MOULTON WEALTH MANAGEMENT INC.

MOULTON HOT MINUTES

SPECIALIZING IN RETIREMENT AND TAX PLANNING

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Week of November 6, 2023

Happy Veterans Day Friday, and a well-deserved "THANK YOU" to all of those serving, or who have ever served!

ATTEND OUR…

RISK MANAGEMENT

LAST OF 2023! ***SEMINARS*** ***LAST OF 2023!***

BRING A GUEST

- **NOVEMBER 15TH @ 9:30 AM – SPOKANE**
- **NOVEMBER 29TH @ 11:00 AM – RICHLAND**

(BOTH HAVE BREAKFAST)

CALL **509-922-3110** TO RESERVE A SEAT *OR IF YOU WANT A SECOND OPINION ON YOUR PORTFOLIO!*

Advisory services through Moulton Wealth Management, Inc., an independent Registered Investment Advisor registered with the SEC

Last week's newsletter reviewed the most recent GDP announcement, noting that high GDP readings heading into recessions and bear markets are not that unusual. We also reviewed some recent consumer data showing deterioration, not acceleration. You can read it here: *Newsletter - Moulton Wealth*.

Last week's radio show discussed jobs as well as the Fed decision not to raise rates further at this meeting. Interestingly, analysis of whether Fed Chair Powell was hawkish (i.e. telling the market more hikes might be coming, markets be damned) or dovish (i.e. telling the markets he'll be here to help them) were split. You can listen here: Your Money Matters – Moulton Wealth.

Please see our new website www.MoultonWealth.com. Of the many improvements, the most important is we now host podcasts of past radio shows, allowing you to listen at your convenience. You can also read all the past newsletters and take the test to find your Risk Number.

Last week the Fed decided not to raise rates and Wall Street took that as bullish. But you shouldn't. Think about why the Fed decided not to raise rates, despite inflation still close to twice as high as their target.

It's because the economic data continues to deteriorate and they believe they just have to wait for the damage to grow.

I wouldn't consider that bullish.

The other news was about jobs. On Friday it was announced the U.S. created 150,000 jobs versus 180,000 expected. The unemployment rate rose to 3.9%, again higher than the 3.8% expected.

Once more, the numbers had Wall Street proclaiming a recession would be unprecedented. But that's not true. In fact, jobs reported are often "off" at economic turning points. In other words, when the economy is moving from contraction to expansion (i.e., bad to good), jobs reported often understate reality. And when the economy is moving from expansion to contraction, jobs reported overstate reality. As such it's important to consider revisions. As the BLS gets more information, they revise previously announced estimates. The direction of those revisions is critical.

Previously announced jobs gains for the last two quarters were revised lower, by an aggregate 101,000 jobs. More importantly that's the 9th straight month of negative revisions.

Liz Ann Sonders of Charles Schwab tells us that year over year increase in permanent jobs losers (orange line) now sits in the territory only seen at the start of recessions. *However, the data only spans the last three recession.*

A friend, and client, reviews and critiques everything we put out, from newsletters to our radio show. He even takes notes. We've joked about it in the past, referring to him as Mr. Unsolicited Advice.

Recently he suggested we explain what "research partner" means, as we often refer to them. He also recommended we give readers a glimpse into a normal work day.

At Moulton Wealth we are fiduciaries, and we are independent. To best execute as fiduciaries, we decided a long time ago, that we needed to employ outside experts. After all, how can we act in clients' best interest, if we don't have the best data available?

As such we've contracted several third party research partners. Each provides their own process of data collection and analysis. And each helps us to formulate and execute our own process. These research partners make their money from clients like us, not from Wall Street. In other words, they don't have ulterior motives. Make no mistake, approaching markets this

LISTEN TO RIAL'S AND DON'S RADIO SHOW,

"YOUR MONEY MATTERS"

EVERY SATURDAY MORNING AT

8:00 AM ON KXLY RADIO CHANNEL 920 AM IN SPOKANE

AND AT 9:30 AM ON NEWSTALK RADIO CHANNEL 870 AM IN THE TRI-CITIES AREA

LISTEN LIVE AT WWW.NEWSTALK870.AM AGAIN AT 9:30 EACH SATURDAY MORNING

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE MOULTONWEALTH.COM FOR PODCASTS

way is much more work, and costs us much more money, than simply telling everyone to buy and hold. But it's also invaluable.

From our meetings with investors, as well as other advisors, we think it's fair to say our approach is not the norm. The vast majority of advisors, and therefore investors, operate under "Modern Portfolio Theory".

In fact, this was part of our CFP® training.

Modern Portfolio Theory espouses parceling investment dollars across a predetermined "pie chart", based on the investor's risk tolerance. The pie chart usually includes large cap and small cap stocks, foreign stocks, possibly some commodities, and then bonds ranging from risky to safe including some foreign. After being allocated, no changes are made, ever, other than periodic rebalancing or for a change in client circumstances.

The argument is usually put forward that no one knows how anything will perform in the future, so they try to cover all bases.

Most important is that in Modern Portfolio Theory, and "set and forget" pie charts, no thought is given to the particulars of where we stand in the economic cycle, or debt, or interest rates, or pretty much anything.

What a nice approach!

It would allow us to get rid of all of our expensive research partners, to free up a massive amount of time previously taken with staying abreast of everything, and to basically work a lot less.

In fact, we could simply roll out the same, time tested Wall Street sayings when investors are concerned…

- Changing anything is a mistake.
- You can't time the market.
- You haven't lost unless you sell.
- The market always comes back.
- It's time in the market, not timing the market.
- Etc.

You've likely heard them all before.

Yet Modern Portfolio Theory didn't become popular until the 1980's and beyond. Why? Because it didn't work in the 1970's with inflation. In fact it's estimated that the popular 60/40

Modern Portfolio Theory allocation (60% stocks, 40% bonds) would have lost money from the late 1960s to the early 1980s.

We think it's reasonable to be concerned, it could behave similarly in this inflationary environment.

We want to be clear. There's nothing wrong with holding a static portfolio over the long term, as long as you understand, and can stomach, the large losses that go with it. The data (and our experience) shows that most investors who think they are "long term" and "buy and hold" are fine as long as losses are quick and not too deep. But those same investors will sell at an inopportune time if those losses become deep and/or drawn out.

The fact is that the last 15 years of Fed Quantitative Easing (Q/E), which is money printing by another name, has conditioned us that no market losses will be deep or last very long. We're afraid that many will learn a difficult lesson.

What do we do that's different?

We change our client allocations as the data changes.

Interestingly, even as we're told to just buy and hope, the big investors don't.

Stanley Druckenmiller is arguably the most successful investor alive. He's told his story of running a hedge fund. Guess what? He didn't use a Modern Portfolio Theory, static allocation. And now retired, with no dog in the race, he tells listeners to be in the safety of U.S. Treasuries, with their 5%+ yields, as he thinks there is a lot farther for stocks to fall.

And we agree.

Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway recently held the most cash ever. Holding the most cash ever means he's not statically holding a pie chart allocation.

Jamie Dimon, CEO of JP Morgan, just announced a 1,000,000-share sale of his stock. He said he's doing it for tax and estate planning reasons, which is fair. Except, as CEO he's never sold any previously, in his 18 years. Do you think he's doing it now because he believes "no one knows the future" or that he thinks his stock price is going higher?

Yet even as these titans adjust to the data, you're told not to.

Is it in your best interest to take large losses, but not in theirs?

On to a "normal" work day.

I'm up by 4:00 am each morning. If I'm lifting weights, it's usually 3:30 am.

This is not meant as a boast, nor a complaint, but Mr. Unsolicited Advice, who knows my schedule, thinks it's important to share.

The first thing I do is begin "measuring and mapping" various economic factors and positions important to us. And I do it by hand, with a pen and paper. *(I sometimes bring my notebook to seminars if you'd like to see.)*

It starts with interest rates across various durations. Then it's on to market volatility. Next it's the U.S. dollar. Then long term bonds, bond volatility and yield curve inversions.

I proceed to gold and commodities, including oil. After all of that, I begin on stock positions and sectors.

When I say "measure and map" it means I am looking up our proprietary metrics and writing them down. And I do it for each point and position.

I do this to stay intimately aware of what's changing. We always say *"it's never one thing, it's the totality of everything."*

It's also never the average of things, instead it's the particulars that matter.

This process ensures I'm aware of the "particulars" and how they are changing, every day.

That process takes about 45 minutes.

Then at 4:45 am I am on a conference call with our research partner, Hedgeye. They're on the East coast so it's a more sane time for them. The call, which lasts an hour, includes all their sector heads taking turns telling us what data has changed in their particular areas, overnight. They also discuss specific equites, and what they expect for earnings, etc.

This call is very helpful for two reasons.

- The particulars of individual positions, sales, expected earnings, etc. are obviously useful.
- But also the totality of what they see helps us visualize the entire macro (i.e. economic) picture across several sectors.

After a quick shower, at 6:00 am I am onto what's called "The Macro Show" which is a 30-minute video presentation, by the head of the company, helping to "pull it all together". He

explains where they think we stand overall, and why. But more importantly, where the data suggests we are headed over the next several months.

Next, I'm on to reading two daily research reports from two different research partners.

So by the time we're hitting the 7:30 am mark, an hour after the market opens, I've been working for about 3 ½ hours, and I've not even gone into the office yet.

Make no mistake, I'm not complaining. I love this stuff. The weekends are more of the same, and even more in depth.

But you can see why earlier, I facetiously said operating under Modern Portfolio Theory would be "so nice".

Beyond sleeping later, I could save thousands of dollars we now spend on research. After all, why would I spend on research, when Modern Portfolio Theory tells me to ignore it?

How do you think your advisor's day begins?

What are they measuring and mapping? Who are they listening to, and what is that source's motivation?

Now is the time to act. Take advantage of what we consider a historic bear market rally to reposition yourself into a more defensive portfolio allocation.

If your goal is to protect what you have during economic market contractions so you can more fully participate in the next expansion and bull market, you should reduce risk in your investments now rather than continue holding the same portfolio you've had the last 10 years.

We strongly suggest that investors who are retired or close to retirement should be the latter.

If you're positioned to protect against the downside, then the extent of such is not so much a concern.

And the extent could be significant.

The Great Financial Crisis was triggered by the popping of a bubble in real-estate. ***The bubble in real-estate today is bigger by most measures.***

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The Dot.com bear market was triggered by the popping of a bubble in equity valuations. ***The equity bubble is bigger today by most measures.***

Neither the Dot.com nor the Great Financial Crisis bear markets had inflation, or nearly as much debt across consumers and businesses as we have today.

If the Dot.com bubble resulted in the S&P-500 falling ~ -50% and the NASDAQ falling over ~ -80%...

If the Great Financial Crisis saw the S&P-500 fall ~ -57% and the NASDAQ falling over ~ -50%...

How much might a market fall with levels exceeding both of those along with inflation and higher leverage?

You don't have to remain locked into the same approach as you had when these risks didn't exist. You are allowed to protect yourself. You can step away and then come back when the risks decline. Call us to find out how.

It's time to focus on return of your money rather than return on your money.

If you still have the same portfolio allocation you had during the bull market, we would ask "why"? The risk profile of the economy and market has changed dramatically and will likely continue to rise. Wouldn't it make sense to adjust your portfolio to what is actually happening?

To be clear, we'll have a great buying opportunity at some point in the future. Usually that happens with the market crashing and most investors disgusted with the thought of investing. If you lose much of your net worth, participating will be difficult.

"You can't buy low if you don't sell high."

Patience and asset protection will be key.

Don't wait until you have suffered unrecoverable losses before taking action.

In the Great Financial Crisis, the S&P-500 fell 24% from the start on October 9, 2007 until the Lehman bankruptcy on September 15, 2008. That was close to a year, and not that far off from what we've lived through so far.

Then in just over a month from September 15, 2008 to October 27, 2008 the S&P-500 fell ***ANOTHER*** 28.8%. And from September 15, 2008 to the ultimate bottom, about 5 months later, it fell ***ANOTHER*** 43%.

Not only do bear markets normally unfold in three stages with the last being the most virulent, it also demonstrates that risk happens slowly and then all at once.

What is your defensive plan? There's still time.

Call or attend a seminar to hear about ours.

Remember, we have a feature on our website: www.MoultonWealth.com to help you measure your risk tolerance. The problem with trying to decide how much risk to take is we all want to be aggressive when the market is going up, but conservative when it's going down. That's why a sell discipline is important. However, the first line of defense is always our allocation. This approach to measuring risk gives a number by making investors trade off gains and losses. Just click the button to see where you stand.

Get a physical! We invite you to attend a seminar and come in for a "financial physical", even if you think your current approach is fine. Much like going to the doctor for a physical despite feeling great, you want to make sure any negative issues you may not be aware of are caught early and addressed. For example…

- Do you need a process to help manage losses during the next bear market?
- Have you addressed your investment process and adjusted it for what is going on in the world?
- If not, what are you waiting for?

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At the bottom of the 2007 - 2009 bear market the S&P-500 index returned to levels last seen in 1996.

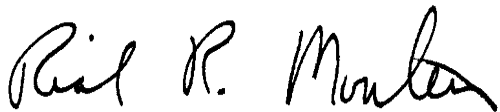
The drop didn't retrace only a few months or even a couple years.

We discuss many of these issues and more on the weekly radio show and invite you to listen.

WEEKLY FOCUS – THINK ABOUT IT

"We change our client allocations as the data changes."

Yours truly,



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P.S. Please feel free to forward this commentary to family, friends, or colleagues. If you would like us to add them to the list, please reply to this e-mail with their e-mail address and we will ask for their permission to be added.

https://twitter.com/LizAnnSonders/status/1721499697351717039
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Investment services offered through Moulton Wealth Management, Inc., an independent Registered Investment Advisor. The Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P 500) is an unmanaged group of securities considered to be representative of the stock market in general. The Dow Jones Industrial Average is a price-weighted index of 30 actively traded blue-chip stocks. The NASDAQ Composite Index is an unmanaged, market-weighted index of all over-the-counter common stocks traded on the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotation System. Yahoo! Finance is the source for any reference to the performance of an index between two specific periods. Opinions expressed are subject to change without notice and are not intended as investment advice or to predict future performance. Consult your financial professional before making any investment decision. You cannot invest directly in an index. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Investments in securities do not offer a fixed rate of return. Principal, yield and / or share price will fluctuate with changes in market conditions and, when sold or redeemed, you may receive more or less than originally invested. No system or financial planning strategy can guarantee future results.

To unsubscribe from the "Molten Hot" Minutes please reply to this e-mail with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line, or write us at 1220 N. Mullan Road, Spokane, WA 99206.

The Barclays Global Aggregate Bond Index *(formerly Lehman Brothers Global Aggregate Index), is an unmanaged market-capitalization-weighted benchmark, and tracks the performance of investment-grade fixed income securities denominated in 13 currencies. The index reflects reinvestment of all distributions and changes in market prices.*

The Barclays U.S. 1-10 Year TIPS Index *is an unmanaged index composed of inflation-protected public obligations of the U.S. Treasury that have a remaining maturity of one to ten years.*

The Barclays U.S. Aggregate Bond Index *is an unmanaged benchmark index composed of U.S. securities in Treasury, Government-Related, Corporate, and Securitized sectors. It includes securities that are of investment-grade quality or better, have at least one year to maturity, and have an outstanding par value of at least $250 million.*

The Barclays U.S. TIPS Index *is an unmanaged index composed of all U.S. Treasury Inflation- Protected Securities rated investment grade, have at least one year to final maturity, and at least $250 million par amount outstanding.*

The Barclays U.S. Treasury Index *is an unmanaged index composed of U.S. Treasuries.*

The CDX IG 12 *is a benchmark high-grade derivatives index, which measures the cost of insuring a basket of U.S. investment-grade corporate debt against defaults.*

The Chicago Board Options Exchange Volatility Index (VIX) *tracks the expected volatility in the S&P 500 over the next 30 days. A higher number indicates greater expected volatility. Common usage: The Chicago Board Options Exchange Volatility Index (VIX), a barometer of market volatility.*

The Dow Jones Industrial Average *is a widely followed market indicator based on a price-weighted average of 30 blue-chip stocks that trade on the New York Stock Exchange which are selected by editors of The Wall Street Journal.*

The Dow Jones Wilshire Real Estate Securities Index (RESI) *is used to measure the U.S. real estate market and includes both real estate investment trusts (REITs) and real estate operating companies (REOCs). It is weighted by float-adjusted market capitalization.*

The JP Morgan Emerging Market Bond Index *is a total-return, unmanaged trade-weighted index for U.S. dollar-denominated emerging-market bonds, including sovereign debt, quasi-sovereign debt, Brady bonds, loans, and Eurobonds.*

The JP Morgan EMBI Global Diversified Index *tracks the performance of external debt instruments (including U.S.-dollar-denominated and other external-currency-denominated Brady bonds, loans, Eurobonds and local market instruments) in the emerging markets.*

The JP Morgan GBI-EM Global Diversified Index *tracks the performance of local-currency bonds issued by emerging market governments.*

The MSCI World Index *is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index that is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed markets. The MSCI World Index represents 23 developed market countries.*

The MSCI All Country World Index *is a market-capitalization-weighted index composed of over 2,400 companies, and is representative of the market structure of 46 developed and emerging market countries. The index is calculated with net dividends reinvested in U.S. dollars.*

The MSCI EAFE Index *is an unmanaged, market-capitalization-weighted equity index that represents the developed world outside North America.*

The MSCI Emerging Markets Index *is a free float-adjusted market-capitalization-weighted index designed to measure the performance of global emerging market equities.*

The NASDAQ Composite Index *is a market-value-weighted index of all common stocks listed on the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations (NASDAQ) system.*

The Russell 1000 Index *includes 1000 of the largest U.S. equity securities based on market cap and current index membership; it is used to measure the activity of the U.S. large-cap equity market.*

The Russell 2000 Index *includes 2000 small-cap U.S. equity names and is used to measure the activity of the U.S. small-cap equity market.*

The S&P 500 Index *is a capitalization-weighted index made up of 500 widely held large-cap U.S. stocks in the Industrials, Transportation, Utilities and Financials sectors.*

Investing Terminology

Alpha *is a measure of a portfolio's return above a certain benchmarked return.*

Alternative Investments *are investments that are not one of the three traditional asset types (stocks, bonds and cash). Alternative investments include hedge funds, managed futures, real estate, commodities, and derivatives contracts.*

Asset-Backed Securities (ABS) *are bonds backed by a pool of loans or accounts receivable and commonly include payments from credit cards, auto loans and mortgage loans.*

Austerity *refers to measures taken by a country's government in an effort to reduce expenditures and a budget deficit.*

Beta *is a measure of the volatility or systematic risk of a security or a portfolio in comparison to the market as a whole.*

Book-to-Price Ratio *is the inverse of the price-to-book ratio, which is calculated as the market value of a security divided by its book value. A lower the price-to-book ratio for a security may mean the security is undervalued, and vice versa (the higher the book-to-price ratio, the better the value).*

Commercial Mortgage-Backed Securities (CMBS) *are pools of commercial mortgage loans that are packaged together and sold to the public. They are usually structured in tranches, or classes of risk, so that investors can determine how much risk they want to take on. In general, CMBS carry less prepayment risk than loans backed by residential mortgages.*

Corporate Bonds *are debt securities issued by corporations to raise money; these bonds usually pay higher coupon rates than government or municipal bonds.*

Correlation Risk *refers to the change in the marked to market value of an asset when the correlation between the underlying assets changes over time.*

Credit Ratings *are an assessment of the risk of default of a company or country. The higher the credit quality (or rating), the lower the perceived risk of default.*

Cyclical Sectors or Stocks *are those whose performance is closely tied to the economic environment and business cycle. Managers with a pro-cyclical market view tend to favor stocks that are more sensitive to movements in the broad market and therefore tend to have more volatile performance.*

Debt-to-Equity Ratio *is calculated as long-term debt divided by common shareholders' equity, and measures the amount of a firm's leverage, or debt.*

Donor Advised Funds *are private funds administered by a third party and created for the purpose of managing charitable donations on behalf of an organization, family, or individual.*

Duration *is a measure of a security's price sensitivity to changes in interest rates. Specifically, duration measures the potential change in value of a bond that would result from a 1% change in interest rates. The shorter the duration of a bond, the less its price will potentially change as interest rates go up or down; conversely, the longer the duration of a bond, the more its price will potentially change.*

Excess Returns *are investment returns from a security or portfolio that exceed a benchmark or index with a similar level of risk.*

Grantor Retained Annuity Trust *is an estate planning technique that minimizes the tax liability existing when intergenerational transfers of estate assets occur. An irrevocable trust is created for a certain term or period of time. The individual establishing the trust pays a tax when the trust is established. Assets are placed under the trust and then an annuity is paid out every year. When the trust expires, the beneficiary receives the assets estate and gift tax free.*

High Yield Debt *is rated below investment grade and is considered to be riskier.*

Managed Futures *strategies use futures contracts as part of their overall investment strategy. They provide portfolio diversification among various types of investment styles and asset classes to help mitigate portfolio risk in a way that is not possible in direct equity investments.*

Market Capitalization *is calculated as the number of companies shares outstanding multiplied by the share price, and is used to determine the total market value of a company.*

Momentum *is the rate of acceleration for an economic, price or volume movement; it is used to locate trends within the market.*

Mortgage-Backed Securities (MBS) *are pools of mortgage loans that are packaged together and sold to the public. They are usually structured in tranches, or classes of risk, so that investors can determine how much risk they want to take on.*

Option-adjusted spreads *estimate the difference in yield between a security or collection of securities and comparable Treasuries after removing the effects of any special features, such as provisions that allow an issuer to call a security before maturity.*

Peripheral Eurozone Countries *are those countries in the Eurozone with the smallest economies.*

Price-to-Book Ratio *is calculated as the market value of a security divided by its book value. A lower the price-to-book ratio for a security may mean the security is undervalued.*

Private Foundations *are charitable organizations that do not qualify as public charities by government standards. A private foundation is a nonprofit organization which is usually created via a single primary donation from an individual or a business and whose funds and programs are managed by its own trustees or directors.*

Quantitative Easing *refers to expansionary efforts by central banks to help increase the supply of money in the economy.*

Recapitalized/recapitalization *refers to injecting fresh equity into a company or a bank, which can be used to absorb future losses. This generally takes place through the company issuing new shares. In the case of a government or organization recapitalizing a bank, it usually results in the government or organization owning a stake in the bank.*

Spreads*: Yield spreads represents the difference in yields offered between corporate and government bonds. If they tighten, this means that the difference has decreased. If they widen, this means the difference has increased.*

Standard Deviation*: Statistical measure of historical volatility. A statistical measure of the distance a quantity is likely to lie from its average value. It is applied to the annual rate of return of an investment, to measure the investment's volatility (risk). Standard deviation is synonymous with volatility, in that the greater the standard deviation the more volatile an investment's return will be. A standard deviation of zero would mean an investment has a return rate that never varies.*

Treasuries *are U.S. government debt obligations that are backed by the full faith and credit of the government. Often, they are used as a proxy for a risk-free asset when comparing other risky assets.*

Yield Curves *illustrate the relationship between the interest rate, or cost of borrowing, and the time to maturity. Yields move inversely to prices. The Barclays Capital 1-10 Year US TIPS Index: Barclays Capital 1-10 Year US TIPS Index measures the performance of inflation-protected public obligations of the U.S. Treasury that have a remaining maturity of one to ten years.*