WSG Monthly Newsletter

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WEALTH STRATEGY GROUP

A Smarter August Starts Here

As summer begins to wind down, August is the perfect time to pause, reflect, and look ahead. In this month's newsletter, you'll find a brief market update, exciting news about our recent office move, and an article debunking common retirement myths that could impact your long-term financial plans. Whether you're checking in on your investments or planning for the future, we're here to provide the insights and guidance to help you move forward with clarity and confidence. Happy reading!

What's New

In case you missed it, our Marquette office has officially moved locations! You can now find us at 1645 Commerce Drive, Marquette, MI 49855. We'll even have parking waiting for you!

Did You Know?

Our advisory team regularly writes and posts blogs on our website with pertinent information covering timely events.

We share these blogs to our social media pages, so don't forget to follow us there for that and other important updates. You can find us on Facebook, LinkedIn, and even Instagram! Give us a follow.

August Market Update

Markets continued their positive momentum through mid-July, supported by resilient corporate earnings and ongoing investment in artificial intelligence. However, investors are increasingly balancing optimism about economic growth against persistent inflation, higher interest rates and signs that the labor market is gradually cooling.

Inflation. June brought encouraging news as consumer prices declined 0.4% from the previous month, largely due to lower energy costs. Even so, inflation remains above the Federal Reserve's 2% target, with prices still 3.5% higher than a year ago. Rising oil prices during July may put renewed upward pressure on inflation in the months ahead, making upcoming inflation reports especially important.

Federal Reserve Policy. The Federal Reserve has maintained its target interest rate at 3.50%–3.75% while monitoring inflation and economic activity. Expectations for rate cuts have diminished as inflation has proven more persistent than anticipated. For now, the Fed appears committed to a "wait-and-see" approach, with future decisions driven by incoming economic data.

Labor Market. The U.S. economy added 57,000 jobs in June, while unemployment held steady at 4.2%. Previous months' job gains were also revised lower, indicating hiring has slowed more than initially reported. Although the labor market remains healthy by historical standards, the pace of hiring has moderated, which could eventually temper consumer spending and economic growth.

Markets & Valuation. Despite economic uncertainty, U.S. equity markets have continued to post gains in 2026 and market leadership has broadened beyond the largest technology companies. Continued earnings growth and optimism surrounding artificial intelligence have remained important drivers of investor confidence.

Bond Market. Treasury yields moved higher during July as investors reassessed inflation expectations. Higher yields have pressured bond prices but have also created attractive opportunities for investors seeking dependable income. Today's bond market offers yields that have not been available for many years, making high-quality fixed income an increasingly valuable component of diversified portfolios.

Outlook. While market volatility may increase following strong year-to-date gains, the overall economic backdrop remains constructive. Inflation continues to ease gradually, corporate earnings have remained resilient, and consumers continue to support economic growth despite higher interest rates. Rather than reacting to short-term headlines, we continue to believe investors are best served by maintaining a diversified portfolio aligned with their long-term financial objectives. Periods of uncertainty often create opportunities, and staying disciplined through changing market conditions has historically rewarded long-term investors.

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Common Retirement Myths That Could Cost You

Retirement is one of life's biggest milestones, but it's also one of the most misunderstood. Well-meaning advice from friends, family, or even social media can lead to assumptions that may not hold up when it's time to stop working. The truth is, successful retirement planning is built on facts. Here are four common retirement myths and the realities behind them.

Myth #1: "I'll spend less in retirement."
It's easy to assume that once you're no longer commuting to work or buying business attire, your expenses will naturally decrease. While some costs may go down, others often increase.
Many retirees find themselves spending more on travel, hobbies, dining out, or helping children and grandchildren. Healthcare costs also tend to rise with age and can become one of the largest expenses in retirement. Home maintenance, inflation, and long-term care needs are additional factors that can impact your budget.
The reality: Your spending may change in retirement, but it won't necessarily decrease. Creating a realistic retirement budget can help ensure you're prepared for both expected and unexpected expenses.

Myth #2: "Social Security will cover most of my expenses."
Social Security provides an important source of retirement income, but it was never intended to be the only source. For many retirees, Social Security replaces only a portion of their pre-retirement income.
The amount you receive depends on factors such as your earnings history and the age at which you begin claiming benefits. While these payments can provide a solid foundation, most retirees rely on additional savings, retirement accounts, pensions, or investment income to maintain their desired lifestyle.
The reality: Social Security is one piece of the retirement puzzle—not the entire picture. Building additional sources of income can provide greater flexibility and financial confidence throughout retirement.

Myth #3: "I can always work a few more years."
Many people plan to delay retirement or continue working part-time to boost their savings. While that may work out, it's important to recognize that not everyone has complete control over when they retire.
Unexpected health issues, family caregiving responsibilities, company downsizing, or changes in the job market can force retirement earlier than planned. If your retirement strategy depends on working longer, an unforeseen event could significantly affect your financial security.
The reality: It's wise to plan as though retirement could come sooner than expected. Saving consistently today can provide more options and greater peace of mind if your timeline changes.

Myth #4: "I'm too young to think about retirement."
Retirement can seem like a distant goal when you're just starting your career or juggling other financial priorities. However, one of the greatest advantages younger investors have is time.
Starting early allows your investments more years to benefit from compound growth, where your earnings have the opportunity to generate additional earnings over time. Even modest contributions made consistently can grow significantly over several decades.
The good news? You don't have to save everything at once. Small, consistent steps taken today can make a meaningful difference tomorrow.
The reality: There's no perfect age to start planning—but earlier is almost always better. The sooner you begin, the more opportunities you have to build the retirement you envision.

Planning Beats Guessing
Retirement isn't one-size-fits-all. Your goals, lifestyle, and financial situation are unique, and your retirement strategy should reflect that. Taking the time to review your savings, estimate future expenses, and develop a personalized plan can help you avoid costly misconceptions and make informed decisions with confidence. Whether retirement is five years away or thirty, thoughtful planning today can help put you on a stronger path for tomorrow.