YOUR CREDIT SCORE

*This is FICO's ranking; lenders may interpret the numbers differently.*

<b>800+</b>	Exceptional ( <i>well above average</i> )
<b>740-799</b>	Very Good ( <i>above average</i> )
<b>670-739</b>	Good ( <i>just above average</i> )
<b>580-669</b>	Fair ( <i>below average</i> )
<b>&lt;580</b>	Poor ( <i>well below average</i> )

**DON'T** pay upfront to have your credit score fixed. You should be very skeptical of a company that promises they can repair your score.

**DON'T** open a new account if you're maxed out on another. Multiple negative effects generally outweigh the possible benefit of a new account.

**DON'T** expect that paying off your mortgage or car loan will necessarily help your score. You're rewarded for recent management of installment accounts.

**DON'T** close a credit card once you've paid it off. Losing the available credit for that account increases your overall utilization rate, temporarily lowering your scores.

**DO** pay your credit card bills on time and work to lower your balances. Having a low usage ratio is better for your score.

Source: AARP



## SHEPHERD'S PIE

### Ingredients:

2 ½ pounds potatoes, peeled and cooked  
1 stick butter  
1 cup sour cream  
Salt and pepper to taste  
2 pounds ground beef  
½ cup chopped onion  
1 medium red pepper, chopped and/or mushrooms  
1 teaspoon garlic salt  
1 can cream of mushroom soup  
1 can whole kernel corn, drained or frozen white corn, peas and carrots  
½ cup milk  
1 cup shredded cheese

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mash potatoes with sour cream and butter and salt and pepper; set aside. In a large skillet, cook beef with onion and red pepper until meat is no longer pink and vegetables are tender; drain. Stir garlic salt, soup, vegetables and milk into meat mixture.

Spread meat mixture into a 13x9 baking dish. Top with mashed potatoes. Sprinkle cheese over potatoes (or mix into meat mixture).

Bake uncovered until heated through, 30-35 minutes.



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