

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

PROVIDED BY
ROGERS NORTON WEALTH MANAGEMENT GROUP OF RAYMOND JAMES

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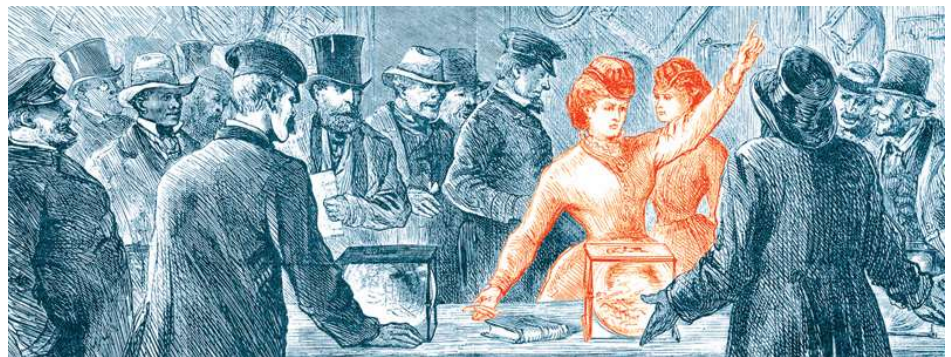
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Happy Spring!

We hope everyone is doing well and getting ready for some warmer weather.

We have included some articles in our Newsletter which we think you will find interesting. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments.

Trailblazers: Women Who Made Financial History



March is Women's History Month. What better time to reflect on the contribution women have made to the field of finance? What follows are the stories of just five of the many women who helped blaze the trail for others in investing, banking, finance, and economics.

Victoria Claflin Woodhull and Tennessee "Tennie" Claflin

Victorian-era sisters Victoria Woodhull and Tennie Claflin were pioneers on many fronts. Not only did they launch the first brokerage house by and for women, they started a progressive newspaper supporting women's rights and were also suffragists. In 1872, Woodhull was the first woman to run for president. The sisters' rise to fame had quite unconventional beginnings. Their father was a "snake oil salesman" who made his young girls serve as psychics and healers in his scams. Woodhull later parlayed this unusual experience into a business relationship with the superstitious tycoon Cornelius Vanderbilt. With the backing of

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his fortune, the sisters opened Woodhull, Claflin & Co., New York's first female-owned brokerage firm. Through surreptitious means (a hidden back door and a women-only lounge), the company helped women manage their own money during a time when it was frowned upon to do so.¹

Maggie Lena Walker

Maggie Lena Walker was born to enslaved parents in 1864 in Richmond, Virginia. At just 14 years old, she joined the local council of the Independent Order of St. Luke, an African-American benevolent society that aided the sick and elderly, promoted humanitarian causes, and encouraged individual self-sufficiency. Walker eventually assumed leadership of the organization, where she served until her death. Among her achievements were launching *The St. Luke Herald* newspaper, which encouraged economic independence and, in 1903, becoming the first African-American woman to charter a bank — the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank.

Upon opening, the bank helped hundreds begin saving money, including one person who opened an account with just 31 cents. Walker also encouraged children to save by handing out penny banks and allowing them to open accounts after saving 100 pennies.

The bank later merged with two others to become The Consolidated Bank and Trust Company, the nation's oldest bank continually operated by African-American management until 2009.²

Muriel Siebert

The first woman to buy a seat on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) and the first to be a superintendent of banking for the state of New York, Muriel Siebert was also the first woman to lead a NYSE member firm. Considered "a scrapper" with "the same brash attitude that characterized Wall Street's most successful men," Siebert made it her life's mission to fight for women to occupy the most vaunted seats at Wall Street's proverbial tables. She donated millions to help women secure careers in business and finance.

At a 1992 luncheon where she was honored for her life's work, Siebert said women "...are still not making

partner and are not getting into the positions that lead to the executive suites. There's still an old-boy network. You have to keep fighting."³

Dr. Janet Yellen

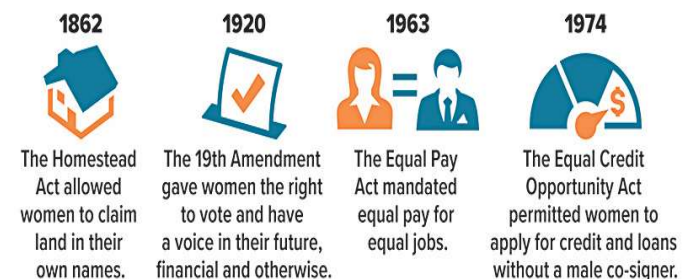
Currently serving as U.S. Secretary of the Treasury — the first woman to do so — Dr. Janet Yellen has been a standout in the field of economics for decades.

Born to a middle-class family in Brooklyn, New York, Dr. Yellen graduated summa cum laude from Brown University in 1967 and earned her Ph.D. in economics from Yale in 1971, the only woman to do so that year. After teaching at several top universities, including Harvard and the London School of Economics, she served as a member of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors.

In 1997, President Bill Clinton appointed her as the first woman chair of the White House Council of Economic Advisors. She later went on to serve the Federal Reserve System in a variety of leadership roles. In October 2013, President Barack Obama nominated her for the position of Federal Reserve Board Chair, the first woman to hold that role.

Dr. Yellen is not only the first woman to lead the U.S. Treasury, the Federal Reserve Board, and the White House Council of Economic Advisors, she also is the first *person* to have held all three posts.⁴

Milestones in Financial HERstory



Source: *HerMoney*, 2022

1) *Museum of the City of New York*

2) *National Park Service and the National Women's History Museum*

3) *The New York Times*, August 25, 2013

4) *National Women's History Museum and Investopedia*

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Individual Bonds vs. Bond Funds: What's the Difference?



Individual bonds and bond funds can both provide an income stream, but there are important differences. An individual bond can offer more certainty and stability than a fund, while a fund can offer diversification that might be difficult to obtain with individual bonds.

Coupon, maturity, and yield

An individual bond has a coupon rate — the annual interest rate paid on the face value of the bond — and a maturity date, which is the date the principal is returned to the borrower. If you hold a bond to maturity, you will receive any interest payments due during the time you own it (typically paid quarterly or semi-annually) and the full principal at maturity, unless the bond issuer defaults. If you sell the bond on the secondary market before maturity, you will receive the market price, which may be higher or lower than the face value or the amount you paid, depending on market conditions.

By contrast, a bond fund does not have a coupon rate or a maturity date (with the exception of certain defined-maturity funds). A fund typically pays monthly distributions based on the bonds in the fund. The rate can change as bonds are replaced (due to maturity or

sales), and as market conditions change. A fund also has fees and expenses, which reduce the interest paid, and fund managers can adjust to market conditions in various ways, depending on the fund's objective. Because there is no maturity date, you can hold the fund as long as the fund company remains in business. However, there is never a guarantee that you will receive your principal no matter how long you hold the shares. Fund shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than your original investment.

Yield is the expected return from a bond or bond fund, based on the interest rate and purchase price. If you buy a \$1,000 bond at face value with a coupon rate of 4%, the yield is 4%. But if you buy the same bond on the secondary market for \$800, the yield is 5%, because you receive interest based on the face value: $4\% \times \$1,000 \text{ face value} = \$40 \text{ interest} / \$800 \text{ purchase price} = 5\% \text{ yield}$. Bond fund yields are more complex, but the 30-day SEC yield (or standardized yield) offers a helpful comparison. This is typically calculated using the maximum share price on the last day of the month and projects annual net investment income assuming it remains the same as the previous 30 days.

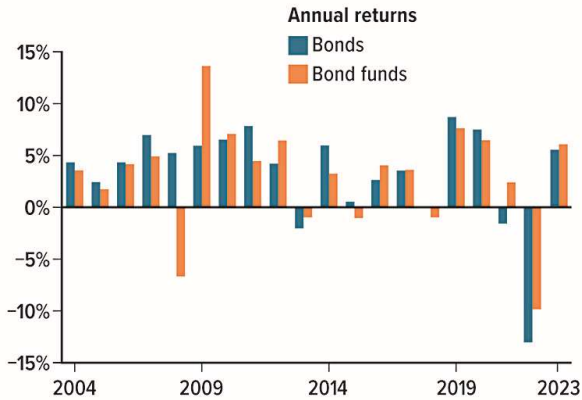
Interest rate sensitivity

Bonds and bond funds are sensitive to changes in interest rates. Generally, when rates rise, the market value of existing bonds and bond funds falls, because newly issued bonds pay higher interest rates. Conversely, when rates fall, the market value of existing bonds and bond funds rises. This only applies to market values and would not affect an individual bond held to maturity.

Varied Performance

Individual bonds and bond funds have performed differently over the past 20 years. In part, this is because fund managers may respond to the market in different ways; for example, they might try to preserve yield over share price or vice versa. Note that the performance of individual bonds only applies to values on the secondary market, not to bonds held to maturity.

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Source: London Stock Exchange Group, 2024, for the period 12/31/2003 to 12/31/2023. Bonds are represented by the Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Bond TR Index, and bond funds are represented by the Thomson US: All Gen Bond - MF Index. Expenses, fees, charges, and taxes are not considered. The performance of an unmanaged index is not indicative of the performance of any particular investment. Individuals cannot invest directly in an index. Rates of return will vary over time, particularly for long-term investments. Investments seeking higher rates of return involve a higher degree of risk. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Actual results will vary.

If you owned bond funds during the period that the Federal Reserve was aggressively raising interest rates, you may have been frustrated as you watched the value of your shares drop. Now that interest rates seem to have stabilized, share values are likely to stabilize as well, and they may increase if rates begin to decrease. Bond funds typically replace underlying bonds as they mature, and new bonds added to funds over the last two years will generally pay higher interest rates, increasing the interest paid by the fund. Although it is impossible to predict future market direction, bond

funds may be poised to offer solid returns if rates remain stable or begin to fall.

Diversification does not guarantee a profit or protect against investment loss. Funds are sold by prospectus. Please consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. The prospectus, which contains this and other information about the investment company, can be obtained from your financial professional. Be sure to read the prospectus carefully before deciding whether to invest.

Beware of These Life Insurance Beneficiary Mistakes



Life insurance has long been recognized as a useful way to provide for your heirs and loved ones when you die. While naming your policy's beneficiaries should be a relatively simple task, there are a number of situations that can easily lead to unintended and adverse consequences. Here are several life insurance beneficiary traps you may want to discuss with a professional.

Not naming a beneficiary

The most obvious mistake you can make is failing to name a beneficiary of your life insurance policy. But simply naming your spouse or child as beneficiary may not suffice. It is conceivable that you and your spouse could die together or that your named beneficiary may die before you and you haven't named successor

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beneficiaries. If the beneficiaries you designated are not living at your death, the insurance company may pay the death proceeds to your estate, which can lead to other potential problems.

Death benefit paid to your estate

If your life insurance is paid to your estate, several undesired issues may arise. First, the insurance proceeds likely become subject to probate, which may delay the payments to your heirs. Second, life insurance that is part of your probate estate is subject to claims of your probate creditors. Not only might your heirs have to wait to receive their share of the insurance, but your creditors may satisfy their claims out of those proceeds first.

Naming a minor child as beneficiary




Insurance companies will rarely pay life insurance proceeds directly to a minor. Typically, the court appoints a guardian — a potentially costly and time-consuming process — to handle the proceeds until the minor beneficiary reaches the age of majority according to state law. If you want the life insurance proceeds to be paid for the benefit of a minor, you may consider creating a trust that names the minor as beneficiary. Then the trust manages and pays the proceeds from the insurance according to the terms and conditions you set out in the trust document. Consult with an estate attorney to decide on the course that works best for your situation.

Disqualifying a beneficiary from government assistance

A beneficiary you name to receive your life insurance may be receiving or be eligible to receive government assistance due to a disability or other special circumstance. Eligibility for government benefits is often tied to the financial circumstances of the recipient. The payment of insurance proceeds may be a financial windfall that disqualifies your beneficiary from eligibility for government benefits, or the proceeds may have to be paid to a government entity as reimbursement for benefits paid. Again, an estate attorney can help you address this issue.

Life Insurance Payout Options

Most life insurance policies offer several options to the policy beneficiary, including:

 <p>Lump sum payment</p>	<p>The most common choice. A one-time payment is made of the death benefit proceeds to the beneficiary.</p>
 <p>Lifetime annuity</p>	<p>The death benefit proceeds are converted to an income annuity, which makes a fixed, periodic payment to the beneficiary for the rest of his/her life.</p>
 <p>Fixed period annuity</p>	<p>Like the lifetime annuity, except the payments will be made over a specified period of time, such as 10 years, after which, payments cease.</p>

Creating a taxable situation

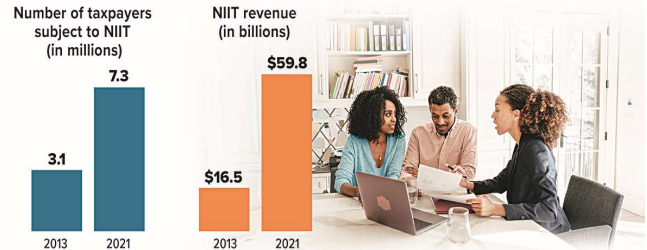
Generally, life insurance death proceeds are not taxed when they're paid. However, there are exceptions to this rule, and the most common situation involves having three different people as policy owner, insured, and beneficiary. Typically, the policy owner and the insured are one and the same person. But sometimes the owner is not the insured or the beneficiary. For example, mom may be the policy owner on the life of dad for the benefit of their children. In this situation, mom is effectively creating a gift of the insurance proceeds for her children/beneficiaries. As the donor, mom may be subject to gift tax. Consult a financial or tax professional to figure out the best way to structure the policy.

As with most financial decisions, there are expenses associated with the purchase of life insurance. Policies commonly have mortality and expense charges. In addition, if a policy is surrendered prematurely, there may be surrender charges and income tax implications. The cost and availability of life insurance

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depend on factors such as age, health, and the type and amount of insurance purchased.

While trusts offer numerous advantages, they incur up-front costs and often have ongoing administrative fees. The use of trusts involves a complex web of tax rules and regulations. You should consider the counsel of an experienced estate planning professional and your legal and tax advisors before implementing such strategies.



Investors Beware: This Surtax IS Creeping UP on You



High-income taxpayers are subject to a 3.8% net investment income tax (NIIT) from capital gains, dividends, interest, certain royalties, rents, and passive income if their modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) exceeds \$200,000 for single filers or \$250,000 for married joint filers. The number of taxpayers paying the NIIT has more than doubled since it took effect, mostly because these income thresholds were not indexed to inflation, and the revenue collected has more than tripled.

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ON THE HOME FRONT

Matt – Time has flown as Nate is now a senior at Saint Michael's College. He was named a tri-captain of the baseball team and made the NE10 Academic Honor Roll.

Liza is a junior at Fordham and a Dean's List student, Club Volleyball player and majoring in psychology with minors in Spanish and Art History.

Stacey continues to volunteer at the Animal Refuge League.

Matt is once again assisting his Alma mater Bowdoin College baseball team.



Liza, Stacey, Nate and Matt on vacation during Christmas break.

Chris - Chris, Shannon, Molly, and Jack, have had a great winter spending time at sugarloaf with the kids learning to ski. Molly just turned 4 and can already go up and down the lifts and trails all by herself and Jack is enjoying the Moose-calator.



Chris and Molly



Jack, Shannon and Chris

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Adele – Samuel and Charlie continue to do very well in school. The topic of conversation around the dinner table is about which colleges to apply to.

Jim, Samuel and Charlie surprised Adele for Christmas vacation with a trip to Tucson, AZ to visit her mother. It was the best Christmas gift!



Samuel, Adele, Jim, Charlie and Grams (Adele's mother) enjoying lunch at In-N-Out burger in Tucson, AZ

TRIVIA QUESTION

In what country did the Easter bunny originate?

PREVIOUS QUARTER

Q. Who has won an Oscar for their role as Santa Claus?

A. Edmund Gwenn won an Oscar for Best Actor in a supporting role as Kris Kringle in Miracle on 34th Street in 1947.