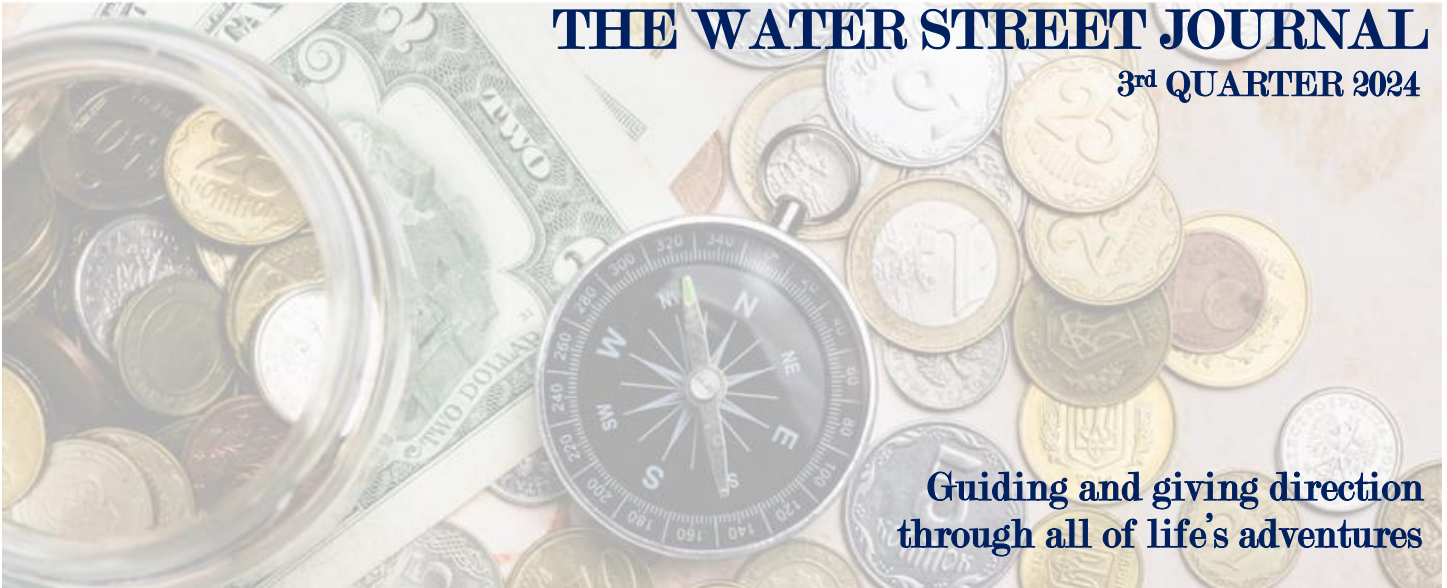


THE WATER STREET JOURNAL

3rd QUARTER 2024



**Guiding and giving direction
through all of life's adventures**

DANIELLE VALLEAU

Financial Advisor

Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC

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Did You Know?

The Olympic torch is lit the old-fashioned way in an ancient ceremony at the temple of Hera, in Greece: Actresses, wearing costumes of Greek priestesses, use a parabolic mirror and sun rays to kindle the torch.

From there, the torch starts its relay to the host city: It is usually carried by runners, but it has traveled on a boat, on an airplane (and the Concorde), on horseback, on the back of a camel, via radio signal, underwater, and in a canoe.

The unlit Olympic torch has also been taken to space several times.

The relay torch and the Olympic flame are supposed to burn during the whole event. In case the flame goes out, it can only be reignited with a backup flame, which has been lit in Greece as well, and with never a regular lighter!

Staying In Touch

The office will be closed on:
July 4th, September 2nd
(Labor Day)

The market will be closed on:
July 3rd 1:00PM
July 4th
September 2nd

Danielle Out for Education and Vacation August 6th – 14th and September 3rd & 4th

Annette Out for Education August 28th -30th

When out of the office:
Please be aware there may be delayed responses.

From Danielle's Desk



June Market Review

Dear Valued Clients:

Having hit 31 record highs since January and up more than 15% year to date, the S&P 500 is off to its best start to the year since 2019 and the best start to an election year *ever*; driven by mega-cap tech stocks and artificial intelligence (AI) tailwinds. NVIDIA's meteoric gains and 10-for-1 stock split briefly propelled the company's market cap above \$3 trillion, surpassing Microsoft as the most valuable public company in the world.

"Tech, Communication Services, and Consumer Discretionary remained center stage as market performance concentration continued — S&P 500 minus mega-cap tech was down," said Raymond James Chief Investment Officer Larry Adam. "The market continues to rally on weaker economic data but we caution that a slowing economy could dampen earnings growth and hamper the market in the near term."

Economic growth has moderated — a good sign to those looking to trust recent, improving inflation numbers. For fixed income, this has helped the Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Bond Index claw back its year-to-date losses.

The year started with expectations for the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates three times beginning in the middle of the year, but higher than expected inflation early in the year halted those hopes. The Fed once again chose to hold rates steady in June and revised its projections to signal only one rate cut this year. However, if inflation continues to cool, we may see two.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) printed 0.0% in May — a surprise to the markets, which were expecting a 0.1% increase. The core CPI also came in lower than market expectations, up 0.2%.

We'll dig further into the details below, but first a look at the numbers year-to-date:

	12/29/23 Close	6/28/24 Close*	Change Year to Date	% Gain/Loss Year to Date
DJIA	37,689.54	39,118.86	+1,429.32	+3.79%
NASDAQ	15,011.35	17,732.60	+2,721.25	+18.13%
S&P 500	4,769.83	5,460.48	+690.65	+14.48%
MSCI EAFE	2,241.21	2,313.88	+72.67	+3.24%
Russell 2000	2,027.07	2,047.69	+20.62	+1.02%
Bloomberg Aggregate Bond	2,162.21	2,156.39	-5.82	-0.27%

* Performance reflects index values as of market close on June 28, 2024. Bloomberg Aggregate Bond and MSCI EAFE reflect June 27, 2024, closing values.

Are we finally seeing AI's limit?

While tech mega-caps have dominated performance in the S&P 500 this year, last month we saw the first significant pullback and possibly the end of AI stocks' rocket-like growth. The question now is: If the leaders take a breather, will the whole market decline or will the laggards get enough action to keep the Index relatively flat?

Labor market holds up, home sales slow down

Nonfarm payrolls grew by 273,000 jobs in May while the household survey showed a decline of 403,000, bringing U.S. unemployment up to 4% for the first time since January 2022. The disparity isn't entirely unusual, but looking at both surveys together creates a clearer picture of the strength of the labor market.

Existing home sales declined in May, but that weakness is yet to be reflected in existing home sale prices, which continue to rise despite the increase in inventory. New home sales declined more than expected with the increased inventory bringing new home sales prices down. In April, both housing starts and housing permits were also lower than expected, indicating that the market for new homes as well as residential investment is weakening.

PCE signals inflation may be continuing to decline

After a lower-than-anticipated CPI, the bond market waited with bated breath for the Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) Index. A lower-than-expected PCE report on Friday marked a directional trend of significance that will likely lead investors to get ahead of lower interest rates, putting additional pressure on the Fed.

More tech and trade restrictions imposed on China

The U.S. intensified efforts to restrict China's access to advanced chip technology last month, focusing on high-bandwidth memory (HBM) and gate all-around (GAA) chip technology, both of which are crucial for AI applications. Japan and the Netherlands coordinated with the U.S. to impose additional tech and trade restrictions on China, which could lead to volatility in the global semiconductor industry.

June also marked significant progress in U.S. nuclear energy policy with the passage of the ADVANCE Act, aimed at revitalizing the nuclear industry and maintaining global leadership in nuclear technology.

Oil market remains range-bound amid continued risks

The global oil market remained in a relatively tight trading range last month, with Ukraine's drone strikes against Russian oil infrastructure having only a modest effect on supply and violence in the Middle East still a headline risk. On the demand side, the International Energy Agency and OPEC released conflicting forecasts, with OPEC calling for double the demand growth forecasted by IEA.

Uncertainty in France; progress in the UK

Developments in the euro area dominated the international investment backdrop in June, with French President M. Emmanuel Macron's decision to dissolve the country's lower house National Assembly and hold snap elections surprising both regional politics and the market. Whatever the result of those elections, leaders will be tasked with addressing the deterioration of the country's public finances in the aftermath of the pandemic and regional energy crisis of 2022.

In contrast, the UK economy is faring comparatively well, as headline inflation hit the 2% target after three years, which will serve as a tailwind for whichever party wins the July 4 election. Still, the Bank of England has voted to maintain the key base interest rate at 5.25% until the incoming government's plan for pursuing its policy agenda becomes clear.

The bottom line

With the S&P 500's dogged run and the looming election, it's normal for investors to ponder the best course of action. Navigating all-time highs is part of the journey – they don't always mean a correction is imminent, but rather signal a healthy and growing economy. Even if a correction does occur, taking a long-term view will generally yield better results. As always, reach out to me directly to ensure your portfolio is in line with your specific goals and timelines.

I will remain committed to the pursuit of your financial goals and thank you for your continued trust in my guidance. If you have any questions regarding this recap – or any other topic – please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,



Financial Advisor / Branch Manager

Mark your Calendars!

We are proud to support the Greater Augusta Back to School Program

As families prepare for the upcoming school year, the GABTSP provides critically needed school supplies to community students K-12. Last year GABTSP distributed 1,000 backpacks!! Their goal for 2024 is to surpass that number and we'd love to help them achieve that. We will be accepting donations for this important cause in our office through **August 5, 2024**.

Below are some suggested items to donate:

- Backpacks (K - 2) & (Junior High/ High School)
- 3 Ring binders
- Notebook paper
- Crayola Markers
- Pencil bags & pencil boxes
- Glue sticks
- Post-it notes
- Water bottles



For more information on GABTSP and the Back-to-School Event on August 18, 2024, please visit

<https://www.greteraugustabtsp.org/home>

Can't make it to the office by the due date, but want to be a part of this? Please call Annette at 207.314.5944

or email annette.sprague@raymondjames.com to arrange another drop-off time.



Join Us Online!

Stay Connected, Stay Informed

Follow our Facebook page and get current, up-to-date information from Raymond James and our office! Simply login to Facebook and search for "Danielle Valleau, Financial Advisor with Raymond James Financial Services"

Check out our website raymondjames.com/daniellevalleau, where Client Access, The Water Street Journal, market and investment updates are all some of the resources at your fingertips.

Just more ways we can stay in touch!



Elevate 2024

Danielle Vallean and her staff attended the Raymond James Financial Services national conference in Maryland this Spring. Financial Advisors who attend Elevate have already proven themselves as successful entrepreneurs. It was 3 days packed with thought-provoking insights and professional development for all who attended.

We are happy to announce, and so proud, that our very own Annette Sprague was awarded top 50 in the 2023 Branch Admin Development STEER Program*. This Program is designed for branch associates at any stage in their career to continue learning, developing, and contributing to their teams. Congratulations Annette!

Elevate is one way your branch staff stays updated on the industry to assist you in achieving your financial goals and greater financial success.

*The 2023 RJFS Top 100 ranking is an internal Raymond James recognition developed by the STEER Development Program. STEER is a calendar year program and Top 100 is achieved based on a point system. Points are accumulated via tenure, industry licensure, and educational course participation. Educational courses are focused on four main topics: Operational Excellence, Client Service & Engagement, Business Growth & Risk Management, Community & Career Development. This may not be representative of any one client's experience, it's not an endorsement, and is not indicative of future performance. While a fee was not paid in exchange for the award/rating, there is a tuition cost associated with the program.

If you are already a client and your financial situation, risk tolerance, or goals and objectives have changed, please give us a call.

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Tips to Help Sidestep Scammers

Fraudsters are constantly looking for ways to part you from your personal information and hard-earned wealth, but fortunately, there are simple steps you can take to thwart their efforts. To help keep yourself, your loved ones and your accounts safe, consider these easy and effective tips:

- Don't allow remote access to your computer.
- Don't give a caller verification codes that you receive via text or email.
- Don't click links in the body of suspicious emails or text messages, especially if they claim to come from your bank, credit card company, real estate agent or title company. Instead, log in to the company's official website or call them directly to verify.
- Don't pay for things you don't remember ordering.
- Don't give your personal information to unknown third parties.
- Work with financial institutions that use fraud protection to safeguard your credit card and banking information.
- Don't click links in the body of suspicious emails, especially if they claim to come from your bank, credit card company, real estate agent or title company. Instead, log in to the company's official website or call them directly to verify.
- Don't let strangers into your house. Instead, ask for a business card and say your spouse, kids or lawyer will be in touch.
- Be wary of caregivers and suitors, especially if conversations center around finances or financial transactions.
- Limit the purchases and donations you make by check, which may list your home address or other key data.

If you suspect you've fallen victim to a scam or that your identity has been compromised, it's time to act. Report the incident to us right away to help protect your accounts, and consult [identitytheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov) to see the Federal Trade Commission's recommendations for critical next steps. Additionally, reporting cybercrime incidents to the [FBI](https://www.fbi.gov) can help our federal agencies respond quicker and more effectively to threats.

For more information about how Raymond James safeguards your information, visit the [How Raymond James Protects Your Privacy](#) page on [raymondjames.com](https://www.raymondjames.com). You can also contact Raymond James Client Services with questions related to your Raymond James account by calling 800.647.7378.

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Live Happier: Live Better

We all have different ideas of the people we aspire to be, making self-improvement an intrinsically personal process. But while you may have specific areas of your life you want to improve, there are general steps we can all take to lead happier, more enriching lives. With September being self-improvement month, let's consider some of those steps:

1. Invest time doing things you love

It can feel self-indulgent to engage in activities solely because you enjoy them, without worrying about productivity or other responsibilities. But as the old adage goes, "time you enjoy wasting is not wasted." To recharge from the stresses of everyday life, try finding an outlet that appeals to you, such as reading, cooking or painting, and set time aside to devote to it.

2. Eat, drink and be merry

When it comes to self-improvement advice, centenarians can be our greatest source of wisdom. By researching "blue zones" – areas where people live long and well – we have found that individuals with longer lifespans tend to have healthy diets that include red wine and smaller portions. They also view meals as an opportunity to spend time with those they genuinely like. Additionally, people in blue zones engage in purposeful exercise such as meditative nature walks, as opposed to viewing physical activity as a means to burn calories.

3. Become a mentor

Whether you lead the training process of a new employee at work or volunteer to become the mentor of a child in a local school, using your knowledge and guidance to empower others can help you feel more personally fulfilled. Mentoring can also build your network and help you learn new things about yourself.

4. Make friends out of strangers

If you think back to your most treasured memories, chances are they were spent with people you truly care about. Making friends can have benefits far beyond expanding your network. Investing time in your current friends and making new ones can not only provide you with a reliable support system, it can also improve your physical health. That's because an active social life can lower risks of heart problems and high blood pressure, as well as deter osteoporosis and rheumatoid arthritis.

There are a myriad of ways to engage in self-improvement. You can take steps as small as journaling more often or as meaningful as starting a new career. No matter how you choose to celebrate Self-Improvement Month, I hope September leaves you feeling happy and fulfilled

From Danielle, Annette & Michelle,

Have a wonderful rest of your Summer!

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