

Quarterly Newsletter

BLANTON
WEALTH
MANAGEMENT

February 2025



Welcome!

- We have had wonderful holiday seasons and have enjoyed the beautiful snowfall! We are now preparing for tax season (and Spring - dust off your gardening gear!).
 - We introduced a new communication last month - a *Message from Laura's Desk*, with notes on our market outlook and a recap of 2024. We hope you enjoyed it. If you missed it, please let us know and we'll make sure you get a copy.
 - **In this newsletter**, you'll find an article covering tax refunds, tax information, and updates from our team.
 - If you have any questions about your Raymond James tax forms, give us a call!
- **Using TurboTax to file?** Raymond James has a partnership that enables clients to import data from their Raymond James 1099s directly into their TurboTax software. To use this service, select "Raymond James" from the financial institution drop-down menu in TurboTax. Then enter your account number and document identification number printed on your 1099. Select the forms you desire to import and your tax information will be filled automatically with the appropriate information. Raymond James recommends that you review your tax information to ensure the upload was successful.

Enjoy this month's newsletter!

In this newsletter you can expect:

Important Notes
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Blanton Wealth
Management
- Laura &
Bethany



*A note from
your team...*



Laura

Well, 2025 has gotten off to a quick start, to say the least! It's been a busy few months, but we had such a lovely holiday season with family and friends that I was able to hit the ground running. I have taken up archery, hosted relatives (one has nothing to do with the other, I promise), seen Emmitt continue to advance in his karate studies, and experienced three snowfalls here in the Upstate. Of course, the snow comes right, alongside weather so nice it's got my trees blooming and my allergies all mixed up. The snow has been welcome, at least according to Emmitt.

I had the opportunity to spend a few days in St. Pete in January at the RJ Institute of Investment Management Consulting (IIMC), Level I program. We covered in-depth material around investment management such as asset allocation, manager selection, and portfolio construction, and they topped it off with a (largely written) exam. It was a great experience and I'm looking forward to the Level II program – that is, assuming I passed the test.

Next month, I'm off to St. Pete again for a 3-day conference for experienced advisors that provides an in-depth look at the resources available to serve you. I'm looking forward to connecting with great people and to leveraging what I learn to work to continually improve your experience and outcomes.

Out of office:

My St. Pete trip is March 3 – 5, so Bethany will be holding down the fort on those days.

I'll also be out of the office on March 13, 14, and 17 – Emmitt is dragging us back to Disney and we're even working in a day at Universal. Thoughts and prayers appreciated.

Our office will be closed on April 18 in observance of Good Friday.

Wishing you a beautiful, sunny Spring!

Bethany

I'm happy to share that I have passed my Series 7 exam! I passed in early December, so I was able to relax and enjoy Christmas with my family. It was the best gift of the season. I am now focusing on my last exam, the Series 66. Wish me luck!

Since I've been focused on studying and the holidays, my camera roll for this past quarter is only filled with screenshots of notes and study tips. Enjoy some pictures of my sweet pups; Goose (brown dog), Maverick (black dog), Willie (hound dog), and Dolly (dachshund).



3 Ideas For When the IRS Owes You

Breaking even is the goal. But if you find yourself receiving a refund this year, consider these ideas for putting it to work.

When it comes to federal income taxes, a small refund or getting nothing back means you (and your tax preparer) were precise and came close to achieving the desired outcome: to break even. If you end up with an unexpectedly large bill or a refund, however, that means you may want to reconsider your estimated taxes or how much you're withholding from your paycheck. A qualified tax preparer can help you find tax strategies that could help you keep more of your money in your pocket – legally.

If you expect a refund because the government withheld too much of your money, don't think of it as a windfall. We're not denying the psychological effect of getting a springtime "bonus," we're just encouraging you to make sure your money is being used wisely. Consider investing in your life, well-being and financial future. Then remember to talk to your tax pro about making adjustments for next year.

If you do end up with a refund this year, consider these ideas for making the most of it.

Invest in your future

- *Save for retirement.* Contribute to your existing IRA or start a new one.
- *Pay down debt.* Eliminate high-interest debt as soon as possible.
- *Build up your emergency fund.*
- *Fortify your portfolio.* Talk to your financial advisor about how to invest the money.

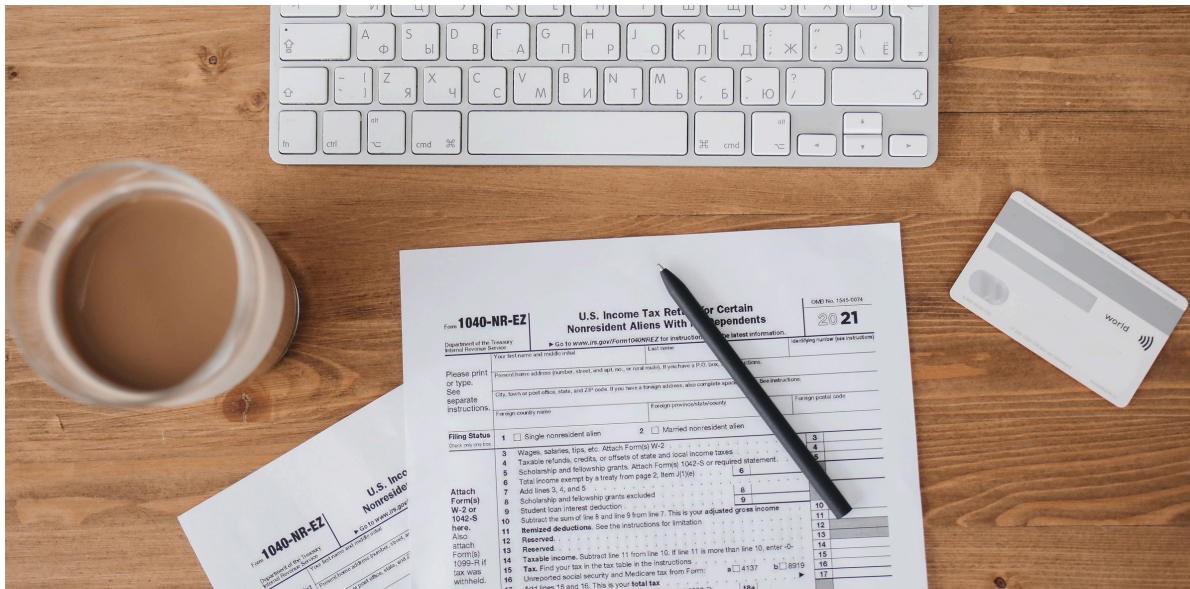
Invest in yourself

- *Save for higher education.* For yourself, your kids or grandkids.
- *Renovate your home.* Add value to your home by making thoughtful upgrades or repairs.
- *Start an exercise routine.* This could mean purchasing at-home equipment, connecting with a trainer or joining a gym. Your well-being is important.
- *Start a "fun" fund.* Save money for future big-ticket wants so you can enjoy them without going into debt.

Invest in the world

- *Become more generous.* Give to a charity you have always wanted to support.
- *Go green.* Invest in ways to save on energy expenses and reduce your carbon footprint.
- *Grow your own garden.* Save money by growing healthy fruits and veggies in your backyard.

Whatever you decide to do with your refund this year, avoid squandering the money and make the most of it. If you end up owing taxes, talk to your tax and financial advisors about ways you can pay the bill without disrupting your investment plan or depleting your savings. If you anticipate owing taxes again, you may also want to discuss investment and tax-saving strategies to reduce your liability next year and over the long term. These two professionals should be able to work together to address your specific situation and help you refine your tax strategies going forward.



It's Tax Season

The holidays have come and gone, which means it is time for tax season!

You may receive multiple 1099s this year if you transferred your account to Raymond James in 2024. Wells Fargo Advisors (or Schwab, Fidelity, etc.) will mail you your tax forms by March 15th.

Raymond James will also mail your 1099 by March 15th. Many of you will receive your 1099 prior to March 15th as we have mailings scheduled for February 15th and February 28th for accounts with less complex securities, such as equities and mutual funds.

For those of you who made a distribution from your IRA account (or if you are receiving a Required Minimum Distribution), keep an eye out for those 1099-Rs as well. They tend to come earlier in the year, typically mailing on 1/31.


Other key documents to look for:

A **1099-Q** if you took a distribution from a 529.

A **5498** if you made a contribution to a retirement account in 2024.

This isn't a comprehensive list, so feel free to call us if you have any questions regarding your specific tax documents. We are happy to help!

Thank you for reading!

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