WSG Monthly Newsletter

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WEALTH STRATEGY GROUP

A Season of Gratitude

November is a season of gratitude, and we're thankful for the trust you place in us. As the holidays approach and the year winds down, it's also a great time to wrap up any financial to-dos before December 31.
In this month's edition, we'll review what's happening in the markets, answer a common question about required minimum distributions, and share a few ways to make your charitable giving go further this year. We also hope you'll join us at our Holiday Open Houses in December!



Welcome, Cain Besse!

Please join us in welcoming Cain, our newest employee in the Marquette office. With more than a decade leading his family's manufacturing business, Cain brings a business owner's perspective to our team. He lives in Marquette with his wife, Corinne, and son, Rory. Feel free to stop in and say hi!

Holiday Open Houses

Marquette: Thursday, December 3
3:00-6:00 p.m. ET

Tomahawk: Wednesday, December 9
3:00-6:00 p.m. CT

Celebrate the season with us. We hope to see you there!

November Market Update

As 2026 nears its end, investors are weighing stubborn inflation, a cooling job market, rising long-term interest rates, and the possibility of further action from the Federal Reserve.

Inflation:
Inflation picked up in September, with consumer prices rising 3.7% from a year earlier, up from 3.4% in August. Higher gasoline prices drove more than half of the monthly increase. Core inflation (excluding food and energy) was 2.6%.

Federal Reserve Policy:
The federal Reserve decided to hold rates at its October meeting after raising them to a target rate of 3.75%-4.00% in September. Elevated inflation concerns continue to persist, and most officials expect another incrase may be appropriate by year-end.

Labor Market
The economy added just 29,000 jobs in September, and July and August were revised lower by a combined 60,000. The unemployment rate edged up to 4.2%, while wages grew 3.0% over the past year.

Markets & Valuations:
Equity markets slipped in September, with the S&P 500 down about 1.2% as rising interest rates weighed on stocks. With valuations elevated in parts of the market, investors may see continued volatility as expectations for inflation, rates, and earnings shift.

Bond Market:
Treasury yields rose in September, with the 10-year yield climbing to about 5.3% by month-end. Rising yields pushed bond prices lower, especially for longer-term bonds, but also offer higher income for new investments.

Outlook:
Looking ahead to year-end, markets will remain focused on inflation, employment, and the Federal Reserve's next steps. Rather than reacting to short-term market movements, we continue to believe investors are best served by staying diversified, disciplined, and focused on their long-term financial goals.

Retirement and Investing Q&A

How do Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) work?

There comes a point when the IRS generally requires you to withdraw a minimum amount each year from traditional IRAs and most employer retirement plans, currently starting at age 73 for most retirees. The deadline is typically December 31, and missing it can result in a penalty. If you're charitably inclined, a Qualified Charitable Distribution may help satisfy your RMD.

Your Year-End Checklist

Take time before December 31 to ask yourself:

- *Have I taken my RMD, if required?*
- *Have I used my remaining FSA dollars?*
- *Can I contribute more to my retirement accounts?*
- *Are there tax-loss harvesting opportunities?*
- *What charitable gifts do I want to make?*
- *Should I change Medicare plans by December 7?*
- *Are my beneficiaries current?*
- *Have I scheduled a year-end review?*

The Gift of Planning: Year-End Charitable Giving

Many of us feel a special pull to give back during the holiday season. With a little planning, your generosity can support the causes you care about while potentially offering tax benefits, too.

Your Appreciated Investments
Many people give cash, but donating stocks or funds that have grown in value may let you avoid capital gains taxes on the growth while still deducting the full market value, if you itemize.

Your Donor-Advised Fund
You can contribute to a donor-advised fund now, potentially receive a tax deduction this year, and recommend grants to your favorite charities over time. This can be especially helpful in a higher-income year.

Your IRA
Making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) allows IRA owners age 70½ or older to give directly from their IRA to charity. QCDs may count toward your RMD and are excluded from taxable income.

Your Tax Picture
Laws change, too. Tax changes that took effect in 2026 affect how charitable gifts are deducted, including a new deduction for cash gifts by those who don't itemize. A quick review before year-end can help you plan.

Keep Your Purpose in Mind
The most meaningful gifts reflect your values. Consider which causes matter most to you and how giving fits into your overall financial plan. This holiday season, **find the giving strategy that's right for you by talking with us before December 31.**

1645 Commerce Drive| Marquette, MI 49855 | 906-228-3696
1411 N 4th Street, Suite 103 | Tomahawk, WI 54487 | 715-453-0722
Email: rctegge@wsginvest.com | Web: www.wsginvest.com

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